FOUCAULT STUDIES

ARTICLE

Pastoral Power, Sovereign Carelessness, and the Social Divisions of Care Work or: What Foucault Can Teach Us about the "Crisis of Care"

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ABSTRACT. Contemporary thinkers studying biopolitics find little interest in Foucault's "vague sketch of the pastorate". Described by Foucault as an inherently "benevolent" "power of care", the concept seems inadequate to describe the deadly forms of carelessness that characterize the current government of life. Sovereign power, as a power of decision over life and death that works by distinguishing populations whose lives are worth affirming from social groups whose lives are not, therefore takes precedence in the examination of the governmental connection between care, violence, and biopolitics. Yet, what we might call the "sovereign turn" in the field of Foucault studies is not without a significant drawback. The focus on the logic of exclusion through which governments "care about" specific groups and "take care of" them, while actively producing subjects that cannot or must not be cared for, often overshadows the analysis of how care is currently given and received. More often than not, the post-Foucauldian critique of governmental *concern* for life neglects the long-standing feminist critique of how *support* for life, in the form of care work, has historically been organized along lines of gender, race, and class. In contrast, this article argues that delving into the relationship between pastoral power and governmentality enables the development of a framework that encompass both these critiques, shedding new light on the mechanisms at play in the current "crisis of care".

Keywords: pastoral power, sovereign biopolitics, crisis of care, feminist theory, care work, carelessness, Foucault's critical legacy.

> "Writing in 1988—that is, after two full terms of Reaganism in the United States—
> D. A Miller proposes to follow Foucault in demystifying "the intensive and con-
> tinuous 'pastoral' care that liberal society proposes to take of each and every one
> of its charges" (viii). **As if! I am a lot less worried about being pathologized by
> my therapist than about vanishing mental health coverage—and that's given the**

great good luck of having health insurance at all. Since the beginning of the tax revolt, the government of the United States—and, increasingly, those of other so-called liberal democracies—has been positively rushing to divest itself of answerability for care to its charges, with no other institutions proposing to fill the gap)".[1]

(Sedgwick, "Paranoid Reading, Reparative Reading", 2003)[2]

INTRODUCTION

According to this quote by queer theorist Eve K. Sedgwick, the study of pastoral power diverts us from the analysis of the deadly effects resulting from the privatization and dismemberment of public services. The concept is at odds with the forms of carelessness that characterize the current government of life and therefore not adapted to shed light on the neoliberal processes that today, exponentially, although differentially, lower the access and quality of care. As such, it makes up for a ridiculous, if not counterproductive base for theoretical inquiry. Interestingly, both post-Foucauldian thinkers who explore the relationship between care, violence and biopolitics and feminist theorists who delve into the multifaceted dimensions of the current "crisis of care"[3] seem to agree with this conclusion. While feminists often maintain a distanced relationship with Foucault and tend to explore the degradation of care infrastructures and provision through alternative frameworks, post-Foucauldians seldom prioritize the pastorate for analyzing the careless logic that animates neoliberal governmentality.[4]

Focusing on the violent logic of exclusion through which the reception of care is granted, suspended, or negated, post-Foucauldians usually mobilize the biopolitical paradigm from another angle. Rather than refine the "vague sketch of the pastorate"[5] that Foucault delineates in his 1977-78 lectures at the College de France, they seek to complexify his understanding of

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[1] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (2003), 141.

[2] Thanks to Dr. Léna Silberzahn for pointing out this quote to me during one of our intellectual exchanges.

[3] For an exploration of this notion, see: Nancy Fraser, "Crisis of Care ? : On the Social-Reproductive Contradictions of Contemporary Capitalism," in *Social Reproduction Theory: Remapping Class, Recentering Oppression*, ed. Tithi Bhattacharya and Lise Vogel (2017), 21–36; The Care Collective, *The Care Manifesto: The Politics of Interdependence* (2020); Madeleine Bunting, *Labours of Love: The Crisis of Care* (2020); Emma Dowling, *The Care Crisis: What Caused It and How Can We End It?* (2022).

[4] Some exceptions: Philippe Büttgen, "Théologie politique et pouvoir pastoral," *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 62:5 (2007), 1129–54; Alain Brossat, "Pouvoir pastoral et « vie bête »," *Appareil* 4 (2010); Jacques Dalarun, *Gouverner c'est servir: essai de démocratie médiévale* (2012); Elizaveta Gaufman, "Putin's Pastorate: Post-Structuralism in Post-Soviet Russia," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 42:2 (2017), 74–90; Rodrigo Castro Orellana, "Théologie politique et pouvoir pastoral : Foucault contre Agamben," *Laval théologique et philosophique* 79:3 (2023), 333–54; Roberto Nigro, "Critique de la morale sacerdotale et pouvoir pastoral," *Cahiers Philosophiques* 175:4 (2024).

[5] Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France 1977-78*, ed. Michel Senellart (2009), 135.

sovereignty.[6] For scholars such as Agamben,[7] Mbembe,[8] or Esposito,[9] as for many others,[10] it is by articulating this sacrificial mode of power to the emergence of biopolitics that we can shed light on current phenomena of precarization,[11] as well as other forms of "social death"[12] and active processes aimed at destroying the lives of targeted individuals and populations.[13] It is the "characteristic privilege"[14] of the sovereign "to decide life and death"[15] that explains how governmental strategies supposedly underwritten by a universal *concern* for life neglect, abuse, and kill those who are politically construed as "disposable",[16] undesirable, and/or dangerous.

This pervasive depiction of biopower as a sovereign bind that "cares to death"[17] has led to what can only be described as a *sovereign turn* within Foucauldian scholarship. Yet, whether this shift offers any real solution to Sedgwick's concerns about the erosion of care institutions compared to D.A. Miller's approach remains questionable. Indeed, post-Foucauldian scholars, fixated on scrutinizing care through the lens of sovereign power, tend to endorse a regalian and paternalistic view of care. They prioritize *care* as an ethico-political *concern* while eclipsing *care* as a socio-historic mode of *support* – a "species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible".[18] Drawing upon an unquestioned dichotomy between capital political themes related to state

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[6] Mathew Coleman and Kevin Grove, "Biopolitics, Biopower, and the Return of Sovereignty," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 27:3 (2009), 489–507.

[7] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (1998).

[8] Joseph-Achille Mbembe, *Necropolitics* (2019).

[9] Roberto Esposito, *Bíos: Biopolitics and Philosophy*, (2008).

[10] See for instance: Michael Dillon, "Correlating Sovereign and Biopower," in *Sovereign Lives: Power in Global Politics*, ed. Jenny Edkins, Véronique Pin-Fat, and Michael J. Shapiro (2004), 41–60; Andrew W. Neal, "Cutting Off the King's Head: Foucault's Society Must Be Defended and the Problem of Sovereignty," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 29:4 (2004): 373–98; Sergei Prozorov, "The Unrequited Love of Power: Biopolitical Investment and the Refusal of Care," *Foucault Studies* 4 (2007), 53–77; Sergei Prozorov, *Foucault, Freedom and Sovereignty* (2007); Nikolas Rose, *The Politics of Life Itself: Biomedicine, Power, and Subjectivity in the Twenty-First Century* (2009); Carlo Galli, *Political Spaces and Global War* (2010); Timothy C. Campbell, *Improper Life: Technology and Biopolitics from Heidegger to Agamben* (2011); Mitchell Dean, *The Signature of Power: Sovereignty, Governmentality and Biopolitics* (2013); Edgar Illas, *The Survival Regime: Global War and the Political* (2020).

[11] Judith Butler, *Precarious life: the Powers of Mourning and Violence* (2004); Guillaume Le Blanc, *Vies Ordinaires, Vies Précaires* (2007); Isabell Lorey, *State of Insecurity: Government of the Precarious* (2015); Donna McCormack and Suvi Salmenniemi, "The Biopolitics of Precarity and the Self," *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 19:1 (2016), 3–15.

[12] Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (1982).

[13] See for instance: Trevor Parfitt, "Are the Third World Poor *Homines Sacri?* Biopolitics, Sovereignty, and Development," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 34:1 (2009), 41–58; Jennifer Fluri, "Capitalizing on Bare Life: Sovereignty, Exception, and Gender Politics," *Antipode* 44:1 (2012), 31–50; Alexander G. Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human* (2014); Jasbir K. Puar, *The Right to Maim: Debility, Capacity, Disability* (2017); C. Heike Schotten, *Queer Terror: Life, Death, and Desire in the Settler Colony* (2018).

[14] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* (1978), 135.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Mbembe, *Necropolitics*, 80.

[17] Michael Dillon, "Cared to Death: The Political Time of Your Life," *Foucault Studies* 2 (2005), 37–46.

[18] Berenice Fisher and Joan C. Tronto, "Toward a Feminist Theory of Care," in *Circles of Care: Work and Identity in Women's Lives* (1990), 40.

prerogatives and secondary themes traditionally tethered to domesticity, they direct their attention towards apparatuses associated with military strategies, economic gain, public safety, and biomedical security while relegating institutions such as the family, elderly care facilities, hospitals, or nurseries to the periphery. Most of their critical analyses of the biopolitical *concern* for life consequently overshadow Sedgwick's preoccupation for the shortages of support that characterize health care systems under neoliberal pressures. Remarkably, among the four dimensions of care delineated by Joan Tronto,[19] post-Foucauldian thinkers exhibit a conspicuous penchant for scrutinizing only the initial two. The prevailing focus on how governments absolve themselves from "caring about" and "taking care of" specific social groups pervasively obfuscates the analysis of the entrenched forms of carelessness inherent in "caregiving" and "care receiving".

While this observation may shed light on why contemporary feminist theorists focusing on the unequal distribution of care work seldom delve into contemporary debates surrounding the biopolitical paradigm, this conspicuous absence highlights a concerning trend within Foucauldian scholarship. Here, the analysis of the nexus between care, violence, and biopolitics is frequently truncated, undermining the pursuit of a comprehensive understanding of the power dynamics inherent in the functioning of care work within the context of governmentality. The sovereign turn leads to favor an androcentric understanding of violence, merely scratching the surface of the power dynamics inherent in the "double contradictory movement"[20] identified by feminists as characteristic of the current care crisis. Diagnoses about the deadly logic underpinning biopolitical apparatuses overlook the fact that our context is marked by a dual trajectory: an increasing demand for care, propelled predominantly by demographic shifts and evolving conceptualizations of needs, juxtaposed with a concurrent rise in the scarcity of care provision attributed to the phenomenon of the "globalization of care chains"[21] and the privatization or fragmentation of public care infrastructure.[22] Consequently, the heightened risks of abuse and negligence encountered by both caregivers and care-receivers, along with the intricate power dynamics of gender, sexuality, age, capacity, class, document status, and race that sanction them, remain outside the scope of analysis.

In light of this observation, one may be tempted to argue that the biopolitical paradigm, whether examined through the prism of sovereign power or, as posited by Sedgwick, through the prism of pastoral power, is an inadequate theoretical framework for feminist scholars endeavoring to dissect the intricate dynamics interlinking care work, patriarchal violence, and

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[19] Joan C. Tronto, *Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care* (1993).

[20] Chantal Nicole-Drancourt and Florence Jany-Catrice, "Le statut du care dans les sociétés capitalistes. Introduction," *Revue Française de Socio-Économie* 2:2 (2008), 7–11.

[21] Arlie Russell Hochschild, "Global Care Chains and Emotional Surplus Value," in *Justice, Politics, and the Family,* ed. Daniel Engster and Tamara Metz (2014).

[22] For a thorough description of these processes, see: Bridget Anderson, *Doing the Dirty Work?: the Global Politics of Domestic Labour* (2000); Helena Hirata et al., *Le Sexe de La Mondialisation: Genre, Classe, Race et Nouvelle Division Du Travail* (2010); Dirk Hoerder, Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk, and Silke Neunsinger, ed., *Towards a global history of domestic and caregiving workers* (2015); Camille Barbagallo and Silvia Federici, "Travail domestique, du Care, du sexe et migrations dans le contexte de la restructuration néo-libérale : de la politisation du travail reproductif," in *Genre, Migrations et Globalisation de La Reproduction Sociale*, ed. Christine Catarino and Christine Verschuur (2018), 421–30.

neoliberal politics. In this article, I develop an opposite argument, advocating instead for a queer feminist reappropriation of the biopolitical paradigm in which both sovereignty and the pastorate are factored in. This argument rests upon on a central hypothesis: the rejection of this paradigm represents a lost opportunity to construct a genealogical framework that addresses the main concerns levelled against prevailing interpretations of the crisis of care in contemporary feminist theory.

These concerns are related to the perceived novelty of the crisis of care. Feminist thinkers such as Evelyn Nakano Glenn or Helena Hirata recall that this crisis is not novel "for working-class families or families of color"[23] who have historically faced exclusion from both public and private care institutions, or discrimination within them.[24] To them, the current diagnosis of a care crisis merely signifies that "middle-class families are [now] affected"[25] by the deterioration of a "social relation of support"[26] that was historically built on the domination, exploitation, and oppression of marginalized groups. By framing the crisis as unprecedented, feminist theorists risk overlooking the deep-seated colonial and imperial histories that have shaped access to care provision and resources while sidelining the voices and issues of those who have long been neglected and abused as a result of these histories.

While these critiques underscore the potential bias towards care feminist politics lacking intersectionality and inclusivity in terms of race and class, others accentuate concerns surrounding sexuality and ability. Feminist and trans theorists such as Sophie Lewis[27] and Hil Malatino emphasize the failure of mainstream discussions of the care crisis to address the fact that "both hegemonic and resistant cultural imaginaries of care have depended on a hetero-cisnormative investment in the family as the primary locus of care".[28] They emphasize that these imaginaries decenter the perspectives of gender and sexual minorities who have learnt to care "in the gaps between institutions and conventional familial structures"[29] and in "the aftermaths of [their] refusals".[30] Conversely, crip and critical disability scholars argue that these imaginaries privilege caregivers and marginalize the experiences and interests of care-receivers.[31] In *Just Care*, Akemi Nishida notes that the mainstream narrative about the care crisis often overlooks the historical realities faced by care recipients, particularly disabled individuals, who have historically improvised care solutions in the absence of formal support

[23] Helena Hirata, "Conclusion. Centralité politique du travail des femmes et du care," *Le care, théories et pratiques* (2021), 183–92.

[24] Evelyn Nakano Glenn, "Racial Ethnic Women's Labor: The Intersection of Race, Gender and Class Oppression," *Review of Radical Political Economics* 17:3 (1985), 86–108; Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Issei, Nisei, War Bride: Three Generations of Japanese American Women in Domestic Service* (1986); Evelyn Nakano Glenn, *Unequal Freedom: How Race and Gender Shaped American Citizenship and Labor* (2002).

[25] Hirata, "Conclusion. Centralité politique du travail des femmes et du care,"

[26] Nicole-Drancourt and Jany-Catrice, "Le statut du care dans les sociétés capitalistes. Introduction,"

[27] Sophie Lewis, *Abolish the Family: A Manifesto for Care and Liberation* (2022).

[28] Hil Malatino, *Trans Care* (2020), 6.

[29] Malatino, *Trans Care*, 3.

[30] *Trans Care*, 3.

[31] Margaret Lloyd, "The Politics of Disability and Feminism: Discord or Synthesis?," *Sociology* 35:3 (2001): 715–28; Justine Madiot et al., "Disability studies/Études critiques du handicap," *Dictionnaire du Genre en Traduction*, worldgender.cnrs.fr (2023); Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, *The Future Is Disabled: Prophecies, Love Notes and Mourning Songs* (2022); Sami Schalk, *Black Disability Politics* (2022).

systems. They also fail to account for the fact that they have devised innovative approaches to household management that "simultaneously resists and interrupts the standardization of family-based care formation".[32]

These concerns offer valuable insights into the complex dynamics of care politics, urging a more inclusive and intersectional approach to addressing the current crisis of care. They demonstrate that by focusing on the internal divisions structuring the social relationship of support, feminist theorists have tended to obfuscate the external divisions on which this relationship is premised and how vectors of power such as gender, race, class, ability, age, sexuality, and nationality participate in them. The feminists of color, crip, queer, and trans thinkers that author these critiques pinpoint that the narratives that other feminist theorists have forged so far to articulate the relationship between the organization of care work, structural forms of violence, and neoliberal politics are partial and incomplete. To overcome this deficiency and alter the story of the care crisis being told, they often mobilize the works of queer theorists, such as Judith Butler,[33] Jasbir Puar,[34] Heike Schotten,[35] or Mel Chen,[36] who have made use of current conceptualizations of sovereign biopolitics to examine the effects of governmentality on both institutionalized and non-institutionalized networks of care work. These texts describe the biopolitical apparatuses through which specific social groups (notably queer and/or racialized subjects) are left uncared for, whereas others are subjugated by being forced to occupy the passive and disempowering position of being cared for (notably, disabled subjects). They enroot the logic of exclusion, domination, and exploitation that characterize these apparatuses in the history of the modern state, insisting on the ways in which eligibility to political subjecthood, and therefore sovereign care, was underwritten by a normative conception of humanness that worked against poor, feminized, racialized, disabled, and/or animalized subjects. They retrieve the histories of these groups, emphasizing how they resist their erasure as uncared subjects by surviving and seeking to flourish in the creation of different webs of support.

The reliance on queer interpretations of the *sovereign turn* highlights why keeping away from the biopolitical paradigm might not be the most pertinent approach for feminist theorists seeking to politicize the care crisis in intersectional and inclusive terms. However, these interpretations also underscore the necessity for more than a queer feminist reading of the genealogy of governmentality through the lens of sovereignty. Indeed, while these works are crucial for care feminist politics by revealing how care was organized beyond and within the gaps of hegemonic institutions of care – notably the modern, white, bourgeois family – they do not offer significant insights into the emergence and development of these hegemonic institutions. Their focus on the care performed and exercised by marginalized communities results in a negative relation with the herstories elaborated by feminist theorists,[37] notably feminist

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[32] Akemi Nishida, *Just Care: Messy Entanglements of Disability, Dependency, and Desire* (2022), 46.

[33] Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (2016).

[34] Puar, *The Right to Maim*.

[35] Schotten, *Queer Terror*.

[36] Mel Y. Chen, *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect* (2012).

[37] Barbara Laslett and Johanna Brenner, "Gender and Social Reproduction: Historical Perspectives," *Annual Review of Sociology* 15:1 (1989), 381–404.

Marxists,[38] regarding their origins. Consequently, they rarely challenge how the central claim on which these herstories revolve – the historical naturalization, devaluation, and relegation of care work outside the realm of high politics – is framed.

Despite differences in terms of period and geography, care theorists and Marxist feminists alike describe the reconfiguration of care work in modern Europe through what Foucault would call a "repressive hypothesis",[39] highlighting how caregiving was forced out of the public sphere.[40] Whereas care theorists such as Joan Tronto underline that care work, traditionally associated with women and the private sphere, became marginalized and excluded from the realm of politics and public discourses in modernity through a shift in focus towards economic productivity and individual autonomy, Marxist feminist theorists such as Silvia Federici argue that the modern, Transatlantic regime of care work developed out of a twofold capitalist process of primitive accumulation and imperialist colonialism.[41] While Tronto elusively situates her analysis via Foucault's studies of the rise of the disciplinary society,[42] Federici clearly emphasizes, against Foucault's insistence on the "productivity" of biopower,[43] that the "housewification"[44] of women, and the new sexual division of labor that confines women to caregiving, took the form of a racialized and gendered movement of persecution and expropriation, which the witch hunt, as a "genocidal attack"[45] on women's bodies, was the "paradigm"[46] of.

The fact that this process is typically described through analytics of gender, race, and class, which often render age, disability, and sexuality as transhistorical categories, is seldom critically examined. However, historians have emphasized how the social construction of these categories impacted the development of public and private institutions of care, including orphanages, foundling hospitals, asylums, almshouses, and hospices.[47] This highlights that the prevailing interpretations of the relationship between care, violence, and politics are not only incomplete and partial but also overly schematic. To articulate the apparatuses of

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[38] Leopoldina Fortunati, *The Arcane of Reproduction: Housework, Prostitution, Labor and Capital* (1995); Selma James and Mariarosa Dalla Costa, "Women and the Subversion of the Community (1972)," in *Materialist Feminism: A Reader in Class, Difference, and Women's Lives*, ed. Rosemary Hennessy and Chrys Ingraham (1997), 40–53; Barbara Ehrenreich, *Witches, Midwives, and Nurses: A History of Women Healers* (2010); Silvia Federici, *Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle* (2012); Maria Mies, *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour* (2014).

[39] Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 10.

[40] I am grateful to Dr. Aylon Cohen for bringing this concept to my attention and engaging in extensive intellectual discussions with me regarding its implications for feminist care politics.

[41] Silvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch* (2004).

[42] Tronto, *Moral boundaries*, 31.

[43] Federici, *Caliban and the Witch*, 19.

[44] Mies and Federici, *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale*, 74–111.

[45] *Caliban and the Witch*, 14.

[46] *Caliban and the Witch*, 220.

[47] In the case of disability, see for instance: Angela Schattner, "Disabled to Work? Impairment, the in/Ability to Work and Perceptions of Dis/Ability in Late Medieval and Early Modern Germany," *Disability Studies Quarterly* 37:4 (2017); Allison P. Hobgood and David Houston Wood, ed., *Recovering Disability in Early Modern England* (2020); Barbara A. Kaminska, "'We Take Care of Our Own': Talking about 'Disability' in Early Modern Netherlandish Households," in *Tracing Private Conversations in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Johannes Ljungberg and Natacha Klein Käfer (2024), 145–74.

subjectivation and subjection related to the current care crisis comprehensively, a more nuanced genealogic framework of this relationship is thus necessary. Such a framework would indeed enable the development of a narrative of the care crisis that moves beyond the caregivers' perspective, illuminating the ways in which the logic that renders some eligible to being cared for at the expense of others is also consolidating through the distribution and hierarchization of the other three caring roles distinguished by Tronto: "caring about", "taking care of", and "care-receiving". In addition, it would help refine and complexify critical approaches to politicizing this crisis, shedding new light on how the coercive nature of hegemonic institutions of care undermines attempts to provide care otherwise. Moreover, delving into historical archives that document the resistance led by marginalized groups, including disabled, infantilized, queer, impoverished, and/or racialized communities, in conjunction with, and sometimes diverging from, the resistance of women, holds promise for recognizing the coalitional work necessary to address the current care crisis.

The central question of this article revolves around whether Foucault's conceptualization of pastoral power can provide a fruitful foundation for constructing such an historical framework. In the subsequent sections, I delve into Foucault's examination of the pastorate and explore the epistemological conditions under which it can be used to comprehend how the interplay of violence, care, and politics impedes the emergence of alternative imaginaries and practices of care within both hegemonic institutions and its peripheries. This exploration begins by situating Foucault's interest in the pastorate within his broader project of a "history of ethical problematizations",[48] as exemplified in his inquiry into the ancient "care of the self".[49] Contrary to feminist contentions that this history is inherently gender-biased and irredeemable, I argue that it offers a nuanced lens about masculinity and care that complicates prevailing narratives within feminist scholarship regarding the relationship between care (work) and politics, challenging the notion that they are solely defined by a sovereign relationship of inclusive-exclusion. I illustrate the utility of this framework in the second segment of this article by examining Foucault's analysis of the paternalistic battle over the "power of care"[50] in Western Antiquity. I show that this analysis not only sheds light on the mechanisms through which distinct articulations of concern for life and support for living beings gain or lose political traction but also reveals how various conceptions of age, disability, sexuality, gender, and kinship impact the distribution and hierarchization of the four roles of care. Lastly, I underscore that revisiting the genealogy of governmentality through a pastoral lens has the potential to enrich prevailing narratives about the modern origins of the current regime of care by opening a space to articulate the apparatus related to the *privatization* of care and those related to its renewed *publicization*.

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[48] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 2: The Use of Pleasure* (2012), 13.

[49] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 3: The Care of the Self* (1988).

[50] Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 127.

FOUCAULT'S "CARE OF THE SELF" AND CARE FEMINIST SCHOLARSHIP

Upon initial examination, Foucault's exploration of the "power of care"[51] and feminist perspectives on care as both an ethical disposition and a set of activities appear to have little in common, leading one to view attempts to put them in conversation as a far-fetched theoretical endeavor. Beyond the mere use of the same noun, there seems to be scant connection between the two. While both revolve around the concept of care, the ethical and political issues they seek to address appear fundamentally divergent. Indeed, if we read the secondary literature on Foucault and care, it seems that the French philosopher primarily employs the notion to depict a self-concern that reverberates onto others, aiming to disrupt and contextualize prevailing moral interpretations.[52] Care is mainly referred to in the context of the third volume of the *History of Sexuality* and contrasted to "the moral attention that is focused on the other".[53] While Foucault keeps intact the portrayal of morality as an endeavor positioned beyond the realm of care work, feminist theorists, notably those delving into care theory, discern within the fabric of this realm—alongside the gendered socialization it underpins—evidence of an enduring concern for others, one that impacts the self and operates beyond what has been recognized as a moral practice.[54] Consequently, the dialogue between Foucault's reflection on care and feminist theory has been predominantly marked by critique.[55] In the first part of this article, I delve into the (gendered) difference that separates their understandings of care in order to stress that beyond the "analogous relationship between the "typically masculine relation to the self" versus the "typically feminine relation to other"[56] lies a converging interest for the ways in which care has been historically politicized and depoliticized. Recalling that Foucault anchors his genealogy of governmentality in a pastoral "matrix",[57] I argue that his gender-biased thematization of care paradoxically allows for the inclusion of more social groups subjugated through care practices than acknowledged by prevailing feminist conceptions of the links between care and coercion.

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[51] *Security, Territory, Population*, 127.

[52] James Wong, "Self and Others: The Work of 'Care' in Foucault's Care of the Self," *Philosophy Faculty Publications* (2013) ; Richard White, "Foucault on the Care of the Self as an Ethical Project and a Spiritual Goal," *Human Studies* 37:4 (2014), 489–504; Daniel Smith, "Foucault on Ethics and Subjectivity: 'Care of the Self' and 'Aesthetics of Existence,'" *Foucault Studies* 4 (2015), 135–50; Daniele Lorenzini, "Ethics as Politics: Foucault, Hadot, Cavell and the Critique of Our Present," in *Foucault and the History of Our Present*, ed. Sophie Fuggle, Yari Lanci, and Martina Tazzioli (2015), 223–35.

[53] Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 2*, 10.

[54] Emily K. Abel and Margaret K. Nelson, *Circles of Care: Work and Identity in Women's Lives* (1990); Carol Gilligan, *Une Voix Différente : Pour une Ethique du "Care"* (2008); Patricia Paperman and Sandra Laugier, *Le Souci des Autres : Ethique et Politique du "Care"* (2011); Fabienne Brugère, *L'Ethique du Care* (2021).

[55] Caroline Ramazanoglu, *Up Against Foucault: Explorations of Some Tensions Between Foucault and Feminism* (2002); Amy Allen, "Foucault, Feminism and the Self," in *Feminism and the Final Foucault*, ed. Dianna Taylor and Karen Vintges (2004), 239–45; Ella Myers, "Resisting Foucauldian Ethics: Associative Politics and the Limits of the Care of the Self," *Contemporary Political Theory* 7:2 (2008), 137–38; Margaret A. McLaren, *Feminism, Foucault, and Embodied Subjectivity* (2012); Lois McNay, *Foucault and Feminism: Power, Gender and the Self* (2013), 152–65.

[56] Valérie Dubé, "Une lecture féministe du « souci de soi » de Michel Foucault : pour un retour à la culture différenciée du genre féminin," *Recherches féministes* 21:1 (2008), 81.

[57] Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 147.

It is quite common to reduce Foucault's engagement with the notion of care to his depiction of the "care of the self"[58] in the third volume of his *History of Sexuality.* Viewed through a feminist lens, this study quickly reveals Foucault as a thinker that has "disregarded certain 'fixed traits' of the history of patriarchal societies."[59] As materialist feminist and care scholar Valery Dubé encapsulates, Foucault's depiction of care as concern for the self delineates a ""life art" (strictly masculine) [that] nonetheless required devoted support from women and was realized by consequence, *through* them".[60] While feminist theorists' focus on women's art of supporting life to unveil the "feminine relation to the world that at all times has carried the "female" individual to self-realization by and with the other",[61] Foucault obliviates this relation. He does not comprehend the "prodigious sexism"[62] of the "care of the self" and elaborates, on its basis, a "philosophy […] impregnated by a bias, or more so by the exclusivity of the masculine reality".[63] Consequently, feminist theorists, while acknowledging the heuristic value of Foucault's framework in various other theoretical enterprises, tend to concur that in navigating the complex terrain of the relationship between care as an ethico-political *concern* and care as a constellation of *supportive* practices shaped by socio-economic dynamics, excessive reliance on an author that "turns a blind eye to the historical feminine subject"[64] and "deprived the concept of self of an essential element for its understanding"[65] – the "concern for the other"[66] – may prove counterproductive. Avenues beyond Foucault's framework which enable light to be shed on "relational lifestyles historically associated with the feminine gender"[67] offer more fruitful insights.

This conclusion, however, overshadows the fact that Foucault's examination of the care of the self is just one facet of his exploration of the relationship between care and subjectivation in Antiquity. Foucault's analysis of pastoral power, particularly expounded in his 1977-1978 lectures at College de France *Security, Territory and Population,* scrutinizes this relationship from another angle: that of subjection. It is a well-known fact that, in these lectures, the pastorate, characterized as a benevolent "care towards others",[68] functions as the foundational "model"[69] of governmentality. It provides the backdrop against which biopower emerges as a dual set of technologies: an individualizing *"anatomo-politics of the human body"*[70] enforced via disciplinary apparatuses and a *"biopolitics of the population"*[71] regulating and controlling social groups to optimize political obedience and economic gain. This "power of care"[72]

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[58] Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 3*.

[59] Dubé, "Une lecture féministe du « souci de soi » de Michel Foucault," 80.

[60] Ibid., 79.

[61] Ibid., 79.

[62] Ibid., 83.

[63] Ibid., 83.

[64] Ibid., 88.

[65] Ibid., 80.

[66] Ibid., 80.

[67] Ibid., 80.

[68] Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 128.

[69] *Security, Territory, Population*, 147.

[70] *History of Sexuality*, 139.

[71] Ibid.

[72] *Security, Territory, Population*, 127.

underpins Foucault's analyses of phenomena such as "the sexualization of children, the hysterization of women, [and] the specification of the perverted".[73] Furthermore, it contextualizes his understanding of governmentality as a technology of power in which political authorities function as the "managers of life and survival, of bodies and the race".[74] In essence, it interconnects power dynamics associated with age, disability, race, gender, sexuality, and class with care-related issues. What is less commented is the fact that Foucault's "dry and schematic"[75] analysis of the pastorate initiates with a depiction of pastoral care as both an ethico-political concern for others and a power manifested through supportive activities such as feeding, breeding, and healing – activities commonly associated with care work by feminists.

Admittedly, this depiction does not address the differentiated culture of the feminine gender which, for Dubé, is intertwined with care work. Instead, it primarily focuses on paternalist figures, predominantly religious and political, which she would undoubtedly associate with the masculine gender (as Dubé would certainly call it). Yet, this depiction implies that there were *men* in the Antique public sphere who advocated for a bond between "caring about" and "taking care of", on the one hand, and "caregiving" on the other. It suggests, in other words, that the culture of the masculine gender was traversed by the question of care work and that far from being the consensus of their boys' club, its exclusion from politics was importantly dissented. Obviously, this does not erase the fact that Foucault, who also describes his history of ethical problematizations as "the history of desiring *man*",[76] does not seem interested in recognizing that women too certainly construed care work as having an ethico-political dimension. Nonetheless, it means that care, as a set of supportive activities, was considered a public affair in Antiquity, challenging the idea that care (work) and politics, as often argued by care feminist theorists, have always been linked to one another by a relationship of mutual exclusion. Additionally, the fact that the *men* in question justify the knowledge-power knot between care as *concern* and care as *support* through a paternalistic ideology – whether religious or political – implies that Foucault's masculine-centric framework sheds light on the role played by such an ideology in defining how supporting activities can be *publicized* and not only, as Marxist feminists often describe, be something which should or must be *privatized*. I believe these are sufficient reasons to suspend our criticisms of Foucault's masculine-centric perspective and to engage deeply with his examination of pastoral power as a form of "men's caring"[77] that troublesomely involved "caregiving".

FOUCAULT'S PASTORATE AND THE ANTIQUE STRUGGLE OVER CARING

Decentering Western Antiquity, Foucault contends that the notion of government, which he contrasts to that of politics as defined in Greek and Roman cultures, came from "Egypt, Assyria, Mesopotamia, and above all, of course, the Hebrews"[78] and developed in "the East, in a

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[73] *History of Sexuality*, 114.

[74] Ibid., 137.

[75] *Security, Territory, Population*, 204.

[76] *History of Sexuality, Vol. 2*, 6. (my emphasis).

[77] Joan C. Tronto, *Caring Democracy: Markets, Equality, and Justice* (2013), 80.

[78] *Security, Territory, Population*, 123.

pre-Christian East first of all, and then in the Christian East".[79] While acknowledging the concerns surrounding the orientalist elements within Foucault's utilization of the "Eastern theme"[80] of the pastorate, I argue in the second part of this article that it is essential to recognize the analytical utility derived from this sketchy comparison. The contrast elucidates the centrality of care as a bone of contention in Western Antiquity: a bone of contention intertwined with considerations of foreignness and community-building, means of survival and well-being, as well as the perpetuation of a hierarchal order demarcating recipients of support from its administrators. By staging such a public battle over the power of care, Foucault complicates the feminist argument according to which care work was privatized for reasons that ultimately revolve around the procreative capacity of women.

As an emanation of the "power of the shepherd",[81] the "Hebraic pastor"[82] diverged from the power of "the Greek magistrate",[83] understood as the "captain or the pilot of the ship",[84] in four ways. Firstly, it did not define a sedentary but a nomadic power geared towards the survival and well-being of a "multiplicity in movement"[85] rather than towards the "unity, […] possible survival or disappearance"[86] of a "territory, or a political structure".[87] Functioning without territorial ties, pastoral power was not an archaic form of sovereignty over land but a specific use of the "fertile grasslands"[88] marked by the search for temporary stays in "places suitable for resting".[89] Secondly, it defines a power that is careful rather than careless. Devoid of the necessity to defend the borders of a kingdom, it is not articulated to the "ability to triumph over enemies, defeat them and reduce them to slavery"[90] but to the ability of "doing good",[91] of being "beneficient".[92] In Foucault's terms, the "shepherd is someone who feeds and who feeds directly, […] that sees to it that the sheep do not suffer, […] that treats those that are injured".[93] The pastor "directs all his care towards others and never towards himself".[94] Thirdly, and consequently, pastoral power does not manifest in the form of a "striking display of strength and superiority"[95] but in the form of an invisible and humble "vigilance with regard to any possible misfortune"[96] that "may threaten the least of its members".[97]

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[79] *Security, Territory, Population*, 123.
[80] *Security, Territory, Population*, 164.
[81] *Security, Territory, Population*, 125.
[82] *Security, Territory, Population*, 164.
[83] *Security, Territory, Population*, 164.
[84] *Security, Territory, Population*, 123.
[85] *Security, Territory, Population*, 125.
[86] *Security, Territory, Population*, 122.9/1/24 10:02:00 PM
[87] *Security, Territory, Population*, 122.9/1/24 10:02:00 PM
[88] *Security, Territory, Population*, 126.
[89] *Security, Territory, Population*, 126.
[90] *Security, Territory, Population*, 126.
[91] *Security, Territory, Population*, 126.
[92] *Security, Territory, Population*, 126.
[93] *Security, Territory, Population*, 127.
[94] *Security, Territory, Population*, 127.
[95] *Security, Territory, Population*, 127.
[96] *Security, Territory, Population*, 127.
[97] *Security, Territory, Population*, 127.

Comprehended as a "burden and effort"[98] rather than an "honor",[99] pastoral power is all about preventing and repairing harm by "keeping watch".[100] It is a power "with a purpose for those on whom it is exercised, and not a purpose for some kind of superior unit like the city, territory, state, or sovereign".[101] As such, not only does it "ow[e] everything"[102] to the ones it guides, but it disappears behind them. Fourthly, and finally, pastoral power is an "individualizing form of power".[103] "Directed at all and each in their paradoxical equivalence",[104] it works "*omnes et singulatim*"[105] and articulates survival, sacrifice, and well-being in a very different manner than in Greek and Roman cultures. Indeed, to the possibility of the "sacrifice of one for all",[106] it adds the possibility of sacrificing all for one.

Foucault asserts that Greek and Roman cultures were not entirely alien to this notion of pastoral power. Rather, they were characterized by intermittent yet substantial critiques thereof, alongside an alternative conceptualization of care encapsulated in the above-mentioned expression of a care of the self. In Foucault's reading, Plato's *The Stateman* exemplifies "the rebuttal of this theme".[107] According to Plato, the shepherd cannot serve as the archetype of politics due to the multiplicity of his tasks – "feeding, care, therapy and the regulation of mating"[108] – which perpetually subjects him to challenges from "rivals […] in shepherding".[109] A community "rest[ing] on concord and friendship"[110] must therefore be based on a separation of roles, disentangling from politics the activities of "the farmer who feeds men, or the baker who makes the bread and provide[s] them with food",[111] "the doctor who takes care of those who are sick […], the gymnastics master and the teacher, who watch over the good education and health of children".[112] Moreover, it necessitates the establishment of a hierarchy between these tasks marked by "humbleness"[113] and that of the ruler in order to prevent the autonomy of those engaged in such "minor activities"[114] from being conflated with the higher authority of the "king".[115] Conversely, care of the self, in so far as it is "not opposed to the care of others",[116] suggests the existence of a Greek conceptualization of pastoral care characterized by an "art of governing others"[117] – one's wife, children, house – premised on the delegation

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[98] *Security, Territory, Population*, 127.

[99] *Security, Territory, Population*, 127.

[100] *Security, Territory, Population*, 127.

[101] *Security, Territory, Population*, 128.

[102] *Security, Territory, Population*, 128.

[103] *Security, Territory, Population*, 128.

[104] *Security, Territory, Population*, 128.

[105] *Security, Territory, Population*, 128.

[106] *Security, Territory, Population*, 129.

[107] *Security, Territory, Population*, 140.

[108] *Security, Territory, Population*, 143.

[109] *Security, Territory, Population*, 143.

[110] *Security, Territory, Population*, 146.

[111] *Security, Territory, Population*, 143.

[112] *Security, Territory, Population*, 143.

[113] *Security, Territory, Population*, 147.

[114] *Security, Territory, Population*, 146.

[115] *Security, Territory, Population*, 147.

[116] Judith Revel, *Le Vocabulaire de Foucault* (2002), 60.

[117] Revel, *Vocabulaire de Foucault*, 60.

of sustenance, healing practices, and nursing to the governed, as well as the invention of other forms of caring practices for the governor.

These developments indicate the existence, within the Greek public sphere, of a pivotal struggle concerning the delineation of care for others, particularly concerning activities of support related to the tending of basic needs. By factoring in the notion of government as a notion distinct from politics in Western Antiquity, what Foucault highlights is that the mutually exclusive relationship between care work and politics was not a given, as usually assumed by feminist theorists of care, but rather a site of public dispute between at least three different conceptions of what caregiving entailed for the members of a community. Whereas care feminist theorists presume a transhistorical political distinction between care as *concern* and care as *support,* Foucault thus offers us a framework to understand how the division between the two came to be. He stresses that their separation is the result of a competition over public care, closely intertwined with the definition of the necessity of a given community (survival and well-being, conflict, disorder), its horizon (salvation, peace, order), and the form of power (pastoral, sovereign) most attuned to conduct its members towards such a horizon.

By stressing how this battle over the relationship between *concern* for life and *support* for living beings was won, against its challengers, by those advocating for a sovereignty-based social and political order, Foucault thus allows for a more complex understanding of the public/private distinction as a technology of power. First, the contrast he makes between a power of care construed as the discrete and humble watching over others and a conception of care as a self-preparation for displays of force and glorious acts signals that the theatricality of (sovereign) politics, the kinds of performances that are associated with it, and the organization of the stage of political endeavors itself constitute barriers to conceptions of care in which *concern* and *support* remain indistinct for gaining political traction. Second, the distinct conceptions of necessity, dependency, and vulnerability that underwrite these two modes of exercising power clarify that *othering* recipients of care is a mechanism of naturalization that subtends the *publicization* of care, in so far as neither the conception of care of the shepherd nor that of the statesman include "care-receiving". It signals, conversely, although implicitly, that the *publicization* of care relies on excluding not only caregivers but also care-receivers from having a say (quite literally in the case of the Hebraic pastorate) in the communal struggle over care. Thirdly, the fact that this *othering* implicates age, abilities, animality, and gender in different ways, as well as some understandings of sexuality and communal membership based on kinship (being part of the flock/being a citizen), sheds light on the fact that the *publicization* of care does not only work by assigning specific social groups to the private sphere but also by foreclosing access to care (either as concern or as support) to individuals: some are excluded all together from care practices. They are neither eligible to the position of caregivers or care-receivers nor to that of "caring about" or "taking care of" others. For instance, whereas the relationship of support that characterized the Hebraic flock excludes feminized humans from both the positions of being cared for (as sheep) and caring for (as shepherd), that which characterized Greek politics assigned them to care-giving while excluding them from the position of care-receiving, as well as that of "caring about" and "taking care of".

These elements emphasize that there is a threefold promise for feminist theorists interested in politicizing the care crisis in reopening the biopolitical paradigm from a pastoral lens. They

show that the genealogy of governmentality is based on an axiom – the separation between *concern* and *support* of life is an effect of (sovereign) power – that allows for the articulation of the processes of subjection that work through compulsory assignations to caregiving and care-receiving and to those who work through excluding specific living beings from the social relationship of support altogether. This enables us to comprehend distinctions in age, abilities, animality/humanness, and kinship as decisive features in the battle over the definition of what "caring about" and "taking care of" could mean for a community, highlighting that the dependency, necessity, and vulnerability on which "caregiving" and "care-receiving" are based are social constructs. These elements also stress that suspending the private/public distinction enables the historicization of the vectors of power at play in the differentiation between four dimensions of care, as well as in the exclusion they produce (race, gender, class, ability, age, citizenship, sexuality), without presuming an analytics of gender/sexuality/desire characteristics of modernity. Indeed, in this framework, procreation is factored in as an important part of the process through which care was privatized, but it is not associated with caregiving (in fact caregiving, in the figure of the shepherd, seems related to an absence of sex) but to care-receiving (and care-receiving, in the figure of the sheep, is not talked of in terms of gender). Finally, this framework highlights that scrutinizing the scenes over which public care is battled over clarifies the role played by the social construction of necessity, dependency, and vulnerability in hindering conceptions of care voiced by marginalized social groups to gain political momentum, as well as in rendering invisible care-receiving as a site of abuse and negligence. To realize this promise, however, one would have to use Foucault's framework to ask a question that the French philosopher was not particularly interested in answering: how did the antique separation between care as *concern* and care as *support* evolve historically and with which effects of power?

FOUCAULT'S "PASTORAL INSURRECTIONS" AND THE MODERN CRISIS OF CARE (WORK)

In *Foucault's Futures,* Penelope Deutscher argues that "absent concepts and problems can be given a shape in potentially transformative ways within philosophical frameworks which have omitted them".[118] To her, the "interesting gesture of wanting what can't be supplied from a theory understood as having failed to provide it"[119] does not have to be the end of the critique. Negotiating with the limits of Foucault's interrogation of reproduction, she emphasizes that "the negative capacities"[120] of his framework can also be "reconceived as transformative capacities"[121] by amplifying and reciprocally pursuing the "suspended reserves"[122] that both Foucault and his critics hold for each other's theoretical pursuits. By engaging Foucault's work in conversation "with recent philosophers and theorists who have engaged biopolitical

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[118] Penelope Deutscher, *Foucault's Futures: a Critique of Reproductive Reason* (2017), 19.
[119] Deutscher, *Foucault's Futures,* 20.
[120] *Foucault's Futures,* 11.
[121] *Foucault's Futures,* 38.
[122] *Foucault's Futures,* 14.

phenomena",[123] she illustrates the potential of utilizing their "failures",[124] notably in accounting for the relationship between gender, reproduction, and biopolitics' "power of death",[125] to elucidate the significance of the "women-as-life-principle"[126] for queer conceptualizations of sovereign biopolitics. In this third part of the article, I mobilize Deutscher's mode of critique in order to demonstrate how Foucault's vague sketch of the pastorate, while limited in its ability to historicize care as *support*, can reveal its productivity by being put in conversation with Marxist feminist herstories about the modern divisions of care work. I show that contrasting "the regular occlusion of sexual difference"[127] that characterizes Foucault's biopolitical paradigm with the an-historicization of heterosexuality that characterizes Federici's *Caliban of the Witch*[128] opens a space to develop a queer materialist narrative about the modern origins of the care crisis. This narrative would historicize the triptych sex/gender/desire on which this crisis is based and articulates it to the other vectors of power intertwined in care work, notably citizenship and whiteness, age and abilities. I indicate how this narrative could ground a more inclusive and intersectional politicization of the current care crisis by enabling the retrieval of histories of care and coercion seldom scrutinized by feminist theorists.

Read through a pastoral lens, Foucault's genealogy of governmentality could be interpretated as a series of historical battles over the power to care characterized by the punctual tying and untying of the power-knowledge knot between care as an ethico-political *concern* and care as a socio-economic set of *supportive* activities. Indeed, in the genealogy he offers, the exploration of the struggle over the signification of public care that characterized Western Antiquity only constitutes the first stage of a longer history marked by other public scenes of contestation and disputes around the pastorate. This suggests that competition between paternalist authorities about what "caring about" and "taking care of" should mean for a political community were essential to the transformations that led to the emergence and development of a new mode of power: biopower. Strikingly, however, the lexicon of care that characterized his description of the Hebraic pastorate only intermittently appears in Foucault's genealogy, replaced, most often, by the lexicon of conducts and counter-conducts. This lexicon emphasizes the evolution of care as an ethico-political *concern* but renders the exploration of care as a socio-economic organization of *support* quite difficult.

The Foucauldian story goes this way: governmentality as we know it emerged through a shift in the antique power balance, precipitated by the "institutionalization of a religion as a Church".[129] This institutionalization is best understood in conjunction with the project of "imperial sovereignty"[130] that had progressively emerged out of the Greek idea of politics as a

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[123] *Foucault's Futures*, 11.

[124] *Foucault's Futures*, 10.

[125] *History of Sexuality*, 133.

[126] *Foucault's Futures*, 19.

[127] *Foucault's Futures*, 37.

[128] I express gratitude to Dr. Aylon Cohen, an expert on the politicization of sodomy from the sixteenth century onwards and its impact on the emergence and development of the modern public sphere, for his valuable insights on this matter. Our extensive discussions regarding the analytics of gender, sex, and sexuality within Marxist feminist frameworks were instrumental in shaping the argument presented in this article.

[129] *Security, Territory, Population*, 148.

[130] Ibid., 155.

magistracy. The "Christian pastorate, institutionalized, developed and reflected from around the third century",[131] operated a "profound reorganization of pastoral power"[132] as an "Hebraic and Eastern theme"[133] which fragilized the knowledge-power knot that Greek and Roman cultures had tied in regard to the concern for others. The Church, as "an institution that claims to govern men in their daily life on the grounds of leading them to eternal life in the other world, and to do this not only on the scale of a definite group, of a city or a state, but of the whole of humanity",[134] became a powerful competitor to the relationship between care (work), politics, and government that characterized Western Antiquity. Indeed, giving rise to "a dense, complicated, and closely woven institutional network",[135] it communalizes an "art of conducting, directing, leading, guiding […] with the function of taking charge of men collectively and individually throughout their life and at every moment of their existence"[136] that was antagonistic to the ways political power was manifesting itself as "an apparatus of imperial unity".[137]

As a result, an "immense dispute"[138] unfolded, manifested by "the intensity and multiplicity of agitations, revolts, discontent, struggles, battles and bloody wars that have been conducted around, for, and against"[139] the "Christian pastorate".[140] This dispute lasted at least "from the thirteenth to the eighteen century, and ultimately without ever really getting rid of the pastorate".[141] Its result was that pastoral power, until then distinct from political power, merged into what Foucault calls, at one point "the state pastorate",[142] i.e., a form of power in which "whoever exercises sovereign power [must] now be responsible for the new and specific tasks of the government of men".[143] It is this second "major type of reorganization of the religious pastoral",[144] which could not have happened without the re-establishment of "the opposition between the private and public"[145] in the sixteenth century, that led to the development of both an anatomo-politics targeting individuals and a biopolitics of population. Although Foucault recognizes that the crux of "this great battle of pastorship"[146] was that a "religious power took on the task of *caring* for individual's souls"[147] by a "permanent intervention in everyday conduct, in the management of lives, as well as in goods, wealth, and things",[148]

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[131] *Security, Territory, Population*, 164.
[132] *Security, Territory, Population*, 150.
[133] *Security, Territory, Population*, 164.
[134] *Security, Territory, Population*, 148.
[135] *Security, Territory, Population*, 164.
[136] *Security, Territory, Population*, 165.
[137] *Security, Territory, Population*, 303.
[138] *Security, Territory, Population*, 148.
[139] *Security, Territory, Population*, 148.
[140] *Security, Territory, Population*, 153.
[141] *Security, Territory, Population*, 149.
[142] *Security, Territory, Population*, 357.
[143] *Security, Territory, Population*, 232.
[144] *Security, Territory, Population*, 228.
[145] *Security, Territory, Population*, 230.
[146] *Security, Territory, Population*, 148.
[147] *Security, Territory, Population*, 154.
[148] *Security, Territory, Population*, 154.

he does not mention how this new form of articulating "caring about" and "taking care of" impacted "caregiving" and "care-receiving". In other words, how the constant intervention of the Christian pastorate into the organization of a community's livelihood hinged upon care work remains blatantly untheorized.

This forclusion creates a queer impression in the feminist reader: although a lot of the conducts and counter-conducts that Foucault describes could very well be interpreted as care practices, they are never construed as such and remain separated from the historicization of the care for others that he operates. Foucault, for instance, describes how, around the sixteenth century, the Christian Church lost its authority as the best "minister"[149] of conducts, opening a strategic opportunity for sovereigns to render themselves eligible to this role. He explains, in that regard, that the "great revolts around the pastorate",[150] as illustrated by "the Wars of Religion [,] were fundamentally struggles over who would actually have the right to govern men, and to govern them in their daily life and in the details and materiality of their existence".[151] He insists that these revolts were "linked to struggles between bourgeoisie and feudalism",[152] "the uncoupling of the urban and rural economies",[153] and "the problem of women and their status in society, in civil society or in religious society".[154] He stresses, even, that "the education of children was the fundamental utopia, crystal and prism through which problems of conduction were perceived"[155] over that period of intense political, cultural, religious, and socio-economic turmoil. However, exploring these links are precisely what Foucault is not interested in. The only reason he seems to mention them is to emphasize that "forms of resistance to power as conducting"[156] are irreducible to "forms of resistance or refusal that were directed at a power in the form of economic exploitation"[157] and to "forms of resistance to power as the exercise of political sovereignty".[158] Yet, one might wonder if the distinct "form"[159] and "objective"[160] he attributes to these revolts about "by whom do we consent to be directed or conducted? How do we want to be conducted? Towards what do we want to be led?"[161] can be thoroughly described without acknowledging that they impacted how care, in the forms of activities of support, was concretely given and received. It seems indeed that the briefly mentioned pastoral counter-conducts that took place "in convents, in the movement that is called Rhenish *Nonnenmystik*",[162] in groups "formed around women prophets in the Middle Ages",[163] or in alternative communal organizations invented and self-managed by

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149 *Security, Territory, Population*, 192.
150 *Security, Territory, Population*, 228.
151 *Security, Territory, Population*, 228.
152 *Security, Territory, Population*, 196.
153 *Security, Territory, Population*, 196.
154 *Security, Territory, Population*, 196.
155 *Security, Territory, Population*, 231.
156 *Security, Territory, Population*, 195.
157 *Security, Territory, Population*, 195.
158 *Security, Territory, Population*, 195.
159 *Security, Territory, Population*, 196.
160 *Security, Territory, Population*, 196.
161 *Security, Territory, Population*, 197.
162 *Security, Territory, Population*, 197.
163 *Security, Territory, Population*, 197.

Beguines[164] manifested a revolt against the very separation that Foucault takes for granted between "caring about" and "taking care of", on the one hand, and "care-giving" and care-receiving" on the other.

That Foucault took this distinction for granted did not escape Federici's reading of the bi-opolitical paradigm. In her famous *Caliban and the Witch,* she stresses that an analysis of this period of "pastoral insurrections"[165] through the evolution of the social relationship of support would have led Foucault to a very different understanding of the emergence of biopower, "stripping [it] of the mystery by which Foucault surrounds"[166] it in the *History of Sexuality.* In queer resemblance to Sedwick's snarky remark about the fact that her "being pathologized by her therapist"[167] does not encapsulate how governmental power is exercised in neoliberal times, Federici particularly derides Foucault for his focus on "pastoral confession".[168] If the French philosopher had condescended – she notes – to study the witch-hunt, he could not have concluded that such a disciplinary apparatus exemplifies the modern shift from a "power built on the right to kill, to a different one exercised through the administration and promotion of life-forces, such as population growth".[169] Although Federici concedes that "the discursive explosion" on sex that Foucault detected in this time was in no place more power-fully exhibited than in the torture of the witch-hunt",[170] she stresses acerbically that it "had nothing in common with the mutual titillation that Foucault imagines flowing between the woman and her confessor".[171] As the "stage upon which this peculiar discourse on sex un-folded was the torture chamber",[172] "by no stretch of imagination"[173] can it be presumed that "the orgy of words the women thus tortured were forced to utter incited their pleasure or re-oriented, by linguistic sublimation, their desire".[174] Federici thus insists that "it was *not* the Catholic pastoral, nor the confession, that best demonstrate how "Power", at the dawn of the modern era, made it compulsory for people to speak about sex"[175] but the witch-hunt, under-stood as "the first step in the long march towards "clean sex between clean sheets" and the transformation of female sexual activity into work, a service to men, and procreation"[176] rather than as the discursive production of a body bearing "new sexual capacities or sublimated pleasures for women.[177] As such, she argues, against "Foucault's theory concerning the

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[164] *Security, Territory, Population*, 204.
[165] *Security, Territory, Population*, 229.
[166] *Caliban and the Witch*, 16.
[167] Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*, 141.
[168] *Caliban and the Witch*, 16.
[169] *Caliban and the Witch*, 16.
[170] *Security, Territory, Population*, 191.
[171] *Caliban and the Witch*, 191.
[172] *Caliban and the Witch*, 191.
[173] *Caliban and the Witch*, 191.
[174] *Caliban and the Witch*, 191.
[175] *Caliban and the Witch*, 191.
[176] *Caliban and the Witch*, 192.
[177] *Caliban and the Witch*, 192.

development of "bio-power",[178] that ""the interminable discourse on sex" was not deployed as an alternative to, but in the service of repression, censorship, denial".[179]

To Federici, Foucault's focus "on pastoral confession in his *History of Sexuality* (1978)"[180] hence signals both the limitations of the biopolitical paradigm for theorizing the "repressive character of the power that was unleashed against women"[181] in early modern Europe and in the colonies, and the fact that "such history [of sexuality] cannot be written from the viewpoint of a universal, abstract, asexual subject".[182] In contrast to such history, she develops an alternative understanding of the social movements and political crisis in Medieval Europe aimed at factoring in "women and reproduction in the 'transition to capitalism'"[183] and exemplifying the repressive nature of the process of primitive accumulation through which the modern divisions of care work were established. Undoubtedly, this framing allows Federici to retrace thoroughly "the development of a new sexual division of labor subjugating women's labor and women's reproductive function to the reproduction of the work-force"[184] and "the construction of a new patriarchal order, based upon the exclusion of women from wage-work and their subordination to men".[185] Beyond this exclusion, however, Federici's herstory reveals very little about how this new patriarchal order was built and assumes that most of the elements that commonsensically defines such an order, notably paternalism and compulsory heterosexuality, were already present beforehand and only consolidated over this period.

However, when we scrutinize this assumption through the lens of Foucault's depiction of pastoral insurrections, its concealment of the fierce battle over "caring about" and "taking care of" that defined the era becomes unmistakable. The manner in which this struggle contested patriarchal authorities' notions of care as both concern and support remains unaddressed, as does its role in shaping modern understandings of sex, gender, desire, childhood, adulthood, citizenship and disability and the articulation of these understandings to race and class. The oversight of how these conflicts, which involved not only women engaged in care through familial ties but also women, particularly those in religious roles, who extended care beyond kinship, contributed to the construction of a new patriarchal order is a significant gap in theoretical exploration. Importantly, the involvement of these women in providing care outside the household highlights that while the reproduction of the heterosexual labor force and their offspring was a crucial aspect, it was not the sole facet in the restructuring of caregivers/care-receivers dynamics. At the very least, the claims made by these women to "care about," "take care of," and provide assistance to unsupported individuals in need indicate that the privatization of care work was intricately linked to the publicization of non-familial care networks. Federici's heterocentric viewpoint complicates efforts to fully elucidate the rationale and evolution of these networks.

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[178] *Caliban and the Witch*, 192.
[179] *Caliban and the Witch*, 192.
[180] *Caliban and the Witch*, 16.
[181] *Caliban and the Witch*, 16.
[182] *Caliban and the Witch*, 16.
[183] *Caliban and the Witch*, 21.
[184] *Caliban and the Witch*, 12.
[185] *Caliban and the Witch*, 12.

If we locate, however, the feminized and racialized resistance against the *privatization* of care work within the broader context of vying for control over communal care – namely, in defining what a community "cares about", who "takes care of" who, who "gives care" to who, and who can or cannot be a care-receiver – we can investigate the simultaneous emergence of private structures like the nuclear family and public institutions such as orphanages, found-ling hospitals, asylums, almshouses, and hospices. We can better grasp how the reappropria-tion of the private/public dichotomy, notably by a sovereign power that viewed in this battle over caring an opportunity to gain political and religious prominence, participates in the building of a new patriarchal order. Indeed, factoring this distinction allows an articulation of the ways in which this power repressed the claims over caring uttered by rebels and compet-itors and the ways it supplanted them by making the networks of support they had built ir-relevant or unproductive in comparison to those created and managed by state authority. Fol-lowing, in that sense, the birth and death of the Beguines' movement could help us under-stand better the role played by new state apparatuses in the making of a modern patriarchal order. In addition, by scrutinizing how needs and desires, vulnerability and dependency, as well as survival and well-being were reinterpreted during pastoral insurrections, we can stress that the construction of this order worked by pitting many more social groups against one another than assumed by Federici. For instance, we can delve into how these reinterpre-tations impacted disabled, elderly and/or very young people by transforming the conditions of eligibility to care-receiving, and by leading to the emergence of public institutions of care characterized by disciplinary mechanisms too. This broader perspective enriches the analysis of the modern restructuring of care work, including the articulation of power dynamics re-lated to age, sexuality, and disability, to those linked to race, class, gender and citizenship, which the traditional focus on the division between reproductive and productive labor tends to decenter. It allows us to articulate the inherent divisions in modern support relationships and the underlying patterns of exclusion, highlighting how the reception of care became con-tingent upon demonstrating forms of helplessness which were only partially and seemingly identical to those prevalent in the Middle Ages.

In framing Foucault's *History of Sexuality* as a narrative from the perspective of an "a-sex-ual" or "gender-neutral[186]" subject, Federici overlooks the nuanced complexities that emerge when, as I have hopefully shown in the last few pages, we approach the *History of Sexuality* as a sexualized and gender-biased genealogy of men's caring. By pinning her understanding of the relationship between sex and power as being opposite to Foucault's, she not only pur-posely misinterprets Foucault's project, who only advocates for a decentering of coercion so as to encompass the transformation of sex "into discourse, a technology of power and a will to knowledge"[187] that was not implemented through "reduction" but the initiation of "sexual heterogeneities".[188] She also forecloses the possibility of factoring in these sexual heterogene-ities in her analysis of the modern crisis of care, even though Foucault's framing of sexuality as a "moral problematization"[189] opens up that possibility. Similarly, by focusing on the

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[186] *Caliban and the Witch*, 192.
[187] *History of Sexuality*, 12.
[188] Ibid., 37.
[189] Ibid., 10.

pastoral confession rather than pastoral insurrections, she does not only bypass the fact that when Foucault describes the Christian pastoral as the "first phase"[190] of the deployment of sexuality in discourse, he insists that it corresponded to the "need to form a "labor force" (hence to avoid any useless "expenditure", any wasted energy, so that all forces were reduced to labor capacity alone" and to ensure its reproduction (conjugality, the regulated fabrication of children)".[191] She misses the opportunity to explain how age, abilities, and sexuality participated in the formation of this labor force, taking for granted the ways they subtend the categories of "men", "women", and "children" and the "straight" bonds that attach them to one another from the Middle Ages to contemporary times. Finally, by reducing Foucault's *History of Sexuality* to "a history of sexual behaviors, […] or a history of representations",[192] she does not only waver the fact that the French philosopher actually wanted to explore "the practices by which individuals were led to practice, on themselves and on others, a hermeneutics of desire, a hermeneutics of which their sexual behavior was doubtless the occasion, but certainly not the exclusive domain".[193] She also misses the opportunity to grasp the role these practices play in the making of a patriarchal order, in which feminized and/or racialized subjects, but also infantilized, disabled and/or queer subjects, are treated carelessly. In a nutshell, she misses the opportunity to develop a more inclusive and intersectional history of the modern regime of care work.

CONCLUSION

In *Security, Territory and Population,* Foucault acknowledges that his work on the pastorate "is not finished work, […] not even work that's been done".[194] He describes it as "a work in progress, with all that this involves in the way of inaccuracies and hypotheses"[195] and invites his audience to consider the "reference points"[196] he mentions as "possible tracks for you, if you wish, and maybe for myself to follow".[197] Although neither Foucault nor his readers have plainly responded to this suggestion, I have argued that exploring these tracks could be quite useful for enriching prevailing feminist narratives about the modern origins of the care crisis. I have stressed that situating Foucault's interest in the pastorate within his broader project of a history of ethical problematizations enables the leveraging of his gender-biased narrative of the genealogy of governmentality to complexify the understanding of the relationship between care (work) and politics. I have demonstrated that it allows an exploration of how various conceptions of age, disability, sexuality, citizenship and kinship impact the gendered and racialized distribution and hierarchization of the four dimensions of caring. In addition, I have shown that construing Foucault's genealogy as a history of men's caring enables a more thorough articulation of the apparatus of subjectivation and subjection related to the privatization

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[190] *History of Sexuality*, 114.

[191] Ibid.

[192] Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 2*, 8.

[193] *History of Sexuality, Vol. 2*, 5.

[194] *Security, Territory, Population*, 135.

[195] Ibid.

[196] Ibid.

[197] Ibid.

of care and those related to its renewed publicization. By doing so, I have underscored the potential of engaging with Foucault's unfinished work on the pastorate, notably his analyses of pastorate insurrections, as they unveil avenues for analyzing power structures within the domain of care in a more inclusive and intersectional manner, thereby contributing to the ongoing discourse surrounding the politicization of the care crisis.

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