Stony Brook University

**The Ethics and Politics of Habitual Bodies: Original Sin, Authenticity,
and the Problem of Moral Responsibility**

A Dissertation Presented

by

Brady Thomas Heiner

to

The Graduate School

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Philosophy

Stony Brook University

May 2010

Stony Brook University

The Graduate School

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Abstract of the Dissertation

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   Who is the subject of habitual activity, and who, if anyone, is morally responsible for such actions? Following Saint Paul, Saint Augustine taught that it is 'not I' who am responsible for my habitual acts, but 'sin, which inhabits me,' sin derived from Adam's 'original' sin. Centuries later, Martin Heidegger argues that the 'who' of our everyday habitual existence is not the 'authentic self,' but the 'they-self,' the inauthentic self entangled in and guided by the anonymous forces of social normativity.

   This dissertation analyzes the early Christian account of 'original sin' and its hitherto unappreciated iteration in Heidegger's existential account of 'fallenness.' Heiner argues that this vestige of the anthropology of Christian theology undermines the post-metaphysical intentions of *Being and Time*, as well as its purported normative neutrality, leading it to a manifestly disembodied, though latently gendered, account of authentic selfhood. *Being and Time*, it is argued, remains caught in the ambit of masculinist and militaristic notions of moral responsibility that privilege ideals of mastery over solidarity, autonomy over relationality, and that rely for their coherence on a feminized construction of habitual and social bodily being against which the virile authentic individual wages a daily war.

   After examining the descriptive and normative deficiencies of this genealogy in Chapters One and Two, the dissertation turns to feminist and phenomenological philosophy on the intentionality and sociality of habitual bodies to offer an account of moral responsibility based in specifically bodily dimensions of social solidarity. Building upon Maurice Merleau-Ponty's notion of the corporeal self as 'an intersubjective field' that is 'centered outside itself' as well as on Judith Butler's figuration of gender identity as 'a stylized repetition of acts through time,' Chapter Three argues that responsibility is not grounded in the autonomous upheaval of a disembodied 'resolution' (Heidegger), but in the prelinguistic and prereflective dynamics of bodily beings in a shared social-practical world.

A free man thinks of nothing less than of death; his wisdom is a meditation not of death but of life. [...] Above all things, the most useful to men is that they join together their habits (*consuetudines*) and bind themselves with such bonds (*vinculis*) that render them more apt to produce something singular of them all—bonds that release them to tend toward those things which serve to strengthen and sustain friendship. But for this, wakefulness (*vigiliantia*) and practical skill (*ars*) are required. For men are varied [...].

–Benedict de Spinoza, *Ethics* IV, Prop 67; and
IV, Appendix 12–13

O my body, make of me always a man who questions!

–Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* E232/F188

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List of Abbreviations

Saint Augustine

PL   –   Saint Augustine, *Opera Omnia: Patrologia Latina,* edited by Jacques-Paul Migne*,* volumes 32–47: http://www.augustinus.it/latino.

Martin Heidegger

BT   –   Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, [1927] 1962).

SZ   –   Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, 15th edition (Tübingen: Niemeyer, [1927] 1976).

Maurice Merleau-Ponty

PP E –   Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, translated by Colin Smith (New York: Routledge Classics, [1945] 2002).

PP F –   Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris: Gallimard, [1945] 1976).

Acknowledgements

Genealogical Confessions: Toward a Transformative Repetition of Initiating Orientations

> *The entire male economy demonstrates a forgetting of life [...]. Men's science helps destroy, then attempts to fix things up. But a body that has suffered is no longer the same. It bears the traces of physical and moral trauma, despair, desire for revenge, recurrent inertia. [...] Despite policies that encourage the birth rate for economic reasons, or sometimes for religious ones, destroying life seems to be as compulsory as giving life. How can this contradiction—the most fundamental in most of our societies—be resolved?*
> *–Luce Irigaray[1]*

> *One does not stand at an instrumental distance from the terms by which one experiences violation. Occupied by such terms and yet occupying them oneself risks complicity, a repetition, a relapse into injury, but it is also the occasion to work the mobilizing power of injury, of an interpellation one never chose. Where one might understand violation as a trauma which can only induce a destructive repetition compulsion (and surely this is a powerful consequence of violation), it seems equally possible to acknowledge the force of repetition as the very condition of an affirmative response to violation. The compulsion to repeat an injury is not necessarily the compulsion to repeat the injury in the same way or to stay fully within the traumatic orbit of that injury. The force of repetition [...] may be the paradoxical condition by which a certain agency—not linked to a fiction of the ego as master of circumstance—is derived from the* impossibility *of choice.*
> *–Judith Butler[2]*

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[1] Luce Irigaray, *Thinking the Difference*, trans. Karin Montin (New York: Routledge, 1994), 7.

[2] Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 123–4.

My paternal grandfather served in the U.S. Armed Forces in Germany during the Second World War. When the early Heidegger writes of the authentic resoluteness (*eigentlichen Entschlossenheit*) of human existence, espousing the virile Christian militarism of the hale and healthy soldier who battles to remain erect in unbending loyalty (*Treue*) to Being and to himself; or when the Heidegger of the Nazi years, citing von Clauswitz's *On War* in his Rectorial Address, invokes his notion of Being itself as a struggle (*Kampf*) of self-assertion (*Selbstbehauptung*); or when the later Heidegger, speaking of Georg Trakl's poetry, says that the lifeless bodies that lay strewn across the battlefield of Grodek, and across the poem Trakl wrote about the battle, ought not to be taken as so many dead soldiers, but as an event in the history of Being, which is something greater and more essential; or when upon the victims of the Holocaust, he broke his baffling silence just long enough to make the scandalous claim that the gas chambers and modern agriculture were essentially the same (*im Wesen dasselbe*); I think of my grandfather.[3]

Leaving my grandmother just three days after she gave birth to my uncle, and with my father a mere five years old, my grandfather reported for conscripted duty at Fort Warren in Cheyenne, Wyoming on November 13, 1942, where for three months he underwent the rigorous bodily regimentation that is part and parcel of basic military training. While there, he befriended another frightened young man with whom he made a pact. They promised each other that if either were severely wounded, neither would attempt anything "heroic" to save the other's life. Shortly thereafter, they were trailing behind the "front lines"—military parlance for a cascading iteration of embodied individuals—picking up the lifeless bodies of soldiers that had fallen in the wake of the battle of Normandy.

Gathering, bagging, and transporting the bodies of American soldiers to military cemeteries: this was my grandfather's assignment for the entirety of his three-year deployment, about which (apart from private disclosures I assume transpired between him and my grandmother) he spoke directly, to my knowledge, only twice. The presumption among "the boys" (my father's designation for himself and my two paternal uncles, to whom he always refers as a unit apart from my aunt) was that my grandfather's reticence about his military experience stemmed from his embarrassment about his "unheroic" station in the service. Presumably, this had to do with the fact that he was committed to the "feminine" work of attending to the inanimate bodies of the dead—what Irigaray calls "the cult of the dead and the cult of death"—rather than contributing to what matters, which is either sacrificing oneself—putting one's life "on the line"—for God and the nation (*pro deo et patria*), or

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[3] See John D. Caputo, *Demythologizing Heidegger* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993), esp. chapters 6–8; and "The Absence of Monica: Heidegger, Derrida, and Augustine's *Confessions*," in *Feminist Interpretations of Heidegger*, eds. Nancy J. Holland and Patricia Huntington (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2001), 149–164.

participating in the spartan effort of sublating those bloodless bodies into a movement of Spirit, an event of Being.[4]

I was present for one of my grandfather's disclosures, as were my grandmother, my parents, and my wife. It took place during one of the brief, episodic moments in his ninth decade when the writhing pains of his delicate, aging body withdrew. He was sitting beside my grandmother, in the same armchair of tattered cloth, worn from the weight of more than forty years of habitual use. And he had been celebrating that reprieve, that gracious opening his body had given him, with the jubilance of caramel popcorn. I'll never know what moved him to speak at that moment. Perhaps it was the rare co-presence of three adult generations in a room: his eldest son, and me, the "caboose" of his eldest son's family. Or perhaps it was the stream of images he had seen earlier that morning on television, images of caskets carrying the breathless bodies of American soldiers from the streets of the Baghdad occupation into the soil of Salt Lake City. Maybe it had to do with my breaking a long-enduring silence by asking him about war.

> The Normandy invasion was terrible. The Americans who drove the barges full of soldiers to shore were supposed to drive up to the beaches and let them out. But some drivers panicked and wouldn't go all the way to the beaches. They forced their own soldiers to get out of the barges in deep waters. The soldiers had several pounds of ammunition, uniforms and artillery on them. As soon as they jumped into the waters, they immediately sunk and drowned. It was terrible. It was our job to retrieve those bodies from the ocean.
>
> There was still shelling going on while we were doing our job, several days later. We often heard the whistling overhead. We set out into the ocean in small boats and reached long hooks into the water to pull the bodies closer to us. Then we pulled them into our boat. We wrapped them in sheets, as we had no body bags. Some bodies didn't surface until seven or ten days later. We were contacted and told to drive to the shore again to retrieve more soldiers.
>
> Some weeks later, we were in rural Germany. My Wyomingan friend and I were carrying a dead soldier on a litter. He was in front. He stepped on a land mine. (The extra weight of the bodies we carried made us more vulnerable to setting off land mines.) It literally blew his legs to pieces. I was protected from the blast when the body and litter flew up in front of me, covering me. I carried him to the truck. He had no legs. He asked me to honor our vow. So I let him die in my arms in the back of the truck. He had a girlfriend back home.

That was the tenebrous clearing through which I was allowed access to the source of my grandfather's unheroic trauma. One of what was no doubt a battery of traumatic events that would render him silent for much of my life. I felt this silence

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[4] Luce Irigaray, "The Eternal Irony of the Community," in *Speculum of the Other Woman*, trans. Gillian C. Gill (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), 214–226.

not only in my direct interactions with him, but even more audibly in my relationship with my father, whose father was removed for his formative years, at war, whether physically (abroad) or imaginatively (during episodes of recurrent inertia at home). My grandfather's was not the kind of silence (*Schweigen*) and reticence (*Verschwiegenheit*) that Heidegger lauds as authentic (so-called) discourse, the kind of genuine discoursing that, in "beating down" (*niederschlagen*) the idle talk that pervades everyday social interactions, manifests something primordial (*ursprünglich*): being-toward-death, finitude, contingency, etc.[5] Or perhaps Heidegger might suggest that it was. Whatever sense my grandfather made of his silence, to much of his family, his absent presence traced out an abyss of affect—an abyss into which my father habitually projected an unrelenting critic of his character.

My father, named after his father, is, as a result, abidingly terrified of failure; he's also petrified of social relationships. Combined with a desire to lift himself out of poverty, these fears propelled my father to promise a portion of his life to the United States military in exchange for the opportunity to study medicine—to seek, through the study of corpses, to mend the bodies that had torn his father apart. The bodies that had also torn away his mother, who for years worked single-handedly to support two children while anxiously anticipating the call that Heidegger never speaks of, but which every woman intimately knows who has a loved one on active duty in the military. Fortunately, that call never came. But the call of duty did. For, immediately upon my father's completion of medical residency in the military hospital at Fort Knox, Kentucky, he was shipped off to Vietnam, leaving my mother to support and tend alone to my eldest two brothers and sister, all toddlers.

In Vietnam, the violence that silenced my grandfather was reiteratively repeated in my father's experience—retrenched, as was the silence that my father had inherited from my grandfather in reaction to that violence. Heidegger might say that it was repeated more primordially, but it was certainly not repeated transformatively.

> From my bed at night, I could hear bombs exploding and helicopters landing overhead, transporting more and more wounded soldiers to the military hospital. A private was wheeled in with shrapnel injuries to his chest. He had suffered a laceration to the circumflex branch of his left coronary artery. We immediately started transfusing blood into him. Scrambling to slow the bleeding, I cupped my hands over his heart, putting pressure on the gaping hole in his chest. His blood pulsed through my hands. I pushed and pushed, but it just kept throbbing and throbbing. I couldn't save him. No matter what I did, no matter what scientific knowledge I had acquired, I was helpless in the face of death.

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[5] "Authentically keeping silent is possible only in genuine discoursing. […] In that case one's reticence makes something manifest, and beats down idle talk" (*Nu rim echten Reden ist eigentliches Schweigen möglich. [...] Dann macht Verschwiegenheit offenbar und schlägt das 'Gerede' nieder*)" (BT 208/SZ 165). Macquarrie and Robinson conceal the violence of the verb *niederschlagen* in their translation of this passage, writing that reticence "does away with" rather than "beats down" idle talk. I am indebted to Mechthild Nagel for drawing my attention to this attenuation of Heidegger's militaristic rhetoric in translation. See "Thrownness, Playing-in-the-World, and the Question of Authenticity," *Feminist Interpretations of Heidegger*, 289–306 (esp. 300 and 306 n. 22).

This was the first of the two occasions on which I've been witness to my father's tears, which welled up along with the blood he recounted. Seeing them for the first time, a boy of ten, I was frightened. Reflecting on the event as an adult, I want to reach out and embrace that man, assure him that it was not his fault the man could not be saved, that though none of us could be saved, we were alive, together. But that boy didn't do this; he didn't know how, which is to say, it wasn't within the repertoire of his habitually lived body.

By his own admission, my father rarely held me as an infant. "I don't do well with babies," he recently told me when I asked if he planned to visit my brother and sister-in-law, who had just given birth to their first child. "They're just so fragile. I feel like I'm going to break them." Of course, if you repeatedly treat a child as if he were made of glass, he will most likely come to take himself as frail and immobile, even actively enacting his own body inhibition. As Iris Young argued, this is more often the case with young girls in certain cultural spheres. Women who as young girls are habitually told that they must be careful not to get hurt, not to go outside without proper clothes, and that things they desire to do are dangerous for them, have a greater tendency to develop habits that lead them to underestimate their bodily capacity. They often experience their bodies as a fragile encumbrance rather than the medium for the enactment of their aims.[6]

In the specifically lived bodily registration of violence, the force of the present radically outstrips the conscious grasp, sense-bestowing or integrative capacity of the subject. The registrata of this event—somatosensorimotor fragments of unintegrated, non-narrativized trauma—not only sediment themselves like mnemonic shrapnel in the habitual body, they project themselves into present experience, effectively carrying the subject "back/again" to the traumatic scene and anchoring the carriage of the momentary body in "a past which has never been present."[7]

Perhaps the habitual body memories nested in my father's hands led him to mistake my infant body for the heart he had held on the operating table in Vietnam, blood flowing uncontrollably out of it.[8] Perhaps his traumatic experience with bodies broken by battle, his reiteratively repeated sense of futility in the face of life's fragility, had so saturated his perception and self-esteem that his window of tolerance for coping with bodily frailty had functionally narrowed beyond manageable limits.[9]

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[6] Iris Marion Young, *On Female Body Experience: "Throwing Like a Girl" and Other Essays* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[7] The word *registration* itself bears a kind of bodily trace. Deriving as it does from the late Latin elements *re-* and *gerere*, it means simultaneously "to carry back" and "to carry again." The stem *gerere* arrives to us in the English *gesture*, which signifies not only "a movement of the body or any part of it," but a "manner of carrying the body" as a whole, in the sense of bodily carriage, bearing, or style. The reference to "a past which has never been present" is from Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E282/F280.

[8] On habitual body memories, see Edward S. Casey, *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study*, second edition (Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 2000), part III.

[9] On trauma and the body's window of tolerance, see Pat Ogden, Kekuni Minton, and Clare Pain, *Trauma and the Body: A Sensorimotor Approach to Psychotherapy* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2006).

None of my four siblings nor I have donned a military uniform, except when as children my brother and I would roll up the sleeves of my father's fatigues and simulate "warfare" in our backyard. But all of us, like millions of others who may or may not have directly participated in combat, are the inheritors of the transgenerational transmission of war-related trauma. Our habitual bodies bear the invisible traces of this trauma, like mnemonic shrapnel that cuts across generations, embedding itself in the historicity of our bodies.

It is partly through the practice of integrative body psychotherapy that I have come to reflect upon the genealogy of my own lived bodily experience. Integrative body and sensorimotor psychotherapies have recently arisen to address the specifically lived bodily aspects of memorial, perceptual, and affective experience that have been ill-addressed by conventional treatments of the "psyche." Habitual bodies are not touched, as it were, or at least not transformatively rechanneled (with sufficient regularity and reproducibility) through an exclusively discursive approach to psychotherapy.

Through integrative body psychotherapy, I began to kinaesthetically feel and think about the trauma of war transgenerationally transmitted through my family. Even now, when I breathe into the image of my father's body, infused with a fear (of rejection, connection, loss) that repels him from making contact with others, I feel a sadness well up in my throat. Sitting with this sadness, mourning the loss of what my father and grandfather were habitually stripped from providing to their families, their communities, their selves—and what my mother and grandmother too were inhibited from fully providing, for they too were not fully supported by their husbands, fathers, grandfathers, their mothers and grandmothers—I feel my primordial shame begin to dissolve.

This shame—and the inseparable shame that I feel about feeling shame—habitually manifests as a weight (*praegravitas*) in my eyes, a downward pull (*Zug*) felt through my cheeks, lowering my gaze below faces; and it often leads to the senses of despair, desire for revenge, recurrent inertia that Irigaray invokes above, as well as to an abiding sense of inadequacy and inefficacy. This shame, and the inarticulateness to which it gives rise, is also tied to the disarticulated body of my grandfather's Wyomingan friend, mutilated and ultimately annihilated by the discharge of a Nazi landmine. It is linked to the shame that my grandfather felt, holding the legless, lifeless body of his friend, unable to retrace and transformatively repeat his steps—steps that he would imaginatively rehearse and reiteratively reenact over the course of his life. To the shame that my father felt when confronted with the abyss of affect that this event produced in my grandfather, into which he as a young child projected a voice of reproach. To the shame that was reiteratively repeated when my father held the expiring heart of the American soldier in Vietnam, and when he reluctantly held or retracted from holding his children and his children's children, frequently filling the black hole of trauma with a defensive defenselessness.[10] To the shame that my mother

[10] R.K. Pitman and S. Orr, "The Black Hole of Trauma," *Biological Psychiatry* 27.5 (1990): 469–471; *Traumatic Stress: The Effects of Overwhelming Experience on Mind, Body, and Society*, eds. Bessel A. van der Kolk, Alexander C. McFarlane and Lars Weisaeth (New York: Guilford Press, 1996).

felt when my father's defenselessness would manifest in aggression—a shame that itself reactivated and retrenched the habitual shame her body had already acquired when her father abandoned her as a child, from when her mother habitually sought refuge from the struggles of single motherhood in the suspended embrace of inebriation.

This long chain of habitual iterations of trauma, shame, and violence—transgenerationally transmitted, reshaped, and reinhabited by the lived bodies of concrete individuals in concrete circumstances—circulates through a male economy that repeatedly demonstrates a habitual *forgetting of life* (what we might call an abiding *bio-letheia*). Driven by a scientific, technological, military ethos, this economy—helping to destroy, then attempting to repair—leaves in its wake traumatized and traumatizing bodies that bear the traces of its moral and physical destruction. As Irigaray argues, this repetitive, explosive, non-evolutive history is bound up with the historically dominant model of male sexuality (tension, release, return to homeostasis), which, in disharmony with cosmic temporalities, forgetful of our conditions as living bodily beings, generates the militaristic economy that is sacrificing us little by little, driving us toward an increasingly unlivable future.

It is with the fore-conception of this injurious economy, the fore-sight of its possible transgression, and the habitual bodily fore-having of some of its baleful effects, that I undertake the following inquiry. Because my habitual body (this paper, this fire…), my grandfather's *verschlossen* lips, my father's hands, this non-evolutive history are inextricably linked to the philosophical anthropology of 'man' and its genealogy. They are part of the abrasive ontological and political history enshrined in and shaped by discourses such as that of Saint Augustine, who in *Confessions* (C.E. 397–401) describes his experience of religious conversion as a daily war (*bellum quotidianum*) waged against his habitual body. He characterizes this conflict, repeating Saint Paul, as an effort to censure (*castigo*) the body and drive it back into submission (*redigo in servitutem*).[11]

In *The City of God Against the Pagans* (C.E. 413–26), Augustine projects this teleological interpretation of his own experience of conversion onto the plane of human history. "God's providence," he contends, "constantly uses war to correct and chasten the corrupt habits of man (*corruptos mores hominum*), as it also uses such afflictions to train men in a righteous and laudable way of life, removing to a better state those whose life is approved, or else keeping them in this world for further service."[12] Heidegger repeats this tradition when he "essentializes" the lifeless bodies of soldiers as an event in Being's fabulous itinerary, which is purportedly more essential than the shattered bodies it leaves behind. Such discourses reiteratively repeat the militaristic, non-evolutive history of 'man' by utterly mystifying and essentializing the concrete welfare of the bodily beings whom that history tendentially forgets.

The questions that guide the following investigation are: Can this genealogy be repeated transformatively? Can it be transgressed rather than simply reiteratively

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[11] Augustine, *Confessions* X.31.43; Paul, *First Letter to the Corinthians* 9:27.

[12] Augustine, *City of God* I.1.

rearticulated and reenacted, as it has been in the history of western ontologies and institutions, as well as in the genealogy of my own family? In asking these questions, it is imperative to pose the question which underwrites them, namely *who* is it that engages in the questioning? The purpose of this prologue is to situate the investigation with respect to its questioner, and in so doing to prepare the ground for the possibilities of its questioner's overcoming.

The *who* conducting this investigation is not the generic subject of philosophy. It is not Augustine's self-identical human soul (*animus*), which is produced in and by a daily war against the feminine and emasculating habituality of the mortal body. It is not the "we, philosophical consciousness" that Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* posits as the product of the long history of social formation, a fraternal order of citizens, scientists, and philosophers who, having relegated 'woman' to the domestic labor of caring for bodies, free themselves from the hindrances of the body, and supersede the claims of life by identifying themselves as an instance of a general principle.[13] Nor is the *who* of this inquiry the disembodied being-there (*Dasein*) of Heidegger's *Being and Time*, who—neutral (*neuter*) and asexual (*geschlechtslos*)—is most properly itself (*des eigentlichen Selbst*) insofar as it resists its fallen tendency to be pulled, dimmed down, set adrift, and alienated from itself by the temptation of the social world.

The *who* of this inquiry lives through and is inseparable from this habitual body that is at one and the same time the subject and object of the inquiry, the medium and captive of the genealogical economy that passes through 'it'/'him'/'me'/'us', and at the same time the embodied reservoir of habitual possibility which seeks to transgress it. I prologue with these genealogical confessions in order to foreground the singularity of the sense of the question of habitual bodily being.

It is important to "bear in mind"—or better, to "hold fast" to the fact—that the philosophical genealogy of habitual bodily being that this project seeks to uncover, proceeds from, through, and toward *a* habitual body. And that this habitual body (which is "in each case mine," yet in an important sense "not mine") is itself marked by and bears the traces of the genealogy under critical investigation. We, philosophical questioners, for whom questioning constitutes one of our possibilities of being, must not let this factical condition fall away; we must not turn away from it. For it is precisely in working through this factical situation, and the genealogies that produce it, that these initiating orientations might be repeated *otherwise*.

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Brady Thomas Heiner
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2010

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[13] On the invisible gendering of Hegel's generic subject of philosophy, see Mary C. Rawlinson, "The Concept of a Feminist Bioethics," *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* 26.4 (2001): 405–416.

INTRODUCTION

According to Aristotle, habit (ἕξις) is part of the necessary infrastructure of every ethical action and every flourishing society. He deems it so necessary, in fact, that he defines ethical virtue (ἀρετή) itself as a species of habit, judging the justice of any social formation on the basis of the kinds of habits that it cultivates in its citizens, because good societies are produced through the formation of good habits in their constituents.[1] While more stable and abiding than an ephemeral disposition (διάθεσις), the habitual structure that Aristotle invokes in his definition of ethical virtue also differs fundamentally from what we would today call natural talents or genetic predispositions, innately possessed at birth. For the only way that we come to possess virtues such as courage, prudence, and honor, is by first *exercising* them.[2] In this respect, virtue is like a skill or art (τέχνη). Just as one becomes a novelist by writing novels, or a jazz pianist by playing the piano, so too, says Aristotle, "we *become* just by *acting* justly, prudent by acting prudently, courageous by acting courageously."[3] From an ethical perspective, it thus makes no small difference whether we form habits of one sort or another; it makes a big difference. As Aristotle says, it makes *all* the difference.[4]

But what exactly *is* habit? 'Who' are we such that we can even have habits? Or, more precisely, who are we such that we *habitually exist*? Given the great ethical importance granted to habit not only by Aristotle and contemporary virtue ethicists, but by political theorists, moral psychologists and educators, it is frankly quite baffling that, over two thousand years after Aristotle's famous formulation, the jury is still out regarding habit's ontology! Are habitual actions a part of the currency of a 'free will'? Is habit a structure of reason or an encroachment upon the autonomy of reason? Does it fall within the horizon of consciousness or is it a fragment of the natural world? Am I responsible for my habits, seeing how so many of them are the product of the culture and community into which I've been thrown and the processes of socialization and enculturation which have shaped my very ability to respond (i.e., response-ability)? As one delves deeper into the ontological structure of habit, dichotomies such as autonomy/heteronomy, voluntary/involuntary, freedom/determinism, which form part of the common conceptual vocabulary of modern moral philosophy and psychology, seem

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[1] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1106a10; 1103b2–6.

[2] For the distinction of ἕξις from διάθεσις, see *Categories* 8b25–9a21. Aristotle distinguishes ἕξις and ἔθος from φύσις, the realm of nature (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1103a28–b26; 1179b21; *Categories* 8b25–9a21) as well as from θεόσδοτον, the god-given (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1099b8).

[3] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1103b1.

[4] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1103b25.

to be dislocated and rendered problematic. Habit seems to disrupt the very ontological categories that undergird dominant approaches to ethics and politics.

A number of philosophers have apprehended the host of ontological aporias that habit presents. Aristotle, for instance, articulates a common and repeatedly remarked upon observation when he notes that while a habit is distinct from a natural capacity insofar as it is the product of repeated activity, habit is also "like nature" (τῇ φύσει ἔοικεν) in its regularity, stability, durability, and even intractability.[5] It is in this light that Henri Bergson calls habit "a place of meeting and transfer" between nature and culture; that Edward Casey refers to the habitual body as the "middle realm" between physicality and sociality.[6] For, habits are also a signal of our deep-seated sociality, arising as they do from the rituality of rearing, education, and socialization. For this reason, Maurice Merleau-Ponty invokes the habitual body as the "invisible hinge" or "surface of separation and contact" between individual and collective existence, constituting what he terms the "inner framework of intersubjectivity."[7]

Thoroughly thinking through the ontology of habit requires that we shatter the hold that metaphysics maintains upon our understanding of ourselves as habitual and ethical subjects. It demands that we grasp anew and transformatively reinhabit the basic meaning of ἔθος, the ancient Greek word for "collective habit" from which the English word "ethics" derives. For, in the words of American pragmatist John Dewey, morals are neither more nor less than "established collective habits."[8] However, our access to the meaning of the question of our habitual being is obstructed, I argue, by the conceptual obfuscations and occlusions of our Christian heritage; in particular, by the speculative tradition of Saints Paul and Augustine, according to which bodily habit is strictly associated, if not identified, with sin.

Saint Augustine's passionate portrayals of the human subject's struggle to master the "habits of this life" (*consuetudo huius vitae*) constitute a decisive moment in the western history of ontology. Under his self-examining gaze, habit comes to be construed as a structure of *ontological constriction* at the heart of the human—an abiding principle of discord (*discordiosum malum*)[9] lodged in the human person as a result of Adam's 'original' sin. Man's struggle for freedom, enlightenment, and goodness, in Augustine's account, is complicated by his inner dehiscence, a distortion and declension of the psyche caused by the grips of earthly habitation. His texts abound with allegorical binaries in which this antagonism is cast: the law of the mind or inward man vs. the law of the flesh or outward man, the city of god vs. the worldly city. But what ultimately ensures that

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[5] *Nicomachean Ethics* 1152a30–33; *Rhetoric* 1370a6–8.

[6] Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. N.M. Paul and W.S. Palmer (New York: Cosimo Classics, 2007), 227; Edward Casey, "The Ghost of Embodiment," *Body and Flesh: A Philosophical Reader*, ed. Donn Welton (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1998), 216, 219.

[7] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, trans. Alphoso Lingis (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 234.

[8] Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct* 75.

[9] Referring to *concupiscentia carnis*, *Contra Julianum* IV.8.49.

Augustinian ontology will reverberate throughout modernity is its articulation of the self as an *axis of ontological dehiscence*—an unstable distention between an anticipated future and a pre-personal past that Augustine interprets as an interminable conflict between the sovereign, progressive principle of reason and the intransigent, self-imprisoning sedimentations of bodily habit.

Augustine's phenomenal recognition of the self as an axis of ontological dehiscence arises out of his experience of his own facticity. This experience is not only one of finding oneself always already thrown into a world and situation that one has not chosen, but also of being intrinsically propelled by an habitual bodily intentionality that is not of one's own conscious making or control. Through his canonical, though at the time rather idiosyncratic, interpretation of the biblical story of Adam and Eve, Augustine comes to conceptualize the ontological dehiscence of habitual human existence in hierarchical and expressly gendered terms. He interprets habitual bodily being as the reciprocal punishment for Adam's disobedience. Our habitual being domesticates and forecloses our future possibilities; it constricts our being; and the reason why it does so is because it is a temporal penalty and expression of the ontological constriction suffered by "man" when he originally chose to separate himself from God. In Augustine's interpretation of *Genesis*, this ontological constriction of "man" is specifically gendered as feminine. "*Like* nature," Aristotle claims, in its repetitive regularity and even intractability, the intentionality of the habitual body comes to be associated in Augustine's ontology with "woman," with a loss of ("virile") self, and a transgression of the sovereignty and volitional unity of the rational soul.

For Augustine, as for Enlightenment humanisms, habit is strictly a structure of the ready-made, a storehouse for obscurely sedimented practices and prejudices that pull the sovereign subject down from the heights of its potential (self) understanding and inhibit the realization of its freedom, identity, and union with transcendent principles. Rather than embraced as an epistemically constitutive aspect of human reason and an ontologically dilating engine of human reality, bodily habit comes to be cast as the source of error and a force of ontological constriction—an emasculation of the (disembodied) will.

Martin Heidegger's existential analytic of human existence constitutes another decisive moment in the western history of ontology. In *Being and Time*, habit comes to be construed as a structure of *ontological fallenness* at the basis of existence. Genealogically akin to Augustine's notion of bodily habit, habitual fallenness (*Verfallenheit*), on Heidegger's account of human existence, functions as an unshakeable principle of dispersal that leads human existence to fall away or turn away from itself—a movement which is at once a turning outward toward and an absorption in worldly entities and relations, as well as a downfall or falling prey to worldly temptation.[10] Thus,

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[10] "In falling, Dasein turns away from itself. […] The turning-away of falling […] *turns outwards* toward entities within-the-world by absorbing itself in them (*Im Verfallen kehrt sich Dasein von ihm selbst ab. […] Die Abkehr des Verfallens […] als sie sich gerade* hinkehrt *zum innerweltlichen Seienden als Aufgehen in ihm*)" (*BT* 230/*SZ* 185–86). See also *The History of the Concept of Time*, trans. Theodore Kisiel (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985), 282; and *BT* 80/*SZ* 54, where Heidegger derives the sense of being absorbed in the world (*Sinne des Aufgehens in der Welt*), which he posits as characteristic of the structure of being-in (*Sein-bei*), from the etymological antecedents "to inhabit" (*habitare*), "to reside" (*wohnen*), "to dwell" (*sich aufhalten*), and "to become habituated to" (*bin gewohnt*). As he reaffirms in his infamous "Letter on Humanism," "the reference in *Being and Time* to 'being-in' as 'dwelling' is no

fifteen-hundred years after Saint Augustine's anxious account of the human soul's struggle to master the habits of the worldly life into which it has fallen, Heidegger, an engaged reader of Augustine, offered an influential account of authentic human existence as a struggle of the subject to take hold of itself and win itself by pulling itself together from out of its dispersal and lostness—i.e., from out of it's habitual fallenness in the embodied affairs of the everyday social world.

On Heidegger's account, humans structurally tend toward or fall into an inauthentic or reified mode of being, toward a mode of habitual action, perception, and cognition that, in becoming regimented and routinized, loses touch with the initiatory ecstasis that calls forth and makes possible the practice of questioning. Such reifying repetition not only closes off alternative possibilities of seeing, interacting, and understanding; it not only shuts down the production of alternative institutional arrangements; it also hypostasizes our sense of ourselves, prompting us to misconceive our existence as thing-like, rather than as a thrown open nexus of possibilities.

While Heidegger explicitly aims to extract philosophy from Christian theological horizons, and constantly claims to do so by purportedly remaining scrupulously neutral with respect to theological matters, the conception of the human condition that emerges from *Being and Time* constantly inclines his text to reinscribe elements of a characteristically Christian—and distinctively Augustinian—structure of thought. The reader of Heidegger's text cannot help but notice the way that it extensively resorts to—not to say *falls back upon*—quasi-theological terminology (falling, guilt, temptation, alienation, conscience, and so on). In the same gesture through which such terminology is put to work, Heidegger denies that what he means to say with it is either theological or presupposes any theological claim.

From a certain perspective, what appears in these instances as a contradiction or disingenuousness on Heidegger's part is in fact an exhibition of the existential analytic's methodological consistency. For it is central to Heidegger's own understanding of human inquiry and self-understanding that it is always necessarily situated, that it can never be free of presuppositions. Likewise, his own inquiry in *Being and Time* is necessarily situated, and Heidegger makes no secret of the fact that the concepts and values of Christian thought constitute a fundamental reference point for the existential analytic's famous account of the human mode of being: care.

It is clear that Heidegger's own inquiries cannot simply leave behind or straightforwardly detach themselves from the initiating theological orientation of the tradition which serves as their principle guiding philosophical reference point. Rather, fundamental ontology must acknowledge this orientation by actively deconstructing it, by repeating its concepts *transformatively* rather than reiteratively. My work poses the question whether, how, and to what extent the existential analytic succeeds or fails in this endeavor. Can one assume and employ the Christian metaphysical vocabulary of fallenness to describe human existence, and yet *mean it otherwise*? Can the rhetoric of fallenness be re-inhabited? Can it be transformatively rearticulated in the service of alternative, post-metaphysical, life-affirming projects? Stronger still: *Must* the discourse of fallenness be re-inhabited, rather than strictly eliminated, if we wish to extract

etymological game" ("Letter on Humanism," trans. Frank A. Capuzzi, in *Basic Writings* [New York: Harper Collins, 1977], 260).

ourselves (our philosophies, our morals) from Christian theological horizons and the conservative—even reactionary—patriarchal moral and political traditions to which they all too often give rise?

Ultimately, I argue that *Being and Time* fosters a tendency to reassert the metaphysical commitments it tried to overcome. One reason for this is that its principled methodological exclusion of any sustained account of bodily experience leads it to spiritualize existence, severing Dasein's authentic self-understanding from habitually lived embodiment. In a manner reminiscent and reiterative of Augustine, Heidegger associates habitual bodily being with a degenerative movement of falling *against* which the project of authentic self-possession must struggle. I make the case that the tendency of *Being and Time* to spiritualize existence stems from an unexamined preconception and prevaluation of habitual embodiment that is ultimately rooted in the project's initiating Augustinian orientation and inspiration. Heidegger's anxious aversion to embodiment and his castigation of the habituality and ritual practice inherent to lived bodily relations with others, I argue, are symptomatic of the persistence of the anthropology of Christian theology in the project of fundamental ontology and in the attempt in *Being and Time* to rethink human agency in light of the fundamental historicity of human existence.

Whether construed as post-lapsarian weight, or the law of sin, as in Augustine, or as the turbulent downfall, the tranquilizing, self-dispossessing movement of sociality, as in Heidegger, habit appears exclusively as a structure of ontological constriction. This conception bears a degree of descriptive integrity that must be granted a certain phenomenological validity. Through the institution and routine deployment of sedimented patterns of perception and response, constrictive habits close down the threshold of futurity. They domesticate the future, leveling down possibilities that fail to fit within the rigidly predelineated frameworks of intelligibility and sensibility that such habits have outlined in advance. Through the habitual body, not only one's own past life, but the life of the common, imply themselves in the fabric of the present and hem in one's future.

There is a different dimension of habit, however, which bears within it an alternative efficacy. This latter dimension is the one that John Dewey and Maurice Merleau-Ponty invoke when they describe habit as the vehicle for the expansion of our power and the transformation of our existence. Against the conception of habit as an alienating inertia that "shrinks our field of availability" and "narrows down the range of the possible," Merleau-Ponty argues that "habit expresses the power that we have to *dilate* our being-in-the-world, or change our existence by appropriating fresh instruments."[11] Likewise, Dewey maintains, "habit-forming is an expansion of power not its shrinkage," in as much as "habits are ways of using and incorporating the environment."[12] Drawing on these arguments, I seek to better understand the intrinsic variability of the structure of habitual bodily being and, thus, to grasp its affirmative possibilities.

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[11] The characterization of habit as shrinking our field of availability and narrowing down the range of the possible comes from Paul Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, trans. Charles A. Kelbley (New York: Fordham UP, 1986), 56–57. The quotation of Merleau-Ponty comes from *PP* E166/F168.

[12] John Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2002), 99, 15.

I analyze habit not only in its constrictive modality, but also in its most transparent, and thus least recognized, modality—namely, as a structure of *ontological dilation*. For habit is not only that which has a hold on us. Only in its reified instances is habit that which is strictly automatic in us, sculpting our thought and behavior as if by some external agency. Habit is primarily that which permits us our hold upon the world, through which we actively in-habit our surroundings. Habit, in this expansive sense, can be redirected not only to refashion the routines through which we inhabit our shared habitats, but also to transform the rituals through which we inhabit truth and come to understand ourselves and our communities.

By developing an account of habitual bodily being as *the variable amplitude of our existence*, my dissertation aims to cultivate an appreciation of our habitual bodies as ontological structures of disposedness that both limit *and* open, contract *and* dilate. It seeks to disclose the fundamental ambi-valence of habituation, with its two-fold movement of sedimentation and spontaneity, as well as the habitual body's specific manner of efficacy and historicity. In doing so, I wish to suggest the indispensible import of such an understanding of habit for any post-humanist ethico-political project.

By recognizing and taking hold of habit as a variable structure of our existence, by making manifest the operative intentionality through which it produces and gears us into a common world, we can modify our understanding of ourselves and transform our habitual ways of being. We can take on the task of developing, through investigation of concrete habits and habitats, a more determinate body of knowledge through which to understand the fields of possibility that are strengthened, and those that are shut down, by the commonality of our habitual bodily practices. These fields of possibility determine not only the sorts of entities that show up for us as thinkable and perceivable, and the courses of action that appear to us as available. They also determine the sorts of entities we ourselves *are* and are capable of *becoming*. For, habit constitutes our social nature. By articulating and lending greater specificity to the normative possibilities of our habitual bodies, investigating their particular manners of inhabiting and being inhabited by their habitations, we might be led to reconceptualize our vital priorities. We would generate a fund of new figures through which to imagine how our habits and habitats might be refashioned in order to construct the possibilities of what Luce Irigaray calls a "livable future," or what Judith Butler calls a "livable life." This task is indispensable to any post-humanist ethico-political project, for habits are not the chains that restrain our will and inhibit our moral responsibility. As Dewey put it, "In any intelligible sense of the word will, [habits] *are* will." They are the very channels through which change becomes possible. Through their inventive iterations, habitual bodies *construct* the ethico-political arrangements of the future. And they do so by directing us toward the virtual bodies that we *would need* in order to inhabit those arrangements.

Habitations of Habit

To begin, let us look closely at the word 'habit' itself. Vast in scope, disjunctive in its genealogy, and unstable in its reference, the concept of habit is a discontinuous terrain. The English 'habit' derives from the ancient Greek ἔχειν and Latin *habere*, which mean "to have, hold, possess." Εχειν takes the forms of ἕξις and ἦθος, which mean

"habit, disposition, custom, character," and which assume a philosophical robustness in Aristotle's ethics and politics, where, being distinguished from nature (φύσις) and the god-given (θεόσδοτον), ἕξις and ἦθος are figured as the fertile ground for the cultivation of moral virtue (*arête*) and the field of engagement for governmental guidance toward the good (ἀγαθόν).[13] In ἕξις and ἦθος, the primordial sense of 'holding' is extended toward that which is so abidingly "held" that it becomes not only integral to one's character—as the way that one *holds oneself*—but also constitutive of a generalized way of thinking, feeling, acting, and behaving "that at one and the same time marks a relation of belonging and presents itself as a task."[14] This sense is extended even further in the Latin *habitare*, where the way that one holds and sustains oneself comes also to embrace and mark a relation of belonging with the environing world as a place of dwelling, or habitat.

In its sense that develops along these lines, the ancient Latin *habitus* becomes applicable to both inner and outer states of being, an ambi-valence that perhaps stems from the fact that the intentionality of holding can either be directed inward or outward, as grasping or as offering. *Habitus*, like the English 'habit,' grows three branches of signification: 1) "fashion or mode of bodily apparel, dress," i.e., the manner in which one holds oneself *qua* exhibition or adornment; 2) "external comportment, constitution, or appearance," i.e., the manner in which one holds oneself *qua* behavior, demeanor, or bodily carriage; and 3) "mental constitution, disposition, custom, character," i.e., the settled aspects of personal identity that both produce and result from the abiding ways that one holds oneself.

Hence, habit is in some instances that which is extraneous to and obfuscating of one's identity. This is the sense in which Shakespeare speaks of habit as disguising the true self within: "It is her habit only that is honest, Herself's a bawd."[15] As Hamlet famously castigates his mother,

> *Seems*, madam! nay, it is; I know not seems.
> 'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
> Nor customary suits of solemn black,
> Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,
> No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
> Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
> Together with all forms, moods, shows of grief,
> That can denote me truly; these indeed *seem,*
> For they are actions that a man might play;
> But I have that within which passeth show;
> These but the trappings and suits of woe.[16]

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[13] For the horizoning of ἕξις and ἦθος from φύσις, see *Nicomachean Ethics* 1179b21; and *Categories* 8b25–9a21. For the distinction of ἕξις and ἦθος from θεόσδοτον, see *Nicomachean Ethics* 1099b8. For Aristotle's definition of moral virtue (ἀρετή) as a ἕξις, see *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book II.

[14] Michel Foucault, *The Essential Works of Foucault: Ethics, Subjectivity and Truth*, vol. 1., ed. Paul Rabinow, trans. Robert Hurley, et al. (New York: The New Press, 1998), 309.

[15] Shakespeare, *Timon* IV, iii, 113.

[16] Shakespeare, *Hamlet* I, ii, 76–86.

But habit is also that which provides the most unmediated access to the self beneath the array of appearances and pretentious comportments. For habit itself *is* character or mental constitution. In this sense, Aristotle defines ethical virtue as neither more nor less than a habit or state of character (ἕξις). For, "it is through the exercise of activities (ἐνεργεῖν) that states of character (ἕξεις) are produced."[17]

Probably most familiar to us is the sense of habit offered by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as "a settled disposition or tendency to act in a certain way, especially one acquired by frequent repetition of the same act until it becomes almost or quite involuntary; a settled practice, custom, usage." This definition captures the fundamental recursivity of habit. As a "tendency to act" that is acquired (*habitudo*) by frequent "repetition of the same act," habit is both source and product of action, action's cultivating power and its cultivated crop. Indeed, in using an agricultural metaphor, I'm well within habit's ambit, for it is also a zoological and botanical term denoting "the characteristic mode of growth and general external appearance of an animal or plant," as well as a term used by mineralogists for "the characteristic mode of formation of a crystal."[18]

Clearly, as a concept—let alone as a phenomenon—habit resides at the threshold of conflicting ontological and epistemological categories. As with the concept of *passion*, habit disrupts the boundaries between inside and outside, subject and object, psychic and physical.[19] It is at once the bodily comportment that masks and exhibits the human self and the mental constitution that *is* the human self. The concept of habit explains phenomena as seemingly divergent as the arguably human phenomena of character and virtue, the growth patterns of animal and vegetal forms of life, and the morphology of geological structures.

Whether human or non-human, the patterns of action through which habitual resources are *consumed* are at the same time the *production* process of new relations of organization, new habits and habitats. Let us see how habit produces, even as habit is itself produced, as that will go a ways toward laying bare the enigma of habit-formation, and determine what sense, if any, can be drawn from Deleuze's proleptic proposition that "[w]e are habits, nothing but habits—the habit of saying 'I'. Perhaps there is no more striking answer to the problem of the Self."[20] To do so, however, requires that we hold fast to the body—not to the extended *res* of Descartes' mechanistic metaphysics, but to the variable, exorbitant existence of the habitual body. As Merleau-Ponty writes, "the body proper (*corps propre*) […] is the most primordial habit, the one that conditions all

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[17] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1106a10; 1114a10.

[18] "Habit." *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed., 20 vols. (New York: Oxford UP, 1989).

[19] Brady Thomas Heiner, "The Passions of Michel Foucault," *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 14.1 (2003): 22–52.

[20] Gilles Deleuze, *Empiricism and Subjectivity: An Essay on Hume's Theory of Human Nature*, trans. Constantin V. Boundas (New York: Columbia UP, 1991), x.

other habits, and by means of which they are mutually comprehensible."[21] Through an examination of Augustinian and Heideggerian ontologies, it will become clear how the existentiality and productivity of habitual bodily being gets repeatedly covered over in the effort to build a unitary foundation for human (self) knowledge and freedom. It will also be illustrated how the process of burying habit is a positive phenomenal characteristic of habitual bodily being itself.

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[21] Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E104/F107.

I asked myself why I approved of the beauty of bodies, whether celestial or terrestrial, and what justification I had for giving a value judgment on mutable things […]. In the course of this inquiry into why I made such value judgments, I found the immutable and authentic eternity of truth to transcend my mutable mind. And so step by step I ascended from bodies to the soul (*anima*) that perceives through the body, and from there to its inward force (*vis interior*), to which bodily senses report regarding the exterior, this being as high as the beasts go. From there again I ascended to the power of reasoning (*potentia ratiocinatio*) to which is to be attributed the power of judging (*iudicandum*) and laying hold of the bodily senses. This power, which in myself I found to be mutable, raised itself to the level of its own intelligence (*intelligentia*), and led my thinking out of the ruts of habit (*abduxit a consuetudine*). It withdrew itself from the contradictory turbulence of imaginative fantasies, so as to discover the light by which it was flooded. At that point it had no hesitation in declaring that the immutable is preferable to the mutable, and that on this ground it can know the immutable, since, unless it could somehow know this, there would be no certainty in preferring it to the mutable. So in the flash of a trembling glance (*in ictu trepidantis aspectus*) it attained to that which *is*. At that moment I saw your invisible nature understood (*intellecta*) through the things which are made. But I did not possess the strength to keep my vision fixed thereon; my infirmity having only momentarily been beaten back (*repercussa*), I was returned to my accustomed habits (*solitis*), carrying with me nothing but a loving memory thereof, and a desire for that of which I had the aroma, but which I had not yet the capacity to eat.

–Saint Augustine, *Confessions* VII.16.23

Post-lapsarian Weight: Habit as Ontological Constriction and Emasculation of the Will in the Corpus of Saint Augustine

Saint Augustine's passionate portrayals of the human subject's struggle to master the "habits of this life" (*consuetudo huius vitae*) constitute a decisive moment in the western history of ontology. Under his self-examining gaze, habit comes to be construed as a structure of *ontological constriction* at the heart of the human—an abiding principle of discord lodged in the human person (*discordiosum malum*).[1] Augustine's discourse is, in this respect, a direct genealogical forebear of the modern humanist conception of the subject, in both its Judeo-Christian and secular variations. For Augustine, as for Enlightenment humanisms, habit is strictly a structure of the ready-made, a storehouse for obscurely sedimented, unrepresentably antiquated practices and prejudices that pull the sovereign subject down from the heights of its potential (self) understanding and inhibit the realization of its freedom, identity, and union with transcendent principles.

The first task of this chapter will be to articulate the metaphysical underpinnings of the constrictive conception of habit as it emerges in the work of Augustine. This stage of the analysis will proceed in three steps. First, I will consider Augustine's conception of habit in relation to the Pauline lens through which he comes to understand the phenomenon, i.e., the Pauline problematic of the flesh (1.1). In this conceptual context, selfhood is figured as an axis of ontological dehiscence, and *consuetudo carnalis* is cast as the inauthentic, constrictive modality of self that leads to self-exile (*se ipse exsule*).[2] I will then situate the Pauline problematic of the flesh in terms of Augustine's doctrine of Original Sin (1.2). In particular, I will look at the gendered axiological framework within which habit appears as metaphysical and moral fallenness (1.2.1). I will also inquire into the androcentric phenomenology on which this metaphysical account of fallenness is based (1.2.2). Third, I will consider

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[1] Referring to *concupiscentia carnis*, *Contra Julianum* IV.8.49.

[2] "[M]en desire what is outside of them and become exiles even from themselves (*quia homines appetentes ea quae foris sunt, etiam a se ipsis exsules facti sunt*)" (Augustine, *Commentaries on the Psalms* 57.1).

Augustine's transworldly principle of neighborly love (*caritas*): the authentic form of Christian sociality that his conception of habit produces. Though explicitly characterized as an exodus from habitually engendered self-exile, I argue that neighborly love is in effect a flight from the irreducible finitude of lived bodily relationality—a flight that results in a reification of social existence and a devaluation of intersubjective mutuality.

The final stage of the chapter will begin to frame my investigation of Augustine as a genealogical exercise in "writing the history of the present."[3] I will illustrate the enduring political repercussions of Augustinian ontology by tracing some of the threads of his ontology that have become woven in the fabric of modern sovereignty (1.4). The chapter will conclude by unearthing some habitual counter-intentions in Augustine's corpus in the effort to locate and take hold of some threads of his ontology that might lead in an alternative direction (1.5).

1.1   The Chains of *Consuetudo Carnalis*: The Pauline Problematic of the Flesh

*I was caught up to you [God] by your beauty and quickly torn away from you by my weight (*pondus*). With a groan I crashed into inferior things. This weight was bodily habit (*consuetudo carnalis*).*
                    –Saint Augustine[4]

*I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. [. . .] I know that good does not inhabit (*οἰκεῖ* / habitat*) me, that is, my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. [. . .] Now, if I do what I do not want to do, it is not I who do it, but sin which inhabits (*οἰκοῦσα* / habitat*) me.*
                    —Saint Paul [5]

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[3] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 31.

[4] *Confessions* VII.17.23.

[5] *Romans* 7:15–20.

Augustinian ontology figures the fleshly intransigence of habit as the principle obstruction to man's attempt to achieve (self) knowledge and realization through the structure of sovereignty. Given the explicitly moralizing context in which it is pursued, Augustine's account exhibits, in a most evident way, that what Foucault calls the "historical ontology of ourselves" is inextricably enmeshed in relations of power.[6] Whether staging his conversion in *Confessions* (C.E. 397–401), projecting the teleological structure of his conversion onto the plane of human history in *The City of God Against the Pagans* (C.E. 413–26), attempting to establish a direct ontological link between the human and the divine in *The Trinity* (C.E. 399–419), or outlining the proper pedagogical practice for teaching Christian doctrine in *Teaching Christianity* (C.E. 396–427), Augustine's thinking is everywhere in the grip of habit (*consuetudo*). Although one might tend to think of habit as a routinized, and hence rule-bound, reiterative activity, one finds that, in Augustine, habit appears as the unruly current that courses through his philosophical corpus. The unruliness of habit stems from its tendency to deviate from and resist the control of the rational will.[7] As such, it ceaselessly threatens to rupture the coherence of Augustine's discourse and disrupt his contemplative pursuit of truth. At every turn, Augustine attempts to confine, constrain, and keep the movement of bodily habit at bay—a movement that, like an imminently approaching wave, possesses the potential to tear him from the abiding hands of God, the sovereign, and place him in the clutches of disorderly worldly forces.

This antagonism is nowhere as dramatically depicted as in Augustine's now canonical *Confessions*, in which he formulates elaborate conceits to describe habit. Habit is the "chain," "shackle," or "fetter" (*catena*), the "bond" (*vinculum*) or "weight" (*moles*, *pondus*, *praegravatus*) that drags down the human psyche, dividing and setting it against its own capacity for self-present wisdom and freedom.[8] Habits are also the "ruts" of sinful routines, the "burdensome weight of the world (*sarcina saeculi*)," which lulls the mind into a "drowsiness such as commonly occurs during sleep" and from which only the power of reasoning, aided by providence, can rouse it.[9] Habit, according to Augustine, is the "wound" (*saucium*), the essential "infirmity"

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[6] Michel Foucault, *Essential Works* 1:315–19.

[7] "By force of habit it is done without willing" (Augustine, *Incomplete Work Against Julian* IV.103).

[8] *Confessions* VII.17.23; *To Simplician–On Various Questions* I.10–11.

[9] "[T]he power of reasoning […], which in myself I found to be mutable, raised itself to the level of its own intelligence, and led my thinking out of the ruts of habit (*consuetudine*)" (*Confessions* VII.17.23). "But through my miserable encumbrances I fall back into and am reabsorbed by my habitual practices. I am held in their grip. I weep profusely, but still I am held. Such is the strength of the burden of habit (*consuetudinis sarcina*)" (X.40.65). It is notable that the ancient Greek σάρκινος, meaning "fleshly," comes to be transposed in the early Latin *sarcina*, used by Augustine to describe habit as a "burden," a "weight." This is doubtless a product of Pauline influence, as will be discussed further below. See also *Confessions* VIII.5.12.

(*infirmitas*) that defines the human condition.[10] "[T]he strength of this 'chain'," writes Augustine's biographer, Peter Brown, "obsesses Augustine throughout the *Confessions*. [...] Like a single cloud that grows to darken the whole sky, this sense of the force of past habit deepens in Augustine. *Consuetudo carnalis* [...] will stand like a black bar, framing his description of every contemplative experience in the *Confessions*" (166, 143).

Man's struggle for freedom, enlightenment, and goodness, in Augustine's account, is complicated by his inner dehiscence, a distortion and declension of the psyche caused by the grips of earthly habitation. His texts abound with allegorical binaries in which this antagonism is cast: the law of the mind or inward man vs. the law of the flesh or outward man, the city of god vs. the worldly city, the unchangeable and authentic eternity of truth vs. the "muddy whirlpool" (*gurges caenosus*) of deceptive semblances of bodily and temporal things.[11] But what ultimately ensures that Augustinian ontology will reverberate throughout modernity is its articulation of the self as an *axis of ontological dehiscence*—an unstable distention (*distentio animi*) between an anticipated future and a pre-personal past that Augustine interprets as an interminable conflict between the sovereign, progressive principle of reason (*mens rationalis*, *legi mentis*) and the unruly, self-imprisoning sedimentations of bodily habit (*consuetudo carnalis*, *lege peccati et mortis*).[12] Augustine's phenomenal recognition of the self as an axis of ontological dehiscence doubtless arises out of his experience of his own facticity. This experience is not only one of finding oneself always already thrown into a world and situation that one has not chosen, but of being intrinsically propelled by an operative intentionality that is not of one's own conscious making or control.

In his confessional discourse, Augustine laments the felt weight of past actions and choices that, in the form of habit, come to be experienced as a ready-made region of himself. This region drags him down from the heights of the contemplative enjoyment of God (*Deo frui*),[13] obstructs his will to act in accordance with the codes of Christian continence, and manifests its own drive and directionality, prior to his conscious participation in it.[14]

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[10] "Augustine wrote the *Confessions* in the spirit of a doctor committed only recently, and so all the more zealously, to a new form of treatment [...] the insistence on treatment by 'confession' [....] Book Ten of the *Confessions* is not the affirmation of a cured man: it is the self-portrait of a convalescent" (Brown 170). Inhabiting the roles of both doctor and patient, Augustine's confessional discourse itself manifests the schism that it attempts to describe, the inner dehiscence that "corrupts" the human psyche.

[11] *Trinity* XII.9.14; *Confessions* II.2.2.

[12] *Confessions* XI.23.30; XI.26.33.

[13] *Teaching Christianity* I.9.9; I.22.20–21.

[14] "[...] the force of habit goes on its own way, and this is what wars against the soul: habit formed in the flesh (*consuetudinem ferri quo solet. Et hoc est quod adversus animam pugnat, consuetudo facta in carne*)" (*Disputation* XXII).

I sighed after [the] freedom [to dedicate all my time to God], but was bound not by an iron imposed by anyone else (*ferro alieno*) but by the iron of my own volition (*mea ferrea voluntate*). The enemy had a grip on my will and so had made a chain to constrict me and hold me prisoner (*inde mihi catenam fecerat et constrinxerat me*). From a distorted will, lust is formed; from servitude to lust, habit is formed; and from habit to which there is no resistance, necessity is formed. By these close-knit links, bound one to another—which is why I have called it a chain—an unyielding subjection held me in confinement. The new will, which was beginning to be within me a will to freely serve and enjoy you, God, the only sure source of pleasure, was not yet strong enough to overcome my older will, which had the strength of habit. So my two wills, one old, the other new, one carnal, the other spiritual, were in conflict with one another, dispersing my psyche (*dissipabant anima mea*) in their discord.[15]

The law of sin is the violence of habit by which even the unwilling mind (*invitus animus*) is dragged down and held, as it deserves to be, since by its own volition it lapsed into habit (*in eam volens inlabitur*).[16]

In instances such as these, Augustine's texts construct habit as the presently felt force of a concatenation of past events (a concatenation which his text itself rhetorically performs).[17] Man's "second nature" remains the principle antagonist in this drama.[18] The dissonance felt between the "I will" and the "I can" (or, as it will be referred to in our full-bodied account of habit, between the "momentary body" and the "customary body") is accounted for in terms of an accumulation of a series of voluntary acts in the

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[15] "Cui rei ego suspirabam, ligatus non ferro alieno, sed mea ferrea voluntate. velle meum tenebat inimicus; et inde mihi catenam fecerat et constrinxerat me. Quippe voluntate perversa facta est libido, et dum servitur libidini, facta est consuetudo, et dum consuetudini non resistur, facta est necessitas. Quibus quasi ansulis sibimet innexis -- unde catenam appellavi -- tenebat me obstrictum dura servitus. voluntas autem nova, quae mihi esse coeperat, ut te gratis colere fruique te vellem, deus, sola certa iucunditas, nondum erat idonea ad superandam priorem vetustate roberatam. Ita duae voluntates meae, una vetus, alia nova, illa carnalis, illa spiritalis, confilgebant inter se, atque discordando dissipabant animam meam" (*Confessions* VIII.5.10).

[16] "Lex enim peccati est violentia consuetudinis, qua trahitur et tenetur etiam invitus animus, eo merito, quo in eam volens inlabitur" (*Confessions* VIII.5.12).

[17] "Quippe voluntate perversa facta est libido, et dum servitur libidini, facta est consuetudo, et dum consuetudini non resistur, facta est necessitas" (*Confessions* VIII.5.10).

[18] "For it is not for nothing that habit is called a quasi-second, quasi-fabricated nature (*Non enim frustra consuetudo quasi secunda, et quasi affabricata natura dicitur*)" (*On Music* VI.7.19). Augustine is likely referring here to the famous Ciceronian proverb: "Habit is (like) a second nature (*Consuetudo est (quasi) altera natura*)" (Cicero, *De Finibus* 5.25.74), which is originally derived from Aristotle's claim in his account of memory: "Habit is a second nature (φύσις ἤδη τὸ ἔθος)" (*On Memory and Reminiscence* 452a 29). See also Brown, *Augustine* 166–67.

personal history of the individual.[19] The fallible individual is like an addict. Having repeatedly chosen to grasp at things inimical to his or her well-being (i.e., in Augustine's axiology, all embodied temporal entities, which are subject to change and, hence, loss), the momentary volition of the habituated individual to direct him- or herself otherwise is compromised. The recovering addict cannot shake an entrenched habit by a sheer act of conscious will. Through the medium of habit, the "I can" becomes overdetermined by its past, dislodging it from the momentary intentionality of the "I will," such that the addict lacks the power to accomplish what he or she rationally wills to do (i.e., quit his or her addiction). This self-estrangement is caused by the chains of habit, which wrap themselves tightly around the subject, rendering it "inveterate" to the free variation of which it was once capable.[20]

This psychological mode of interpretation, while intermittently present throughout the heterogeneous contexts of his writing, is more prevalent in the younger Augustine. Before his baptism and commitment to the Christian code of continence, Augustine had not yet experienced the struggle of sustaining an ascetic way of life. He also had not yet experienced the ecclesiastical difficulties he would later encounter as Bishop of Hippo, attempting to evangelize "intransigently schismatic" North African religious communities.[21] Nor was the young Augustine yet entrenched in the battle to forge the doctrinal unity and sovereign authority of the Catholic Church against the multitude of pagan and early Christian heterodoxy—an *agon* which would consume much of his later life. No, this younger, pre-evangelical Augustine was more optimistic about the power and free choice of the will, and so less attuned to the ontological depths of habitual bodily being. Habit, and the psychical dispersion which he attributes to it, appears as a chain. But from this principally psychological perspective, the links of this chain are viewed as instances of volition in the practical history of the individual that derive their strength from the working of human memory.[22] So, as necessity was formed by a chain of intentional acts, it could in turn be unshackled through the intentional disciplines of philosophy and ethical ἄσκησις.

This conception is very much of a piece with pagan Neoplatonic and Stoic aesthetics of existence.[23] Indeed, the corpus of Saint Augustine is arguably the paradigmatic turning point from Hellenistic to Latin Christian cultures. This is evident in Augustine's early view of habit, which is more Platonic and Stoic than (what, after him, would become recognizably) Christian. In this early view, there is a confidence in the unbridled efficacy of rationality to govern and control its perceived subordinates

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[19] "No one is punished for faults of nature (*vitiis naturalibus*) but for faults of will (*vitiis voluntariis*); even the vice which has become habitual (*vitium consuetudine*), and has developed and hardened into 'second nature', originated in an act of volition" (*City of God* XII.3).

[20] *Teaching Christianity* I.24.25.

[21] See Brown, *Augustine* 231–233.

[22] See Brown, *Augustine* 142.

[23] See Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*; Michel Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*.

(whether body, passion, woman, or animal). The Hellenistic ideals of autarky, self-sufficiency, and the "well-ordered man" (*homo ordinatissimus*)—ideals which Augustine will cleave to and strive for throughout his life—appear to the young Augustine as mortally obtainable goals.[24] "Whatever it is by which man is superior to beasts, whether mind or spirit or whether either of them is the correct term (we find both in the Scripture), if this dominates and rules all the other elements of which the human being is composed, then he is well-ordered in the highest degree."[25] And it was in pursuit of the *homo ordinatissimus* that Augustine himself retired from Milan to an essentially private life of philosophical repose (*otium*) in Cassiciacum in C.E. 386, prior to his decision to be baptized (C.E. 387) and his ordination as priest (C.E. 391). At Cassiciacum, Augustine attempts to inhabit and formulate an intellectual and ascetic program of ethical self-cultivation, evidenced in his earliest tracts such as *Against the Academics*, *On the Blessed Life*, *On Order*, *Soliloquies*, *On Music*. These texts propose an exacting philosophical training (*eruditio*)—thoroughly within the Hellenistic tradition of the Liberal Arts and, of course, inextricable from a rigorous regimentation of the body (*disciplina*)—by means of which one is led away from the distracting and deceptive appearances of embodied affairs, which are subject to change, toward the disciplined, self-possessed contemplation of the beautiful order (*ordo*) and changeless law (*lex immutabilis*) of the universe, which "cannot be perceived by the eye of the flesh or any bodily sense, but are known by the mind alone." [26] Augustine's attitude regarding this passage through bodily things to disincarnate spirituality (*per coroporalia ad incorporalia*) is ripe with the promise of speculative philosophy. "Philosophy promises to make known with limpid clarity the most true and hidden God, and deigns, step by step, to present Him to our view, as if through clouds suffused with light."[27]

However, the persistent pangs of Augustine's conversion extinguish the residues in his thought of that Hellenistic confidence in human reason's self-sufficient capacity to participate in and assimilate itself to the universal reason of the cosmos. He comes to castigate such confidence in the power of "worldly" wisdom as a sign of pride (*superbia*)—the greatest vice and obstacle to the spiritual life and to the attainment of changeless truth.[28] As he deepens his inquisition of the dynamics of the

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[24] See Brown, *Augustine* 94–95

[25] "Illud est quod volo dicere: hoc quidquid est, quo pecoribus homo praeponitur, sive mens, sive spiritus, sive utrumque rectius appellatur (nam utrumque in divinis Libris invenimus), si dominetur atque imperet caeteris quibuscumque homo constat, tunc esse hominem ordinatissimum" (*On Free Choice of the Will* I.8.18). See also I.7.16 and I.10.20.

[26] See Brown, *Augustine* 108–120. Quote from Augustine, *On True Religion* 30.55: "Porro ipsa vera aequalitas ac similitudo, atque ipsa vera et prima unitas, non oculis carneis, neque ullo tali sensu, sed mente intellecta conspicitur."

[27] "Ipsa [philosophia] verissimum et secretissimum Deum perspicue se demonstraturam promittit, et iam iamque quasi per lucidas nubes ostentare dignatur" (*Against the Academics* I.1.3). See also III.10.43.

[28] *Trinity* IV.20–24; XIII.22; *Confessions* VII.20.26–21.27.

habitual body, he sharpens what will become the most distinctive feature of his religious attitude: an unrelieved anxiety about himself and a deep sense of dependence on the external sovereign authority of God. Whilst coming to inhabit this attitude, Augustine comes to appreciate the depth of the discrepancy between human volition and human capability—between the "I will" and the "I can." He becomes aware of the way that every instance of intentionality is at once partly willed and partly nullified (*partim velle, partim nolle*).[29] As a result, the psychological characterizations of the operative intentionality of habit that pervade his early works give way to problematics of an ontological sort. "[T]he power of reasoning […], which in myself I found to be mutable, raised itself to the level of its own intelligence, and led my thinking out of the ruts of habit (*consuetudine*). […] But through my miserable encumbrances I fall back into and am reabsorbed by my habitual practices (*solitis*). I am held in their grip. I weep profusely, but still I am held. Such is the strength of the burden of habit (*consuetudinis sarcina*)."[30] The powerful pull of bodily habit ruptures Augustine's Neoplatonic faith in the power of reasoning (*ratio*) to lift and hold the mind in the contemplative intuition of eternal ideas. The heuristic method of Plato's ladder, espoused in the *Symposium* and mimicked by Augustine in works like *On Order*, eventually strikes Augustine as insufficient in its failure to duly attend to the weightiness of the habitual entanglements of embodied existence.[31]

Indeed, as the young Augustine attempts to extricate himself from his pagan heritage and deepen his religious perspective, he argues that the primary deficiency of Platonic philosophy, the reason why it failed to initiate a mass conversion toward the good and blessed life among Athenians and beyond—in effect, the reason why it failed to become "Platonism *for the masses*," as Nietzsche would later define Christianity[32]—was precisely its inattention to bodily habit and social ritual. "[T]he one great fault [of Platonic philosophy] that is healed by Christian discipline" is that "philosophy, i.e., the pursuit of wisdom, cannot be divorced from religion," specifically, religious "ritual" (*ritu*).[33] Plato was "pleasant to read rather than potent to

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[29] "[I]t is not monstrous partly to will something, partly to nill it, but it is a morbidity of the soul. Although lifted up by truth, the soul does not wholly rise up, but is weighed down by habit (*[N]on igitur monstrum partim velle, partim nolle, sed aegritudo animi est, quia non totus assurgit veritate sublevatus, consuetudine praegravatus*)" *Confessions* VIII.9.21.

[30] "*Ratiocinantem potentiam […] quoque in me comperiens mutabilem, erexit se ad intellegentiam suam, et abduxit cogitationem a consuetudine. […] Sed reccido in haec aerumnosis ponderibus et resorbeor solitis, et teneor et multum fleo, sed multum teneor. tantum consuetudinis sarcina digna est!*" (*Confessions* VII.17.23; X.40.65).

[31] As Brown narrates this shift, "We met [Augustine], at Cassiciacum, as a man certain of his future: his books are all of them programmes; even his reminiscences are no more than a list of those obstacles to perfection, which he hoped soon to surmount. In the *Confessions*, he is a man who has lost this certain future: […] he is obsessed by the need to understand what had really happened to him in his distant past" (*Augustine* 149).

[32] "Christentum ist Platonismus fuers Volk" (Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1966), 3.

[33] *On True Religion* 5.8–9.

persuade"[34] because while he and his followers "privately" (*privatum*) despised the sensuous world and embraced the pure spirit in the pursuit of the one eternal true Go(o)d, they preferred to submit to "popular custom" (*consuetudo popularum*) in the way of religious rites, rather than to bring the people over to their way of thinking and living.[35] As he writes in the *Confessions*, the Platonists "see what the goal is but not how to get there," whereas Christians "see the way which leads to the home of blessedness (*viam patriam beautificam*), not merely as an end to be perceived but as *a realm to be inhabited* (habitandum)."[36]

We will take up this critical conjuncture again in Section 1.5, for it allows us to grasp Augustine's conception of habit as a "lever of intervention" that subverts and transgresses the metaphysical-axiological intentions of his own text.[37] But first we must follow those latter intentions to their full articulation and, ultimately, to their point of exhaustion. For now, it bears mentioning that the *via habitandum* that Augustine pursues is that of disciplinary authority. The failure of speculative philosophy, in his estimation, was not simply its lack of evangelism, but its failure to appreciate the need, in the pursuit of wisdom, for submission to external disciplinary authority (i.e., Christ, embodied in the Catholic Church) over against everyday habitual practice. "[T]rue religion cannot by any means be approached without the weightiness of sovereign authority (*gravi auctoritatis imperio*). Things must first be believed of which a man may later achieve understanding if he conduct himself well and prove himself worthy."[38] Augustine posits the *gravitas* of sovereign authority, which aims to turn the subject toward the realm of eternal, universal truth, as the morally and metaphysically necessary counter-weight to the *pre-gravitas* of

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[34] "suavius ad legendum, quam potentius ad persuadendum" (*On True Religion* 2.2).

[35] *On True Religion* 1.1–5.9.

[36] "[D]iscernerem atque distinguerem, quid interesset inter praesumptionem et confessionem, inter videntes, quo eundum sit, nec videntes, qua, et viam ducentem ad beatificam patriam, non tantum cernendam sed et *habitandam*" (*Confessions* VII.20.26; my emphasis). Augustine is here reflecting on the insight that his reading of the epistles of Saint Paul provided him, over against the texts of the Platonists.

[37] The critical reading/writing strategy of extraction, or transformative repetition, will be discussed in further detail in the Intermezzo situated between the investigation of Augustine (Chapter One) and that of Heidegger (Chapter Two). On the concept of the "lever of intervention" and its role in the deconstructive strategy of extraction, see Jacques Derrida, *Positions*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 6, 71. See also Edward S. Casey, "Origin(s) in (of) Heidegger/Derrida," *The Journal of Philosophy* 81.10 (1984): 601–610, esp. his discussion of "transcription" on pp. 608–610; Mary C. Rawlinson, "Levers, Signatures, and Secrets: Derrida's Use of Woman," in *Derrida and Feminism*, eds. Ellen K. Feder, Mary C. Rawlinson, and Emily Zakin (New York: Routledge, 1997), 69–86; and Jacques Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: IL, University of Chicago Press, 1982), 320–21.

[38] *The Usefulness of Belief* 8.20–9.21.

habituality, which pulls the subject toward the immediacy and unreliability of embodied affairs.[39]

Within this social and conceptual horizon, Augustine outlines a two-pronged cure (*medicina animae* or *medicina temporalis*) for the infirmity of habit—a graded treatment by which man may overcome his internal resistances and become well-ordered by re-collecting himself in the image and love of God: Reason (*ratio*) and Authority (*auctoritas humana*). Authority, in these early formulations, serves an essentially propaedeutic function. By demanding belief, it *prepares* man for reasoning.[40] And, indeed, the early Augustine expects man to graduate to reasoning.[41] Furthermore, in an ideal world (which is to say, no world at all), external authority would not be necessary to raise man's mind to God and lead him to moral action. Authority is rendered necessary by the corrupted condition of man in his temporal, embodied state of existence, i.e., by the chains of habit which have wrapped themselves tightly around the rational subject, rendering it "inveterate" and incapable of self-governance.[42] Man grows accustomed from a very young age to seeking and having his needs met by conforming himself to the material and social world. And the fleeting, finite pleasures that he gleans from this world lead him to habitually prefer corporeal things to spiritual things, "to love inhabiting the building" instead of "inhabit[ing] the builder."[43] As a result, the mind clings to (*inhaerere*) temporal entities and worldly opinions, literally internalizing them, becoming fastened (*infigo*) to them through the glue of care (*curae glutino*), such that the subject is borne along, turned about, and shaped by them, losing and forgetting itself amidst the constant change and variation of "things outside itself."[44] Authority, in the form of *christiana*

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[39] "Although lifted up by truth, the soul does not wholly rise up, but is weighed down by habit (*sed aegritudo animi est, quia non totus assurgit veritate sublevatus, consuetudine praegravatus*)" (*Confessions* VIII.9.21). "[C]onsciousness is weighed down with a sort of self-heaviness that expels it from blessedness (*[P]raegrauatus animus quasi pondere suo a beatitudine expellitur*)" (*Trinity* XII.11.16).

[40] *On True Religion* 24.45.

[41] The twofold program of *ratio* and *auctoritas* is present in Augustine's early, Neoplatonic writings on spiritual education. However, the idea of the spiritual life as a vertical ascent, as a progression toward a final, highest stage *to be reached in this life* is displaced by the idea that the human will, weighed down by habit, lacks the power requisite for such an ascent. The mortal need for the external authority of the church and the grace of God assumes a more prominent and indispensable role in his mature conception of the spiritual life. The principle catalyst for this shift, as we will discuss below, is Augustine's reading of Saint Paul. See Brown, *Augustine* 144–45. See also John G. Prendiville, "The Development of the Idea of Habit in the Thought of Saint Augustine" 35–39.

[42] *Teaching Christianity* I.24.25. See also Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine* 5.

[43] "Do not love to inhabit the building, but inhabit the builder (*Noli amare habitare in fabrica, se habita in fabricatore*)" (*Commentaries on the Psalms* 141.15).

[44] *Confessions* IV.14.23; *On Music* VI. 5.12–14; *Trinity* X.5.7; XII.9.14–11.16. In her article, "Vision: The Eye of the Body," Margaret Miles elucidates the significance of Augustine's theory of perception for his theory of the constitution of the soul. For Augustine, the soul is ultimately formed and shaped by the objects that it perceives. The object seen is permanently drawn into the soul as the soul literally

disciplina, is thus required, Augustine decides, to unshackle the mind from *consuetudo corporum* and *consuetudo populorum* so that it may raise itself up to the truth (i.e., God) via participation in the sacraments and contemplation of the eternal reasons that shine through the exemplary life of Christ.[45]

The decisive influence in Augustine's shift from a psychological interpretation to an ontological interpretation of habit—and ultimately from an adopted Hellenistic perspective to a Christian perspective—is his reading of Paul of Tarsus. Hannah Arendt goes so far as to say that "it is primarily from Saint Paul that [Augustine's] life and thought took their bearings, insofar as both were truly religious rather than determined by Neoplatonic Greek influences."[46] In the epistles of Saint Paul, Augustine found something that spoke to his condition even more directly than did the Platonic texts. Paul's thought had a "visceral effect" on him (*mihi inviscerabantur*), for it provided him with an unambiguous explanation of habit—the "obscurity" of his soul (*tenebras animae meae*)—as well as an abiding hope that, through a relationship of radical dependence, his habituality, along with his mortality, could be swallowed up in religious victory. This is a persuasive program that Augustine had not found in his reading of the Platonists. "In the Platonic books no one sings: 'Surely my soul will be submissive to God (*Nonne deo subdita erit anima mea*).'"[47] Indeed, in the final scene of the drama of his conversion, when the voice he heard in the garden at Milan bade him "Pick up and read," it was to the epistles of Paul that he turned, and it was in them that he discerned a divine call to abandon the world: "put on the rule of Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in its concupiscence."[48]

Through Paul, Augustine comes to see embodied existence as a single, unresolved tension between "flesh" (*carne*) and "spirit" (*spiritus*)—a tension susceptible of being resolved only after this life, "when death is swallowed up in victory."[49] However, until that post-mortal "time" (namely, "eternity") when body and psyche will be reintegrated by Christ's grace, man's (embodied, temporally distended) self remains in exile from its (rational, abidingly integrated) self, and his capacity for

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absorbs the object into itself, retaining it in the seat of the self: memory. See *Trinity* X.5.7 and Margaret Miles, "Vision: The Eye of the Body and the Eye of the Mind in Saint Augustine's *De Trinitate* and *Confessions*," *Journal of Religion* 63 (1983): 125–142.

[45] *On True Religion* 5.8; 35.65; 4.6.

[46] *Love and Saint Augustine* 3–4.

[47] *Confessions* VII.20.26–21.27.

[48] "Non in comissationibus et ebrietatibus, non in cubilibus et inpudicitiis, non in contentione et aemulatione, sed induite dominum Iesum Christum, et carnis providentiam ne feceritis in concupiscentiis" (*Romans* 13:13–14; quoted in Augustine, *Confessions* VIII.12.29). It is noteworthy in this context that the imperative prohibiting one from making provisions for the flesh, at the same time relies upon a corporeal metaphor: "assume" or "put on" (*induite*) the rule of Jesus Christ, as one would put a garment on one's body.

[49] Paul, *First Letter to the Corinthians* 15:54. See Brown, *Augustine* 145–50.

moral action is thwarted.[50] *Consuetudo carnalis* is at once the mortal "agent" of this self-exile and the symptom of man's fallenness. But what is the specific *carnality* of habit? How is the Pauline antithesis between the spirit and the flesh to be understood? This antithesis, Peter Brown writes,

> was a particularly fateful 'theological shorthand.' Paul crammed into the notion of the flesh a superabundance of overlapping notions. The charged opacity of this language faced all later ages like a Rohrschach test: it is possible to measure, in the repeated exegesis of a mere hundred words of Paul's letters [e.g., the famous sixth and seventh chapters of his letter to the Romans], the future course of Christian thought on the human person.[51]

The Pauline future of Christianity to which Brown refers is one that is indelibly shaped, if not inaugurated, by Augustine's interpretation. And for Augustine, the principle of the flesh provided a metaphysical corroboration and explanation of his own lived bodily experience as a form of helplessness and rebellion against God. Ultimately, the Pauline problematic of the flesh enables Augustine to conceptually yoke together two decisive phenomena of embodied experience and resolve them in a unified metaphysical axiology. The first is his own discordant experience of habitually thrown facticity, in which he encounters a disjunction between his conscious image of himself (projected into a desired future) and a mysterious inability (rooted in a pre-personal past) to follow his own will. The second phenomenon, to which Augustine connects habit as the incongruous experience of himself as an exile to himself, is death, the most violent dislocation of the human person and ineluctable loss of self imaginable. But through the Pauline notion of death as "the wages of sin,"[52] which operates according to a law that "dwells in the members of the body,"[53] habit comes to

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[50] There is lively debate as to whether Augustine's account of habit entails merely a "diminished capacity" for moral choice or an ontologically rooted "involuntary sin." Augustine's texts supply evidence of both positions, as he equivocated between them over the course of his life, changing his position according to the ecclesiastical, pastoral, doctrinal, and philosophical demands that pulled upon him in various historical contexts. See, e.g., Malcolm E. Alflatt "The Development of the Idea of Involuntary Sin in St. Augustine." *Revue d'Études Augustiniennes et Patristiques* 20 (1974): 113–34; and "The Responsibility for Involuntary Sin in St. Augustine." *Recherches Augustiniennes*. 10 (1975): 170–86; as well as William S. Babcock, "Sin, Penalty, and the Responsibility of the Soul: A Problem in Augustine's *De libero arbitrio*, III." *Studia Patristica*. Vol 27. Ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone (Leuven: Peeters Pub, 1993); and R.J. O'Connell, "'Involuntary Sin' in the *de libero arbitrio*," *Revue d'Études Augustiniennes et Patristiques* 37 (1991): 23–36.

[51] *Body & Society* 48.

[52] "The wages of sin is death (τὰ γὰρ ὀψώνια τῆς ἁμαρτίας θάνατος / *Stipendia enim peccati mors*)" (*Romans* 6:23).

[53] "I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members (βλέπω δὲ ἕτερον νόμον ἐν τοῖς μέλεσίν μου ἀντιστρατευόμενον τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ νοός μου καὶ αἰχμαλωτίζοντά με ἐν

be fatefully conjoined for Augustine with the metaphysical conception of death as a penalty (*poena*), something that man has earned and that has been justly imposed upon him by God.[54]

Let us explicate this fateful conjuncture by first looking more closely at Augustine's understanding of his own discordant experience of habitual facticity. Through habitual absorption, the subject "plunges" (*immergo*) or "falls out of itself into itself by the downward tendential movement of its own being" (*nutu suo ad se ipsum*).[55] *Consuetudo carnalis* is thus not a psychological trait that is acquired through an individual's course of life (*curriculum vitae*); it is an existential direction or orientation of human being, the site of the production of an ineluctable cleavage in the "I."[56] In the operative intentionality of habit, Augustine sees a rupture between the I of reason and the I of embodied worldly life. As Augustine famously laments, "I have become a question to myself (*mihi quaestio factus sum*), and that is my infirmity. […] I labor within myself to grasp my own self, but I have become to myself a land of difficulty and a source of sweat beyond measure."[57] As John Prendiville argues in an analysis of the development of the idea of habit in the thought of Saint Augustine, "'flesh' must stand for a tendency of the whole person on all levels of his [*sic*] being."[58]

According to Augustine's phenomenological ontology, bodily habit is the impetus of bodily busyness (*impetus carnalium negotiorum*). When the subject yields to this existential movement, when it turns outwards and absorbs itself in embodied affairs, it becomes less self-collected, less with-itself (*ideo apud seipsam minus est*). The preposition that Augustine employs in this context, *apud*, is grammatically identical to the French *chez*, which means not only "in" and "with," but "at home." Thus, to say that the subject is less *apud se ipse* is akin to saying that one is less *chez soi*; the expression suggests that the subject is not only less "with itself," but less "at home with itself."[59] The terminology that Augustine uses is significant, and will become increasingly significant when we assess the traces of Augustinian ontology in

τῷ νόμῳ τῆς ἁμαρτίας τῷ ὄντι ἐν τοῖς μέλεσίν μου / *Video autem aliam legem in membris meis repugnantem legi mentis meae et captivantem me in lege peccati quae est in membris meis*)" (*Romans* 7:23).

[54] "Since God created for man an immortal nature, it is not by a law of nature that man is subject to bodily death, but as a just punishment for sin (*etiam ipsam nobis corporis mortem non lege naturae, qua nullam mortem homini Deus fecit, sed merito inflictam esse peccati*)" (*City of God* XIII.15).

[55] *Trinity* XII.9.14–11.16.

[56] See Paul Ricoeur, *Symbolism of Evil* 142–143.

[57] "[M]ihi quaestio factus sum, et ipse est languor meus […] Ego certe, domine, laboro hic et laboro in me ipso: factus sum mihi terra difficultatis et sudoris nimii" (*Confessions* X.33.50; X.16.25).

[58] John G. Prendiville, "The Development of the Idea of Habit in the Thought of Saint Augustine" 75.

[59] "Clearly when [the soul] adapts itself to the body, it is less with itself, because the body is always less than it is (*sed plane cum se accommodat corpori: et ideo apud seipsam minus est, quia corpus semper minus quam ipsa est*)" (*On Music* VI.5.12).

the Heideggerian problematic of sociality. Augustine claims that when the subject, "adapting itself to the body," turns away from the concentrated, contemplative activity of mind, in which the self, as the image of God, is present to itself, the subject is made miserable by entangling itself in the distresses of mundane matters. The subject prefers care (*cura*) to security (*securitas*).[60] The Latin prefix *se-* is an ablative prefix meaning "apart" or "away from." So the Latin *se-cura*, from which drives the English *secure*, literally means "away from/free from care."

Habitual bodily being is, for Augustine, ontologically interpreted as care: a constant tendency of the subject toward concernful absorption in worldly relations, a basic orientation of the subject through which it seeks and finds its existential anchorage in mundane moorings. But this fleshly orientation ultimately obfuscates and alienates the authentic subject of spirituality, which can only veritably find security in the diligent obedience to the law of the inner man, i.e., in loving, remembering, and willing itself in the subsistent self-sameness that lies *beyond* its habitual bodily attachments. Care is insecure (literally, "not free from care") precisely because it seeks security through inhabiting (*habitare*) the world, through having and holding (*habere et tenere*), and ultimately craving (*appetitus*) and clinging to (*inhaerere*) temporal goods through the body. Such goods, as endlessly subject to change, are incessantly susceptible to loss, and by internalizing and getting stuck to them, the subject loses and forgets its authentic self.

> Craving, as the will to have and to hold, gives rise in the moment of possession to a fear of losing. […] So long as we desire temporal things, we are constantly under this threat […]. Temporal goods originate and perish independently of man, who is tied to them by his desire. Constantly bound by craving and fear to a future full of uncertainties, we strip each present moment of its calm, its intrinsic import, which we are unable to enjoy. And so, the future destroys the present.[61]

The anxious care (*impensa cura*) of the uncertain future destroys *self-presence*. The fear of death—the ultimate loss of self and all that it holds and inhabits—destroys the self's presence to itself and is daily rehearsed in the discordant experience of the

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[60] "No wonder the soul gets entangled in distresses, it prefers care to security […] and it remains so until the impetus of carnal busyness, which is set into motion by long-enduring habit and which inserts itself into the self that is trying to turn toward God, comes to rest (*Nec mirum, si aerumnis implicatur, praeponens curam securitati […] donec carnalium negotiorum requiescat impetus, effrenatus consuetudine diuturna, et tumultuosis recordationibus conversioni ejus sese inserens*)" (*On Music* VI.5.14). A variation of this discussion is reiterated in *Trinity* X.5.7. As we will discuss in Chapter Two, Heidegger explicitly bases his account of care (*Sorge*) in *Being and Time* on Augustine's discussion of the dynamics of *cura*: "The way in which 'care' is viewed in the […] existential analytic of *Dasein*, is one which has grown upon the author in connection with his attempts to interpret Augustinian (i.e., Helleno-Christian) anthropology with regard to the foundational principles reached in the ontology of Aristotle" (*Being and Time* 492 n. vii).

[61] Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine* 10.

subject's temporal dispersion in habitual bodily activity. Habituality is death as a phenomenon; in confronting its habitual bodily being, the subject is rendered problematic. *Mihi quaestio factus sum*: I am a question to myself. *Oneri mihi sum*: I am a burden to myself.[62] "Surely I have not ceased to be my own self […] and yet there is still a great gap between myself and myself (*interest inter me ipsum et me ipsum*). […] Oh that my soul might follow my own self (*ut anima mea sequatur me*) […] that, extricated from the glue of concupiscence, it might not be in rebellion against itself."[63]

"The cleavage between me and myself," Ricoeur writes, "and the projection of this self that is alienated from itself into externality is the key to the Pauline conception of the flesh."[64] The dehiscence of the temporalizing subject is experienced by Augustine as a rebellion within himself, which he expresses as a *distantia* within the subject, an *inter-esse*. The bodily subject "stands apart" from itself (*dis-stare*) in an ontological state of dehiscence or betweenness (*inter-esse*: "being between") and Augustine figures the habitual body as the intractably alien force of rebellion within himself that must be mastered or sacrificed in service of the project of self-recollection. "Our real selves are not bodies (*Corpora vero non sunt quod nos sumus*)."[65] The screens upon which Augustine projects this intimate alterity vary in shifting conceptual and social contexts (and as will be seen in Section 1.2, such screens are consistently figured as feminine). The overriding metaphysical project that governs these shifting projections, however, remains the same—or, rather, it incessantly strives for sameness. The Pauline antithesis between the flesh and the spirit serves as its guiding figure.

Inflected by this problematic, Augustine's hermeneutics of habit roots the latter elsewhere than in the historically sedimented choices or actions of the individual. In these articulations, the roots of habit reach down deeper into a more distant, mythical-metaphysical past. Man's habituality is the quotidian symptom of his mortality, the "wage" and "penalty" of Original Sin. Human flesh is "dragged along by the chains of habit, which derive from the inheritance of our first parents, and which have grown in upon our flesh by a law of nature, rendering it inveterate."[66]

> I was in conflict with myself and was dissociated from myself. The dissociation came about against my will. Yet this was not the manifestation of a mind alienated in its [pre-lapsarian, created] nature, but of a [post-lapsarian] punishment suffered in my own mind. And for that reason it was "not I" that brought this about, "but sin which

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[62] *Confessions* X.33.50; X.28.39.

[63] *Confessions* X.30.41–42.

[64] Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil* 333.

[65] *On True Religion* 46.89.

[66] *Teaching Christianity* I.24.25.

inhabited (*habitat*) me" (*Romans* 7:17, 20), sin resulting from the punishment of a more freely chosen sin, because I was a son of Adam.[67]

I say that there was free exercise of will in that man who was first formed. He was so made that absolutely nothing could resist his will, if he had willed to keep the precepts of God. But after he voluntarily sinned, we who have descended from his stock were plunged (*praecipitatio*) into necessity.[68]

If it be asked how Paul knows that nothing good inhabits his flesh, which means that sin dwells there, how but from his inherited mortality and from his reiterative attentiveness to bodily pleasure? The former is the penalty of original sin, the latter of repeated sinning. We are born into this life with the former, and add to the latter as we live. These two things, nature and habit conjoined (*natura et consuetudo conjuncta*), render cupidity strong and unconquerable. This is what Paul calls sin which, he says, inhabits his flesh, obtaining a certain domination and sovereignty there, so to speak.[69]

The intractable inertia that issues from an individual's "second nature" and exerts a gravitational pull on rational moral choice is only an expression of a more deeply rooted ontological division: that of fallen human being. Pre-lapsarian man is figured as not having a passive or habitual bone in his body (except perhaps the one from which woman, his "helper" [*adiutor*], was fashioned). In post-lapsarian human nature, the chains of habit have, "by a law of nature," wrapped themselves tightly around the subject, rendering the *mihi quaestio* unanswerable.

Whoever wishes to say "I am," and to summon up his own unity and identity and pit it against the variety and multiplicity of the world, must withdraw into himself, into some inner region, turning his back on whatever the "outside" can offer. It is in this context that Augustine definitely departs from contemporary philosophical teachings, Stoic and Neoplatonic, and strikes out on his own. For unlike Epictetus or Plotinus, he did not find either self-sufficiency or serenity in this inner

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[67] *Confessions* VIII.10.22 (my emphasis).

[68] *Disputation Against Fortunatus* 22.

[69] "Quod si quaesierit aliquis: Unde hoc est, quod dicit habitare in carne sua non utique bonum, id est peccatum? Unde nisi ex traduce mortalitatis et assiduitate voluptatis? Illud est ex poena originalis peccati, hoc ex poena frequentati peccati; cum illo in hanc vitam nascimur, hoc vivendo addimus. Quae duo scilicet tamquam natura et consuetudo coniuncta robustissimam faciunt et invictissimam cupiditatem, quod vocat peccatum et dicit habitare in carne sua, id est dominatum quemdam et quasi regnum obtinere" (*To Simplician–On Various Questions* I.10).

region of the self. […] For the more he withdrew into himself and gathered his self from the dispersion and distraction of the world, the more he "became a question to himself" (*quaestio mihi factus sum*). Hence, it is by no means a simple withdrawal into himself that Augustine opposes to the loss of self in dispersion and distraction, but rather a turning about of the question itself and the discovery that this self is even more impenetrable than the "hidden works of nature."[70]

The *mihi quaestio* produced at the phenomenal site of the ontological dehiscence of lived bodily being is, as Arendt notes, an open question—*when existentially interpreted*. In this respect, Arendt reads Augustine in a manner akin to Heidegger, i.e., as an existentialist attempting to extract himself from the Hellenistic tradition. But as commonly occurs (and I will argue that it also occurs in both Heidegger's and Arendt's existential analyses), the openness of the *mihi quaestio* gets closed down by the project of metaphysics. Augustine shifts from a Platonic to a Pauline axiology, and thereby habit becomes fatefully conjoined with a metaphysical conception of death as a penalty. Rather than an irreducible element of human being, Augustine understands death as man's own fault, the punishment for his sins—an abiding principle of discord (*discordiosum malum*) lodged in the human person since the Fall.[71] Man's habitual bodily being is at once an analogue, symptom, and product of human mortality; it is the reciprocal punishment (*poena reciproca*) for Adam's disobedience.[72] Interpreted through the pathway of the Pauline problematic of the flesh, the axis of ontological dehiscence and the open question that is at issue within it come to be grafted onto a metaphysical axiology, and the open, generative possibilities that are produced by habituality from within that ontological dehiscence are foreclosed. To fully understand that foreclosure, and the sacrifice that it engenders, we must turn to the doctrine of Original Sin to which Augustine is led by the Pauline problematic of the flesh.

1.2 The Sexual Politics of Habitual Fallenness in Augustinian Ontology

*Among all things possessed in this life, the body is—on account of the Ancient Sin and in accordance with God's most just law—man's heaviest bond (*gravissimum vinculum*). Nothing*

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[70] Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine* 24–25.

[71] Referring to *concupiscentia carnis*, *Against Julian* IV.8.49.

[72] *City of God* XIV.17; Brown, *Body & Society* 408–423.

*is more obviously known in the preaching of
Christianity; yet nothing is more impenetrable to
the understanding. Lest this bond should be
shaken and disturbed, the soul is vexed with fear
of toil and pain; lest it should be lost and
destroyed, the soul is vexed with the fear of
death. For the soul loves the body through the
force of habit (*vi consuetudinis*).*

<div align="right">

–Saint Augustine[73]

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*[H]ow do presumptions about normative gender
and sexuality determine in advance what will
qualify as the 'human' and the 'livable'? In
other words, how do normative gender
presumptions work to delimit the very field of
description that we have for the human? What is
the means by which we come to see this
delimiting power, and what are the means by
which we transform it?*

<div align="right">

–Judith Butler[74]

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To ask the question of whether metaphysical positions are politically innocent, Elizabeth Spelman argues, is "a defining if not a necessarily distinguishing characteristic of a feminist perspective in philosophy." [75] This is precisely the perspective that this dissertation seeks to inhabit. And in this section I will bring this perspective to bear on Augustine's interpretation of the biblical myth of Adam, Eve, and the Serpent. Augustine meditated at length on these passages of *Genesis* (2:4–3:24), writing six tracts over the course of his career (two early works,[76] two middle

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[73] "Sed inter omnia quae in hac vita possidentur, corpus homini gravissimum est vinculum iustissimis Dei legibus propter antiquum peccatum, quo nihil est ad praedicandum notius, nihil ad intelligendum secretius. Hoc ergo vinculum ne concutiatur atque vexetur, laboris et doloris, ne auferatur autem atque perimatur, mortis terrore animam quatit. Amat enim illud vi consuetudinis […]" (*On the Catholic and the Manichean Ways of Life* I.22.40).

[74] Judith Butler, "Preface to the 1999 Edition," *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge Classics, 2006), xxiii.

[75] Elizabeth V. Spelman, "Aristotle and the Politicization of the Soul," in *Discovering Reality: Feminist Perspectives on Epistemology, Metaphysics, Methodology, and Philosophy of Science*, eds. Sandra Harding and Merrill B. Hintikka (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1988), 17–30 (quote 17).

[76] *On Genesis Against the Manichees* (C.E. 388–389) and *On the Literal Interpretation of Genesis: An Unfinished Book* (C.E. 393).

works,[77] and two late works).[78] The importance of Augustine's reading of this text cannot be overestimated, for his conception of habit and his theory of the soul rest on his painfully influential doctrine of Original Sin—what Augustine scholar James O'Donnell calls Augustine's "most original and nearly single-handed creation."[79] Through his (at the time) highly idiosyncratic interpretation of the story of Adam and Eve, Augustine "makes plain the extent to which he was prepared to shift the center of gravity of Christian thought on the human person."[80] Much ink has been spilled reflecting on the ways that Western concepts of subjectivity have been framed by this cosmic shift.[81] That Augustine constructed an entirely new sense of the inner life of the individual,[82] that he invented the modern notion of will,[83] and that he did so in a manner that proved decisive for the emergence of the humanistic notion of the individual in Western culture—these theses have been subject to voluminous and insightful debate. What is less remarked upon, however, is the way that the habitual body is seated at the crux of this cosmic shift in the conception of the subject, and what gets concealed in the conversion.

In Section 1.1, we bore witness to Augustine's dramatic, existentialist articulation of lived bodily experience as an axis of ontological dehiscence. *Consuetudo carnalis* was the site of an alterity at the heart of intentional experience,

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[77] The final three books of *Confessions* (C.E. 397–401) and *On Genesis Literally Interpreted* (C.E. 404–415).

[78] Book XII of *The Trinity* (C.E. 399–419) and books XI–XIV of *The City of God Against the Pagans* (C.E. 413–26).

[79] James J. O'Donnell, *Augustine: A New Biography* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), 296.

[80] Brown, *Body & Society* 399.

[81] Augustine's intervention truly was a *cosmic* shift. Late ancient scholars of the caliber of Hilary Armstrong, Henri-Irénée Marrou, and Peter Brown have meditated at length on the way that the Christian variety of Platonism that Augustine ushered into the Latin world, with its preoccupation with human interiority and will, inaugurated a decisive turn away from the κόσμος and the spiritual significance of mundane, bodily relationality. As Armstrong puts it: "For a pagan Platonist, even one as other-worldly as Plotinus, the cosmos was always religiously relevant. […] The universe for a pagan Platonist is not only good, but holy. […] I think in the [principally Augustinian] rejection of the cosmic religion something important was in danger of being completely lost, and an opportunity was, in the 4th and 5th centuries, missed. What was in danger of being lost was the sense of the holiness, the religious relevance of the cosmos as a whole, and with it, inevitably, the sense of the holiness of ordinary human life and bodily activities" (*Augustine and Christian Platonism* 14–16). See also Brown, *Augustine* 502–506; Marrou, *Saint Augustine and His Influence Through the Ages* and *Saint Augustin et la fin de la culture antique*.

[82] E.g., Phillip Cary, *Augustine's Invention of the Inner Self*; Fredric Jameson, "On the Sexual Production of Western Subjectivity; or, Saint Augustine as a Social Democrat," in *Gaze and Voice as Love Objects*, eds. Renata Salecl and Slavoj Zizek (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996): 154–178.

[83] E.g., Albrecht Dihle, *The Theory of the Will in Classical Antiquity* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1982).

an intractable inertia that issues from the individual, exerting a gravitational pull on rational moral choice. Through the lens of the Pauline problematic of the flesh, Augustine projects the root of that alterity into a distant mythical-metaphysical past. The product of that projection is his doctrine of Original Sin. By explicating that doctrine, the metaphysical underpinnings of the constrictive conception of habit can be laid bare. Augustine's interpretation of the myth of Adam and Eve exposes the invisible gendering of the "habits of this life" (*consuetudo huius vitae*) and of the purportedly generic human subject that struggles to master them (1.2.1). It reveals the androcentrism of the phenomenology on which the Christian metaphysics of fallenness is based (1.2.2). And it exhibits the unitary subject—spiritually self-possessed and uprightly oriented—as an essentially defensive construction, posited over against the finite, volatile power and fluidity of bodily subjectivity. As I will argue in Section 1.3, this fundamentally defensive construction of the unitary subject arises from a fear of death and a desire for plentitude in a love that is untainted by the risk of loss—a risk intrinsic to lived bodily relationships.

1.2.1   The Feminization of Fault: Augustine on Original Sin

Frailty, thy name is woman!
            –Shakespeare[84]

Augustine slips back and forth between two types of interpretation of the myth of Adam and Eve: an allegorical interpretation and a social interpretation. Modern Christian commentators most commonly emphasize the allegorical interpretation and attempt to disentangle it from the social interpretation. This is done with mind to preserving the integrity and internal consistency of Augustine's theology of the (disembodied) human soul as an image of God, while distancing the latter from the sexual politics of his social interpretation. Such a strategy of interpretation requires one to dismiss Augustine's own social interpretation of the myth as a strictly contingent historical product of his culture that has no necessary bearing on his theology. This strategy of interpretation is false; not only because it dodges or disguises the discontinuities deriving from Augustine's own corpus, but because it presupposes an essential distinction between philosophy and history, *mens* and *carne*, that is itself the untoward, contradictory product of Christian Neoplatonic metaphysics as handed down to us by Augustine. I will argue that Augustine mobilizes the slippage between his allegorical and social interpretations of the Fall to secure his construction of the unified subject over against the dispersed bodily "subject" of habit. Furthermore, I will argue that his allegorical interpretation arises from his social

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[84] *Hamlet* I.2.146.

interpretation and is structurally dependent upon his own embodied experience of habit, desire, and sexual relations.

The essential component of Augustine's interpretation of the myth of Adam, Eve, and the Serpent is the notion of reciprocal punishment (*poena reciproca*).[85] Augustine's basic premise is that, prior to the Fall, Adam and Eve were in a state of *posse non peccare*: they had the uninhibited power and capacity *not* to sin. Pre-lapsarian being was an axiological arrangement of perfect (hierarchical) order: Adam and Eve were wholly mindful of and obedient to God, and they reciprocally enjoyed a harmonious unity of body and soul. "Their bodies followed the dictates of their wills with the same loving and familiar concord as they themselves followed the will of God."[86] They experienced no intrinsic tendency toward evil. No rebellious desires bubbled up to impede the unswervingly unified intentions of their wills. Their flesh was held in uninterrupted submission by their spirits.[87] The first sin, however, irreparably disrupted this axiological order. For, as a consequence of Adam's disobedience,[88] God instituted a reciprocal punishment, causing Adam's act of disobedience to be perpetuated in himself. Having chosen disobedience and rebellion against the order of God, man would now experience disobedience and rebellion within himself. He would be in a protracted state of "dissension with himself,"[89] his flesh insubordinate to his spirit. Quoting Paul, Augustine articulates the post-lapsarian ontologically dehiscent condition—the infirmity—of man as a war (*repugnantia*) between the law of sin, which operates through the flesh, and the law of the spirit seated in the mind.[90] The operative intentionality of the habitual body (*consuetudo carnalis*), like the intentionality of desire (*cupiditas*), is the phenomenological imprint of this fallen state of existence. The manner in which the lived body, in its habitualities and desires, operates *in excess* of conscious awareness—the fact that it seems to "go on its own way" (unmindful of itself)[91]—is a factical reiteration of Adam's initial decision to "go on his own way" (unmindful of God). Both instances disrupt the order of mindful self-presence, and both result in self-exile, the first causing and the second

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[85] *City of God* XIV.17.

[86] Brown, *Body & Society* 405.

[87] "The flesh did not yet, in a fashion, give proof of man's disobedience by a disobedience of its own (*Nondum ad hominis inoboedientiam redarguendam sua inoboedientia caro quodam modo testimonium perhibebat*)" (*City of God* XIV.17).

[88] As will soon become clear, Augustine primarily understands Original Sin as Adam's disobedience alone, since sin proper is delimited from passionate suasion (symbolized by Eve) by consent, which only Adam (as symbol of rationality) can give.

[89] "a se ipse quoque dissentiens sub illo" (*City of God* XIV.15).

[90] *City of God* XIV.17.

[91] "[…] the force of habit goes on its own way, and this is what wars against the soul: habit formed in the flesh (*consuetudinem ferri quo solet. Et hoc est quod adversus animam pugnat, consuetudo facta in carne*)" (*Disputation* 22).

both exhibiting and deepening man's separation from God. As the first man was exiled from God's presence, so now is "everyman" (*omnis homo*) exiled from himself.[92]

Such is the crux of Augustine's conception of habituality as the most suitable retribution (*dignissima retributa*) for Original Sin.[93] But what is one to make of the specific roles played by Adam, Eve, and the Serpent in this drama? To answer this question, Augustine offers an allegorical interpretation of the myth as a story of a single soul—i.e., that of "everyman" (*omnis homo*)—in light of a threefold division of the human person, allegorically represented by the three protagonists of *Genesis*. On this reading, the structural dynamics of sin as represented in the myth serve as a figure for the structural dynamics of sin as they manifest in the individual person. Following Plotinus, who divides the human soul into three strata, one directed toward intelligibility, one toward the sensuous, and one intermediate part that is attracted upwards or downwards,[94] Augustine symbolically associates Adam, Eve, and the Serpent with three strata of the human psyche. Adam is symbolic of the masculine aspect of the human psyche (*mens/animus*), which is its rational, inward, and higher function. As "the image and glory of God," *animus* is most itself in the contemplation of eternal and immaterial truth, the highest activity of mind (*mens animi*), which Augustine calls divine wisdom (*sapientia*). Eve is symbolic of the lower, feminine aspect of the human psyche (*anima*), which is directed outward toward transitory sensuous things. While capable of knowledge about temporal and material things (*scientia*), *anima* is incapable of divine wisdom. This feminine inability of "everyman's" soul is such, Augustine writes, because, like Eve succumbing to the suasion of the Serpent, *anima* is forever vulnerably affiliated with "the fleshly, or […] sensual, motion of the soul which is stretched forth (*intenditur*) through the senses of the body, and which is common to us and the beasts," but which "is shut off (*seclusus*) from the reasoning of wisdom."[95] Indeed, Augustine sometimes refers to *anima* as *anima animalis*, because "she" is conceived to be tendentially entangled with the part of soul that humans share with animals.

On Augustine's allegorical interpretation, Adam's sin of consenting to the appetite of Eve, who was pleasurably seduced by the Serpent, is an allegorical figuration of the way that reason (*mens/animus*) sins by consenting to the arousal of

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[92] "[M]en desire what is outside of them and become exiles even from themselves (*quia homines appetentes ea quae foris sunt, etiam a se ipsis exsules facti sunt*)" (Augustine, *Commentaries on the Psalms* 57.1).

[93] *On Marriage and Concupiscence* I.6.7.

[94] Plotinus, *Ennead* II.9.2

[95] The term Augustine employs to describe the fleshly motion of the soul that is "stretched forth through" the senses of the body is *intenditur*, the passive form of the verb *intendo*, which is the basis of the Latin for intentionality (*intentio*). Augustine is thus consciously referring to a form of intentionality that operates in and through the body, but he portrays it in the passive voice, attributes it to the soul, and (following both his Neoplatonic and Pauline influences) relegates it to the lowest axiological order of the person. "[…] carnalis, uel ut ita dicam qui in corporis sensus intenditur sensualis animae motus, qui nobis pecoribusque communis est, seclusus est a ratione sapientiae" (*Trinity* XII.12.17).

the appetitive aspect of the soul (*anima*) when the latter is allured by bodily passion (*carne*). Sin—experienced as disorder, disharmony, and the forgetting of God—enters the world when Adam/reason abdicates his rightful position of authority and allows himself to be ruled by Eve, "the inferior of the human pair" who is symbolic of appetite and worldly-oriented reason.[96] "It is by means of the woman (*per mulierem*) that the serpent deceives. Our reason (*ratio nostra*) cannot be dragged down to the consent that is sin, except when delight is aroused in that part of the soul which ought to obey reason as its ruling husband (*vir*)."[97]

At this juncture, one begins to see how the project of Christian metaphysics closes down, or "axiologizes" the *mihi quaestio* that Augustine turned about in his experience of conversion. Through the doctrine of Original Sin, Augustine's early investigation of the habitual body, which led to an existential account of the self as an axis of ontological dehiscence, comes to be grafted onto a metaphysical, gendered axiology. The intrinsic alterity of the temporalizing, bodily subject—the cleavage within the "I" between its intrinsic pressure toward future possibilities and the past-weighted inertia in its capacity to press into those possibilities—is projected into externality. The subject that is identified with rationality and transcendence and that is demarcated and shored up through that projection is marked as masculine (*animus*). The habitual bodily "subject" that is involved with the immanence of temporal, worldly affairs—and, as we shall see in Section 1.3, with fleshly, social relationships—is marked as feminine (*anima*) and is divided off and displaced from the authentic subject of reason, whose only dependency is upon God.[98] Through this procedure of projecting self-alterity into externality, rationality is dissociated, delimited, and insulated from habituality. Rather than embraced as an epistemically constitutive aspect of human reason and an ontologically dilating engine of human reality, bodily habit comes to be cast as the source of error and a force of ontological constriction—an emasculation of the (disembodied) will.

Augustine's articulation of a gendered axiology in his metaphysics of the purportedly generic human subject generates a host of theological problems for him

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[96] " […] inferiore illius humanae copulae […]" (*City of God* XIV.11).

[97] "Sed tamen per mulierem decipit: non enim etiam ratio nostra deduci ad consensionem peccati potest, nisi cum delectatio mota fuerit in illa parte animi, quae debet obtemperare rationi tamquam rectori viro" (*On Genesis Against the Manichees* II.14.20).

[98] In an analysis of the gendered logic of deferral operative in Augustine's *Confessions*, Penelope Deutscher observes the way that Augustine feminizes man when describing his absolute dependency on God. "[W]here god is identified as not-man, we find that man gives this content by being rendered *feminine*, and the dichotomy between man and woman must be forsaken. In other words, where we are told that god is not-man, we are told that god is not-*material*, not-*embodied*, not-*emotional*, not-*passionate*, not-*feeble*. […] It is necessary (if paradoxical) for man to be feminine, in order to be masculine. It is as feminine that man negatively gives god the identity he himself identifies with as masculine." Penelope Deutscher, "The Evanescence of Masculinity: Deferral in Saint Augustine's *Confessions* and Some Thoughts on Its Bearing on the Sex/Gender Debate," in *Feminist Interpretations of Augustine*, ed. Judith C. Stark (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), 281–300, qt from p. 290.

and his Christian commentators. Principle among them is the status of "woman" with respect to the claim in *Genesis* 1:26–27 that man (ἄνθρωπος / *hominem*) was made, male (ἄρσην / *masculum*) and female (θῆλυς / *feminam*), in the image of God (εἰκώνα θέου / *imago Dei*).[99] For, Augustine's gendered axiological account seems to exclude woman from this dispensation of human being, which he identifies with rationality. As he writes in *The Trinity*, interpreting Paul's claim that "[t]he man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God. But the woman is the glory of the man"[100]: "Woman together with her husband (*mulierem cum viro suo*) is [*sic!*] the image of God […], but in her function as helper (*adiutor*), which is her concern alone, she is not the image of God; whereas what concerns the man alone (*ad virum solum*) he is the image of God as fully and completely as when the woman (*mulier*) is joined to him in one whole." [101] Such expressions solicit apologetic responses from Augustine's modern Christian commentators. For example, consider the following remarks that Edmund Hill, the English translator of the Augustinian Heritage Institute edition of *The Trinity*, makes in a footnote to the above quoted text:

> Here I must try *to save Augustine from being torn to pieces* by his feminist critics. He is not anti-feminist; indeed his whole effort in this chapter is to maintain the equality of woman *as human beings* with men, and their equal status as made to the image of God. That is why he insists on interpreting Paul here symbolically. The reader must therefore continually bear in mind that the author is not talking about man and woman in themselves or about their real personal relationships, but about man and woman as symbols of two aspects or

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[99] Debates about the spiritual status of "woman" in Augustine's works have principally emerged in the twentieth century. For a defense of the interpretation that men and women, while sexually distinct, are "spiritually equivalent" *qua* human beings in Augustine's account, see, for example, Richard J. McGowan, "Augustine's Spiritual Equality: The Allegory of Man and Woman with Regard to *Imago Dei*," *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 33 (1987): 255–264. For arguments that Augustine's texts cast woman as spiritually inferior to man, see, for example, Julia O'Faolain and Lauro Martines, eds., *Not in God's Image: Woman in History from the Greeks to the Victorians* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978); Margaret A. Farley, "Sources for Inequality in the History of Christian Thought," *Journal of Religion* (April 1976): 162–176 (esp. 168); Cornelia W. Wolfskeel, "Some Remarks with Regard to Augustine's Conception of Man as the Image of God," *Vigiliae Christianae* 30 (1976): 63–71; Kari E. Borresen, *Subordination and Equivalence: The Nature and Role of Women in Augustine and Thomas Aquinas*, trans. Charles H. Talbot (University Press of America, 1981); and Judith C. Stark, "Augustine on Women: In God's Image, but Less So," in *Feminist Interpretations of Augustine*, ed. Judith C. Stark (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), 215–242. For a deconstructive reading of the deferral of masculinity in Augustine's *Confessions*, see Penelope Deutscher, "The Evanescence of Masculinity: Deferral in Saint Augustine's *Confessions* and Some Thoughts on Its Bearing on the Sex/Gender Debate," in *Feminist Interpretations of Augustine*, 281–300.

[100] *First Letter to the Corinthians* 11:7.

[101] "Mulierem cum viro suo esse [*sic*] imaginem Dei […],cum autem ad adiutorium distribuitur, quod ad eam ipsam solam attinet non est imago Dei; quod autem ad virum solum attinet imago Dei est tam plena atque integra quam in unum coniuncta muliere." (*Trinity* XII.7.10).

functions of the human mind. What woman symbolizes *as female* is subordinate to what man symbolizes *as male*. It does not follow that what woman is *as person* is subordinate, let alone inferior to what man is *as person*, or that men do not engage as much, if not more, in the "feminine" function of mind as do women.[102]

Hill reads Augustine faithfully to the extent that Augustine maintains the non-corporeal, and hence, non-sexed nature of the *imago Dei*: "not according to the body, nor according to any part of the soul, but according to the rational mind, where knowledge of God is able to be, is man (*homo*) made to the image of the one who created him."[103] The image of God, Augustine writes, resides in that part of the human person "where there is no sex" (*ubi sexus nullus est*),[104] "that part by which the mind of man (*homo*) adheres to consulting the eternal reasons, which, it is manifest, not only men (*masculos*) but women (*feminas*) also possess."[105] Against readers who might understand Augustine's "strictly allegorical" allusions to (sexed) embodiment in his account of universal reason as actually referring to sexually differentiated bodies, Richard McGowan, like Hill, defends Augustine's doctrine of the image of God as universal, disembodied reason. In his article "Augustine's Spiritual Equality: The Allegory of Man and Woman with Regard to *Imago Dei*" (1987), McGowan argues that despite the "allegorical hierarchy" that Augustine invokes between "man" as the associative matrix of virility/reason/security and "woman" as that of habituality/body/care, Augustine ultimately maintained the "spiritual equality" of man and woman (as embodied beings). To feminist critics who point out the inconsistency in Augustine's claim that "woman" both is and is not the image of God—which, while "masculine" (*virile*), is at the same time sexless (*ubi sexus nullus est*) and non-corporeal (*non secundum corpus*)—McGowan retorts that "Augustine was indeed consistent and that some of his readers [i.e., feminists] are inconsistent in that they understand Augustine literally when he wrote figuratively."[106]

A parallel instance of slippage occurs in Augustine's text when, in describing the self-exile or -excess produced in man as a result of the Fall, he suddenly grafts a female reproductive organ onto Adam's body. "If Adam had not slipped away from

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[102] *The Trinity* 339, n. 27 (my emphasis).

[103] "non secundum corpus neque secundum quamlibet animi partem sed secundum rationalem mentem ubi potest esse agnitio dei hominem factum ad imaginem eius qui creauit eum" (*Trinity* XII.7.12).

[104] "The image of God resides where there is no sex. It is there, where there is no sex, that man (*homo*) was made to the image of God, i.e., in the spirit of his mind (*imaginem dei ubi sexus nullus est, ibi factus est homo ad imaginem dei ubi sexus nullus est, hoc est in spiritu mentis suae*)" (*Trinity* XII.7.12).

[105] "ut non maneat imago dei nisi ex qua parte mens hominis aeternis rationibus conspiciendis uel consulendis adhaerescit, quam non solum masculos sed etiam feminas habere manifestum est" (*Trinity* XII.7.12).

[106] Richard J. McGowan, "Augustine's Spiritual Equality: The Allegory of Man and Woman with Regard to *Imago Dei*," *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 33 (1987): 259, n. 18.

you [God], there would never have flowed from his womb (*ex utero eius*) the brackishness of that sea which is humankind (*genus humanum*), so deeply curious, like a sea in a stormy swell, so fluidly unstable."[107] Henry Chadwick, the translator of the Oxford World Classics edition of the *Confessions*, simply erases this slippage in Augustine's text, replacing "womb" with the neuter "loins" without further comment. John Gibb and William Montgomery, the editors of the Cambridge Patristic Texts edition of the *Confessions*, acknowledge this conspicuous (mis)identification of the female reproductive organ, calling it "a remarkable example of catachresis." In a manner identical to Hill and McGowan, they argue that the slippage "is to be explained, no doubt, by the fact that 'Adam' is used generically rather than personally."[108]

Finally, within this stream of interpretation, there is Paul Ricoeur. In *The Symbolism of Evil*, Ricoeur acknowledges that the Biblical story of Adam and Eve, insofar as it symbolizes "woman" as the point of weakness and vulnerability to sin (i.e., insofar as it represents the serpent as tempting man *through* woman), "gives evidence of a very masculine resentment, which serves to justify the state of dependence in which all, or almost all, societies have kept women."[109] Nevertheless, he asserts, beyond the "legitimate criticism" that a "Nietzschean spirit" might level against this masculine resentment, "the story points to an 'eternal feminine,' which is more than sex and which might be called the *mediation of the weakness, the frailty of man*. […] Woman represents the point of least resistance of finite freedom to the appeal of evil."[110]

There is much more at stake in all this than a zealous concern with the precise interpretation of a biblical injunction. What is at stake is the attempt, on the part of Augustine and his Christian commentators, to make a clear separation between claims about female nature and the role of woman as symbol.[111] To this strategy of interpretation the questions must be posed: Who is speaking when "woman" is chosen

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[107] "[S]i non esset lapsus Adam, non diffunderetur ex utero eius salsugo maris, genus humanum profunde curiosum et procellose tumidum et instabiliter fluvidum" (*Confessions* XIII.20.28). I am indebted to Margaret R. Miles for pointing out this sexually significant instance of catachresis in Augustine's text. See *Desire and Delight* 114–115 and 142, n. 36.

[108] *The Confessions of Augustine*, eds. John Gibb and William Montgomery (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1908), 428, n. 9; quoted in Miles, *Desire and Delight* 142, n. 36.

[109] *Symbolism of Evil* 254.

[110] *Symbolism of Evil* 254–55 (original emphasis).

[111] For a sustained consideration of the effects of this sort of misogyny on the philosophical tradition, see Genevieve Lloyd, *Man of Reason: "Male" and "Female" in Western Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984). For an account that focuses on the Medieval reverberations of this sort of misogyny in Augustinian and Early Christian literature, see R. Howard Bloch, "Early Christianity and the Estheticization of Gender," in *Medieval Misogyny and the Invention of Western Romantic Love* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 37–64. The canonical feminist work of historical theology on this matter is that of Mary Daly, *The Church and the Second Sex* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968).

to symbolize susceptibility to seduction and the tipping point of fault?[112] According to what fund of figures or symbols are the constructions of man/woman, masculine/feminine articulated in accordance with a metaphysical axiological hierarchy except one which emerges from a misogynous culture? What these slippages expose is that the unified rational subject, which is purportedly universal, sexless, and non-corporeal, is in fact invisibly, but forcefully gendered. In order to preserve the metaphysical integrity of "man" (*homo/ratio/mens/animus/imago Dei*) and defend this "spiritual" construction against the dispersion and alterity of lived bodily existence, Augustine sequesters "man" from all of that which in situated, embodied, sexed, human persons exceeds "him" (i.e., bodily desire, bodily intentionality, bodily generativity, and habitual involvement with the world). In a parallel manner, in order to preserve the integrity and consistency of Augustine's theology and defend him "from being torn to pieces by his feminist critics,"[113] Augustine's commentators are led to sequester his allegorical/symbolic/functional account of the supposed generic human subject from any association with literal/real/personal—i.e., embodied, sexed, habitual—individuals. (Indeed, Augustine provides them a justification for doing so in his own biblical hermeneutics, where he castigates the "carnal" habit of giving literal readings of figurative expressions—i.e., mistaking signs [*signa*] for things signified [*res*]—as a "slavery of the spirit" to the body.[114])

The masculine marking of the supposed generic human subject cannot, however, be erased by such strategies of interpretation. For it remains the case that "man" (*homo*), insofar as "he" is rational and oriented toward transcendent principles, is constructed as "virile." Insofar as "he" is weak, frail, vulnerable to error and mundanely anchored through habit, "he" is fashioned as manifesting or participating in "the eternal feminine." For a woman to be identified with the universal, she must shed her sex and become a reasonable man.[115] What the defensive interpretive

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[112] The Latin *seducere* means "to lead away or astray." As man's vehicle of contact with the bodily realm, woman is that which renders him susceptible to being led astray—not only from himself, but from God.

[113] See Edmund Hill citation above.

[114] Augustine posits "one and only method" for discerning whether a scriptural assertion is literal or figurative: "Anything in the divine writings that cannot be referred to decent morals or to the truth of the faith, you must know is said figuratively." This criterion, which permits the allegorization of almost everything, is a hermeneutical strategy for severing and defending theological contents from the social-historical contexts from which they emerge and with which they exist in a relationship of reciprocal determination. *Teaching Christianity* III.5.9–6.10; III.8.12; III.10.14; *On the Literal Interpretation of Genesis* I.20.40–21.41; *On Genesis Against the Manichees* II.19.29. See also Richard A. Norris, Jr. "Augustine and the Close of the Ancient Period of Interpretation," in Alan J. Hauser and Duane F. Watson (eds.), *A History of Biblical Interpretation: The Ancient Period*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2003), 380–408, esp. 392–397.

[115] This idea is expressed with particular directness by Augustine's Milanese mentor and baptizer, Saint Ambrose: "[S]he who does not believe is a woman and should be designated by the name of her sex, whereas she who believes progresses to perfect manhood, to the measure of the adulthood of Christ. She then dispenses with the name of her sex." Mary Daly points to "the recurrent theme [in early Christian Patristic texts] that by faith a woman transcends the limitations imposed by her sex." She

strategies of Augustine and his Christian commentators demonstrate is that, as feminist philosopher Mary Rawlinson argues (in a discussion of Derrida), "a certain 'sacrifice' of woman is essential to the project of metaphysics."[116] In supplying the site of the production of the universal "we" of human reason,[117] Augustine's interpretation of *Genesis* sacrifices "woman," excluding her from the dispensation of reason in the same breath (*spiritus*) with which he ostensibly includes her. And in the same gesture of exclusion, he marks the habitual body off from spiritual life, feminizing it and figuring it as an emasculation of the virile will.

It is not insignificant that the male commentators we have mentioned fault their female counterparts for disrupting or ignoring the distinction between the spiritual and the corporeal, the figurative and the literal; nor is it insignificant that feminist commentators see in-consistency in the enterprise of (and investment in) maintaining such metaphysical distinctions.[118] For, throughout the history of Western ontology and Western institutions, "woman" and "the body" have been intertwined to such an extent that, as Rawlinson argues, "putting the body out of play and silencing 'woman' often come to the same gesture."[119] Augustine's gendered axiological account of the supposed generic human subject, according to which virile reason installs order in itself by subjugating its feminine habitual involvements with the world, depends for its structure on the factical experiences of men and, in turn, at once presumes and justifies the social subordination of women. The structural analogy between the disembodied soul of "man" (*homo*), as *animus* and *anima*, and the social and sexual relations of men (*viri*) and women (*mulieres*)—which Augustine mobilizes through such terms as *quemadmodum*, *sic*, and *sicut*—has nested within it a logic of derivation and a logic of justification. And this logic, as it were, runs in both

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argues that "It would never occur to the Fathers to say the same of a man. When woman achieves this transcendence, […] she is given the compliment of being called 'man' (*vir*). Thus there is an assumption that all that is of dignity and value in human nature is proper to the male sex. There is an identification of 'male' and 'human'." Saint Ambrose, *Commentary on the Gospel of according to Luke* X.161; Mary Daly, *The Church and the Second Sex* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 85–90.

[116] Mary C. Rawlinson, "Levers, Signatures, and Secrets: Derrida's Use of Woman," in *Derrida and Feminism*, eds. Ellen K. Feder, Mary C. Rawlinson, and Emily Zakin (New York: Routledge, 1997), 69–86 (quoted 69).

[117] "For we all were in that one man, since all of us were that one man who fell into sin through the woman who was made from him (*Omnes enim fuimus in illo uno, quando omnes fuimus ille unus, qui per feminam lapsus est in peccatum*)" (Augustine, *City of God* XIII.14). "In Adam we are one and all; the mythical figure of the first man provides a focal point at the beginning of history for man's unity-in-multiplicity" (Ricoeur, *Symbolism of Evil* 244.).

[118] Augustine's defenders insist on his logical consistency with regard to the rigid distinction between the (disembodied) spirit and sexually differentiated bodies. They see a consistent intention—literally, an intention "standing firmly together" (*con-sistere*)—and defend that unified intention against the "dispersion" to which Augustine's feminist critics subject it. In deconstructing that logic, feminist critics uncover intrinsic in-consistency—i.e., an intention that does not "stand together" in itself—thus decentering the construction of the unified subject.

[119] Mary C. Rawlinson, "The Concept of a Feminist Bioethics," *The Journal of Medicine and Philosophy,* vol. 26, no. 4 (August 2001): 406.

directions. The allegorical hierarchy between "man" and "woman" *qua* symbols or functions of the universal subject, and the social hierarchy between actually existing men and women, exist in Augustine's text in a relationship of mutual derivation and justification. Each is a regional expression of the self-same metaphysical axiology.

> Man (*homo*), in your image and likeness, was put in authority over all irrational animals by your image and likeness, i.e., by the power of reason and intelligence. And just as (*quemadmodum*) in his soul there is one part which deliberates and dominates and another part which is submissive and obedient, so also (*sic*) for corporeal man (*vir*) a woman (*femina*) was created who has a nature equal indeed to his in mind and rational intelligence, but by the sex of her body submits to the masculine sex. In the same way (*quemadmodum*), the appetite for action submits to the rational mind's prudent concern for the rightness of the act.[120]

> Let us conquer desire (*cupiditas*) with its blandishments and molestations. Let us subjugate this woman (*femina*), Desire, if we are men (*vir*). With our leadership and guidance she will herself become better and be called no longer Desire but Temperance. When she leads and we follow she is publically pronounced to be Cupidity and Lust (*libido*), and we Rashness and Folly. Let us follow Christ, our head, that she whose head we are may follow us.[121] This precept can be enjoined upon women as well, not in the marital but the fraternal bond (*fraterno juris*). In Christ there is neither male nor female. Women too have that certain masculine 'something' (*illae virile quiddam*) whereby they can subjugate feminine pleasures (*femineas voluptates*), serve Christ, and govern desire. That masculine principle manifests itself (*manifestum est*) in many godly widows and virgins, and in many who are married but who by the dispensation of the Christian people preserve conjugal rights in the bond of fraternity (*fraterno juris*). Insofar as we dominate that [feminine, desiderative] part, as God commands us to, He will accordingly exhort and aid us to be restored to our own self-possession. If, therefore, by negligence or impiety a man, i.e. mind and reason (*vir, id est mens et ratio*), is subjugated by that

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[120] "hominemque ad imaginem et similitudinem tuam, cunctis inrationabilibus animantibus ipsa tua imagine ac similitudine, hoc est rationis et intellegentiae virtute, praeponi; et quemadmodum in eius anima aliud est, quod consulendo dominatur, aliud, quod subditur ut obtemperet, sic viro factam esse etiam corporaliter feminam, quae haberet quidem in mente rationabilis intellegentiae parem naturam, sexu tamen corporis ita masculino sexui subiceretur, quemadmodum subicitur appetitus actiones ad concipiendam de ratione mentis recte agendi sollertiam" (*Confessions* XIII.32.47).

[121] Augustine is here quoting Paul: "Christ is the head of every man (*vir*), and man (*vir*) is the head of the woman (*mulier*), and God is the head of Christ" (1 *Corinthians* 11:3).

[feminine, desiderative] part, he will be a depraved and miserable man. […] No filth should be permitted to stain the universal creation.[122]

Woman (*femina*) was made as an illustration (*exemplum*) of [the axiological hierarchy between *mens/animus*, i.e. "virile reason" (*virilis ratio*), and *anima*, reason's "animal part," by the help of which it governs the body]. For the order of things (*rerum ordo*) renders woman subordinate to man (*subjugat viro*). Thus appears in one human what we can see more clearly in two humans, that is, in the male and the female. The interior mind, like virile reason, should subjugate the soul's appetite by means of which we control the members of the body, and by just law it should place a limit upon its helper [*adiutor*, i.e., woman, feminine soul], just as (*sicut*) man ought to rule woman and ought not to permit her to rule him. For when this happens, the home becomes perverted and miserable.[123]

The gendered hierarchy within the universal human soul and the social hierarchy between living men and women are each called upon to justify the other, for each is an exemplification or manifestation of a metaphysical axiology that ultimately justifies them both. The "order of things" (*rerum ordo*) establishes a social hierarchy, rendering women subordinate to men, so that "everyman" might understand the axiological order of the soul, in which *anima* is subordinate to *mens/animus*, in accordance with universal law.

This metaphysical axiology, and the gendered subordination that it is called upon to justify, can be directly traced to the present. For instance, consider the following passage of the *Baptist Faith and Message* (1998), a self-produced "summary" of the faith of the Southern Baptist Convention. In the section addressing the subject of "Family" it reads:

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[122] "Uincamus ergo huius cupiditatis uel blanditias uel molestias. subiugemus nobis hanc feminam, si uiri sumus. nobis ducibus et ipsa erit melior. Nec iam cupiditas sed temperantia nominabitur. nam cum ipsa ducit, nos autem sequimur, cupiditas illa et libido, nos uero temeritas et stultitia nuncupamur. Sequamur Christum caput nostrum, ut et nos sequatur cui caput sumus. Hoc et feminis praecipi potest, non maritali sed fraterno iure, quo iure in Christo nec masculus nec femina sumus. habent enim et illae uirile quiddam unde femineas subiugent uoluptates, unde Christo seruiant et imperent cupiditati. Quod in multis uiduis et uirginibus dei, in multis etiam maritatis sed iam fraterne coniugalia iura seruantibus Christiani populi dispensatione manifestum est. Quodsi ab ea parte cui dominari nos deus iubet atque ut in nostram possessionem restituamur et hortatur et opitulatur, si ergo ab hac parte per neglegentiam et impietatem uir subditus fuerit, id est mens et ratio, erit quidem homo turpis et miser […] Nulla itaque foeditate uniuersam creaturam maculare permittitur" (*On True Religion* 41.78).

[123] "Ad huius rei exemplum femina facta est, quam rerum ordo subiugat viro; ut quod in duobus hominibus evidentius apparet, id est in masculo et femina, etiam in uno homine considerari possit: ut appetitum animae, per quem de membris corporis operamur, habeat mens interior tamquam virilis ratio subiugatum, et iusta lege modum imponat adiutorio suo, sicut vir debet feminam regere, nec eam permittere dominari in virum; quod ubi contingit, perversa et misera domus est" (*On Genesis Against the Manichees* II.11.15).

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The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.[124]

As iterated in the Augustinian axiology, here too man leads and provides, while woman respects, serves, and submits herself graciously to the servant leadership of man.

What is the significance of this sexual genealogy for our understanding of the habitual body and Augustine's constrictive conception of habit? What motive internal to the problematic of habit led to such an undertaking in the first place? We turned to Augustine's doctrine of Original Sin because it is through that metaphysical project that he demarcates and extricates rationality from habituality. Feeling the "weight" of habit working against his efforts of conversion, Augustine becomes "obsessed by the need to understand what had really happened to him in his distant past."[125] Why was it so difficult for him to maintain himself in continent self-possession? Why was he unable to wholeheartedly convert his desire through discipline so that it would cease leading him away from this mindful self? What was at the root of his incapacity to abide by the law of the spirit, identified and embraced by his mind, but deflected by the unmindful, worldly directionality of bodily habit? Following Paul, Augustine concludes that the answer to these questions, and the origin of habituality, resides not in the history of the individual, but in the mythical-metaphysical past of "everyman." Augustine interpretively understands habitual bodily being as the reciprocal punishment (*poena reciproca*) for Adam's disobedience. Our habitual being domesticates and forecloses our future possibilities; it constricts our being; and the reason why it does so is because it is a temporal penalty and expression of the ontological constriction suffered by "man" when he originally chose to separate himself from God.[126]

In Augustine's interpretation of *Genesis*, however, this ontological constriction of "man" is specifically gendered as feminine. The intentionality of the habitual body

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[124] Southern Baptist Convention, 1998 Amendment to the *Baptist Faith and Message* (re-affirmed and -adopted in 2000), Section XVIII on "Family," http://www.sbc.net/bfm/bfm2000.asp.

[125] Brown, *Augustine* 149.

[126] "Man did not fall away to the extent of losing all being, but being turned toward himself, *his being became more constricted (*minus esset*)* than it was when he clung to Him who supremely is" (*City of God* XIV.13).

comes to be associated with "woman" and with a loss of ("virile") self. Only that part of the self which, through obedience to God, is conceived as extricable from and superior to the habitual body, and thereby gendered as specifically masculine, has a claim to full being. "Of course," Augustine and his apologists attempt to assure us— we embodied readers—"of course this is only an allegory, a symbolic way of speaking. It would be 'in contradiction both to Christian good sense and to the text of *Genesis* 1:27 to exclude woman altogether from being the image of God.'[127] Women too share in universal, disembodied rationality (*imago Dei*), just as men are subject to bodily habit and, through that subjection, become entangled in self-estranging worldly activity. This is not about sex. We are talking about metaphysical principles—mind and flesh—that are 'more than sex' (Ricoeur). For our real selves are not bodies.[128] Mind is sexless (*ubi sexus nullus est*) and non-corporeal (*non secundum corpus*), even though we call it 'that certain masculine "something"' (*illae virile quiddam*) to the extent that it subjugates its habitual nature. Likewise, when we say that 'consciousness is weighed down with a sort of self-heaviness that expels it from blessedness'[129] and that 'pours out and empties it of its virility'[130] and we call that habitual weight 'the "feminine" function of mind' (Hill) or 'the eternal feminine' (Ricoeur), again, we are not talking about women, per se. We're merely employing a (gendered) spiritual language to refer to 'the frailty of man,' 'the point of least resistance to the appeal of evil' (Ricoeur). 'What woman symbolizes *as female* is subordinate to what man symbolizes *as male*. But it does not follow that what woman is *as person* is subordinate, let alone inferior to what man is *as person*.'[131] Because subjectivity is universal, generic, bodiless."

But is the voice of reason actually bodiless? From whence does it speak? Is this metaphysical discussion politically innocent? What fear, what bodily angst is evidenced in Hill's desire to "save Augustine from *being torn to pieces* by his feminist critics"? And what relation does it have to the metaphorics of dismemberment, disintegration, dispersion, and dissemination that Augustine routinely employs to describe the facticity of lived bodily existence? These figures, and the constrictive conception of habit that is fashioned through them, depend for their structural integrity upon an androcentric phenomenology of the body. This phenomenology must be assessed and decentered in order to reawaken a more radical understanding of habitual bodily being.

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[127] Edmund Hill, *Trinity* p. 327.

[128] "Our real selves are not bodies (*Corpora vero non sunt quod nos sumus*)" (*On True Religion* 46.89).
[129] "[P]raegravatus animus quasi pondere suo a beatitudine expellitur" (*Trinity* XII.11.16).

[130] "[…] effusis ac perditis viribus" (*Ibid.*).

[131] *The Trinity* 339, n. 27 (my emphasis).

1.2.2 The Androcentrism of Augustine's Phenomenology

Society, culture, discourse [must] be recognized
as sexuate *and not as the monopoly on universal*
value of a single sex—one that has no awareness
of the way the body and its morphology are
imprinted upon imaginary and symbolic
creations.

–Luce Irigaray[132]

To reveal the site of the production of the subject, let us return to the initial site of the emergence of the habitual fallenness of man, i.e., to the primordial phenomenal appearance of man's reciprocal punishment (*poena reciproca*). Augustine exclaims that after Adam and Eve disobeyed, "they felt for the first time a movement of disobedience in their flesh, as a reciprocal punishment for their disobedience to God. The soul, which had taken a perverse delight in its own liberty and disdained to serve God, was now deprived of its original mastery over the body." [133] What does Augustine cite as the primordial experience of this loss of mastery and loss of self? Adam's rebellion against God is punished by an incessant uprising in the "disobedient members" (*membrorum inoboedientium*): "the libido of our disobedient members arose in those first human beings as a result of the sin of disobedience […] and because a shameless movement (*impudens motus*) resisted the rule of their will [*sic!*], they covered their shameful members (*pudenda*)."[134] "Because of this, these members are rightly called *pudenda* [i.e., parts of shame] because they excite themselves just as they like, in opposition to the mind which is their master, as if they were their own masters."[135]

Augustine projects his own experience of the stirring of an erection over which he has no control as the figure for the primordial appearance of the habitual fallenness of human being. As Elaine Pagels writes, "the aging Augustine takes his own experience as paradigmatic for all human experience—indeed, for Adam's."[136] The

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[132] *An Ethics of Sexual Difference* 68.

[133] "Nam postea quam praecepti facta transgressio est […] Senserunt ergo nouum motum inoboedientis carnis suae, tamquam reciprocam poenam inoboedientiae suae. Iam quippe anima libertate in peruersum propria delectata et Deo dedignata seruire pristino corporis seruitio destituebatur, et quia superiorem dominum suo arbitrio deseruerat" (*City of God* XIII.13).

[134] "Si libido membrorum inoboedientium ex peccato inoboedientiae in illis primis hominibus, cum illos diuina gratia deseruisset, exorta est; unde in suam nuditatem oculos aperuerunt, id est eam curiosius aduerterunt, et quia inpudens motus uoluntatis arbitrio resistebat, pudenda texerunt" (*City of God* XIII.24). See also *City of God* XIV.17; XIV.23; and *On Marriage and Concupiscence* I.6.7.

[135] *City of God* XIV.23; *On the Merits and Remission of Sins* II.2.

[136] *Adam, Eve, and the Serpent* (New York: Quality Paperback Book Club, 2005 [1988]), 106. See also 117.

"disobedient movement" specific to the male sexual organ is, on Augustine's account, man's original punishment—a most suitable retribution (*dignissima retributa*) for Adam's archaic disobedience.[137] The non-conscious movement of the male sexual member functions as the paradigm according to which Augustine conceives of habit as an ontological constriction.[138] It is there that Augustine locates a visible index of man's fallenness.[139] And it is there, in the intransigent(ly) external presentation of his sex (organ), that man's disciplinary and domineering relationship to exteriority has its phenomenological genesis.

Augustine projects his own experience of unbridled sexuality (*concupiscentia carnis*) as an insurmountable principle of discord lodged in "everyman" (*discordiosum malum*), and establishes it as the model of habitual care (*cura*) and its resultant loss of self.[140] This is evidenced in the metaphorics of tumescence and distention, swelling and spillage that he invokes to characterize the subject's temporal and social dispersion in habitual bodily activity. As Miles points out, Augustine consistently used the verbs *turgeo* and *tumeo* to describe the "swelling" or "swollen" condition of prideful arrogance.[141] "I was separated from you by the swelling (*tumor*) of my pride."[142] "I was very pleased with myself and swelling (*tumeo*) with arrogance."[143] "I was given free play with no kind of severity to control me and was allowed to dissipate myself (*dissolutionem*) in many different directions."[144] "And I asked: What is wickedness? And found that it is not a substance but a perversity of the will turning away from you, God […] toward lower things—casting away, as it were, its own insides, and swelling toward what is outside it (*tumescentis foras*)."[145] The knowledge one acquires by turning toward changing temporal entities, neglecting to hold to

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[137] *On Marriage and Concupiscence* I.6.7.

[138] "The problem of the involuntary erection haunts much of Augustine's writings, yielding a phallocentric discourse of asceticism that ironically makes sexuality central to the formation of subjectivity" (Judith A. Peraino, "Listening to the Sirens: Music as Queer Ethical Practice" *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 9:4 (2003): 443). See also Peter Brown, *Body & Society* 416–422; and Fredric Jameson, "On the Sexual Production of Western Subjectivity."

[139] "[Sexuality] echoed in the body the unalterable consequence of mankind's first sin. It was down that single, narrow, and profound shaft that Augustine now looked, to the very origins of human frailty" (Peter Brown, *Body & Society* 422).

[140] On concupiscence as a *discordiosum malum*, see *Against Julian* IV.8.49. On habitual care as a loss of self, see my discussion in Section 1.1.

[141] *Desire and Delight* 95.

[142] *Confessions* VII.7.11.

[143] *Confessions* III.3.6.

[144] *Confessions* II.3.8.

[145] *Confessions* VII.16.22. See also especially *Sermon* 142.5.

unchanging wisdom, "puffs up" (*inflat*) instead of "edifies" (*aedificat*), and weighs down the subject with a sort of self-heaviness that expels it from blessedness and "pours out and empties it of its virility."[146]

The Augustinian model of spiritual freedom (*se-cura*) that is put forth as the corrective correlate of the loss of self in habitual care, the means through which the self is re-collected in its integrity, is male sexual continence, specifically the retention of seminal fluid. Margaret R. Miles persuasively argues this position in *Desire and Delight*, her 1991 study of Augustine's *Confessions*.

> In Augustine's physical and spiritual universe, the hoarding of seminal fluid became the practice and paradigm for an integrated life. […] Augustine's conception of spirituality [is] based on his own most intimate physical experience. […] Augustine did not integrate sexuality into his reconstruction of true [spiritual] pleasure […]. Yet, significantly, poignantly, *his understanding of the spiritual life itself depends for its structure on the sexual activity he has known*. The spiritual life is defined by retaining, collecting, rather than spilling and scattering, the precious, dangerously fluid and slippery "self." Augustine's sexuality "returns" as the form rather than content of his reformed life.[147]

Augustine's sexuality, his body and its morphology supply the androcentric phenomenological framework for his conception of habit as metaphysical fallenness and of continence as the *telos* of spiritual life. Out of the dispersion in which the self gets lost in the world, Augustine calls upon the sweet security (*dulcedo secura*) of the continent love of God "to gather me in from the dispersion through which I am torn asunder."[148]

But where, it must be asked, does Eve figure in all of this? Is Augustine's phenomenological framework adequate to woman's experience of care? Where is Eve's "disobedient member"? Where is the visible index of woman's share in fallenness? In the man, the body's disobedience presents itself in an "open movement" (*motu aperto*)—i.e., erection—but the woman's disobedience, Augustine writes, is *occulto*: hidden, concealed, secret. [149] Augustine surmounts the impossibility of

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[146] *Trinity* XII.11.16. See also *Confessions* III.5.9; VII.9.13; VII.18.24; *Trinity* XII.11.16.

[147] Margaret R. Miles, *Desire and Delight: A New Reading of Augustine's* Confessions (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 98, 99, 122 (my emphasis).

[148] "Recolens vias meas nequissimas in amaritudine recogitationis meae, ut tu dulcescas mihi, dulcedo non fallax, dulcedo felix et secura, et colligens me a dispersione, in qua frustatim discissus sum" (*Confessions* II.1.1). See also Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine* 23.

[149] "Did not they—he in an open movement, she in a hidden one—perceive those members to be disobedient to the choice of their will, which certainly they ought to have ruled like the rest by their voluntary command? They deservedly suffered this, because they themselves were not obedient to their Lord (*Nonne et ille in motu aperto et illa in occulto contra suae voluntatis arbitrium inoboedientia illa membra senserunt, quibus utique nutu volontario sicut ceteris dominari debuerunt? Quod merito*

visually locating women's bodily disobedience in arousal by generalizing *woman* as a symbol of disobedience, fault, sexuality, and enslavement to habit. In doing so, Augustine's texts consistently tempt their reader to read without a body—especially a female body—and to assume a normative male subject position that positions "woman" as either object of desire or subject of seduction, i.e., in Ricoeur's words, as "the point of least resistance of finite freedom to the appeal of evil."[150] "To Augustine's theological man," Margaret Maxey argues, "woman as a theological datum is the visible incarnation of sexual desire and lust, the carrier of evil and guilt, the occasion of man's original Fall and subsequent transmission of sin."[151] Augustine conceptually conjoins "woman" and "habit" as the indices and symbols of fault. For instance, while dispersed in the push and pull of the slippery battle between his two wills, Augustine personifies the overwhelming force of his own habit (*consuetudo violenta*) in the seductive voices of his past mistresses. "They tugged at the garment of my flesh and whispered: 'Do you think you can live without us?'"[152] The womanly, habitual pleasure in temporal entities (*laetitia*) that such voices of seduction invoke is, as Augustine defines it elsewhere, "blindness and utter misery, for it tightly ensnares the soul and draws it toward greater afflictions." He compares one who enjoys such irreducibly finite pleasures to a fish devouring bait, unaware of the hook that is concealed within it. "The fish is delighted (*gaudet*) as well, when, failing to notice the hook, it devours the bait. But, when the fisherman begins to draw his line, first the fish's viscera are distorted and wrenched out; then it is dragged to its destruction, away from all the pleasure (*laetitia*) that the bait had brought to it."[153]

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passisunt, quia et ipsi oboedientes suo Domino non fuerunt.)" (*A Treatise Against Two Letters of the Pelagians* I.16.32). Augustine repeatedly invokes the secret and hidden to justify women's subordination. For instance, he justifies the polygyny of the biblical patriarchs for the sake of procreation, but argues that women ought never be allowed to have more than one husband, because "by a hidden law of nature (*occulta lege naturae*) things that rule love singularity; things that are ruled, indeed, are subjected not only each one to an individual master, but also, if natural or social conditions (*ratio naturalis vel socialis*) permit, many of them are not unfittingly subordinated to one master" (*On the Good of Marriage* 17.20). Thus, as Bernadette Brooten points out, "Augustine universalizes wifely subordination to one husband by postulating a hidden law of nature that guarantees to a ruler that he rule alone." See Bernadette J. Brooten, "How Natural is Nature? Augustine's Sexual Ethics," paper presented at the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, February 20, 2003, pp. 18–19.

[150] Margaret Miles reflects on this in her reading of *Confessions*: "Women readers, in order to become the reader constructed by the text, must read without the female body, assuming the universalized perspective of the male subject. A gendered reading, however, reveals the absence of a female subject position in the text; it also makes visible Augustine's extensive use of male sexuality as a primary and pervasive model for human life" (*Desire and Delight* 81). The Ricoeur quote is from *Symbolism of Evil* 255. See my discussion in Section 1.2.1 above.

[151] Maxey further asserts, rather provocatively, that "The theological task of 'liberating' women would get underway primarily by rejecting and counteracting an Augustinian inheritance." See Margaret Maxey, "Beyond Eve and Mary: A Theological Alternative for Women's Liberation," *Dialog* 10 (1971): 115–117.

[152] *Confessions* VIII.11.26.

[153] *On Christian Struggle* 7.8.

Through an accumulation of conceptual associations running through Augustine's corpus, the habitual body comes to be conceptually conjoined to a system of predicates defining "woman" as an ontological force of temptation and alienation. As tempting, habit/woman pulls the rational moral subject away from its rational self and its adherence to transcendent principles and plunges it out of its authentic being into a self-alienating care for the management of temporal affairs. Such figurations display the deep-seated anxiety that drives Augustine's denigrations of the feminized habitual body. His dread over the disintegration of the self, and the defensive strategies he constructs to (re)produce its integrity, is an expression of his fear in the face of death. The lived body's irreducible and inevitable susceptibility to dissolution undergirds all of Augustine's articulations of the self as an axis of ontological dehiscence. It also provides the underlying framework for his conception of Christian love (*caritas*), which he posits as the only path to definitively prevailing over the ontological tendency toward loss of self that is manifest in habit.

1.3   Christian Love as F(l)ight from the Finitude of Lived Bodily Relationality

> *If love of the world (*dilectio mundi*) be there, love of God (*dilectio Dei*) will not be there. Hold fast rather to the love of God, that as God is forever and ever, so you may also remain forever and ever; because such is each as is his love (*talis est quisque, qualis eius dilectio est*). Lovest thou earth, thou shalt be earth. Lovest thou God, what shall I say? Thou shalt be God? I dare not say it myself, let us hear it from the Scriptures: "I have said, Ye are gods, and all of you sons of the Most High" (Psalms 82:6).*
>
> *–Saint Augustine*[154]

The response that Augustine ultimately gives to the *mihi quaestio*, his most famous existential formulation, is that "such is each as is his love (*talis est quisque, qualis eius dilectio est*)." Love, for Augustine, is not reducible to some psychological state that a person *has*; it is an ontological movement and orientation: I *am* and derive my orientation from what I love. Bodily habit, in Augustine's account, is the medium through which the subject becomes entangled in the wrong order of love (*cupiditas* or *amor*). In the course of this love, which takes "the world" and worldly others as its objects, the self forgets its authentic self and loses itself in its relationships. The right order of love, the authentic form of Christian sociality, in Augustine's conception, is neighborly love (*caritas* or *dilectio*). Though explicitly characterized as an exodus from habitually engendered self-exile, I argue that Augustine's model of Christian love and authentic sociality is in effect a flight from the irreducible finitude of lived

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[154] *Homilies on the First Epistle of John* 2.14.

bodily relationality. Moreover, I contend that, as fleeing, such love results in a reification of social existence and a devaluation of intersubjective mutuality.

Throughout his life and work, Augustine had a diffuse and profound dread of loss and, consequently, an abject fear of intimate human relationships. As finite, lived bodily relationality is constantly exposed to the ineradicable possibility of loss. Insofar as one loves entities that are subject to change and degeneration, as all mortals are, one not only runs the risk, but is in fact guaranteed to have one's beloved eventually removed from one's presence. Augustine's term for this mundane kind of love, which clings to and constitutes the world[155] and which is thus inseverable from loss, is *cupiditas*, *amor*, or *appetitus* (desire or craving). Its correlate he calls *mutabilia* (changeable entities).[156] *Cupiditas* remains an abiding concern for him throughout his life and work and it concerns him because of its inextricability from the fear of loss. "None will doubt that the only causes of fear are either the loss of what we love and have gained, or failure to gain what we love and have hoped for."[157] But the loss intrinsic to human relationship that so distressed Augustine was not primarily that the lover was destined to lose its beloved, but rather that the lover would lose himself in the process of loving. In *cupiditas* I seek what is outside, outside myself (*extra me* or *foris a me*), and in longing for and desiring "things which are outside, [the lover] is thus driven outside himself."[158] The subject clings to (*inhaerere*) things other than itself, Augustine argues, literally internalizing them and becoming fastened (*infigo*) to them through the glue of care (*curae glutino*), such that the subject is borne along, turned about, and shaped by them, losing and forgetting itself amidst the constant change and variation of "things outside itself."[159] Like the fish that devours the bait at the end of a fishing line, the person who seeks and takes pleasure in worldly entities outside himself positions himself to undergo a radical disruption and displacement of his own interior when those entities are torn from his possession.[160]

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[155] "For we call 'world' (*mundus*) not only this fabric which God made, heaven and earth [...] but the inhabitants of the world (*habitatores mundi*) are also called 'the world.' [...] Especially all lovers of the world (*dilectores mundi*) are called 'world'" (*Homilies on the First Epistle of John* 2.12).

[156] "He who delights in freedom seeks to be free from the love of mutable things (*Quem ergo delectat libertas, ab amore mutabilium rerum liber esse appetat*)" (*On True Religion* 48.93).

[157] *Eighty-three Different Questions* 33.

[158] Augustine, *Sermon* 96.2. See also *Commentaries on the Psalms* 57.1: "[M]en desire what is outside of them and become exiles even from themselves (*quia homines appetentes ea quae foris sunt, etiam a se ipsis exsules facti sunt*)."

[159] E.g., *Confessions* IV.14.23; *On Music* VI. 5.12–14; *Trinity* X.5.7; XII.9.14–11.16. See also the discussion of Augustine's account of care in Section 1.1.

[160] *On Christian Struggle* 7.8. See end of Section 1.2. It is precisely the language of severance that Augustine employs in *Confessions* to express his pain over the loss of loved ones. For instance, in the wake of the death of his childhood friend, he writes "I carried about my pierced and bloodied soul, rebellious as being carried by me, but I could find no place where I might put it down" (IV.7.12). Reflecting on the death of his mother: "My heart was wounded through and my life was as if torn asunder" (IX.12.30), or his separation from the woman with whom he had his one long-term, committed

Human and worldly attachments, as Augustine's account of care is quite insistent upon, entail an inevitable loss of self, and testify to a fundamental separation of man from the self-mastery that is envisioned as bringing him happiness. "By deserting (*deserendo*) the one above itself with regard to whom alone it could keep its strength (*fortitudo*) and enjoy him as its light, the mind (*mens*) became weak (*infirma*) and dark (*tenebrosa*), causing it to be miserably dragged down from itself to things that are not itself and are lower than itself, by loves that it cannot master (*amores quos non valet vincere*) and confusions it can see no way out of."[161] Simply put, desire occasions dispersion, disintegration, insecurity and, hence, discontentment and unfreedom. For, freedom (*securitas*) and happiness (*beatitudo*), in Augustine's definition, essentially mean *mastery* and *imperviousness to privation*.[162] The free and happy life (*vita secura et beata*) is essentially constituted by freedom *from* care (*se-cura*), by freedom from exposure to risk and from dependency upon persons or things, which are subject to loss through deterioration, change, betrayal, and withdrawal. Augustinian freedom, in a word, is inviolable plentitude, permanence—what he frequently refers to simply as "rest" or "repose" (*adquiescere*).

Needless to say, such quiescent security is not abidingly possible in the Heraclitean flux—i.e., the perpetual becoming—of temporal existence. The possibility of permanence must be deferred to an absolute future, i.e., to the "hereafter," a changeless immortal dimension. Augustine's desiderative anticipation of this projected future leads him to advocate a kind of love that is not only a flight (*conversio*, literally a turning away) from the finitude of lived bodily relationality, but a disdain (*contemno*) and hatred (*odium*) of intimate human relationships and the social solidarity that they make possible.[163] This "right order" of love, which is "straight"

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sexual relationship: "My heart still clung to her: it was pierced and wounded within me, and the wound drew blood from it. […] Not yet healed within me was that wound which had been made by the cutting away of my former companion. After intense fever and pain, it festered, and it still caused me pain, although in a more chilling and desperate way" (VI.15.25). See Julie B. Miller's provocative argument that Augustine's depiction of God as a trinity that is perpetually remembering, knowing, and loving itself arises from Augustine's experience of relationship and his fear of relationships in which one forgets and loses oneself. "To Remember Self, to Remember God: Augustine on Sexuality, Relationality, and the Trinity" in *Feminist Interpretations of Augustine* 243–279.

[161] "Quamuis enim se ita diligat ut si alterutrum proponatur, malit omnia quae infra se diligit perdere quam perire, tamen superiorem deserendo ad quem solum posset custodire fortitudinem suam eoque frui lumine suo, cui canitur in psalmo: Fortitudinem meam ad te custodiam, et in alio: Accedite ad eum et inluminamini, sic infirma et tenebrosa facta est ut a se quoque ipsa in ea quae non sunt quod ipsa et quibus superior est ipsa infelicius laberetur per amores quos non ualet uincere et errores a quibus non uidet qua redire" (On Trinity XIV.14.18).

[162] "Therefore, life will only be truly happy when it is eternal" (*City of God* XIV.25). "Since all men want to be happy, they want also to be immortal, if they know what they want; for otherwise they could not be happy" (*Trinity* XIII.8.11). "Happiness is achieved only when the beloved becomes a permanently inherent element of one's own being. Augustine indicates this closeness of lover and beloved by using the word *inhaerere*, which is usually translated as 'clinging to' and occurs chiefly as *inhaerere Deo*, 'clinging to God,' expressing a state of being on earth that is not Godforsaken" (Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine* 19).

[163] "[A]n absolute future can be anticipated only through the annihilation of the mortal, temporal present, that is, through hating the existing self (*odium sui*)" (Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine* 27).

(*rectus*) rather than "contorted" (*perversus*), the antithesis of the "passions" of *cupiditas* and *amor*, Augustine calls *dilectio* or *caritas*.[164] "True love (*vera dilectio*) […] is that we should live justly by cleaving to the truth [i.e., eternal being], and so for the love of men (*amore hominum*) by which we wish them to live justly we should despise all mortal things (*contemnamus omnia mortalia*)."[165] "For the friendship of this world is the enemy of God."[166]

Augustine explains this hatred of lived bodily relationality in terms of his interpretation of habitual bodily being and Original Sin. To embrace the *mutabilia* of the world, as worldly love does, is to embrace *mortalia*. Since mortality is the "wages of sin"—i.e., the reciprocal punishment for Adam's disobedience—worldly love thus entails the celebration of mortality and of man's original disobedience to God. Furthermore, by manifesting an ontological tendency toward self-exile, worldly love—guided by bodily habit—existentially reiterates Adam's disobedience and is itself an expression of mortality. For insofar as one is led by habit to become invested in this life, insofar as one becomes "entangled" in *mutabilia* and *mortalia*, one loses and forgets the immutable and immortal. One turns away from eternal true being— and, hence, from true security—as Adam turned away and exiled himself from the law of God through his original act of disobedience. Thus the bonds of lived bodily relationality come to be interpreted as impediments to authenticity and moral order, as habitual weights that pull man away from himself and away from God.

As Augustine accounts for it, we sin, like Adam sinned, not only because we *consent* to our appetites, which are seduced by bodies and worldly pleasure; we sin because we *are always already habituated* to love bodies and worldly pleasure. When Adam sinned, he "put his wife's will above God's commandment, […] he could not bear to be severed from his life's companion, even though the refusal entailed companionship in sin."[167] He was not led astray to disobedient transgression of God's law because he believed the woman spoke the truth; "he yielded to the woman, the husband to the wife, the one human being to the only other human being, because of the bond of social relationship (*sociali necessitudine*) between them." [168] This

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[164] "The love (*dilectio*) which is called bodily (*carnalis*) is not love (*dilectio*), but should be called affection (*amor*), for the word '*dilectio*' is used with reference to better objects and is to be understood with reference to better objects" (*Homilies on the First Epistle of John* 8.5). See also *On Trinity* XIV.14.18; XI.6.10.

[165] *Trinity*, VIII.7.10.

[166] "Amicitia huius mundi inimica est Dei" (Augustine, citing the *Book of James* 4:4; *Confessions* I.13.21). See also Augustine, *Sermon* 142.3.

[167] *City of God* XIV.11 & 13.

[168] *City of God* XIV.11. See also *On the Literal Interpretation of Genesis* XI.42.59: "After the woman had been seduced and had eaten of the forbidden fruit and had given Adam some to eat with her, he did not wish to make her unhappy, fearing she would waste away without his support, alienated from his affections, and that this dissension would be her death. He was not overcome by the concupiscence of the flesh, which he had not yet experienced in the law of the members at war with the law of his mind, but by the sort of attachment and affection by which it often happens that we offend God while we try

denigration of human relationship as a force that tilts the subject toward fault gives rise to the most inhuman declarations:

> Truth himself calls us back to our original and perfect state, commands us to resist bodily habit (*consuetudo carnalis*), and teaches that no one is fit for the kingdom of God unless he hates these bodily relationships (*carnales necessitudines oderit*). [...] No one can perfectly love that *to* which we are called unless he hate that *from* which we are called. We are called *to* perfect [i.e., non-habitual, self-present] human nature as God made it before we sinned. We are recalled *from* love of what we have deserved by sinning [i.e., finitude, habitual embodiment]. Therefore we must hate that from which we choose to be set free. If we are ablaze with love for eternity, we shall hate temporal relationships (*oderimus temporales necessitudines*).[169]

Augustine explicitly identifies temporal and bodily relationships (*necessitudines temporales et carnales*) with bodily habit (*consuetudo carnalis*), because it is through our habitual bodies that we have primary contact with the world and others. Through our habitual bodies we have always already inhabited the world. When given the choice between God and the world, Adam chose the world. As a consequence, we mortals, having inherited the stain of Adam's sin, are always already habitually predisposed toward loving and caring for embodied and mortal entities, i.e., toward *mutabilia* and *mortalia*. Thus, Augustine maintains that *caritas* and *cupiditas* are distinguished not only by their respective object, but by their volitional status. Inasmuch as they are habitual, worldly love and investment are, for Augustine, never a choice properly understood. This is because he understands intentionality and freedom as essentially non-bodily and thus non-habituated and non-habituating. Insofar as man is embodied, insofar as he is of the world, habit has already delivered him to the world. Through the habitual body the world is always already encountered as there, and so love of it is *a matter of course*.[170]

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to keep the friendship of men. That he should not have acted thus is clear from the just sentence which God pronounced on him."

[169] *On True Religion* 46.88–89. Augustine makes scriptural reference to the synoptic gospel of Luke with the notion that one is unfit for the kingdom of God unless one hates lived bodily relationships. Such, as Luke recounts, is "the cost of following Jesus": "Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: ˙If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple.' [...] He said to another man, 'Follow me.' But the man replied, 'Lord, first let me go and bury my father.' Jesus said to him, 'Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.' Still another said, 'I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say goodbye to my family.' Jesus replied, 'No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.'" (*Luke* 14:25–26; 9:57–62).

[170] As will be discussed in Chapter Two, in his existential analytic of human existence, Heidegger calls the "matter-of-course intentionality" of the habitual body falling (*Verfallen*) and attributes it to the operative nexus of social normativity (*das Man*), both of which he designates as structural components of being-in-the-world. "The movements of being that Dasein so to speak makes in *das Man* are a matter

Augustine insists that we can authentically be ourselves (as images of God)—that is, we can order and possess ourselves in self-collected security—only insofar as we "resist *consuetudo carnalis*." *Consuetudo carnalis* overdetermines our "choice" of love object, pre-inclining our interest and desire toward changeable, mortal entities, to the detriment of spiritual values and eternal truths—to the detriment of our authentic created selves. To break the hold that worldly values and entities have on us in virtue of our habitual bodies, he insists that we hate all bodily relationships (*carnales necessitudines*). To turn toward and re-collect the abiding, authentic self, one must "hate the existing self (*odium sui*)."[171] Through such hatred, "man tears himself loose from his mundane moorings and from making his home in the world."[172] The soul "extracts itself (*extraho*) from the love of inferior beauties by conquering and destroying its own habit that wars against it."[173] Christian love, in Augustine's formulation, is thus inseparable from and impossible without a thoroughgoing hatred of alterity—a condemnation and renunciation of worldly, sensible transcendence. Christian love demands hatred of the self-alterity of one's own habitual body as well as the alterity of other embodied persons. This is why Augustine is adamant about the command that one love one's neighbor *as oneself* (*diligere homo proximum tamquam se ipsum*):[174] "Whoever loves another as himself ought to love that in him which is his real self. Our real selves are not bodies." What is to be loved rather is "human nature free of its bodily condition and relationships (*natura humana sine carnali conditione*)."[175] "For you love in [your neighbor] not what he is, but what you wish that he may be."[176] As Arendt sums up Augustine's account of mutual love (*diligere invicem*), "I never love my neighbor for his own sake, only for the sake of divine grace. This indirectness, which is unique to love of neighbor, […] turns my relation to

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of course, not conscious or intentional. […] The matter-of-course way in which this movement of Dasein [i.e., falling] comes to pass also belongs to the manner of being of *das Man*." Martin Heidegger, *The History of the Concept of Time*, trans. Theodore Kisiel (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985), 282.

[171] "No one will become what he desires to be unless he hates himself as he is (*Nec fiet quisquis qualis cupit esse, nisi se oderit qualis est*)" (Augustine, *On True Religion* 48.93). See Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine* 27.

[172] Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine* 85.

[173] "Sed haec actio qua sese anima, opitulante Deo et Domino suo, ab amore inferioris pulchritudinis extrahit, debellans atque interficiens adversus se militantem consuetudinem suam" (*On Music* VI.15.50).

[174] The original commandment as revealed to Moses appears in the *Book of Leviticus* 19:18. Jesus gives emphasis to it in the *Book of Mark* 12:29–31. Augustine posits *caritas* as the Christian law toward which all the other laws aim: "Thus the end of every commandment is *caritas*, that is, every commandment has *caritas* for its aim" (*Enchiridion on Faith, Hope, and Love* 32.121).

[175] Augustine, *On True Religion* 46.89.

[176] Augustine, *Homilies on the First Epistle of John* 8.10.

my neighbor into a mere passage for the direct relation to God himself. […] This indirectness breaks up social relations by turning them into provisional ones."[177]

Through the hatred and denial of both self and other in their respective temporal and embodied singularity, the Christian subject seeks to dislodge itself and its neighbor from the messiness, mutability, and finitude of social relations. The other-worldly reduction effected by Christian love enacts a radical revaluation of existence: the world becomes a desert to be passed through, social relations become provisional and intrinsically inauthentic, the body becomes a prison confining the spirit with the chains of habit, and life on earth becomes a kind of living death (*mors vitalis* or *vita mortalis*).[178] In thus seeking to flee *from* the finitude of the world, Christian love calls the subject *to* the end of mortality; Christian love seeks, through grace, to put death *to death*. "Love itself is our death to the world (*ipsa dilectio est mors nostra saeculo*), and our life with God. For it is death when the soul leaves the body, how is not death when our love goes forth from the world (*de mundo amor noster exit*)?"[179]

The inviolable man (*homo* or *vir invictus*), who in loving others as himself directs his love (and thereby himself) away from the world, stands in a condition of needlessness with respect to others. He becomes inviolable in virtue of loving an inviolable object. He loves and needs God alone, which "no one can take away from him."[180]

> Such a man (*vir*), so long as he is in this life, […] uses all persons as objects of or occasions for benevolence. […] He is not made sorrowful by the death of anyone, for he who loves God with all his mind knows that nothing can perish for him […]. He is not made unhappy by the unhappiness of another, any more than he is made just by the justice of another. As no one can take from him God and justice, so no one can take from him his happiness. […] In all dutiful labors, he cherishes the certain expectation of rest to come, and so is not shattered (*futurae quietis certa exspectatione, non frangitur*).[181]

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[177] Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine* 111.

[178] "If indeed it is even to be called life when it is really a death" (*City of God* XII.21). See also *Confessions* I.6.7.

[179] Augustine, *Tractates on John's Gospel* 65.1. "Death is meaningless to love of neighbor, because in removing my neighbor from the world death only does what love has already accomplished […]. Death is irrelevant to this love, because every beloved is only the occasion to love God. […] The Christian can thus love all people because each one is only an occasion, and that occasion can be everyone. […] It is not really the neighbor who is loved in this love of neighbor—it is love itself" (Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine* 96–97).

[180] Augustine, *On True Religion* 47.90.

[181] Augustine, *On True Religion* 47.91.

One can see how the Augustinian injunction of Christian love, by reifying social existence and devaluing intersubjective mutuality, leads to a glorification of religious dogmatism, militarism, and martyrdom.[182] Indeed, Christian love renders the martyric experience of death as the paradigm of authenticity. Christian love inclines one to regard death as the beginning of true life, life with Christ; the sojourn in this "valley of tears" seems to be no more than a time of trial and a figure of evil. As for the Socrates of the *Gorgias* and the *Phaedo*, so too for the inviolable, Christian loving man, the purest desire is to flee from here to the beyond, the proper practice of philosophy—itself a practice of loving (knowledge)—is to train and prepare oneself for death.[183]

But what, one must ask, was the phenomenological motivation for Augustine's excoriation of worldly, bodily, social—i.e., existential—love (*cupiditas* or *amor*)? Augustine insists that existential love is inauthentic because, as care, it destroys self-presence. It drives the self outside of its authentic self, causing the self to forget and lose possession of itself in its care for extrinsic *mutabilia*. Even when it possesses its object, existential love inevitably gives rise to a fear of loss, because its object—and hence its love—is inherently unstable. So long as we desire temporal things, which originate and perish independently of us, we are constantly under this threat. Bound by existential love and fear to a future full of uncertainties, we are deprived of the restful repose—the freedom (*securitas*)—that Augustine argues is only possible in the presence of God. We strip each present moment of its calm, its intrinsic import, which we are unable to enjoy. The indeterminate, existential future destroys the present.

On the basis of Augustine's own normative account, however, Christian love fails to accomplish the authentic self-presence for which it was proposed and by which it is ostensibly distinguished from existential love. Christian love differs from existential love by its object alone, and itself reiterates the existential dynamic of self-exile that it was called upon to resolve. Arendt articulates this point concisely.

> [In *caritas*] man's present life is being neglected for the sake of his future, and loses its meaningfulness and weight in comparison with that true life which is projected into an absolute future and which is constituted as the ultimate goal of present, worldly human existence. […] In longing for and desiring the future, we are liable to forget the present, to leap over it.[184]

Rather than being constantly threatened and dispersed by its projection into the indeterminate existential future as in worldly love, in Christian love, the existential

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[182] For instance: "God's providence constantly uses war to correct and chasten the corrupt habits of man (*corruptos mores hominum*), as it also uses such afflictions to train men in a righteous and laudable way of life, removing to a better state those whose life is approved, or else keeping them in this world for further service" (*City of God* I.1.).

[183] See Ricoeur, *Symbolism of Evil* 335; Plato, *Phaedo* 64a–67e.

[184] Arendt, *Love and Saint Augustine* 27.

present is contracted and abolished by its projection into the absolute future of eternity. The Christian lover is not free from care. His care simply latches onto an other-worldly object, which, projected into an absolute future, causes him to abandon social relations and worldly possibilities. Like the subject of care dispersed and engaged in its projection into existential possibilities, the Christian subject forgets and leaps over the present by projecting itself into an other-worldly future. The security that Christian love offers still rests on a forgetfulness of self and an annihilation of self-presence. That which is forgotten and denounced is the bodily subject, and that which is annihilated and foreclosed is the social solidarity made possible by lived bodily relationality.

It is on account of this withdrawal that feminist commentators such as Margaret Miles argue that "Augustine's formulation of the spiritual life as a withdrawal from attachment to the world of senses and objects [and bodily subjects!] has played a role in creating the present condition of the earth, a planet in ecological and nuclear crisis."[185] As French feminist philosopher Luce Irigaray argues, "What is called human nature often means forgetting or ignoring our corporeal condition for the sake of some spiritual delusion or perversion […] a forgetting of life."[186] The model of spirituality and the ideal of Christian love that are produced by Augustine's metaphysical conception of lived bodily existence as a condition of habitual fallenness and a reciprocal penalty for Original Sin constitute a forgetting of embodied life, an *exodus mundi*. This metaphysical project of exodus gives rise to an ethics of restraint and renunciation, and an authoritarian politics of obedience.

1.4   Enduring Political Repercussions of Augustinian Ontology

However much theology may orient itself toward the transcendent, however much the generically posited subject may strive to extract itself from its factical, lived bodily attachments, it nevertheless is shaped by and responsive to the relational entanglements of its historical and political context—what Augustine disparagingly delimits as "this life" (*huius vitae*) or the *saeculum*. Augustine's theological ontology of the fallenness of man takes form in a tumultuous period in the history of the early Christian church. As the Catholic bishop of Hippo, a North African seaport in modern day Algeria, at the turn of the fifth century, Augustine was faced with a multitude of African Christian communities. His episcopate was wrought with schisms (e.g., the Donatist controversy), heresies (e.g., Pelagianism), and massive political turmoil (e.g., the fall of the Roman Empire) that constantly threatened and fractured the unifying aspirations of the Catholic Church. For all his transworldly aspirations and

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[185] *Desire and Delight* 98.

[186] "A Chance to Live," in *Thinking the Difference* 18, 7.

admonitions as a theologian, Augustine the bishop found himself ex-orbitantly concerned with matters of politics and society, demonstrating himself to be not only a skillful church leader, but a deft, if at times authoritarian, politician and propagandist.

This is especially evident in his suppression of the Donatists, a schismatic contingent of the Catholic church who rejected the spiritual authority and administrative legitimacy of priests and bishops who had abetted or succumbed to the pressures of state persecution under Roman emperor Diocletian (C.E. 303–305) by handing over religious texts and in some cases other Christians to political authorities (hence the Donatist designation of such individuals as *traditores*: literally, 'people who handed over,' a word which serves as the etymological basis for the English *traitor*). After the official Christianization of the Roman Empire with the reign of Constantine I (C.E. 306–337), Augustine helped convince Roman Emperor Honorius (C.E. 395–423), a devout Catholic, to outlaw Donatist congregations, which at the turn of the fifth century outnumbered other Christians in many places in North Africa. As late ancient historian Peter Brown points out, Augustine wrote, with unsuspected journalistic flair, "the only full justification, in the history of the Early Church, of the right of the state to suppress non-Catholics."[187] Authorizing forced conversions and ordering Donatists to surrender their churches, Augustine allied himself with Roman imperial authority to expropriate Donatists of their property, restrict them from holding public office, and declare Donatist assembly punishable by death, thus squelching a major Christian dissension of his early episcopate.[188]

Augustine's suppression of the Donatists is, of course, not the only, nor even the most enduring mark of his political legacy. The primary thematic purpose of his weighty tome *The City of God Against the Pagans* (C.E. 413–26) was to defend the Catholic Church against the charge that Christianity was to blame for the historical fall of the Roman Empire. Amidst this political, social, and ideological disorder, Augustine provided, through his narration of the metaphysical "fall" of man, an anthropology that managed to shore up the authority of the Catholic Church and ensure its alliance with the Medieval reterritorializations of imperial power. Indeed, modern sovereignty, which poses the unitary subject of the "people" over against the differential, multivalent tendencies of the "multitude," is arguably part of the continuing legacy of Augustinian anthropology.[189] For the human condition, according to the latter, is a metaphysical struggle of the soul which, having fallen from a prior unity in God into a state of "habitual entanglement in the multitude," must seek the

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[187] Peter Brown, *Augustine* 222–239. Publicizing theological arguments in the form of a commentary on contemporary events, Augustine enacted what Brown calls "a use of propaganda unparalleled in the history of the African church."

[188] See Peter Brown, "St. Augustine's Attitude to Religious Coercion," *Journal of Roman Studies* 54 (1964): 107–116; and "Religious Coercion in the Later Roman Empire: The Case of North Africa," *History* 48 (1963): 283–305.

[189] See my article, "Reinhabiting the Body Politic: Habit and the Roots of the Human," *differences*: *A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 20.2-3 (2009): 73–102.

authority of the sovereign "spirit" (through the institution of the church) to control and combat the habituality of its fallen nature.

Augustine projects this theological anthropology onto the plane of political history in more ways than one. Indeed, the philosophical tradition of just war theory finds its origins in this early Christian soil. For as Augustine famously declares in the opening pages of the *City of God*: "God's providence constantly uses war to correct and chasten the corrupt habits of man (*corruptos mores hominum*), as it also uses such afflictions to train men in a righteous and laudable way of life, removing to a better state those whose life is approved, or else keeping them in this world for further service."[190]

Numerous historians and commentators on Augustine's work have written about the connection between Augustine's doctrine of the Fall and the authoritarian politics of sovereignty. Brown argues that

> Augustine's view of the Fall of mankind determined his attitude to society. Fallen men [and especially women] had come to need restraint. Even man's greatest achievements had been made possible only by a 'strait-jacket' of unremitting harshness. […] The test of such an attitude is what Augustine thought might happen if ever the pressures of society were relaxed: [quoting Augustine] 'the reins placed on human licence would be loosened and thrown off: all sins would go unpunished. Take away the barriers created by the laws! Men's brazen capacity to do harm, their urge to self-indulgence would rage to the full. No king in his Kingdom, no general with his troops, … no husband with his wife, nor father with his son would attempt to put a stop, by any threats or punishments, to the freedom and the sheer sweet taste of sinning.'[191]

Whether Augustine's metaphysical understanding of the habitual fallenness of man determined his attitude toward his social circumstances or whether, as is more likely the case, his historical situation and his understanding of habitual bodily being were reciprocally generative, is a question best left to the intellectual historian.[192] To appreciate the enduring political repercussions of Augustinian ontology, it is worthy of remark, as Brown himself notes, that Augustine's oppressive sense of the need for restraint "breaks down the barriers, firmly fixed in the imagination of the average Early Christian, between the 'sacred' and the 'profane,' between the purely spiritual sanctions exercised by the Christian bishop within the Church, and the manifold (and at times, horrific) pressures of Roman society, as administered by the Emperors."[193]

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[190] *City of God* I.1.

[191] *Augustine* 234–35.

[192] See R.A. Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of Saint Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1970).

[193] *Augustine* 235.

For Augustine, man in his fallen state required more than the spiritual and social pressures of religious communities to keep him from evil. The "Apostolic discipline" of bishops had to be diffused and deployed upon (social) bodies through secular channels—in the imperial discipline of Emperors issuing political laws, and the domination (*dominatio*) of (male) "heads" of families (*domini*) maintaining "the order of things" in the domestic sphere (*domus*).[194]

> By 405, [Augustine] accepted that the Roman state could bring to bear the force of its own laws to 'reunite' Donatist congregations to the Catholic Church under threat of punishment. In so doing, he upheld the view that the structures of authority that gave cohesion to profane society might be called upon to support the Catholic Church: Emperors should command their subjects, landowners their peasants (flogging them when necessary [*sic*]), heads of households their wives and children, in order to bring them back into the unity of the Catholic Church.[195]

Considering that Augustine's conversion was prompted and his deepest sensibilities directed by a desire to disentangle himself from the habitual structures and attachments of the social world, it is of no small consequence to note that the self-present unity he sought was never attained except through a rigorous regimentation and rehabituation of bodies. Whether the trinitarian unity of the continently contemplative mind remembering, knowing, and loving itself as the *imago Dei*, or the doctrinal and institutional unity of the Catholic Church, Augustine's aspiration for an authenticity unaffiliated with the habits of this world (*consuetudo huius vitae, consuetudo carnalis*) was only ever instantiated in and *by means of* the finite structures of habitual bodily being, shaped by *disciplina christiana*. The habitual bonds that held subjects to emperors, slaves to masters, wives to husbands, and children to parents could neither be ignored nor abandoned. They had, rather, to be made to serve the Catholic causes of individual continence and congregational unity.

As with nearly all of his temporal affiliations, Augustine's assent to sociopolitical alliance between Catholic and Roman imperial power was not without ambivalence and angst. In an anxious letter to Paulinus of Nola written at the heart of the Donatist controversy, Augustine writes of the "fearfulness and trembling" he feels with respect to "the infliction and remission of punishment in cases where we have no other desire but to forward the spiritual welfare of those we have to decide whether or not to punish."[196] Nevertheless, even more than Augustine's episcopal actions, his

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[194] "[H]e rules and she obeys. He is ruled by wisdom, she by the man. For Christ is the head of man, and the man is the head of the woman. […] for the order of things (*rerum ordo*) makes woman subjugated to man" (*On Genesis Against the Manichees* II.11.15).

[195] Brown, *Body & Society* 398.

[196] "What trembling, what darkness! May we not think that with reference to such things it is said: *Fearfulness and trembling are come over me, and horror overwhelmed me. And I said: 'O that I had*

doctrine of the fall and its attendant conception of the habitual body lent themselves to serving as theological justification of the alliance between the Catholic Church and imperial power. Elaine Pagels exposes the enduring political efficacy of Augustine's ontology in *Adam, Eve, and the Serpent* (1988).

> By insisting that humanity, ravaged by sin, now lies helplessly in need of outside intervention, Augustine's theory could not only validate secular [sovereign] power but justify as well the imposition of church authority—by force, if necessary—as essential for human salvation. [. . .] For what Augustine says, in simplest terms, is this: human beings cannot be trusted to govern themselves, because our very nature—indeed, all of nature—has become corrupt as a result of Adam's sin. [. . .] Throughout western history this extreme version of the doctrine of original sin, when taken as the basis for political structures, has tended to appeal to those who [. . .] suspect human motives and the human capacity for self-government.[197]

It is on account of the easy alliance between the Augustinian ontology of habitual fallenness and the political, social, and sexual domination of sovereign power that leads a historian like Brown to claim that "Augustine may be the first theorist of the Inquisition," and a Christian philosopher such as Paul Ricoeur to lament "the harm that has been done to souls during the centuries of Christianity [by Augustine's metaphysics of man's fallenness] will never be adequately told."[198] Indeed, Pagels argues that it is precisely on account of the way that Augustine's teachings justify and necessitate the alliance between the Catholic Church and imperial power that his influence throughout western Christendom has surpassed that of any other church father.[199]

This constrictive conception of habit is by no means antiquated. One need only go to the founding theoretical statement of liberal humanism, John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* (1859), to discern not only how deeply the Augustinian anthropology is embedded in the liberal conception of individuality, but also the expressly colonizing tendency to which this conception grants sanctuary.

> The despotism of custom is everywhere the standing hindrance to human advancement, being in unceasing antagonism to that disposition to aim at something better than customary, which is called [...] the spirit of liberty, or that of progress or improvement. [...] The

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wings like a dove; for then I would fly away and be at rest" (*Epistolae* 95.3; quoted in Brown, *Augustine* 239).

[197] Elaine Pagels, *Adam, Eve, and the Serpent* (New York: Quality Paperback Book Club, 2005 [1988]), 125, 145, 149.

[198] Brown, *Augustine* 236; Ricoeur, *Symbolism of Evil* 239.

[199] *Adam, Eve, and the Serpent* 125–26.

progressive principle […] is antagonistic to the sway of Custom, involving at least emancipation from that yoke; and the contest between the two constitutes the chief interest of the history of mankind. The greater part of the world has, properly speaking, no history, because the despotism of Custom is complete. This is the case over the whole of the East. […] They have become stationary—have remained so for thousands of years; and if they are ever to be farther improved, it must be by foreigners.[200]

The Enlightenment metaphysic merely adjusts the rhetoric of sovereignty. In place of the spirit of Christianity that struggles to free itself from the pulls and pangs of its polytheistic past, the secular humanists of the modern era project the spirit of liberty: the principle of progress in virtue of which human rationality sheds its habitual encasements and frees itself to authentically realize itself. The modern savior from oriental confinement to custom is not the sovereignty of Christ, but rather that of occidental liberalism and colonial capitalism.

At this juncture, the disposition to question the universalizing pretensions of western humanism compels us to ask: From whence stems this so-called spirit of liberty, in its various iterations? From which constraints and which inexhaustible reserve do its iterations rise to efficacy and intelligibility?[201] What is this impulse to liberate itself from the chains of past habit if not simply a *competing habit* struggling to assert itself—as Mill writes, a "*disposition* to aim at something better than customary"? And, if this is the case, what analytic and evaluative criteria can be generated to differentiate these competing habitual assemblages? The notion of habit as ontological constriction provides an insufficient vocabulary for understanding such alternatives.

1.5   Habitual Counter-intentions in Augustine

Every disavowal generates a symptom; Augustine's is no exception. Despite its apparently exhaustive attempts to extricate itself from habitual bodily being, Augustine's thinking nevertheless suggests that the unself-conscious structure of habit is inextricable from the production of truth. On monuments throughout the Occident and its imperial outposts, interiority is continually reinscribed: "*Noli foras ire, in te ipsum redi; in interiore homine* habitat *veritas* […]. Do not lose your way outside.

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[200] John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, ed. Stefan Collini (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 70-72.

[201] The expression *réserve inépuisable* appears in the Preface of Foucault's *The Birth of the Clinic*. Alan Sheridan translates it as the "non-verbal conditions" of discourse. It is, as Foucault remarks, "the common structure that carves up and articulates what is seen and what is said" (xix).

Return within yourself. Truth *inhabits* the inner man."[202] *Prima facie*, this maxim famously importunes its interlocutor to turn away from worldly, temporal things and to seek truth—through the mediation of church authority (*auctoritas*)—in the private abode of individual human contemplation, which is held to be the region most proximate to divine light and rational self-transparency.[203] *Sotto voce*, the adage subverts the sanctity of the very interiority it inscribes. Augustine does not claim that man *is* truth or that truth is *in* man as water is 'in' the glass; nor does he aver that truth resides in the *correspondence* between man's inner representations and the outer objects to which they refer, because the contemplation that he seeks is directed away from the realm of sense-perception. Truth *inhabits* man's capacity for mindful self-presence. It settles into him as one settles into a house, organizing his capacities for activity, furnishing him with his familiar concepts (as well as his concept of the familiar), and establishing in him a familiar orientation toward (or away from) the world.

Notwithstanding his invective against habit, Augustine's precept of inward conversion—through which the soul seeks to disburden itself of the post-lapsarian weight of habit—presents itself, despite itself, as neither more nor less than an habitual formation. Conversion (*conversio*, literally a 'turning away' from the world) is revealed as an habitual iteration that *differently* orients the subject toward itself by figuring the essential self as other than the world. It is disclosed as an infinite practice of self-fashioning through the intervention of ecclesiastical authority (*auctoritas*) and the daily war (*bellum quotidianum*) of disciplinary practice (*disciplina christiana*) which consist in turning inward (*redire in se ipsum*), confession (*confiteri*), renouncing and disdaining the bodily self (*odium sui*) along with its affective and social ties to the world (*odium necessitudines carnales et temporales*), striving to extract the self (*extraho*) from its habitual encumbrances by cultivating a love that exits the world (*de mundo amor noster exit*) by taking as its object an abstract ideal human nature free of bodily condition (*diligere natura humana sine carnali conditione*).

Through this habitual conversion, the unitary subject (created, literally self-fashioned in the image of the divine sovereign) is cast as essentially extrinsic to the worldly subject's habitual entanglement in the multitude of everyday sociality. The codes of Christian continence figure this otherworldly orientation as spiritual and thus distinguish it as superior to the orientation established through habit 'properly' so called. This is because, in its ownmost office, habit orients the subject toward itself *as bodily subject*—i.e., as a corporeal singularity. But the specific inhabitation of truth that Augustine invokes, and which Augustinian anthropology (re)produces, orients the subject toward itself *as subject of and to body*—i.e., as a disembodied identity. Notwithstanding this bodily aversion, the Augustinian inhabitation of truth

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[202] Augustine, *On True Religion* 39.72; my emphasis.

[203] The process of conversion that Augustine describes is not only a turn "inward," but also a "step by step ascent" (*Confessions* X.8.12), not only a turn away from the external world, but an ascension to more spiritual, less material things.

symptomatically reveals the structure of habit as not strictly the medium for error, unreason, and the law of sin, as Augustine's manifest text would have it. Habit is also the medium for truth, which is inextricable from the habitually structured orientation, or conversion, that establishes the subject in its relation to truth.

The injunction that immediately succeeds Augustine's pedagogical formula leads us away from Augustine's text and its licit sense of conversion. It points toward a *different* sense of conversion. It opens an alternative ontological horizon, against and despite the habitual motions of thinking and acting that continually attempt to restrict its unfolding: "[…] and if you find that your nature is mutable, transcend also yourself. But remember that the moment you transcend yourself, you transcend reason (*ratiocinantem animam*). Tend, therefore, to that from which the light of reason springs forth." [204] In addition to their earthly habitations, Augustine urges his interlocutors to transcend their transitory human nature and its unstable, sensuously-bound, worldly-oriented reason. The *telos* that Christian self-transcendence projects is the unchangeable substance of eternal truth which is God.

We can, however, attribute to Augustine's injunction a meaning that goes beyond his sovereign intention. If the sordid history of humanism, from the conquest of the Americas to Auschwitz, has taught us anything, it is that reason does not spring forth from a universal source, but rather from a nexus of discontinuous, historically-embedded social practices. Furthermore, these social practices possess no inherent teleology toward liberation but can as well lead "from the slingshot to the megaton bomb."[205] Augustine transcends Enlightenment humanisms in so far as the experience of the constrictive force of habit leads him to conclude that transformation of the human is only possible through processes that exceed the individual's control. Augustine is right that "human nature" is mutable and that it both can and ought to be overcome. He's also right that reason is insufficient to the task of overcoming this false stabilization of our being, as such a task demands that we tend to "that from which the light of reason springs forth."

To progress further with this examination of the transformative tendency of habit, however, we must break with Augustine's discourse and its anthropo-logic of sovereignty; we must rethink the source of reason. Rather than some transcendent(al) sovereign unity, reason has its source in habitual bodily being. We inhabit regimes of truth, and through the intrinsic self-effacement of habituation itself we come to experience as categorically necessary not only those regimes themselves but also ourselves as fashioned within them. By dwelling in regimes of truth, we push them into existential transparency, causing them to withdraw into the unself-conscious background of our everyday ways of being. Rather than take hold of the task of understanding the efficacy and historicity specific to the unself-conscious background of habitual bodily being, we imprison the body in constructions of the soul. We fail to open up and take hold of the affective and relational virtualities toward which our

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[204] *On True Religion* 39.72.

[205] Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, trans. E.B. Ashton (New York: Continuum, 2000), 320.

habitual bodies can direct us. Thus, I believe, a more radical understanding of habitual bodily being must be reawakened.

Repetition: Habitual Bodily Being and the Task of Genealogical Extraction

In a seminar given at the University of Marburg in the summer of 1928, the year after the publication of *Being and Time*, Heidegger describes the idea and function of fundamental ontology as at bottom an effort at transformative repetition (*Wiederholung sich zu verwandeln*).[1] He explains that fundamental ontology is "always only a repetition" of the ancient attempts to bring the problem of being to light, but that in repeating what gets transmitted to us by repetition, there is the possibility of transformation (*die Möglichkeit sich zu verwandeln*). "[C]haracteristically, the tradition, i.e., the externalized transmission, deprives the problem of this very transformative repetition. Tradition passes down definite propositions and opinions, fixed ways of questioning and discussing things," which "denies problems their life," and "seeks to smother or asphyxiate (*ersticken*) their transformation." Hence, we must struggle (*Kampf*) against this externalized (*äußerliche*) or hardened (*verhärteten*) tradition, against the fatuous stewards (*schlechten Sachwalter*) of tradition.[2] This is what Heidegger means by the destruction (*Destruktion*) or deconstruction (*Abbau*) of tradition; it is not an obliteration or elimination of tradition, but rather a loosening up (*Auflockerung*) or dissolution (*Ablösung*) of sedimented meanings that, having become rigid, conceal (*verdecken*), close down (*schließen*), and close off (*verschließen*) possibilities rather than disclosing (*erschließen*) and releasing possibilities for reinvestment and resignification.

Heidegger posits and pursues the method of *Destruktion* expressly against what he characterizes as the abiding human tendency—"not just today and not just incidentally (*zufällig*)"—to "fixate" on and "absolutize" a single potential stage of an originating problematic and make it an eternal task, instead of summoning and preparing the possibility of new originations.[3] In other words, humans structurally tend toward a reification of focus, toward a mode of habitual action, perception, and cognition that, in becoming regimented and routinized, loses touch with the initiatory ecstasis that calls forth and makes possible the practice of questioning. Such reifying

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[1] *Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, trans. Michael Heim (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1984), 155.

[2] *Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* 155; *BT* 44/*SZ* 22.

[3] *Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* 155.

repetition not only closes off alternative possibilities of seeing, interacting, and understanding; it not only shuts down the production of alternative institutional arrangements; it also hypostasizes our sense of ourselves, prompting us to misconceive our existence as thing-like, rather than as a thrown open nexus of possibilities.

In contrast to this reifying mode of repetition, Heidegger invokes a deconstructive, transformative mode of repetition, which summons and prepares the possibility of new originations. In his account of historicity in *Being and Time*, Heidegger describes this mode of repetition as a hidden handing down (*Sichüberliefern*) of historical possibilities, a repetition in which Dasein "hands himself [*sic*] down to himself (*ihm selbst überliefert*) in a possibility which he has inherited yet chosen."[4] The early Heidegger assigns this transformative, resignifying function to philosophy, more specifically to fundamental ontology. However, he is quick to point out, because philosophizing is essentially a matter of finitude, each concrete instance of factical philosophy must by necessity fall victim (*zum Opfer fallen*) to the tendency toward reification.[5]

Chapter Two is situated squarely within the tension—at once conceptual, phenomenological, and political—that persists between the possibilities of transformative and reifying or strictly reiterative repetition—possibilities that, while distinct, are often difficult to discern.[6] A question, in many ways inspired by Heidegger's text, will now be re-turned to Heidegger's text: Is the philosophical repetition of fundamental ontology transformative or merely reiterative? How, in what ways, and to what extent? What conception of human existence does fundamental ontology hand down? And what transformations or reifying reiterations are nested in that transmission? Having explicated the Augustinian formulation of the Pauline problematic of the flesh, the following chapter will now seek to incorporate the results of that analysis as part of the guiding fore-sight of an inquiry into the Christian theological inheritance of *Being and Time*. I will investigate this genealogical heritage, and the degree to which it is transformatively or merely reiteratively repeated in Heidegger's text. The investigation will center on Heidegger's accounts of fallenness

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[4] *BT* 435/*SZ* 384.

[5] *Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* 155–56.

[6] In Heidegger's text, "repetition" (*Wiederholung*) is often used to signify what he above refers to as "transformative repetition" (*Wiederholung sich zu verwandeln*) or what he variously refers to in *Being and Time* as "authentic repetition" (*eigentliche Wiederholung*), "resolute repetition" (*entschlossenen Wiederholung*), "anticipatory repetition" (*vorlaufend-wiederholender Augenblick*), or "fateful repetition" (*schicksalhaften Wiederholung*). That which is repeated in this mode of repetition is the lived-through past *as possibility*, what Heidegger refers to as the "having been" (*Gewesenheit*). The strictly or merely reiterative mode of repetition, on the other hand, which Heidegger associates with social existence (*das Man*)—which, according to him, "cannot repeat what has been" (*BT* 443/*SZ* 391)—is designated as "bringing forth again" (*Wiederbringen*), "retaining" (*behalten*), or "receiving/conserving" (*erhalten*), and that which gets repeated in such reiterative repetitions is the objectified past (*Vergangenheit*). I will consistently refer to these dual modes of repetition as "transformative repetition" and "reifying or reiterative repetition" respectively, and their correlates as the "expropriated or reanimated past" and the "reiterated or reentrenched past."

(*Verfallenheit*) and in/authenticity (*Un/eigentlichkeit*) and will explicate the implicit but unthought role of the habitual body in those accounts.

When considering a philosopher's thought, Heidegger himself wrote, "the greater the work of a thinker, the richer is that which is unthought (*Ungedachte*) in this work, which means, that which emerges in and through this work as having not yet been thought."[7] The thesis that I will defend in Chapter Two is that the habitual body is an enduring, if not *the* most exigent unthought element in *Being and Time*. The habitual body haunts Heidegger's text like a ghostly presence of his thought. As David Krell puts it, the body of Dasein is the elusive "gauzy ghost of the counter-Cartesian."[8] I will argue that the absence of the habitual body in Heidegger's thinking leads *Being and Time* to spiritualize existence (to borrow an expression from John Protevi). In a manner reminiscent and reiterative of Augustine, Heidegger associates habitual bodily being with a degenerative movement of falling against which the project of authentic self-possession must struggle. In virtue of the abiding tendency of Heidegger's existential analytic to spiritualize existence, its purported concreteness amounts to a false concreteness.[9] Protevi tellingly and accurately designates this false concreteness as the "fundamental fault" of the Marburg project. This fundamental fault, I submit, is a theological residue deriving from the project's Augustinian inheritance.[10]

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[7] *The Principle of Reason*, trans. Reginald Lilly (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1991), 71. For an exquisite account and exemplification of thinking through the unthought element of a thinker, see Merleau-Ponty's essay on Husserl, "The Philosopher and His Shadow," in which Merleau-Ponty quotes the above passage from Heidegger. *Signs*, trans. Richard C. McCleary (Northwestern University Press, 1964), 159–181.

[8] David Farrell Krell, *Daimon Life: Heidegger and Life-philosophy* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1992), 53.

[9] "Our aim in the following treatise is the concrete working out of the question of the meaning of *being* (*Die konkrete Ausarbeitung der Frage nach dem Sinn von* Sein *ist die Absicht der folgenden Abhandlung*)" (*BT* 19/ *SZ* 1).

[10] See John Protevi, "The 'Sense' of 'Sight': Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty on the Meaning of Bodily and Existential Sight," *Research in Phenomenology* 28.1 (1998): 211–223; quotation from p. 223. On the absence of the lived body from Heidegger's project of fundamental ontology, see *BT* 143/*SZ* 108, where he writes that "lived bodiliness (*Leiblichkeit*) hides a whole problematic of its own, though we shall not treat it here," a lacuna about which he says nearly fifty years later: "the lived body (*das Leibliche*) is the most difficult (*das Schwierigste*) [to think]" (*Zollikon Seminars*, ed. Medard Boss, trans. Franz Mayr and Richard Askay [Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2001], 231).

For critical evaluations of this absence, see David R. Cerbone, "Heidegger and Dasein's 'Bodily Nature': What is the Hidden Problematic?" *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 8.2 (2000): 209–30; Tina Chanter, "The Problematic Normative Assumptions of Heidegger's Ontology," in *Feminist Interpretations of Heidegger*, eds. Nancy Holland and Patricia Huntington (New York: Routledge, 2001), 73–108; Cristian Ciocan, "The Question of the Lived Body in Heidegger's Analytic of Dasein," *Research in Phenomenology* 38 (2008): 72–89; Alphonse De Waelhans, "The Philosophy of the Ambiguous," foreword to 2nd French edition of Merleau-Ponty's *The Structure of Behavior,* trans. Alden L. Fisher (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1963), xviii–xxviii; David Farrell Krell, *Daimon Life: Heidegger and Life Philosophy* (Blommington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1992); and Frank Schalow, *The Incarnality of Being: The Earth, Animals, and the Body in Heidegger's Thought* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2006).

For defenses of Heidegger that justify the exclusion of the lived body from fundamental ontology, see Kevin A. Aho's article, "The Missing Dialogue between Heidegger and Merelau-Ponty:

The theological residues of this inheritance must be dealt with, I argue, if we are to reawaken a more radical understanding of habitual bodily being. At the same time, it would be remiss and mistaken to think that the new conception of habitual bodily being that this work sets out to articulate could simply be posited in detachment from the metaphysical overdeterminations that overtly and surreptitiously insinuate themselves into our understanding of habit and our habitual selves. Like an undesirably constrictive habit of which we would prefer to divest ourselves, our ontological inheritance cannot be straightforwardly discarded; rather its sense must be worked through in the effort to direct it otherwise. The resources for any such transformative redirection must themselves be harvested from the marginalized possibilities latent in the tradition itself.

As Heidegger outlines in the Introduction to the "Preparatory Fundamental Analysis of Dasein" (the first and solely realized part of the three-part project of *Being and Time*), the aim and effect of transformative repetition is not to shake off (*Abschüttelung*) the ontological tradition, but rather (1) to stake out the positive possibilities of the tradition, and simultaneously (2) to trace out the limits or boundaries (*Grenzen*) of the tradition, the way that the tradition de-limits or bounds off (*Umgrenzung*) the possible field of investigation.[11] I read this articulation of destructive-deconstructive repetition (*Destruktion/Abbau*) in tandem with Jacques Derrida's description of *extraction* as a transgressive strategy of reading/writing. In *Positions*, Derrida discusses, under the title of *paleonomy*, a strategic necessity that requires the occasional maintenance of an old name in order to launch a new concept. "Taking into account the fact that a name does not name the punctual simplicity of a concept, but rather a system of predicates defining a concept, a conceptual structure *centered* on a given predicate," Derrida delineates the operation of extraction in two phases: (1) "the extraction of a reduced predicative trait that is held in reserve, limited in a given conceptual structure (limited for motivations and relations of force to be analyzed), *named x*;" and (2) "the delimitation, the grafting and regulated extension of the extracted predicate, the name *x* being maintained as a kind of *lever of intervention*, in order to maintain a grasp on the previous organization, which is to be transformed effectively."[12] The transformative repetition enacted in the operation of extraction loosens the metaphysical moorings of the repeated conceptual structure, providing an opening for interrogations of closure and making possible a multiplication of possibilities.

Building upon the conceptual structure of Chapter One, I will turn a critical regard toward the project of *Being and Time* itself—now a formidable and ineluctable element of the western ontological tradition. I will continue to pursue the reduced predicative traits of the habitual body, attempting to uncover the ways that the

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On the Importance of the *Zollikon Seminars*" *Body and Society* 11.2 (2005): 1–23; and his recent monograph, *Heidegger's Neglect of the Body* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2009); also see Richard Askay, "Heidegger, the Body, and the French Philosophers," *Continental Philosophy Review* 32 (1999): 29–35.

[11] *BT* 44/*SZ* 22.

[12] Derrida calls this process of extraction–grafting–extension *writing*. See *Positions*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 6, 71.

ontological tradition extending from Augustine to Heidegger delimits or bounds off this reserve of possibilities by centering the movement of existence on the absolute anchoring of the generic (disembodied) subject of philosophy. For, fifteen-hundred years after Saint Augustine's passionate portrayals of the human subject's struggle to master the "habits of this life" (*consuetudo huius vitae*) into which it has fallen, Heidegger, an engaged reader of Augustine and former student of systematic theology, offered an influential account of authentic human existence as a struggle of the subject to take hold of itself (*eigen ergriffenen Selbst*) and win itself (*sich gewonnen*) by pulling itself together (*zusammenholen*) from out of its dispersal (*Zerstreuung*) and lostness (*Verlorenheit*)—i.e., from out of it's habitual fallenness in the embodied affairs of the everyday social world.

The questions that guide the analysis of the following chapter are: Can one assume and employ the Christian metaphysical vocabulary of fallenness to describe human existence, and yet *mean it otherwise*? Can the rhetoric of fallenness be re-inhabited? Can it be transformatively rearticulated in the service of alternative, post-metaphysical, life-affirming projects? Stronger still: *Must* the discourse of fallenness be re-inhabited, rather than strictly eliminated, if we wish to extract ourselves (our philosophies, our morals) from Christian theological horizons and the conservative—even reactionary—patriarchal moral and political traditions to which they all too often give rise? Does the vocabulary of fallenness itself fall, as it were, under that strategic necessity which demands that we *repeat* conceptual structures, grasping subordinated predicates within them as levers of intervention with which to launch new ontological possibilities? Put otherwise, is the possibility of altogether dispensing with this "fallen" way of understanding ourselves historically unavailable to us—we inhabitants of the shadow of God?[13] For God is not a determinately present (even if supernatural) entity that can be removed from the world, leaving the rest of that world entirely unchanged. To understand the project of secularization in this way is to misunderstand not only the world, and the project at hand (though, importantly, not *zuhanden*); it is to misunderstand our inextricably worldly selves.

The world is not simply a collection of entities—the totality of all that is the case—with contents susceptible of rearrangement or subtraction. The world is the "horizon of all horizons," the "referential nexus of significance," the sociocultural background of embodied understanding (e.g., roles, standards, norms) in terms of which entities that we encounter are rendered intelligible to us.[14] Not only do Christian culture and institutions (what Kierkegaard called Christendom) pattern our social landscape. Our common ways of being and everyday modes of understanding

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[13] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1974), sections 108, 125.

[14] On the difference between 'world' as totality and 'world' as horizon of all horizon in the context of a discussion of Husserl and Heidegger, see Donn Welton, *The Other Husserl* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2000), 81–87, 331–346. The description of the world as the "horizon of all horizons" is that of Merleau-Ponty who, while borrowing the expression from Husserl, goes beyond Husserl in ascribing to the transcendental conception of the world its counterpart in the sensory capacities of the material lived body (*Phenomenology of Perception* E385/F381). The description of the world as the "referential nexus of significance" is Heidegger's (*BT* 167/*SZ* 129).

ourselves—indeed, our very social fabric—are themselves saturated with theological rituals, conceptualizations, and sense residues. As Stephen Mulhall argues in a discussion of Nietzsche, God is not so much an entity as "a medium or system of coordinates"; his presence is "part of the living tissue of our culture, our responses, our most intimate self-understanding." Thus the presence or absence of God in our world is best understood not as the addition or subtraction of one supernatural item to the supposed furniture of the universe, but rather as the presence or absence of "an atmosphere or framework that orients us in everything we say, think, and do."[15] One need only take note of the recent resurgence of theological and political fundamentalisms of various stripes to concur with the notorious mad messenger of Nietzsche's *The Gay Science* who, relaying the message of God's death to modern atheists and theists, concludes, as he's met with silent, disconcerted expressions, that it is still too early for a truly secular culture to be intelligible and actionable.[16]

It is in no small measure because of Heidegger that we understand the depths to which the metaphysical tradition holds us. Indeed, it is by our having internalized the referential implications of what Heidegger called the fundamental thrownness (*Geworfenheit*) and historicity (*Geschichlichkeit*) of human being, and the impossibility and unintelligibility of the Enlightenment project of establishing a tradition-free grounding of our own existence (our understanding, institutions, practices, morality), that we can appreciate the degree to which our *moving beyond* is at one and the same time a movement beyond *ourselves* and a movement *in terms of* the possibilities of our history. Such a movement cannot be an autonomous act of unencumbered invention or upheaval. Necessarily "*in terms of the heritage* which [we], as thrown, *take over*,"[17] the movement through which we overcome our

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[15] *Philosophical Myths of the Fall* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 22.

[16]   Here the madman fell silent and looked again at his listeners; they too were silent and
       looked at him disconcertedly. Finally he threw his lantern on the ground and it broke
       into pieces and went out. 'I come too early,' he then said; 'my time is not yet. This
       tremendous event is still on the way, wandering; it has not yet reached the ears of
       men. Lightning and thunder need time; the light of the stars needs time; deeds need
       time, even after they are done, in order to be seen and heard. This deed [i.e. the
       murder of God] is still more remote to them than the remotest stars—*and yet they
       have done it themselves!* (Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, section 125).

Habit is precisely the sort of action the intentionality and intelligibility of which remain remote from its agent. Like the marketplace atheists who mock the madman, comparing God to a lost child, a sailor, and an emigrant, thus betraying their underlying assumption that God is an entity of some kind, we have yet to properly inhabit secularism; we have yet to cultivate the habitual bodies of a secular culture. As a consequence, we merely reiteratively rather than transformatively repeat the possibilities of our theological heritage. For secular culture to be fully intelligible and actionable for us, we must reawaken a more radical understanding of our habitual bodily being.

[17] "Authentic existentiell understanding is so far from extricating itself (*entzieht sich*) from the way of interpreting Dasein which has come down to us, that in each case it is in terms of (*auf*) this interpretation, against (*gegen*) it, and yet again for (*doch wieder für*) it, that any possibility one has chosen is seized upon in one's resolution. The resoluteness in which Dasein comes back to itself, discloses current factical possibilities of authentic existing, and discloses them *in terms of the heritage* which that resoluteness, as thrown, *takes over* (aus dem Erbe, *das sie als geworfene* übernimmt)" (*BT* 435/*SZ* 383). See also *BT* 213/*SZ* 169.

Christian metaphysical heritage can only ever be, as Heidegger suggests, a repetition (*Wiederholung*) of the possibilities that we've inherited—a repetition which, while potentially transformative, always carries the risk of being merely reiterative, of failing to invent.

While Heidegger explicitly aims to extract philosophy from Christian theological horizons, and constantly claims to do so by purportedly remaining scrupulously neutral (*neuter*) with respect to theological matters, the conception of the human condition that emerges from *Being and Time* constantly inclines his text to reinscribe elements of a characteristically Christian—and distinctively Augustinian— structure of thought. The reader of Heidegger's text cannot help but notice the way that it extensively resorts to—not to say *falls back upon*—quasi-theological terminology (falling, guilt, temptation, alienation, conscience, and so on). In the same gesture through which such terminology is put to work, Heidegger denies that what he means to say with it is either theological or presupposes any theological claim.

From a certain perspective, what appears in these instances as an ostensible contradiction or disingenuousness on Heidegger's part is in fact an exhibition of the existential analytic's methodological consistency. For it is central to Heidegger's own understanding of human inquiry and self-understanding that it is always necessarily situated, that it can never be free of presuppositions, i.e., of the circuit of hermeneutic conditions that he designates as the fore-structures of understanding.[18] Likewise, his own inquiry in *Being and Time* is necessarily situated, and Heidegger makes no secret of the fact that the concepts and values of Christian thought constitute a fundamental reference point for the existential analytic's famous account of the human mode of being: care (*Sorge*). Aside from Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, and certain prominent German philosophers of his era (e.g., Husserl, Dilthey, Scheler, Jaspers), by far the most numerous references in *Being and Time*, and those most explicitly expressive of philosophical debt, are references to philosophers of the Christian theological tradition, in particular, the trinity of Augustine, Luther, and Kierkegaard. Indeed, Heidegger acknowledges (albeit only in footnotes in *Being and Time*) his indebtedness to Augustine and Kierkegaard for his understanding of such notions as *Existenz*, *Angst*, the *Augenblick*, and *Sorge*.[19] The text of Heidegger's 1920–21 Freiburg lecture course[20] more overtly demonstrates the specificity and extent of his indebtedness to Augustine, revealing how Heidegger's conception and very vocabulary of care and

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[18] *BT*/*SZ* Section 32.

[19] "The way in which 'care' is viewed in the […] existential analytic of Dasein, is one which has grown upon the author in connection with his attempts to interpret Augustinian (i.e., Helleno-Christian) anthropology with hindsight (*Rücksicht*) to the foundational principles reached in the ontology of Aristotle." (*BT* 492 n. vii/*SZ* 199 n. 3). In addition to acknowledging the Augustinian heritage of conception of "care," Heidegger traces the genealogy of his notion of "anxiety" back to Augustine, Luther, and Kierkegaard (*BT* 492 n. iv/*SZ* 190 n. 3), and his notions of "existence" to Kierkegaard (*BT* 494 n. vi/*SZ* 235 n. 6), and the *Augenblick* (*BT* 497 n. iii/*SZ* 338 n. 2).

[20] *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, trans. Matthias Fritsch and Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004).

falling arise as a formal transmutation and translation of Augustine's conceptions of *cura* and *cadere*. As John Caputo points out—a point which we will take up in our analysis in Chapter Two—"[Augustine's] *Confessions* provide Heidegger with the first, and perhaps the principle, paradigm for what he called [in the 1920–21 lectures] 'factical life,' and later on in *Being and Time* the 'Being of Dasein.'"[21]

It is clear that Heidegger's own inquiries cannot simply leave behind or straightforwardly detach themselves from the initiating theological orientation of the tradition which serves as their principle guiding philosophical reference point. Rather, fundamental ontology must acknowledge this orientation by actively deconstructing it, by repeating its concepts *transformatively* rather than reiteratively. The question that the following chapter seeks to address is whether, how, and to what extent the existential analytic succeeds or fails in this endeavor. To what extent does Heidegger's account of Dasein foster a tendency to reassert the metaphysical commitments he tried to overcome?

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[21] John D. Caputo, "The Absence of Monica: Heidegger, Derrida, and Augustine's *Confessions*," in *Feminist Interpretations of Heidegger*, eds. Nancy J. Holland and Patricia Huntington (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2001): 149–164, qtd p. 150.

In its interpretation of 'life', the anthropology worked out in Christian theology—from Paul right up to Calvin's *meditation futurae vitae*—has always kept death in view.

–Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*,
division two, chapter one, note vi.

Degenerative Repetition: Habit as Ontological Fallenness and Self-dispossession in Heidegger's *Being and Time*

Martin Heidegger's existential analytic of human existence—what he calls *Dasein*—constitutes another decisive moment in the western history of ontology. In *Being and Time*, habit comes to be construed as a structure of *ontological fallenness* at the heart of existence. Genealogically akin to Augustine's *consuetudo carnalis*, which was fashioned as the inauthentic, constrictive modality of self that leads to self-exile (*se ipse exsule*),[1] habitual fallenness (*Verfallenheit*), on Heidegger's account of human existence, functions as an unshakeable principle of dispersal (*Zerstreuung*) that leads human existence to fall away or turn away from itself (*Abgefallen*, *Abkehr*)—a movement which is at once a turning outward toward (*Hinkehr*) and an absorption in (*Aufgehen in*) worldly entities and relations, as well as a downfall (*Absturz*) or falling into a condition of disfavor (*Ab-Gefallen*).[2]

Of the lived body, one can readily remark, yes, Heidegger speaks as little as possible. As we are repeatedly reminded by figures of the French phenomenological tradition, from Sartre to De Waelhans, "one cannot find six lines on the problem of the

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[1] "[M]en desire what is outside of them and become exiles even from themselves (*quia homines appetentes ea quae foris sunt, etiam a se ipsis exsules facti sunt*)" (Augustine, *Commentaries on the Psalms* 57.1).

[2] "In falling, Dasein turns away from itself. […] The turning-away of falling […] *turns outwards* toward entities within-the-world by absorbing itself in them (*Im Verfallen kehrt sich Dasein von ihm selbst ab. [...] Die Abkehr des Verfallens [...] als sie sich gerade* hinkehrt *zum innerweltlichen Seienden als Aufgehen in ihm*)" (*BT* 230/*SZ* 185–86). See also *The History of the Concept of Time*, trans. Theodore Kisiel (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985), 282; and *BT* 80/*SZ* 54, where Heidegger derives the sense of being absorbed in the world (*Sinne des Aufgehens in der Welt*), which he posits as characteristic of the structure of being-in (*Sein-bei*), from the etymological antecedents "to inhabit" (*habitare*), "to reside" (*wohnen*), "to dwell" (*sich aufhalten*), and "to become habituated to" (*bin gewohnt*). As he reaffirms in his infamous "Letter on Humanism," "the reference in *Being and Time* to 'being-in' as 'dwelling' is no etymological game" ("Letter on Humanism," trans. Frank A. Capuzzi, in *Basic Writings* [New York: Harper Collins, 1977], 260).

body" in the whole of *Being and Time*.[3] Perhaps those sparse lines contain all that Heidegger ever said by that name or the names under which we recognize the problem, of "the lived body," "habit," or indeed of "the habitual body." That silence, therefore, is easily remarked, which means that the remark is somewhat facile. A few indications, concluding with "everything happens as if…," and the issue would be settled. The case could be closed, avoiding trouble and risk, hazard and vulnerability: it is as if, in reading Heidegger, there were no habitual body, as such, nothing of that in man to interrogate or suspect, nothing worthy of questioning (*fragwürdig*). It is as if the habitual body, one might continue, did not rise to the height of fundamental ontology, that on the whole it were negligible in regard to the question of the sense of being—a merely ontic predicate. Discourse on habitual embodiment could then be abandoned to the sciences or philosophies of life, to psychology, anthropology, sociology, biology, or perhaps to religion or morality.

Is it imprudent to mistrust Heidegger's manifest silence (*Schweigen*) and reticence (*Verschwiegenheit*) on the subject of the body, let alone bodily habit? Is it careless to question the propriety (*Eigentlichkeit*) of this silence? Where is the silence working on/in his discourse? One might begin to address this question by pointing out a certain unease with which Heidegger averts lived bodies, explicitly excluding lived bodiliness (*Leiblichkeit*) and life (*Leben*) from the austerely formal, ontological horizons of *Being and Time*.[4] "Lived bodiliness (*Leiblichkeit*) hides a whole problematic of its own, though we shall not treat it here."[5] (No, not here. Not in the preparatory fundamental analysis of the architectonic of the house of Being. Perhaps in one of the regions opened up in that house: the vestibule, the kitchen, or perhaps the bathroom; certainly not the *Werkstaat*.)

Heidegger addressed the complaint of the French phenomenologists some fifty years after the publication of *Being and Time*, in a series of seminars with physicians and psychiatrists that took place in Zollikon, Switzerland, in the house of one of Heidegger's close friends and colleagues, Swiss psychiatrist Medard Boss. The seminar initially began at the University of Zurich's psychiatric clinic, Burghölzli, in September of 1959, but the modern, public atmosphere of the large auditorium in which Heidegger delivered his first lecture was, on Boss's account, "simply not conducive to Heidegger's thinking" on the matter. (Perhaps it was too "austerely formal" for the "regional" topic of the body.) So the seminar was moved to the domestic interior of Boss' home, where Heidegger enunciated words which, according

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[3] Alphonse De Waelhans, "The Philosophy of the Ambiguous," foreword to 2nd French edition of Merleau-Ponty's *The Structure of Behavior,* trans. Alden L. Fisher (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1963), xviii–xxviii; Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, trans. Hazel Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1956), 498.

[4] The characterization of the ontological categories of *Being and Time* as "austerely formal," derives from John D. Caputo, "The Absence of Monica: Heidegger, Derrida, and Augustine's *Confessions*," in *Feminist Interpretations of Heidegger*, eds. Nancy J. Holland and Patricia Huntington (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2001), 151.

[5] *BT* 143/*SZ* 108. On the exclusion of life from the existential analytic of Dasein, see *BT* 75/*SZ* 49–50.

to Boss, "were impossible to hear delivered elsewhere."[6] The two-week seminars continued annually until 1970, when, as Boss remarks, "my conscience as a doctor no longer allowed me to expect that Heidegger could continue to endure the great strain of the Zollikon Seminars. By then Martin Heidegger's physical powers were quickly declining because of his age. From then on, I asked for his intellectual help only by mail or during my visits to his home in Freiburg."[7] Responding to his French critics in a letter to Boss written (ostensibly from his Freiburg home) in 1972—well after his aging body elicited the call of Boss' medical conscience—Heidegger writes: "I can only counter Sartre's reproach by stating that the lived body (*das Leibliche*) is *das Schwierigste*, and that at the time [of *Being and Time*] I did not know what else to say."[8] *Das Schwierigste*: the most difficult, messy, arduous, sticky, vexed, intricate, involved (to think).

Perhaps it is the messiness, leakiness, vulnerability, and exposure of the body, it's specific manner of worldly involvement, that led Heidegger to relegate the lived bodiliness of human existence to the status of a "regional" (i.e., ontic, not ontological) investigation—a matter to be dealt with by "regional" disciplines such as biology, medicine, cultural anthropology, and social theory. All such regional inquiries, Heidegger maintains, presuppose and depend for their intelligibility upon an understanding ("however indefinite ontologically") of the meaning of (disembodied) being in general. Thus, it is argued, fundamental ontology—the inquiry into the meaning of being in general that begins with the existential analytic of Dasein—is more original than any analysis of the body.[9] The sense of lived bodiliness is conceived as emerging out of an anterior "clearing" (*Gelichtetheit*) of sense that is opened up through the "movement" (*Bewegtheit*) or "happening" (*Geschehen*) of

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[6] Boss goes on, in his preface to the German edition of the posthumously published seminars, to recall the initial foreignness of Heidegger's vocabulary to the group of medical doctors and scientists participating in the seminars. "It was as if a man from Mars were visiting a group of earth-dwellers in an attempt to communicate with them." Reflecting over twenty years later, such an analogy seems "grossly exaggerated" to Boss, given that some of Heidegger's characteristic neologisms, such as 'being-in-the-world' or 'care', "have become more familiar," finding their way "into everyday, undemanding (*alltägliche und anspruchslose*), illustrated magazines. Of course, it remains to be seen," he desists, "whether this is the product of genuine familiarity (*echte Vertrautheit*)—in the sense of a deep understanding (*teifgängigen Verstehens*) of Heidegger's meaning—or whether it is a rather superficial *habituation of the ear* (*oberflächliche* Angewöhnung des Ohres)" (Medard Boss, "Preface to the First German Edition," in Martin Heidegger, *Zollikon Seminars*, ed. Medard Boss, trans. Franz Mayr and Richard Askay [Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2001], xvii-xix; my emphasis).

[7] It is noteworthy that when Boss switches from regarding "Heidegger the philosopher" to regarding Heidegger as an embodied being with physical powers subject to the degeneration of age, he inserts Heidegger's first name, Martin. *Zollikon Seminars* xviii.

[8] *Zollikon Seminars* 231.

[9] This is argued, for example, by Kevin A. Aho, "The Missing Dialogue between Heidegger and Merelau-Ponty: On the Importance of the *Zollikon Seminars*" *Body and Society* 11.2 (2005): 1–23; and Richard Askay, "Heidegger, the Body, and the French Philosophers," *Continental Philosophy Review* 32 (1999): 29–35.

human existence.[10] The sense of lived bodiliness is not thought to fundamentally, constitutively contribute to that clearing; it is not considered an essential element of that specifically existential *movement* that Heidegger calls "care" (*Sorge*)—i.e., the being of human existence, which is structured by a three-fold movement of thrownness (facticity), fallenness (being-fallen), and projection (existentiality).[11] In a manner reminiscent, if not reiterative, of the anthropology of Christian theology, Heidegger excludes the living body, the animal body, from the dignity, the luminosity (*Erleuchtung*) of the clearing.[12]

Perhaps the young Heidegger of *Being and Time* "did not know what else to say" about the lived body, because his discourse at that juncture so thoroughly presupposed a hale and hearty, able white male body, non-leaky, self-contained, and not subject to the incessant normalizing regimes of social or medical inspection—what Drew Leder calls the "absent body," or Sartre the body "passed over in silence," or Shaun Gallagher the "absently available" body. In other words, the body that recedes into existential transparency in the fluidity of an embodied agent's intentional projects and that is all too often presupposed as a universal, only liminally interrupted, norm.[13]

By delineating, imposing, and maintaining this austerely formal architectonic order with respect to the methods and matters of ontological investigation, however, I argue that fundamental ontology retains—counter to Heidegger's expressed

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[10] *BT* 401–402/*SZ* 350–51.

[11] Heidegger consistently refers to the thrownness (*BT* 223, 400/*SZ* 197, 348), fallenness (*BT* 172, 221–24/*SZ* 134, 177–80) and happening/historizing (*BT* 427, 441/*SZ* 375, 389) of human existence as a specifically existential type of movement (*Bewegtheit*) that is distinct from the physical motion (*Bewegung*, *kinêsis*), i.e., change of location, of determinately present (*vorhanden*) entities.

[12] Caputo remarks on the way that "Heidegger excludes the living body, the animal body, from the dignity, the greatness of the clearing. […] He resists contamination to the end. He wants to keep his Open pure: no animals allowed. He will not permit the body a role in the clearing. […] Even as he fleetingly opened up the very possibility of thinking the body as a place of clearing, a place of and for the open." One of the tasks of the present chapter will be to locate and (more sustainably) reopen the possibility of thinking the body as a place of opening, or structure of *ontological dilation*, which Heidegger passes over in silence, as it were, on his way toward the constrictive conception of the habitual body as ontological fallenness and self-dispossession. See John D. Caputo, *Demythologizing Heidegger* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993), 126–27.

[13] Drew Leder, *The Absent Body* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1990). On the androcentrism and ablelism of the concept of the absent body as a model of health, see Maya Goldenberg, "Clinical Evidence and the Absent Body in Medical Phenomenology: On the Need for a New Phenomenology of Medicine," *International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics* 3.1 (2010): 43–71. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, trans. Hazel Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1956), part three, chapter two, section I. Shaun Gallagher, "Lived Body and Environment," *Research in Phenomenology* 16 (1986): 139–170. For a phenomenological account of forms of bodily violation and the way that such forms of embodiment render the dominant tradition of existential phenomenology of the body problematic, see Elizabeth A. Behnke, "Embodiment Work for the Victims of Violation: In Solidarity with the Community of the Shaken," *Essays in Celebration of the Founding of the Organization of Phenomenological Organizations*, ed. Chan-Fai Cheung, Ivan Chvatik, Ion Copoeru, Lester Embree, Julia Iribarne, & Hans Rainer Sepp, web- Published at www.o-p-o.net, 2003.

intentions—"an orientation thoroughly colored by antique-Christian anthropology."[14] It carries forward what Heidegger himself refers to as the "residues of Christian theology within philosophical problematics which have not yet been radically extruded"—residues of an initiating orientation which, as Heidegger's text itself submits, "obstructs or misleads the basic question of the being of human existence."[15]

Even if we let ourselves be guided by a "strictly ontological" intention, as the project of fundamental ontology claims we must, even if the ultimate goal of research is that of posing the question of the meaning of being, we cannot simply rid ourselves of the ontological meaning of the socially-saturated, sexually-differentiated, habitually-lived body (nor of the ontological meanings of the suffering body, the exhausted or hungry body, the pregnant body, the erotic body). If the concept of human existence (*Dasein*) refers to that being that, as Heidegger is so fond of saying, "proximally and for the most part" (*zunächst und zumeist*), "we ourselves are" (*sind wir je selbst*), one cannot give an adequate account of it while circumventing the lived bodily structures that orient and frame our whole existence and that intrinsically connect us to and separate us from others and our own mortality.[16] How can we understand who *we* are if *we* are not *all* there?

I want to suggest that the very project of fundamental ontology, of being guided—or, more precisely, of seeking to be guided—by a "strictly" ("properly," "authentically") ontological intention, of seeking to interpret human existence without reference to the difference (*Differenz*) of any particular way of existing (*eines bestimmten Existierens*) and without reference to the embodied specificity of the movement of existence—such a project is guided by pretensions to a neutrality and universality that are ultimately unsustainable.[17] Following critics from the French phenomenological and feminist traditions, such as Emmanuel Levinas—who pithily remarks that "*Le Dasein chez Heidegger n'a jamais faim*"[18]—Jacques Derrida, Luce Irigaray, John Caputo, Tina Chanter, and Patricia Huntington, I will argue that there is a normative bias built into the ontological method, and that it is embedded in such a way as to cover over its guiding pretensions. Tina Chanter articulates this bias with particular concision. She argues that by methodologically ruling out in advance any serious consideration of significant differences between individuals (whether those differences are specified in terms of gender, race, class, ethnicity, sexuality or some other culturally-loaded difference), Heidegger is led "to posit, almost by default, a

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[14] *BT* 74–75/*SZ* 48–49.

[15] "[…] noch nichte radikal ausgetriebenen Resten von christlicher Theologie innerhalb der philosophischen Problematik" (*BT* 272/*SZ* 229). See also *BT* 74–75/*SZ* 48–49.

[16] *BT* 67/*SZ* 41.

[17] *BT* 69/*SZ* 43.

[18] Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 1969), 134.

culturally specific version of Dasein that he takes to be exemplary, but whose exemplarity is never made available for critical interrogation."[19]

The false concreteness, false neutrality, and false universality of fundamental ontology are made possible by the latter's principled, methodological exclusion of any sustained account of bodily experience. I will expose this bias and subject the false concreteness and exemplarity of Heidegger's account of human existence to critical interrogation. In doing so, I will put forth what I take to be my particular contribution to this critical debate. I will make the case that the tendency of *Being and Time* to spiritualize existence stems from an unexamined preconception and prevaluation of habitual embodiment that is ultimately rooted in the project's initiating Augustinian orientation and inspiration.[20] Of course, to claim that *Being and Time* is characterized by an unexamined prevaluation of habitual embodiment, one must confront Heidegger's laborious attempts to avoid speaking of negative value or value in general (Heidegger's distrust for the value of value is well known). In doing so, one might follow Derrida who, instead of speaking of negative value, seeks to take account of "the differential and hierarchical accent" which regularly comes to mark Heidegger's use of various terms in *Being and Time*.[21] For Heidegger regularly insists that such ostensibly pejorative terms as 'falling,' 'loss of self' (*Selbstverloernheit*) and 'inauthenticity' have no evaluative content.[22] But, to quote Taylor Carman, such insistence "is utterly unconvincing. No one can come away from the text with the idea that such notions are value-neutral."[23] As Chanter writes, "[Heidegger's] objections notwithstanding, there is an undeniably moral tone, which sometimes approaches a quasi-religious fervor, in his exhortations that Dasein disentangle itself from the curiosity and idle talk of the they. It is hard not to read into the language of fallenness with which Heidegger describes Dasein's lostness in the they echoes of the theological fall from grace."[24] This—to use Heidegger's own words—"is no accident."[25]

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[19] Tina Chanter, "The Problematic Normative Assumptions of Heidegger's Ontology," in *Feminist Interpretations of Heidegger*, eds. Nancy J. Holland and Patricia Huntington (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2001): 73–108, qt p. 74.

[20] The critical characterization of *Being and Time* in terms of its "false concreteness" and its tendency to "spiritualize existence" is derived from John Protevi, "The 'Sense' of 'Sight': Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty on the Meaning of Bodily and Existential Sight," *Research in Phenomenology* 28.1 (1998): 211–223, esp. p. 223.

[21] In his well-known discussion of *Geschlecht* and sexual difference in Heidegger's fundamental ontology, Derrida points to such a hierarchical accent in Heidegger's use of the neutral (*neuter*) and dispersion (*Zerstreuung*) in *Being and Time*. See Jacques Derrida, "*Geschlecht*: Sexual Difference, Ontological Difference," in *Feminist Interpretations of Heidegger*, eds. Nancy J. Holland and Patricia Huntington (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2001): 53–72, qt p. 70.

[22] *BT* 211, 220, 224/*SZ* 167, 175–76, 179.

[23] Taylor Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic: Interpretation, Discourse, and Authenticity in* Being and Time (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 270.

[24] Chanter, "The Problematic Normative Assumptions of Heidegger's Ontology" 81.

[25] See Section 2.1 below.

Heidegger's anxious aversion to embodiment and his castigation of the habituality and ritual practice inherent to lived bodily relations with others, I argue, are symptomatic of the persistence of the anthropology of Christian theology in the project of fundamental ontology and in the attempt in *Being and Time* to rethink human agency in light of the fundamental historicity of human existence.

The juxtaposition of Augustine and Heidegger allows us to see the repetition of Christian metaphysics within *Being and Time*. Just as Augustine closes down and "axiologizes" the *mihi quaestio* that he had turned about in his experience of conversion (see Section 1.2.1). Heidegger, who derives his conception of the *mihi quaestio* directly from Augustine's *Confessions* and situates it at the heart of his formulation of human existence in *Being and Time*,[26] reiteratively repeats the metaphysical-axiologizing movement of Christian theology in his existential analytic. In Augustine, it was the explicit doctrine of Original Sin that drove this axiologizing movement, leading him to interpret the habitual body in expressly hierarchical and gendered terms. Heidegger surreptitiously carries forward the normative pretensions of the doctrine of Original Sin in his conception of the fallenness of human existence. Against this purportedly degenerative movement of habitual bodily being, which allegedly causes human existence to fall away (*ab discedo*, *Abgefallen*, *Absturz*) from its authentic ability to individually realize itself, Heidegger reinscribes the virile Christian militarism (*christiana disciplina*, *bellum quotidianum*) that Augustine deploys to countermand the concatenations of *consuetudo carnalis*.[27]

The task of this chapter will be to unearth and analyze the way that Heidegger's account of care and the fallenness of human existence manifests and arises from an unarticulated and unsubstantiated devaluation of habitual bodily being. I will proceed in three steps. First, I will orient the inquiry by first digging deeper into the margins of *Being and Time* (2.1). Focusing on a chain of footnotes in which Heidegger attempts to explicate himself with respect to the theological inheritance of

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[26] "Dasein is an entity which does not just occur among other entities. Rather it is ontically distinguished by the fact that, in its very being, that being is an *issue* for it" (*BT* 32/*SZ* 12). "I have become a question to myself, and that is my infirmity. […] I labor within myself to grasp my own self, but I have become to myself a land of difficulty and a source of sweat beyond measure (*[M]ihi question factus sum, et ipse est languor meus […] Ego certe, domine, laboro hic et laboro in me ipso: factus sum mihi terra difficultatis et sudoris nimii*)" (Augustine, *Confessions* X.33.50; X.16.25).

[27] Augustine repeatedly invokes the theme of war in his writing, both to describe the moral conflict of the self—the daily war (*bellum quotidianum*) against the ontological constriction of bodily habit (*consuetudo carnalis*)—and the political manifestation of that daily conflict transpiring between clashing communities. In both instances, Augustine conceptualizes war as a necessary technique of moral correction. "God's providence constantly uses war to correct and chasten the corrupt habits of man (*corruptos mores hominum*), as it also uses such afflictions to train men in a righteous and laudable way of life, removing to a better state those whose life is approved, or else keeping them in this world for further service" (*City of God* I.1). Augustine continues to influence contemporary conceptions of "just war." In a discussion of this influence, Robert Holmes points to the way that "Augustine weds Christianity to a militarism that to this day is a hallmark of the societies that profess it." See "St Augustine and the Just War Theory," in *The Augustinian Tradition*, ed. G.B. Matthews (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999), 321. For a discussion of the conceptual connection between Christian militarism and Augustine's theory of authority, see Section 1.1 of the present work.

his discourse, I will uncover the unthought devaluation of embodiment that attaches to each of the concepts he avowedly draws (and attempts to formally withdraw) from Christian thought—i.e., care (*Sorge*), anxiety (*Angst*), and the moment of vision (*Augenblick*).

Second, beginning with Heidegger at *Being and Time*'s concrete starting point, Dasein's habitual being-in-the-world, I will follow his discourse as it spiritualizes existence, progressively—or we might rather say 'regressively'—turning away (*Abkehr*) from an embodied understanding of Dasein. Foreclosing with the formal constraints of his analysis any kind of sustained account of bodily experience and the ways in which humans negotiate lived social space, fundamental ontology preserves, in both explicit and unarticulated ways, a relation to a certain tradition of philosophy. In resurrectively repeating this tradition, however, his discourse severs the sensible body from the understanding and temporality, i.e., the essential structure, of Dasein.

Third, following the Berkeley School of Heidegger interpretation led by Hubert Dreyfus, I will analyze the way that Heidegger's account of fallenness constantly conflates and confuses a (normatively neutral) structural interpretation of the phenomenon with a decidedly normative interpretation (2.3). On the one hand, he claims that the tendency or pull (*Zug*) of human fallenness toward the everyday social world (*das Man*), in which human existence is drawn into a de-individuating absorption in sociality—what he calls being-with-one-another (*Miteinandersein*)—is "an *essential* ontological structure of human existence itself."[28] On the other hand, he castigates this tendential movement of human existence as an inauthentic "turning away from itself," a form of human existence not-being-its-self (*das Nicht-es-selbst-sein*), which ought to be overcome by means of a project of mastery and self-possession (*Eigentlichkeit*) that "beats down" (*niederschlagen*) the temptation (*Versuchung*) and alienation (*Entfremdung*) of social, bodily being.[29] I will show how this normative account of fallenness is a direct rearticulation of Book X of Augustine's *Confessions*, in which Augustine recounts the daily war (*bellum quotidianum*) waged by the soul against habitual bodily being, a war that, in seeking to censure (*castigo*) the body and drive it back into submission (*redigo in servitutem*), serves as the principle paradigm for Heidegger's virile conception of the "being of human existence."[30] Indeed, an analysis of the text of Heidegger's Freiburg lecture course of the summer of 1921, entitled "Augustine and Neoplatonism,"[31] will reveal that the

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[28] *BT*/*SZ* Sections 27 and 38.

[29] "Authentically keeping silent is possible only in genuine discoursing. […] In that case one's reticence makes something manifest, and beats down idle talk" (*Nu rim echten Reden ist eigentliches Schweigen möglich. [...] Dann macht Verschwiegenheit offenbar und schlägt das 'Gerede' nieder*)" (*BT* 208/*SZ* 165). Macquarrie and Robinson conceal the violence of the verb *niederschlagen* in their translation of this passage, writing that reticence "does away with" rather than "beats down" idle talk. I am indebted to Mechthild Nagel for drawing my attention to this attenuation of Heidegger's militaristic rhetoric in translation. See "Thrownness, Playing-in-the-World, and the Question of Authenticity," *Feminist Interpretations of Heidegger*, 289–306 (esp. 300 and 306 n. 22).

[30] Augustine, *Confessions* X.31.43; Paul, *First Letter to the Corinthians* 9:27.

[31] Published in *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, trans. Matthias Fritsch and Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004).

notions of care (*Sorge*) and falling (*Verfall*) in *Being and Time* are directly inspired by Augustine's notions of *cura* and *cadere*.[32]

2.1   The Bodies Buried in the Margins of *Being and Time*

> *Taken strictly, [...] the ontology of Dasein* of itself *[...] as a philosophical inquiry 'knows' in principle nothing about sin.*
> —*Martin Heidegger*[33]

Heidegger sets out to sharply distinguish existential philosophy from the project of metaphysics and from the forerunning theological commitments that, sedimented in our ways of (self) understanding, continually reiterate that project. In a curiously denunciatory statement uttered in a lecture course taught at the University of Freiburg in 1940 entitled "Nietzsche: European Nihilism," Heidegger claims that "a 'Christian philosophy' is even more of an absurdity than the idea of a square circle. Square and circle are at least compatible in that they are both geometrical figures, whereas Christian faith and philosophy are separated by an abyss."[34] Separated by an abyss. *Durch einen Abgrund geschieden ist*. There is another signal text in which Heidegger reiterates this expression. And, as Dasein's fate (*Geschick*) would have it, it is a text that exhibits Heidegger's constant care about the distance (*Abstand*) between the disembodied essence of human being (i.e., Dasein, existence) and that of living, embodied animals.[35] We will not investigate this concernful distantiality here, except

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[32] "No wonder the soul gets entangled in distresses, it prefers care to security […] and it remains so until the impetus of carnal busyness, which is set into motion by long-enduring habit and which inserts itself into the self that is trying to turn toward God, comes to rest (*Nec mirum, si aerumnis implicatur, praeponens curam securitati [...] donec carnalium negotiorum requiescat impetus, effrenatus consuetudine diuturna, et tumultuosis recordationibus conversioni ejus sese inserens*)" (Augustine, *On Music* VI.5.14).

[33] "[S]treng genommen […] die Ontologie des Daseins *von sich aus* […] sofern sie als philosophisches Fragen grundsätzlich nichts von der Sünde 'weiß'" (*BT* 496 n. ii/*SZ* 306 n. 1; original emphasis).

[34] Heidegger, *Nietzsche, Volume Four: Nihilism*, trans. Frank A Capuzzi, ed. David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), 88.

[35] Heidegger claims that our everyday, inauthentic being-with-one-another has the character of distantiality (*Abständigkeit*). In other words, we are constantly concerned about our distance (*Abstand*) from others, about our conformity with social norms, carefully heeding the way we differ from others (*Sorge um einen Unterschied gegen die Anderen*), and experiencing uneasiness (*Beunruhigung*) if our comportment is too distant (*abständig*) from the norm. He interprets this eagerness to conform as a flight (*Flucht*) from our abiding unsettledness (*Unheimlichkeit*) about the groundlessness of our existence. What unsettledness is latent in Heidegger's constant care about the distance between human being (i.e., Dasein, existence) and living, animal bodies? Might this concern with the essential distance between man (*Mensch*) and living beings (*Lebe-Wesen, Tier*) itself be a kind of flight? A flight from an inherited unsettledness about the bodily 'ground' of this groundlessness— about "our scarcely

to mention that in that passage, Heidegger also reiterates his claim that living beings are the most difficult to think (*das Lebe-Wesen am schwersten zu denken*). Suffice it for now to say that in the utterance above, which is itself a reiteration of a claim Heidegger made in his 1935 lecture course, "An Introduction to Metaphysics," the question of the relation between the philosophy of existence and Christian philosophy seems settled, it might be said.[36] And yet! *Und dennoch!* (As Derrida points out, Heidegger uses more often than one would fain believe this rhetorical turn: and yet, exclamation mark, next paragraph).[37]

And yet the question of *Being and Time*'s theological inheritance (not to say ingredience) is so little settled that Heidegger is compelled to explicate himself time and again in the margins of *Being and Time*. This effort of self-explication unfolds in a series of footnotes, in which Heidegger's text engages in a kind of turning (*kehren*). The turning to which I refer is not the *Kehre* that is conventionally invoked in Heidegger scholarship to designate the shift in orientation from the early to the later work (though I don't think it's unrelated to that subsequent *Kehre*—more specifically, to the *Motiv* of that *Kehre*).[38] Rather, what transpires in the margins of *Being and Time* is a twofold structure of turning: a turning toward (*Hin-kehr*) that is also an effort at turning away (*Ab-kehr*)—an effort, dare I say, at conversion (*Be-kehrung*). In these marginalia, Heidegger at one and the same time acknowledges the Christian philosophical sources of his existential analytic and attempts to establish a distance (*Abstand*) between his inquiry and the theological horizons of those orientating sources.

This twofold marginal turning begins, as it were, with a certain unsettledness.

> *It is no accident* that the phenomena of anxiety (*Angst*) and fear (*Furcht*) […] have come—ontically and even (though within very narrow limits) ontologically—within the horizon of Christian theology. This has happened whenever the anthropological problem of man's being toward God has won priority and when questions have been formulated under the guidance of phenomena like faith, sin, love, and repentance.[39]

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thinkable, abysmal lived bodily kinship with the animal (*als die kaum auszudenkende abgründige leibliche Verwandtschaft mit dem Tier*)"? *BT* 163–168/*SZ* 126–130; "Letter on Humanism," trans. Frank A. Capuzzi, in *Basic Writings* (New York: Harper Collins, 1977), 230.

[36] *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Ralph Manheim (New York: Doubleday, 1961), 6.

[37] Jacques Derrida, "*Geschlecht*: Sexual Difference, Ontological Difference," in *Feminist Interpretations of Heidegger*, eds. Nancy J. Holland and Patricia Huntington (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2001), 56.

[38] For the classical formulation of the *Kehre*, see William Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*, fourth edition (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003).

[39] *BT* 492 n. iv/*SZ* 190 n. 3 (my emphasis).

Es ist kein Zufall. It is no accident. It is not by chance that the phenomenon of anxiety, which itself has won a certain priority in Heidegger's account of the ontological problem of Dasein's being-toward-death, appeared within the anthropological horizon of Christian theology—"primordial Christian religiosity," as the younger Heidegger put it.[40] And it is no mere contingency that the phenomenon appeared under the guidance of the metaphysical-axiological leading clues of faith, sin, love, and repentance. As Heidegger goes on to indicate in this three-paragraph genealogical self-explication, his understanding of anxiety and fear is indebted not simply to Augustine, Luther, and Kierkegaard, but, more particularly, to their respective discussions of the problem of Original Sin, i.e. to the myth of the Fall.

This is no accident. Heidegger himself asserts as much (albeit marginally). Nor is this non-accidental influence exclusive to Heidegger's understanding of the phenomenon of anxiety. It also extends to his conception of care (*Sorge*)—a conception which he confesses, when resuming his marginal self-explication a few pages later, "has grown upon the author (*erwuchs dem Verf.*) in connection with his attempts to interpret Augustinian anthropology […]."[41] The abbreviation of this authorial self-reference is matched by the abbreviation of the self-explication he provides. Tersely tracing the concept of care back to the ancient Greek μεριμνα, rendered in the Latin Vulgate translation of the New Testament as *sollicitudo*, Heidegger neglects to mention the specific Augustinian or New Testament contexts in connection with which the existential analytical conception of care has grown upon him. And in this negligent (not to say 'deficient') mode of distancing his discourse from the horizons of Christian theology, he neglects to delineate the specific theological sense-horizon within which the Pauline-Augustinian concept of care emerges and from out of which a genuinely existential interpretation must extract itself.

I will more extensively delineate these sense-horizons in the following section (2.2), and I will do so by foregrounding another marginal discussion—if we may call marginal a series of courses that Heidegger gave at the University of Freiburg in 1920–21 on the "Phenomenology of Religion" and "Augustine and Neoplatonism"—in which Heidegger explicitly discusses the texts to which he only vaguely alludes in the margins of *Being and Time*. Here, I would like simply (though by no means innocently) to uncover the fallen bodies that lay buried in those margins. Heidegger's unspecified New Testament reference is to Saint Paul's *First Letter to the Corinthians*, to a passage in which Paul directs his readers to renounce bodily-worldly relationships and significances, among them marital, familial, and social bonds, and through relinquishing them, to free themselves from care (μεριμνα, *sollicitudo*). Paul implores his readers to comport themselves toward the relational nexus of the world, into which

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[40] Martin Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, trans. Matthias Fritsch and Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004).

[41] "The way in which 'care' is viewed in the […] existential analytic of Dasein, is one which has grown upon the author (*erwuchs dem Verf.*) in connection with his attempts to interpret Augustinian (i.e., Helleno-Christian) anthropology with hindsight (*Rücksicht*) to the foundational principles reached in the ontology of Aristotle" (*BT* 492 n. vii/*SZ* 199 n. 3).

they've been thrown by their sinful condition, "as if" they bore no attachments to it (ὡς μή, *tamquam non*).[42] This is no accident.

It is also no accident that Heidegger (re)turns toward and away from the theological sense-horizons of Saint Paul in the next marginal self-explication of *Being and Time*. Throughout the main text of *Being and Time*, Heidegger calls the moment of transformation from inauthentic falling to authentic resoluteness the *Augenblick*, literally 'the glance of an eye'. Macquarrie and Robinson translate the *Augenblick* as 'the moment of vision', but as Hubert Dreyfus suggests, it would be better translated as 'the moment of transformation.'[43] In this next marginal disclosure, Heidegger acknowledges his indebtedness to Søren Kierkegaard, who in Heidegger's estimation "is probably the one who has seen the existentiell phenomenon of the *Augenblick* with the most penetration." Though he is quick to qualify that "this does not signify that [Kierkegaard] has been correspondingly successful in interpreting it existentially."[44] For Kierkegaard, the *Øieblik* is a momentary state of consciousness in which one has a sense of having a more-than-bodily spiritual existence. He describes it as a spiritual emergence, arising out of anxiety, in which "sensuousness is transfigured into spirit" and in which an unconditional religious commitment comes to define one's world and reconfigure one's relation to the present.[45] For Heidegger, the *Augenblick* is the momentary shift in Dasein's way of being-in-the-world from inauthenticity to authenticity—a moment of transformation from falling to resoluteness.

Dreyfus and Jane Rubin have elucidated the conceptual connections between Heidegger and Kierkegaard, clarifying the Kierkegaardian heritage of *Being and Time* that Heidegger only marginally and laconically identifies. They make a persuasive case that Heidegger's account of fallenness is a secularized translation of Kierkegaard's religious account of the Fall.[46] Heidegger attempts, one might say, to transformatively repeat Kierkegaard's account in a manner that is ontologically clarified, secular, and normatively neutral, i.e., in a way that extracts itself from the ontologically distorting categories of western metaphysics and the moralizing theological conceptions of Christian thought. Dreyfus and Rubin also point out that *Augenblick* is Martin Luther's translation of Saint Paul's claim in *First Corinthians*

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[42] Saint Paul, *First Letter to the Corinthians* 7:29–35; Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life* §§31–32.

[43] Hubert Dreyfus, *Being-In-The-World* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), 321.

[44] *BT* 497 n. iii/*SZ* 338 n. 2.

[45] Søren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Dread*, trans. Walter Lowrie (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957), chapters 2–3, esp. pp. 78–83. Describing this trans-bodily transformation, Kierkegaard writes: "A perfect spirit cannot be conceived as sexually differentiated" (71). It is also worthy of note that Heidegger's particularly normative descriptions of *das Man* share much in common with Kierkegaard's account of "the default of spirit," which he calls "spiritlessness" or "the crowd." See *The Concept of Dread* 83–86; and *The Present Age*, trans. Alexander Dru (New York: Harper, 1962).

[46] Hubert Dreyfus, and Jane Rubin, "Appendix: Kierkegaard, Division II, and Later Heidegger," in Hubert Dreyfus, *Being-In-The-World* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991): 283–340.

that "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, we shall all be changed."[47] But neither Heidegger nor Dreyfus and Rubin attempt to articulate the meaning-context from which this Pauline conceptual antecedent of Heidegger's notion of *Augenblick* arises, leaving us to assume that such context is inconsequential for the project of fundamental ontology. After all, the existential analytic of Dasein is normatively neutral, taking place on a level of ontological abstraction that is 'prior' to any moral or theological consideration.

But this oversight, I argue, covers over axiological-theological predicates that persist in the fore-conceptions of *Being and Time*. These predicates, which attach to the conceptual binary of fallenness/redemption that runs through Christian metaphysics and is transformatively reappropriated in the existential analytic of human existence, circulate around the notion of the habitual body. These predicates are buried by/in Heidegger's discourse and left undisclosed by his commentators. For it is precisely the habitual body that is left buried in the *Augenblick*. The Pauline discourse from which the expression derives is explicitly about resurrection. In it, Paul characterizes the resurrection of the faithful as a moment of transformation from mortality to immortality, a transmutation of the fallen (i.e. originally sinful) natural body (*corpus animale*) into a redeemed spiritual body (*corpus spiritale*).[48] This is no accident. And yet!

And yet, as Heidegger insists in yet another marginal self-explication one hundred pages later, in the context of a disquisition on Dasein's ontological being-at-fault (*Schuldigsein*), the ontology of Dasein *of itself* (*von sich aus*)—that is, taken strictly (*streng genommen*), that is, as a philosophical inquiry—"'knows' in principle nothing about sin."[49] With strange vehemence, Heidegger repeatedly protests against any suggestion that what he says about fallenness either is or presupposes any theological or moral claim.

> It should be noted here that the explication of these structures of Dasein has nothing to do with any doctrine of the corruption of human nature or any theory of original sin. What is involved here is a pure (*reine*) consideration of structures, which is *prior* (*vor*) to all such considerations. Our consideration must be wholly and sharply demarcated (*ganz scharf abzugrenzen*) from any theological consideration. It is possible, perhaps necessary, that all of these structures will recur (*weiderkehren*) in a theological anthropology. I am

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[47] Saint Paul, *First Letter to the Corinthians* 15:52. See Dreyfus and Rubin, "Appendix: Kierkegaard, Division II, and Later Heidegger" 321.

[48] Though it exceeds the scope of this study, it is worthy of further reflection that the Latin Vulgate translation of Paul's Greek significantly distorts the sense of this passage, rendering σῶμα ψυχικόν, psychical or ensouled body, as *corpus animale*, natural or animal body. Saint Paul, *First Letter to the Corinthians* 15:35–58, esp. 15:44. We will return to this passage, and Heidegger's conception of the *Augenblick* at the end of this chapter.

[49] "[S]treng genommen [...] die Ontologie des Daseins *von sich aus* [...] sofern sie als philosophisches Fragen grundsätzlich nichts von der Sünde 'weiß'" (*BT* 496 n. ii/*SZ* 306 n. 1; original emphasis).

in no position to judge how, since I understand nothing of such things.[50]

> This word [i.e., *Verfallen*] does not signify the Fall of Man (*Sündenfall des Menschen*) understood at one and the same time in a 'moral-philosophical' and secularized way; rather, it designates an essential relationship of man to being within being's relation to the essence of man. Accordingly, the terms 'authenticty' and 'inauthenticity', which are used in a provisional fashion, do not imply a moral-existentiell or an 'anthropological' distinction […].[51]

Is it accurate, let alone honest, for Heidegger to claim to 'understand nothing of such things'? More pointedly, is it even consistent with his own discourse? After all, it is central to his own understanding of 'understanding' (*Verstehen*) that it can never be free of fore-structuring presuppositions, that it is necessarily situated, and hence always already oriented in relation to its questioning, which would be entirely directionless in the absence of some provisional understanding of the subject matter of its questioning. How then, in turning toward the provisional theological sources of the genesis and working-out of his existential analytic of Dasein, can Heidegger so insistently, sharply, and self-assuredly turn away from them? Does his discourse wholly turn away? Can it?

By my repeated iteration of Heidegger's non-accidental (though marginal) attribution—*Es ist kein Zufall*—I mean to suggest that he does not succeed in radically extruding the residues of Christian theology from his discourse, despite his avowed and insistent suggestion to the contrary. Perhaps this is what Heidegger means to tacitly acknowledge in his "Letter on Humanism" when, having by that point begun to abandon the vocabulary of authenticity, he claims that such value-laden, anthropologically-overdetermined terms are used in *Being and Time* in a provisional (*präludierend*) fashion. Is it necessary that the sedimented language of Christian metaphysics be provisionally employed as a preparatory prelude to a mode of thinking beyond metaphysics? If so, how can that vocabulary be retained while still succeeding in speaking from beyond Christianity, from beyond the conceptual structures centered on that system of predicates?

These marginal self-explications arise at a moment of reversal (*Kehre*) in the text of *Being and Time*. This—I hesitate to repeat—is no accident. (Is this repetition belaboring rather than advancing the point? The work of repetition is tiresome, a constant inducement to fatigue. It can open, but is always poised near closure, always tilting toward losing its poise.) This reversal takes place toward the end of the "Fallen Tract" of Division One—a title I posit to designate the swath of text that prepares what will ultimately undermine the normative neutrality of Heidegger's phenomenological

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[50] *The History of the Concept of Time*, trans. Theodore Kisiel (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985), 283 (original emphasis). See also *BT* 224/*SZ* 179–80.

[51] Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," trans. Frank A. Capuzzi, in *Basic Writings* (New York: Harper Collins, 1977), 235–36.

characterization of 'our' average, everyday, prereflective existence as agents in familiar contexts of action.

Comprising three parts—Part One: *Das Man* (§§25–27), Part Two: *Verfallen* (§§35–38), and Part Three: *Angst* and *Sorge* (§§39–42)—this Fallen Tract reveals the preparatory (*vorbereitende*) fundamental analysis of Dasein as a predisposing (*prädisponierende*) analysis of Dasein. It prepares a reversal that is set into full swing in Division Two, beginning with the claim in the opening pages of that Division that "One thing has become unmistakable: the preceding existential analysis of Dasein cannot sustain the claim to primordiality. In its fore-having was only ever the *inauthentic* being of Dasein as unwhole (*als unganzes*)."[52] Invoking the idea of wholeness or completeness (*Ganzheit*) as both an individual and methodological goal, Heidegger criticizes his analysis of everydayness in Division One for failing to achieve that goal. While it is important to note that he goes on in Division Two to acknowledge the finitude of human existence as posing an intractable ontological obstruction to such a desire for completion, Heidegger never questions that desire itself. What is the meaning of this 'wholeness'? And 'who' is it that desires it? Does not the talk of 'dispersion,' 'alienation,' 'entanglement,' and 'lostness' at the heart of the Fallen Tract of Division One derive its meaning from this 'wholeness' taken up as a prior conception?

This prior conception drives the Fallen Tract of Division One to ambivalently oscillate between two accounts of the fallenness of human existence—one structural, one normative. Heidegger's reversal, predisposed by this ambivalence, ultimately leads him to blur the distinction between inauthenticity and the modally indifferent background of habitual everydayness,. This prevaluating predisposition arises, I submit, from the absent body of *Being and Time*.

Having simply (re)marked (upon) the graves of the bodies buried in the margins of *Being and Time*, I would like now to repeat Heidegger in turning away from them. Though in *this* iteration I would like to turn away while embracing them— not anxiously or graspingly, mind you, but sentient (not to say cognizant, mindful, etc.) of their presence, which is neither a presence-at-hand (*Vorhandenheit*) nor a presence ready-to-hand (*Zuhandenheit*), but an *active passivity* that is always already at work in and renders possible such modes of presence. Following Nietzsche, we might call this constitutive active passivity of the habitual body an active forgetting (*aktiven Vergesslichkeit*), to be distinguished from a mere failure of recollection. But it must also to be distinguished from the disembodied, one-sidedly negative interpretation that Heidegger gives of it, calling forgetting (*Vergessenheit*) an inauthentic mode of Dasein's having been that is only ever an expression of the fallenness of human existence—a hardening (*Verhärtung*) or rigidification (*Versteifung*) of sense that covers up (*verdecken*), closes down (*schließen*), and closes off (*verschließen*) the primordial possibilities of existence.[53] In turning toward the center (not to be confused with the body) of Heidegger's discourse, we will not fail to remember the bodies buried in the margins of *Being and Time*. We will hold them in

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[52] *BT* 276/*SZ* 233; original emphasis.

[53] *BT* 388–89/*SZ* 339.

the fore-having of our inquiry with the desire of diagnosing the ways in which they silently work upon Heidegger's discourse.

2.2 Understanding (:) the Severance of the Habitual Body

In *Being and Time*, Chanter argues, "there is a progressive move away from the concrete starting point of Dasein's world and toward a disembodied understanding of Dasein."[54] To critically interrogate the false concreteness of *Being and Time*, the movement of discourse according to which existence is progressively spiritualized, we must first appreciate the project's concrete starting point. This starting point is summed up in Heidegger's claim in Division One, Chapter Three, that "Being-in-the-world, according to our interpretation hitherto [this subordinate clause already foreshadows and prepares the normative reversal to come], amounts to a *non-thematic circumspective absorption* in the references or assignments that make up the readiness-to-hand of an equipmental whole."[55] This claim warrants unpacking.

Being-in-the-world is the radical concrete starting point of Heidegger's existential analytic. The radicality of Heidegger's point of departure, what makes it concrete, is the way that it displaces the Cartesian dualistic substance ontology according to which a disembodied, self-identical thinking substance or mind stands over against a world of extended material substances. The modern epistemological vocabulary of subject/object reflects this deep-seated ontological assumption: the subject (*sub-jectum*) being that self-identical epistemic presence over against which objects are re-presented (*ob-jectum*). As pragmatist John Dewey notes, pointing to what Heidegger calls the ontologically 'founded' (*fundierten*) or derivative character of this dualistic, epistemic mode of relation, "the object is that which objects."[56] Its mode of presence, which Heidegger calls presence-at-hand (*Vorhandenheit*), is one of obtrusively standing-forth over against a thematically intending subject. But as Dewey's verbal formulation indicates, and as Chapters Two and Three of Division One of *Being and Time* demonstrate at length, this mode of presence, and the dyadic or representational intentional relation which it comprises, emerge from a more basic ontological background that the Cartesian substance ontology overlooks.

Heidegger attempts to dislodge the assumption that all entities exhibit this same mode of presence, which is modeled upon the determinate presence of inert

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[54] Chanter, "The Problematic Normative Assumptions of Heidegger's Ontology," 81.

[55] *BT* 107/*SZ* 76; my emphasis.

[56] Dewey's dismantling of the ontological priority of the objective correlate of dualistic substance ontology is also accompanied by a demythologization of its posited subject: "Concrete habits do all the perceiving, recognizing, imagining, recalling, judging, conceiving, and reasoning that is done. 'Consciousness' […] expresses functions of habits, phenomena of their formation, operation, their interruption, and reorganization. […] Knowledge […] lives in the muscles, not in consciousness." John Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct* (New York: Dover, [1922] 2002), 191, 177.

physical matter, as well as the preconception that knowing is a relation between two entirely independent realms of reality, a subject (mind) and an object (world). Against these assumptions, Heidegger describes a way of being that he calls being-in-the-world, which is unique to Dasein, the human existing entity. This way of existing consists in our having, in the very fabric of our being, an understanding (*Verstehen*) of ourselves and of other entities.[57] Rather than a form of representational thinking, the understanding within which Dasein first and most basically operates is prereflective and non-thematic. Distinct from detached observational cognition (*Erkennen*), which Heidegger describes as a mode of dwelling autonomously (*Sichaufhaltens*) alongside entities by holding-oneself-back (*Sichenthalten*) from bodily involvement with the world, this prereflective understanding is a kind of *absorption* in and by the world (*Aufgehens in der Welt*).[58] Dasein's mode of being-in, which Heidegger calls dwelling (*Wohnen*), is that of inhabiting. When we inhabit something, it is no longer an object for us but becomes part of us and pervades out relation to other objects in the world. Inhabited facets of our world—e.g., entities, spatial directions and dimensions, functional relationships between entities, etc.—are not grasped as determinate objects of perception apart from the body. They are 'simply put to work' as part of the assemblage of capabilities through which the body fashions itself and its world.

Heidegger uses different terms to designate this ontologically basic, absorbed understanding: 'familiarity' (*Vertrautheit*), 'circumspection' (*Umsicht*), or simply 'our practical everyday orientation.' He describes it as "the background of […] primary familiarity, which itself is not conscious and intended but is rather present in [an] unprominent way," as well as "that familiarity in accordance with which Dasein, as being-with-one-another, 'knows its way about' (*sich 'auskennt'*) in its public environment."[59] Constantly at work in our everyday coping (*Bewältigung*) or dealings (*Umgang*)—dealings which Heidegger variously describes as concernful (*besorgen*), habitual (*gewohnten*), or operative (*hantieren*)—this unself-conscious background familiarity is constitutive of our habitual commerce with the world.[60] Thanks to it, we skillfully negotiate the conditions of our environment, opening doors, sitting in chairs, driving cars, maneuvering around obstacles, and using tools—all without a reflective act of consciousness. (That is, assuming we are able-bodied, which Heidegger

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[57] "That wherein Dasein already understands itself […] is always something with which it is primordially familiar. This familiarity with the world […] is constitutive for Dasein, and goes to make up Dasein's understanding of being" (*BT* 119/*SZ* 86).

[58] *BT* 89/*SZ* 61.

[59] *History of the Concept of Time* 189; *BT* 405/*SZ* 354.

[60] I borrow the expression "unself-conscious background" from David Morris's incisive discussion of the role of lived time and habit in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, "Lived Time and Absolute Knowing." The mode of understanding peculiar to the habitual body is unself-conscious in that it is a form of awareness, but one that is not self-aware or at least not characterized by explicit self-reference. It is an unself-conscious awareness because, as will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three, it transpires at a transindividual level of interrelation. "Lived Time and Absolute Knowing: Habit and Addiction from *Infinite Jest* to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*," *CLIO: Journal of Literature, History, and the Philosophy of History* 30.4 (2001): 375–415.

certainly does in the specific version of Dasein that he takes to be exemplary. We will return to this.) In connection with this habitual know-how, the entities with which we are pragmatically involved are present for us in a unique way. These entities, which Heidegger calls equipment (*Zeug*), are not present-at-hand in the manner of a determinate ob-ject that is set before and re-presented by a cognizing subject. Rather they are present to us as available or ready-to-hand (*Zuhandenheit*). Just as we are transparent to, or reflectively unaware of, ourselves in our habitual commerce with familiar equipment, so too are we thematically unaware of the tools that we skillfully operate. For that which one has in view in such dealings is neither oneself nor the tools that one prereflectively grasps, but rather the projects for the sake of which one is geared into a world of equipment.[61]

In this basic, familiar state of absorption (if described in a philosophically unprejudiced way), there is no 'subject' standing in distinction from an 'object.' Rather, Dasein is intrinsically integrated into the world of its concern. "Self and world belong together in the single entity, Dasein. Self and world are not two entities, like subject and object […] but self and world are the basic determination of Dasein itself in the unity of the structure of being-in-the-world."[62]

> In directing itself toward something and grasping it, Dasein does not somehow first get out of an inner sphere in which it has first been encapsulated, rather its primary kind of being is such that it is always 'outside' with entities that it encounters and that belong to an already discovered world. Nor is any inner sphere abandoned when Dasein dwells autonomously alongside the entity to be cognized, and determines its character. Rather even in this 'being-outside' amidst the object (*Gegenstand*), Dasein is still 'inside' as being-in-the-world that cognizes. And furthermore, epistemic perception (*Vernehmen des Erkannten*) is not a matter of returning with one's booty to the 'cabinet' of consciousness after one has gone out and grasped it; even in perceiving, retaining, and preserving, cognizing Dasein, *as Dasein, remains outside*.[63]

The inherence and depth of the relationality of Dasein's being is such that its faithful description confounds and decenters the ascriptions of 'inside' and 'outside.' Dasein is 'in' the world in a sense that is distinct from the way that water is in a container or a stone in a pile. Dasein inhabits and harvests its sense of itself from its involvement in the world. Dasein is structured by its very relation to the world. In its habitual

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[61] Hubert Dreyfus thematizes this two-fold transparency quite clearly in Chapter Four of *Being-In-The-World*: "Precisely when is it most genuinely appropriated equipment becomes transparent. […] Not only is the equipment transparent; so is the user […] there is awareness but no self-referential experience of acting" (65, 67). As Dewey writes, "it is a commonplace that the more suavely efficient a habit the more unconsciously it operates" (*Human Nature and Conduct* 178).

[62] *Basic Problems of Phenomenology* 297.

[63] *BT* 89/*SZ* 62.

commerce, in which it understandingly makes use of things without noticing them explicitly, it is geared into the world; it inhabits the roles and postures called forth by the referential contexts of its circumspective concern. Individual items of equipment do not just occur alongside one another in objective space and time, but instead form an organized equipmental totality (*Zeugganzheit*), which holistically assigns each item its particular practical significance. "Equipment—in accordance with its equipmentality—always is *in terms of* its belonging together to other equipment: inkstand, pen, ink, paper, blotting pad, table, lamp, furniture, windows, doors, room."[64] This equipmental totality is in turn implicated in a broader intelligible network of pragmatic relations assigning tools to contexts of use, tasks, goals, and to the ultimate purpose of our projects, our 'for-the-sake-of-whiches.' Heidegger describes these practical relations as 'signifying' (*be-deuten*), calling the entire intelligible network of signifying relations 'significance' (*Bedeutsamkeit*), and presents being-in-the-world as a primordial familiarity with such a structure of significance, with the meaningfully structured domain of practices and institutions.

Heidegger describes Dasein's inhabitation of the roles, postures, tasks, and goals called forth by the referential contexts of its circumspective concern in a way that also disrupts dichotomies of 'activity' and 'passivity.' Inhabitation is a self-delivery (*Sichstellen unter*) or submission (*Angewiesenheit*) in which Dasein understandingly gives itself beforehand (*selbst vorgängig gibt*) to the assignments of the world—a submission that has the temporal distinction of the 'always already' (*immer schon*). "Dasein, in so far as it *is*, has always already submitted itself to a 'world' which it encounters, and this submission belongs essentially to its being."[65] This delivery is a self-delivery, as Dasein's turn or self-assignment (*Sichverweisen*) to worldly relations is conducted in a prepredicative mode of understanding (*vorprädikative Verstehen/Sehen*).[66] "It holds itself in them in familiarity; and in so doing, it holds them *before* itself, for it is in them that its assignment operates."[67] As Maurice Merleau-Ponty writes of a skilled organist inhabiting a particular organ for the first time: "During the short rehearsal preceding the concert, he does not comport himself like one who is about to draw up a plan. He sits on the seat, works the pedals, pulls out the stops, gets the measures of the instrument with his body, incorporates its directions and dimensions within himself; *he settles into the organ as one settles into a house*."[68] Dasein settles into its habitual world as one settles into a house. It does not call upon a cognitive map of the physical space to be negotiated and compare the details of that representation with the objective proportions of its body; rather the

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[64] *BT* 96–102/*SZ* 68–73; quote from *BT* 97/*SZ* 68.

[65] *BT* 120–1/*SZ* 87.

[66] *BT* 189, 411/*SZ* 149, 359.

[67] "Im vertrauten Sich-darin-halten hält es sich diese *vor* als das, worin sich sein Verweisen bewegt" (*BT* 120/*SZ* 87).

[68] Merleau-Ponty, PP E168/F170 (my emphasis).

habitual body, having tacitly incorporated the directions and dimensions of the context, holds open a horizon of availability that orients action in advance.

The prepredicative understanding of being-in-the-world undergirds the theoretical understanding or thematizing stance that Dasein can take on the world. Moreover, as Heidegger demonstrates, this latter epistemic mode of comportment towards entities, which traditional ontology presupposes and privileges, has its phenomenological genesis in the rupture of the fluidly transparent, habitual commerce with the world. Thematizing intentionality and its determinately present objective correlate only emerge (originarily) when an entity *objects*, i.e., when it falls out of the circuit of habitual sense. Explicitly announcing itself in its unavailability or uninhabitability (Heidegger's famous example is a carpenter's hammer that is broken or missing), such an entity solicits a deliberative and, in cases of extreme breakdown, a theoretically inquisitive regard. In this disruption its mode of presence changes over to that of a present-at-hand entity with discernible properties.

Among Heidegger's great philosophical contributions is the depth with which he decenters the ontological assumptions and longstanding epistemological privilege of cognitive intentionality and epistemic perception, uncovering a more basic form of habitual or absorbed intentionality that cognitive intentionality parasitically relies upon and derives its intelligibility from. Indeed, to get the ontology right, Heidegger introduces a new term for the way human beings relate to things: comportment (*Verhalten*): "Comportments have the structure of directing-oneself-toward, of being-directed-toward. Annexing a term from Scholasticism, phenomenology calls this structure *intentionality*."[69] Heidegger uses 'comportment' to refer to our directed activity, precisely because the term has no mentalistic overtones.

> Because the usual separation between a subject with its immanent sphere and an object with its transcendent sphere—because, in general, the distinction between an inner and an outer—is constructive and continually gives occasion for further constructions, we shall in the future no longer speak of a subject, of a subjective sphere, but shall understand the being to whom intentional comportments belong as *Dasein*, and indeed in such a way that it is precisely with the aid of *intentional comportment*, properly understood, that we attempt to characterize suitably the being of Dasein.[70]

This advance over the enduring legacy of modern conceptions of the subject as a disembodied, worldless intellect, which Heidegger accomplishes by taking concrete being-in-the-world as the starting point of his analysis, is worthy of celebration. And yet, this legacy nonetheless persists in the existential analytic, being reiteratively reinscribed through the formalizing constraints of its method. For throughout his descriptions of the habitual intentionality of circumspective concern, Heidegger makes explicit mention of the lived body only in order to cast it aside. Though he

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[69] *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* 58 (original emphasis).

[70] *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* 64 (original emphasis).

emphatically characterizes Dasein as essentially spatial (*es wesenhaft räumlich*) and oriented in its lived bodiliness (*Leiblichkeit*), Heidegger is quick to disregard: "This 'bodily nature' ('*Leiblichkeit*') hides a whole problematic of its own, though we shall not treat it here."[71]

Any kind of sustained account of bodily experience and the ways in which humans negotiate lived social space is foreclosed by the formal constraints of his analysis, which severs the lived body from the essential structure of Dasein: "Being-in […] is a state of Dasein's being; it is an existential. So one cannot think of it as the being-present-at-hand of some corporeal thing (human lived body) 'in' an entity which is present-at-hand."[72] Heidegger eagerly swims upstream, against the dominant tendency of interpretation which, pulled by a fall, mistakenly equates Dasein's ontological status with that of either a present-at-hand or ready-to-hand thing. In doing so, however, he ends up paralleling the path of Saint Anthony and the other 'desert fathers' of the early Christian eastern empire, who set off by foot into the eminence of the desert along the valley of the Nile, within sight of settled land, seeking through radical social and sensible renunciation to sever the umbilical cord that linked them to the 'world.'

> The myth of the desert was one of the most abiding creations of late antiquity. It was, above all, a myth of liberating precision. It delimited the towering presence of the 'the world,' from which the Christian must be set free, by emphasizing a clear ecological frontier. […]
>
> The 'world,' the 'present age' of previous Christian radicals had been almost too big to be seen. Its measureless demonic structures had engulfed the very stars. There was no outside viewing-point from which to take the measure of its faceless immensity, and no hope of disengagement from its clutches other than through drastic rituals that promised total transformation, through the formation of small, inward-looking groups of the redeemed; or […] through adopting the disturbing rootlessness of the religious vagabond.
>
> Seen from the slight eminence of the desert of Egypt, however, the 'world' was no more and no less than the green valley below. This was a valley of crowded villages, condemned to ceaseless labor by the ever-present fear of famine.[73]

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[71] *BT* 143/*SZ* 108. See also *History of the Concept of Time* 232.

[72] "In-Sein […] meint eine Seinsverfassen des Daseins und ist ein *Existenzial*. Dann kann damit aber nicht gedacht werden an das Vorhandensein eines Körperdinges (Menschenleib) 'in' einem vorhandenen Seienden" (*BT* 79/*SZ* 54).

[73] Peter Brown, *Body & Society* 216. One such desert father wrote: "Let the soul then, brothers, teach wisdom to this thick body every day when we come to our bed at evening, and say to each member of the body, 'O feet, while you have the power to stand and to move before you are laid out and become motionless, stand eagerly for your Lord.' To the hands, let it say, 'The hour comes when you will be loosened and motionless, bound to each other [crosswise over the breast]… then before you fall into that hour do not cease stretching yourself out to the Lord.' 'Oh body…bear me as I eagerly confess

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Emerging from his desert 'cell,' Saint Anthony returned to crowded villages "instantly recognizable" as someone who had achieved a "total transparency and singleness of heart."[74] Heidegger insists that Dasein pursue a similar self-transparency (*Durchsichligkeit*) by wresting itself away (*abgerungen*) from its concrete involvement with the world and the entangling errors (*verfänglichen Miß-griffe*) that such involvement produces. He urges that 'we Dasein' thrust aside (*abdrängen*) the everyday interpretive tendencies that "keep thrusting themselves upon us and running along with us."[75]

Like the desert fathers seeking to extricate themselves and rise above the tempting, turbulent, famine-ridden world that had 'possessed their inmost parts'—who aspired through self-mortification to 'clarify' the bodies that 'closed down their hearts'—Heidegger seeks to clarify (*geht die Aufklärung*) Dasein's self-opacity (*Undurchsichtigkeit*), rooted in the ignorance of the world (*der Unkenntnis der Welt*). And he seeks to do so by severing this self-transparent existential 'sight' from the sensible-habitual lived body.[76] In case one of his readers might have inauthentically associated the non-thematic familiarity of circumspection (*Umsicht*) with a lived body, Heidegger at least twice insists that Dasein's existential sight, which Dasein *is*, has nothing to do with the perception of lived bodily eyes (*leiblichen Augen*).[77] Rather, he claims, the prepredicative perception (*Umsicht*) operative in habitual dealing (*Umgang*), like all sight, "is grounded primarily in understanding (*alle Sicht primär im Verstehen gründet*)."[78]

> We must, to be sure, guard against a misunderstanding of the expression 'sight.' It corresponds to the 'clearedness,' which we took as characterizing the disclosedness of the 'there.' 'Seeing' does not intend just perceiving with the bodily eyes (*leiblichen Augen*), but neither does it mean pure non-sensory (*unsinnliche*) awareness of something present-at-hand in its presence-at-hand. In giving an existential signification (*Bedeutung*) to 'sight,' we have merely drawn upon the peculiar feature of seeing, that it lets entities which are

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God, before you are borne away by others… . For there will be a time when that most heavy sleep will surely overcome you. But if you listen to me, we shall together enjoy the blessed inheritance" (quoted in Brown 222–23).

[74] Peter Brown, *Body & Society* 226.

[75] *BT* 186, 96/*SZ* 146, 67.

[76] See Peter Brown, *Body & Society* 224–235. Heidegger *BT* 186–87/*SZ* 146–47.

[77] *BT* 187, 397/*SZ* 147, 346. I am indebted to John Protevi, whose, as it were, insightful discussion of Heidegger's 'sense' of 'sight' in *Being and Time* guides my discussion of the passage below. See John Protevi, "The 'Sense' of 'Sight': Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty on the Meaning of Bodily and Existential Sight," *Research in Phenomenology* 28.1 (1998): 211–223, esp. 215.

[78] *BT* 187/*SZ* 147.

accessible to it be encountered unconcealedly in themselves. Of course, every 'sense' ('*Sinn*') does this within the domain of discovery which is genuinely its own. But from the beginning onwards the tradition of philosophy has been oriented primarily toward 'seeing' as a way of access to entities and to being. To preserve the connection with this tradition, we may formalize 'sight' and 'seeing' enough to obtain therewith a universal term (*universaler Terminus*) for characterizing any access to entities or to being, as access in general (*Zugang überhaupt*).[79]

Like the term transparency (*Durchsichtigkeit*), which "we (*wir*) choose [...] in order to designate 'knowledge of self' (*Selbsterkenntnis*) in a sense which is well understood (*wohl-verstandenen*)," 'we' formalize 'sight' and 'seeing' at one and the same time in order to keep the connection with the oculocentric tradition of philosophy and to obtain therewith a 'universal term' for 'access in general.'

With this formalization, Heidegger (I mean, 'we') guards against the danger ('we must, to be sure') of falsely describing Dasein's insightful self-movement as the property of a present-at-hand entity aiming at a pre-existent present-at-hand object. By formalizing the vulgar term 'sight,' replete as it is with erroneous entangling associations of embodiment, Heidegger also preserves the relation to the tradition of philosophy. (One might ask here: Which tradition exactly? And what is 'our' motivation for preserving a connection with it? What system of predicates is carried forward into our fore-conceptions by retaining and reiterating this inheritance? Heidegger provides no such specification or justification. Perhaps his conservative contention that "everything 'good' is a heritage…" is at work here—and here, again, in an unspecified manner and to similarly disturbing effect.)[80] But, akin to the tradition that it reiteratively repeats—which, while unspecified at the center of his discourse, is recuperable from the margins—Heidegger's austere formalization severs the sensible body from the understanding and temporality of Dasein.

As a consequence, the temporality of embodied sense is sacrificed and foreclosed; it is relegated, along with spatiality and alterity, to the status of a fallen occlusion of the expression of original temporality in which the former are to be embedded. "In his eagerness to avoid equating Dasein's ontological status with that of a present-at-hand thing," Chanter argues, "[Heidegger] seems to divorce his analysis from the tangible realm, providing us with no path back to the material, except insofar as he allows that it remains a necessary starting point and guide for the analysis."[81] *Being and Time* fails to grasp the way that the temporality of embodied sense, which consists in an iterability allowing a sinking into habits, affords a forgetting that is not

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[79] *BT* 187/*SZ* 147.

[80] *BT* 435/*SZ* 383. See Chanter, "The Problematic Normative Assumptions of Heidegger's Ontology," 98–107.

[81] Chanter, "The Problematic Normative Assumptions of Heidegger's Ontology," 87.

only conducive to, but indispensible for *a genuinely finite, embodied freedom*.[82] The specific forgetting occasioned by bodily habit is one that opens the present to future projects and as yet uninhabited possibilities. It is thus a productive, dilational structure of existence, not just a limiting and constrictive one. Through the habitual body the momentary body is not only geared into the world of equipment and social institutions, it is also opened onto and directed toward an array of virtual bodies that are yet to be inhabited.[83]

Heidegger does not name the tradition with which he seeks to preserve a connection in his methodological procedure of formalization. Perhaps, given the hegemony of oculocentrism and eidetics throughout the history of western philosophy, he does not need to.[84] But at least one set of genealogical linkages—or should we say, following Augustine, a habitual chain (*catena consueto*)—could be traced back to the Pauline problematic of the flesh as articulated in the works of Paul and Augustine. Let us return to the margins of *Being and Time* to explicate these concatenations. Let us cast an eye (i.e., a habitually informed lived bodily eye) to the way that the particular bodies that are battled and buried in these early Christian works are resurrected in Heidegger's discourse. Through such an inquiry it will become evident how, complicit with this tradition, Heidegger's resurrective repetition elevates a spiritual 'body' at the expense of fallen lived bodies.

Heidegger's formal conversion of Dasein's sight, his extraction of existential 'sight' from the lived body, has its roots in Book X of Augustine's *Confessions*. That is to say, Heidegger's discourse carries forward prevaluative pretensions from this influential Christian text—a text in which Augustine describes the spiritual conversion of the soul as a daily war (*bellum quotidianum*) waged against the concatenations of *consuetudo carnalis*. Augustine characterizes this conflict, repeating Saint Paul, as an effort to censure (*castigo*) the body and drive it back into submission (*redigo in servitutem*).[85] And the New Testament text from which Augustine takes his cues in understanding this war is worthy of our attention. It states:

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[82] Though he fails to fully grasp this specific mode of forgetting, Heidegger glimpses it, though he restricts its significance to the realm of instrumental action: "A specific kind of *forgetting* (*Vergessen*) is essential for the temporality that is constitutive for letting something be involved. The self *must forget itself* if, lost in the world of equipment, it is to be able 'actually' to go to work and handle something (*Für die Zeitlichkeit, die das Bewendenlassen konstituiert, is ein spezifisches* Vergessen *wesentlich. Um an die Zeugwelt 'verloren' 'wirklich' zu Werke gehen und hantieren zu kōnnen,* muß sich das Selbst vergessen" (*BT* 405/*SZ* 354; my emphasis).

[83] This constructive account of the subject of dilational habit is taken up in fuller detail in Chapter Three.

[84] On the hegemony of oculocentrism in the western philosophical tradition and its marginalization of other visual practices, see Edward S. Casey, *The World at a Glance* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007), esp. Chapter Four.

[85]   Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a corruptible crown; but we do it to get an incorruptible crown. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—bodily desire, the desire of the eyes, and worldly ambition or entanglement—does not come from the Father, but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.[86]

Following this text, the three temptations (*tentatio*), or the three directions of the defluxion (*defluere,* flowing down, scattering) of self, that Augustine brings into view as manifesting through the medium of the habitual body are bodily desire (*concupiscentia carnis*), the desire of the eyes (*concupiscentia oculorum*), and worldly ambition or entanglement (*ambitio saeculi*).[87] These temptations serve as the basis for what Heidegger in *Being and Time* calls Dasein's fallen modes of absorption in

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Οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι οἱ ἐν σταδίῳ τρέχοντες πάντες μὲν τρέχουσιν, εἷς δὲ λαμβάνει τὸ βραβεῖον; οὕτως τρέχετε ἵνα καταλάβητε. πᾶς δὲ ὁ ἀγωνιζόμενος πάντα ἐγκρατεύεται, ἐκεῖνοι μὲν οὖν ἵνα φθαρτὸν στέφανον λάβωσιν, ἡμεῖς δὲ ἄφθαρτον. ἐγὼ τοίνυν οὕτως τρέχω ὡς οὐκ ἀδήλως, οὕτως πυκτεύω ὡς οὐκ ἀέρα δέρων· ἀλλὰ ὑπωπιάζω μου τὸ σῶμα καὶ δουλαγωγῶ, μή πως ἄλλοις κηρύξας αὐτὸς ἀδόκιμος γένωμαι.

Nescitis quod hii qui in stadio currunt omnes quidem currunt sed unus accipit bravium sic currite ut conprehendatis. Omnis autem qui in agone contendit ab omnibus se abstinet et illi quidem ut corruptibilem coronam accipiant nos autem incorruptam. Ego igitur sic curro non quasi in incertum sic pugno non quasi aerem verberans. Sed castigo corpus meum et in servitutem redigo ne forte cum aliis praedicaverim ipse reprobus efficiar. (Paul, *First Letter to the Corinthians* 9:27; see Augustine, *Confessions* X.31.43)

[86] Μὴ ἀγαπᾶτε τὸν κόσμον μηδὲ τὰ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ. ἐάν τις ἀγαπᾷ τὸν κόσμον, οὐκ ἔστιν ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ πατρὸς ἐν αὐτῷ· ὅτι πᾶν τὸ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ, ἡ ἐπιθυμία τῆς σαρκὸς καὶ ἡ ἐπιθυμία τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν καὶ ἡ ἀλαζονεία τοῦ βίου, οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου ἐστίν. καὶ ὁ κόσμος παράγεται καὶ ἡ ἐπιθυμία αὐτοῦ, ὁ δὲ ποιῶν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.

Nolite diligere mundum neque ea quae in mundo sunt si quis diligit mundum non est caritas Patris in eo. Quoniam omne quod est in mundo concupiscentia carnis et concupiscentia oculorum est et superbia vitae quae non est ex Patre sed ex mundo est, et mundus transit et concupiscentia eius qui autem facit voluntatem Dei manet in aeternum. (*First Book of John* 2:15–17)

[87] Augustine renders the Latin *superbia vitae*, literally a worldly pride or pride of life, as *ambitio saeculi*. Meaning 'secular ambition,' Augustine also selects this transposition to invoke the literal signification of *ambitio*, which is 'going around, encompassing, embracing.' The defluxions of the soul, on Augustine's account, are each a kind of 'solicitous entanglement' in or 'embracement' of the non-spiritual world.

(*Aufgehen bei*), curiosity (*Neugier*), and entanglement (*Verfangen*) in the world of *das Man*—modes which derive from the inherent temptation (*Versuchung*) of being-in-the-world.[88]

Heidegger's formal conversion of Dasein's sight is situated most proximally by Augustine's denunciation of *concupiscentia oculorum*. Augustine calls this bodily sight a lustful curiosity (*curiosa cupiditas*) that, rooted in the appetite for knowing (*appetitus noscendi*), gets hidden or concealed (*palliata*) under the titles of understanding (*cognitionis*) and science (*scientiae*).[89] Augustine seeks, through his own formal analytic (*ana-lysis* is literally an unfastening, loosening, or releasing) to disaggregate and sever this bodily sight, which in virtue of its bodiliness is affiliated or rooted in appetite and lust, from the general, disembodied locus of understanding (*cognoscendum*). Augustine calls this understanding, extracted from the sensuousness of the lived body, the general faculty of seeing or understanding (*officio vivendi* or *cognoscendi*), which is precisely what Heidegger intends with his notion of existential 'sight' as access in general (*Zugang überhaupt*)—a faculty of 'seeing' which Augustine claims the bodily senses usurp onto themselves (*usurpant*). It is precisely this generically disembodied mode of access that rises up to God (*adsurgere in Deo*), cutting off (*praecidere*) and expelling (*dispellere*) from itself the buzzing distraction (*circumstrepant*) of everyday life (*quotidianam vitam*) that tugs on the soul through its lived bodily senses and captures the soul in vacant care (*vana cura*).

In the margins of *Being and Time*—if we may call marginal a course that Heidegger gave at the University of Freiburg in the summer of 1921 on "Augustine and Neoplatonism"—Heidegger reveals his own method of formalization and his own notion of the ontological clarity of authenticity to have been significantly developed and modeled upon his reading of this passage from Book X of the *Confessions*. Closely following Augustine's Latin, he says that in seeing or experiencing through the flesh (*videre/experiendi per carnem*), "sensuousness enters into the sense-character of access and the performance of access in such a way that the access stands in the *appetitus* of *experiendi*" rather than "the cognizing experience in sensuousness in general: 'seeing.'"[90] When the performance of access, instead of having a generically disembodied sense-character, experiences rather through the body (*experiendi per carnem*), it becomes entangled in a kind a kind of appetite for enjoyment rather than an instrumental striving for the sake of an end. "The seeing and hearing that *enjoys* [rather than *uses*] is factical seeing and hearing; as enjoyment, it is so natural that we do not even 'see' it any longer, or it is covered up and hidden insofar as one deceives oneself."[91]

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[88] "This life […] is all temptation without any interruption (*Ista vita […] est tota tentatio sine ullo interstitio*)" (Augustine, *Confessions* X.32.48). As Heidegger reiteratively repeats Augustine: "Being-in-the-world is in itself *tempting* (*Das In-der-Welt-sein ist an ihm selbst* versucherisch)" (*BT* 221/*SZ* 177; original emphasis).

[89] Augustine, *Confessions* X.35.54–57.

[90] Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life* 165–69.

[91] Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life* 166.

One sees from this marginal discourse, the genesis of what in *Being and Time* will be designated as *das Man* (Dasein's sociality), which in its idleness "perverts (*verkehrt*) the act of disclosing (*Erschließen*) into an act of closing off (*Verschließen*)."[92] As Heidegger says in his lecture on Augustine, the seeing and hearing that enjoys, and thereby closes off, rather than using/disclosing, "lends experienced significance its basic *articulation*."[93] This is precisely the language that Heidegger later adopts in *Being and Time*, where he claims that *das Man* "articulates the referential context of significance," "prescribes the kind of being of everydayness," and "determines what and how one 'sees'"[94]

Numerous commentators have pointed to the way that Heidegger's descriptions of Dasein's involvement with the world are largely instrumental, geared almost exclusively to the world of end-oriented tasks. The picture of Dasein that emerges and the largely task-oriented *existentialia* that are grasped, as Chanter argues, produce "a very one-sided view of Dasein […] that either ignores what most would regard as important aspects of experience, for example, sexuality, eroticism, enjoyment, and pleasure, or, at best, treats them as only important as subordinate to Dasein's successful negotiation of its equipmental relations and its ultimate ontological task of clarifying the significance of such dealings."[95] In the horizon traced out by this genealogical connection between Heidegger and Augustine, we are able to see that the subordination of bodily experience and enjoyment in *Being and Time* is a reiterative repetition of a particularly masculine Christian ascetic intention—what John Caputo calls Heidegger's 'Christian soldierism.'

> For Heidegger, in [the] years shortly after he returned from World War I, the *Confessions* were a kind of war journal, a report from the front on the battle the soul wages with itself, which became for him the model of the being whose Being lies in taking up its Being. […] Following this Augustinian model, Dasein is called to take up the good fight and resist the pull (*Zug*) of fallenness, to gather itself together in the unity of resolute self-possession. The 'fundamental ontology' of Dasein, which was supposed to occupy a place of a priori neutrality, prior to the division between the genders (or between atheism and theism, good and evil, and so on), is deeply marked and inscribed by the traits of a very masculine subject, a knight of anticipatory resoluteness, ready for anxiety, a macho, virile figure out there all alone […] without any women at all, […] including […] the womanliness within a man […].[96]

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[92] *BT* 213/*SZ* 169.

[93] Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life* 166.

[94] *BT* 167, 164, 213/*SZ* 129, 127, 170.

[95] Chanter, "The Problematic Normative Assumptions of Heidegger's Ontology," 82.

[96] John D. Caputo, "The Absence of Monica: Heidegger, Derrida, and Augustine's *Confessions*" 150, 159.

Heidegger's emphasis upon and privileging of instrumental-teleological modes of existence, as well as his commitment to a formalizing and similarly teleological method, are couched in the bellicose Augustinian relation to *consuetudo carnalis*, in what for Augustine is a fundamental prioritization of end-oriented use (*uti*), which Heidegger comes to articulate as an authentically disclosive mode of comportment toward the world, over enjoyment (*frui*), which Heidegger associates with the ontological closure of *das Man*.

This binary, which pervades Augustine's corpus, is explicitly worked out in his treatise *On Christian Doctrine*, where he constructs an allegory in which he associates mortal life in the world with a "state of exile," with the state of an exile traveling toward his "home country" (i.e. God). He characterizes bodies as "land vehicles" or "sea vessels" which, he argues, are worldly things to be *used* in service of one's trek towards home. One ought not be "perversely captivated" by "agreeable experiences" with other mortals, he writes; one ought not be "delighted with the pleasure of the journey," or be "converted to *enjoying* what we ought to have been *using*."

> [I]f we are to return to our home country [i.e. God], where alone we can be truly happy, we have to use (*uti*) this world, not enjoy (*frui*) it, so that we may behold the invisible things of God, brought to our knowledge through the things that have been made (*Romans* 1:20); that is, so that we may proceed from temporal and bodily things to grasp those that are eternal and spiritual.[97]

Although that which is eternal and spiritual, Augustine concedes, is brought to our knowledge *through* temporal and bodily things, according to Augustine's conception we are able to grasp the spiritual only insofar as we transcend the sensible through abstraction—only insofar as we *use* the sensible and renounce the *enjoyment* that it affords us. Similarly, in Heidegger's conception, Dasein is able to grasp its authentic self only insofar as it transcends the sensibility of habitual everydayness through a formalizing, ontological abstraction, i.e., through severing its ties from the lived body, cutting itself off from its habitual bodily connection to others, and pulling itself together from out of this dispersion in a project of mastery and self-possession.

Heidegger's Dasein progressively clarifies its understanding of itself by wresting itself from the concrete world. "This journey of self-clarification," Chanter argues,

> is at the same time a severing of Dasein from inauthenticity, a severance that takes shape as a repudiation of others, who figure for the most part as 'the they.' To the extent that the material, bodily aspects of the world are left behind by Dasein in its quest for self-understanding, they are associated with the domain of those inauthentic others. The care of the self is left to those vague, shadowy figures who are still

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[97] Augustine, *Teaching Christianity* I.4, 4.

caught up in the ontological obfuscation of the they. […] Those others, from whom Dasein tries so hard to divorce itself, also play the role of caretakers of Dasein's material, bodily needs, and such roles are occupied overwhelmingly by women and minorities. Since Heidegger's Dasein is allegedly neutral, there is no room for him to acknowledge the political implications of the division of labor that is implied by his account. Since his ontology is one that has universal pretensions, there is no place for an acknowledgement of the sexist, racist, and classist structures on which his account implicitly relies.[98]

We must now repeat the movement of Heidegger's masterful discourse once more, embracing in our fore-having not only the fallen lived body of Heidegger's Dasein, but the fallen lived bodies of these other Dasein. Having followed Heidegger's discourse as it severs Dasein's habitual body from its (*sic*) existential sight, thereby abandoning the concrete starting point of the existential analytic, we must next follow his discourse as it progressively departs from another aspect of that concrete starting point—namely Dasein's inherent sociality and its habitual, ontologically constitutive connection with others. For it is through repeating this movement of exodus that we will be enabled to fully exhibit—and perhaps begin to transform—our Christian theological inheritance through *Being and Time*.

'Whose inheritance?' one might ask. How are we to answer this question of the 'who' of Dasein's inheritance? Chanter writes that "feminists who are situated within the continental tradition are saddled with the uneasy legacy of Heidegger's discomfort with bodies"—a legacy, she adds, "that we are still trying to live down."[99] We are uneasily saddled, not only those of us situated within the continental philosophical tradition, but those of us situated within the horizon of Christian metaphysics and Christian patriarchal institutions that Heidegger's uneasy discourse reiteratively reinscribes. We—women and men of different races and classes, with distinct ethnic heritages and itineraries of desire—are differently marked by and bear the traces of this traditional discomfort in distinctly individual ways.

Chanter, along with Irigaray, Derrida, Caputo, and other feminist philosophers (many of whom are contributors to the volume *Feminist Interpretations of Martin Heidegger*), make great strides not only in critically working through the normative assumptions operative within Heidegger's uneasy legacy, but in transformatively repeating Heidegger's notion of Dasein handing itself a "possibility which it has inherited and yet chosen."[100] But as I turn to Heidegger's account of Dasein's sociality, I want to reflect on Chanter's claim that feminists situated within the continental tradition "are still trying to live down" the uneasy legacy of Heidegger's discomfort with bodies. This expression itself repeats, in an instructive way, the uneasy legacy that Chanter's discourse endeavors to critically overcome. For, to "live

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[98] Chanter, "The Problematic Normative Assumptions of Heidegger's Ontology," 106.

[99] Chanter, "The Problematic Normative Assumptions of Heidegger's Ontology," 105.

[100] *BT* 435/*SZ* 383.

down" is to "succeed in making others forget (something regrettable or embarrassing)," or to "overcome or reduce the shame of (a misdeed, mistake, or disgrace)."[101] How might this expression be understood in the context of Chanter's discourse?

Feminists are certainly not trying to succeed in making others *forget* the uneasy legacy of Heidegger's discomfort with bodies—at least (as briefly mentioned above and discussed further below), not in any straightforward, transparently intelligible sense of *forgetting*.[102] The text of Chanter's article and the volume in which it appears are evidence—or, how shall we say, a 'testament'—to that. It is clear rather that feminists aim to overcome the regrettable aspects and effects of that heritage, handing ourselves possibilities, as it were, which we have inherited and yet chosen. But ought we suggest—as Chanter does (avowedly only marginally, and no doubt unintentionally)—that what such an intention seeks to overcome is "the shame of a dis-grace"?

Chanter's discourse circulates at this juncture within the orbit of Christian theology; or, more precisely, within the orbit of experience from which Christian theology emerges and is always already susceptible of gaining a certain traction. The invariable structure of being according to which we are always already irrevocably constructed by one's culture and history—and, above all, the way that such construction disperses itself and is felt through the habitual body—is precisely what led Augustine, working from his own habitual bodily experience, to project the Christian doctrine of Original Sin. He interpreted human facticity as the index of the Fall, the shame of a primordial dis-grace, a penal deformation and habitual corruption of our authentic human nature. Heidegger thematized this invariable structure of human existence as well. Seeking to say what Augustine has to say about the human condition as fallen whilst meaning it otherwise, he interpreted Dasein's temporal being as a primordial being-at-fault (*Schuldigsein*), as a thrown basis (*geworfene Grund*) the projection (*Entwerfen*) of which is always already fallen (*Verfallen*).[103]

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[101] "Live," Definition 6b, *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed., 20 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); "Live," Phrasal verb definition. *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 4th ed. (2009).

[102] Incidentally, the German equivalent of the phrasal verb *live down* is *vergessen machen*, to make forget, the same expression that Heidegger employs to describe the special forgetting at work in skillful habitual bodily coping (see note 26 above). It is also the term that Nietzsche affirmatively invokes at the beginning of the Second Essay of *The Genealogy of Morals* to describe the active forgetting (*aktiven Vergesslichkeit*) that makes possible the foresight (*Voraussehn*), and fore-determination (*Vorausbestimmen*) of the present (*Gegenwart*). In Chapter Three, I discuss this active mode of forgetting—what I call epistemic disburdenment—as a component of habitual body being in its dilational valence. In trying to live down the aspects of tradition that are hostile to embodiment, feminists could be said to be producing new concepts and practices so as, through a process of habituation or active forgetting, to generate more diverse and expansive subjectivities. See Chapter Three below. See also Friedrich Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufman (New York: Modern Library, 1992), Second Essay, Section 1.

[103] Heidegger guards the ontological difference between the ontological and the ontic, maintaining that Dasein's ontological fault is not a moral notion. "The primordial being-at-fault cannot be defined by morality, since morality already presupposes it for itself. […] This essential being-at-fault is, equiprimordially, the existential condition for the possibility of the 'morally' good and for that of the

Given that 'woman' (via the facts of menstruation or reproduction or the projections of male heterosexual desire) has been associated, if not identified, with facticity and embodiment throughout the western tradition, women are often regrettably all-too-familiar with the habitual bodily indices of shame. In seeking to live down or overcome this shameful heritage, factical women and men must not only overcome the sense of *shame*; we must also overcome the *sense* of shame. That is to say, we must also engage and transform the fore-structured habitual tendency to regard facticity through the lens of shame. In order to deprive the gendered metaphysical axiology of Christian theology from gaining traction in our modes of self-understanding and self-making, we must extract the system of predicates (and prepredicates) that fashions human facticity as an intransigent leakiness threatening to undermine the freedom of the self-contained, autonomous self.[104]

2.3   The Entanglements of *das Man*: The Heideggerian Problematic of Sociality

*Being-in-the-world is always already fallen (*immer schon verfallen*). [...] Dasein has in every case already gone astray and failed to recognize itself [...] Dasein has proximally always already fallen away from itself (*zunächst immer schon abgefallen*) as an authentic ability-to-be-itself, and has fallen to the 'world.'*
                                    –Martin Heidegger[105]

'morally' evil—that is, for morality in general and for the possible forms which this may take factically" (*BT* 332/*SZ* 286). This precisely accords with the Christian myth of the Fall. For, the Genesis story posits Adam's moral responsibility for the deed that constitutes his acquisition of the central precondition for moral responsibility.

[104] Feminists such as Simone de Beauvoir, Elizabeth Grosz, Julia Kristeva, and Margrit Shildrick have called critical attention to the way that historical accounts of female biological inferiority have been significantly iterated in terms of the out-of-control 'leakiness' of women's bodies. Grosz goes so far as to argue that "women's corporeality is inscribed as a mode of seepage." "The indeterminacy of body boundaries," Shildrick writes, "challenges that most fundamental dichotomy between self and other, unsettling ontological certainty and threatening to undermine the basis on which the knowing self establishes control." Beauvoir argues that menstruation is strongly associated with uncleanliness, weakness, and irrationality, and is frequently a source of shame and disgust. See Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. and ed. H. M. Parshley (New York: Vintage, 1974), 348–67; Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), 197–213 (qt. from p. 203); Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, trans. Leon Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982); and Margrit Shildrick, *Leaky Bodies and Boundaries: Feminism, Postmodernism, and (Bio)ethics* (New York: Routledge, 1997), qt. from p. 34.

[105] *BT* 225, 184, 220/*SZ* 181, 144, 175.

If there is an Other, whatever or whoever he may be, whatever may be his relations with me, and without his acting upon me in any way except by the pure upsurge of his being—then I have an outside, I have a nature. *My original fall is the existence of the Other. Shame—like pride—is the apprehension of myself as a nature although that very nature escapes me and is unknowable as such. Strictly speaking, [...] my nature is over there, outside my lived freedom.*

*   —Jean-Paul Sartre[106]*

With his analysis of Dasein's being-in-the-world as a concrete prepredicative absorption in the world, which he explicitly associates with habituality,[107] Heidegger makes strides to supplant the presupposition, pervasive throughout the history of western metaphysics, that human subjectivity is metaphysically distinct from the world in which it always already finds itself embedded or thrown. Human beings' basic mode of intentionality or comportment, as Heidegger shows, is one that is thoroughly absorbed in, and thus inseparable from, the world that it inhabits. As he puts it in his 1927 lectures, "Dasein has always already *stepped out beyond itself, ex-sistere,* it is in a world. Consequently, it is never anything like a subjective inner sphere."[108] However, as we saw in the last section, this initial concreteness of Heidegger's account of being-in-the-world ultimately gives way to the formalizing intention of his inquiry. Explicitly excluding the lived body from the existential analytic of Dasein, the formalization of *Being and Time* seems to reiterate rather than transform the traditional emphasis on disembodied subjectivity as the locus of understanding.

There is another dimension of *Being and Time*'s concrete starting point, however—another aspect of Dasein's intrinsic worldliness and relationality that warrants attention for the purpose of an analysis of habit. For that in which Dasein, as being-in-the-world, is situated and absorbed in its habitual dealings is a shared social world. Dasein's habitual familiarity and ways of being, its tacit understanding of worldly functions, goals, and purposes as well as its understanding of itself and its possibilities, are not a matter of private experiences. They are acquired from and embedded in a world of shared social practices and depend upon that world for their

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[106] Jean-Paul, Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, trans. Hazel Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1956), 352; original emphasis.

[107] "'Everydayness' means the 'how' in accordance with which Dasein 'takes each day as it comes', whether in all its ways of behaving or only in certain ones which have been prescribed by being-with-one-another. To this 'how' belongs also the complacence of habit (*das Behagen in der Gewohnheit*), even if it forces one to do something burdensome and 'repugnant'" (*BT* 422/*SZ* 370–71). See also *BT* 79–81/*SZ* 54–55.

[108] *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* 170.

intelligibility. Thus, intentionality and self-understanding are inextricably social; or, as Heidegger puts it, attempting to curtail the subjectivist preconceptions that attach to the vocabulary of intentionality, "Dasein is essentially being-with (*Mitsein*)." There is no such thing as a mode of Dasein's being that is not a mode of relatedness to other Dasein, because "being-with is an existential constituent of being-in-the-world. […] So far as Dasein *is* at all, it has being-with-one-another (*Miteinandersein*) as its kind of being."[109] This is so, Heidegger continues, "even when factically no Other is present-at-hand or perceived."[110]

Dasein is thus not an isolated 'I' with private mental states; it is not a mental island or Cartesian *res cogitans*, nor is it, as Husserl put it, a transcendental 'sphere of ownness.'[111] Correlatively, others do not typically show up as minds about which one has beliefs; their mode of presence in the world is distinct from that of entities that are either ready-to-hand or present-at-hand. Others have a kind of privileged existential status, being constitutively woven into the fabric of the with-world (*Mitwelt*) of Dasein.[112] "By 'Others' we do not mean everyone else but me—those over against whom the 'I' stands out. They are rather those from whom, for the most part, one does *not* distinguish oneself—those among whom one is too."[113]

At this juncture, having established the existential structure of being-with and indicated the ingredience of others in Dasein's very being, Heidegger's rhetoric takes a decisively disparaging turn. Shifting his discourse toward what at first seems like one (perhaps common, but nonetheless impoverished) possible way of being with others, which Heidegger calls the 'they' (*das Man*) or publicness (*Öffentlichkeit*). In this everyday mode of being with others, Dasein is constantly concerned with comparing and conforming itself and its behavior to that of others. "We take pleasure and enjoy ourselves as *they* (*man*) take pleasure; we read, see, and judge about literature and art as *they* see and judge; likewise we shrink back from the 'great mass' as *they* shrink back; we find 'shocking' what *they* find shocking. The 'they,' which is nothing definite, and which all are, though not as a sum, prescribes the kind of being of everydayness."[114]

Heidegger's account of this habitual mode of being with others, which he calls fallenness (*Verfallenheit*), takes on an undeniably moral tone, which at times approaches a quasi-religious fervor. As Chanter points out, "[i]t is hard not to read into the language of fallenness with which Heidegger describes Dasein's lostness in the

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[109] *BT* 163/*SZ* 125.

[110] *BT* 156/*SZ* 120.

[111] Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*, trans. Dorion Cairns (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1999), Fifth Meditation.

[112] *BT*155/*SZ* 118.

[113] *BT* 154/*SZ* 118.

[114] *BT* 164/*SZ* 126–27.

they echoes of the theological fall from grace."[115] It is hard not to; indeed, this is no accident. The fluid ontological commingling that Heidegger had described under the *existentiale* rubric of being-with-one-another (*Miteinandersein*), suddenly shifts into a turbulent (*wirblend*) ocean of alterity into which Dasein is sucked, occasioning its downward plunge or downfall (*Absturz*).[116] The phenomenal character of the inherent movement (*eigenen Bewegtheit*) of falling being-in-the-world, on Heidegger's account, is tempting (*versucherisch*), tranquilizing (*beruhigend*), and alienating (*entfremdend*), and leads to Dasein's getting entangled in itself (*verfängt in ihm selbst*), losing itself (*Selbstverlorenheit*), and becoming closed off (*verschließt*) from its authenticity and possibility.[117] "This downward plunge into and within the groundlessness of the inauthentic being of the 'they,' has the kind of motion which constantly tears the understanding away from the projecting of authentic possibilities."[118]

Dasein "stands in subjection (*Botmässigkeit*) to others," and relates to them in such a way that its being "has been taken away by the others." Being with one another in the publicness of the 'they' "entirely disintegrates (*löst völlig auf*) one's own Dasein into the kind of being of 'the others,'" which, Heidegger states, "are not *definite* others," but indistinguishable, inconspicuous, exchangeable others, thus rendering one's own Dasein equally indefinite, indistinguishable, and exchangeable. The 'who' of Dasein in its habitual everydayness, then, the 'subject' of habit, as it were, though previously described in a way that curtailed the notion of subjectivity as an isolated, antecedently given unity, appears from this newly inhabited perspective as a violent and privative dispersal (*Zerstreuung*) of such an antecedently given subject into the shared social world of the 'they.'

> The self of everyday Dasein is the *they-self* (*Man-selbst*), which we distinguish from the *authentic self* (*eigentlichen Selbst*)—that is, from the self which has been taken hold of in its own way (*eigens ergriffenen*). […] *Proximally*, it is not 'I', in the sense of my own self (*eigenen Selbst*), that 'am', but rather the others, whose way is that of the 'they.' In terms of the 'they', and as the 'they', I am 'given' proximally to 'myself'. Proximally Dasein is 'they', and for the most part it remains so. If Dasein discovers the world in its own way (*eigens*) and brings it close, if it discloses to itself its own authentic being, then

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[115] Chanter, "The Problematic Normative Assumptions of Heidegger's Ontology," 81.

[116] "Dasein's facticity is such that *as long as* it is what it is, Dasein remains in the throw, and is sucked into the turbulence (*hineingewirbelt*) of das Man's inauthenticity" (*BT* 223/*SZ* 179; original emphasis).

[117] In Heidegger's account of fallenness as entangling (*verfänglich*) or self-entangling, and of thrownness as an always already entangledness, we can see a parallel with Augustine's account of the fallen entanglements of habit (*consuetudine implicatus*). For Augustine, such habitual entanglements are always "anterior" (*antea consuetudine implicatus*). See Augustine, *Seventeen Questions on the Gospel of Matthew* 3. *BT* 221–224/*SZ* 177–180; *The History of the Concept of Time* 281–283.

[118] *BT* 223/*SZ* 178.

this discovery of the 'world' and this disclosure of Dasein are always accomplished as a clearing-away of concealments and obscurities, as a breaking up of the disguises with which Dasein bars its own way.[119]

We are immediately confronted with a remarkable (shall we say, 'non-accidental') parallel between the Heideggerian problematic of sociality and the Pauline problematic of the flesh as it gets taken up by Saint Augustine. In Chapter One, we witnessed how Augustine ontologically interpreted habitual bodily being as flesh, i.e., as a constant tendency of the subject toward concernful absorption in worldly relations, a basic orientation of the subject through which it seeks and finds its existential anchorage in mundane moorings. But this fleshly orientation, according to Augustine, ultimately obfuscates and alienates the authentic subject of reason, which can only veritably find self-security in the diligent obedience to the law of the inner man, i.e., in loving, remembering, and willing *itself* in the subsistent self-sameness that lies *beyond* its habitual bodily attachments.

"I do not understand what I do," Paul writes in his lamentation of the flesh. "For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. […] I know that good does not inhabit me, that is, my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. [. . .] Now, if I do what I do not want to do, it is not I who do it, but sin which inhabits me."[120] In his account of *das Man*, Heidegger articulates the problematic of Dasein's sociality in stunningly similar terms. He effectively claims that "it is not really I (i.e., Dasein's authentic self) who does what the 'they' does, but an exchangeable, inauthentic 'they-self', i.e., the social normativity of the 'they' which inhabits my own Dasein."

Like *consuetudo carnalis*, *das Man* is an existential direction or orientation of human being, the site of the production of an ineluctable cleavage in Dasein. And like Augustine, who equivocates in his interpretation of our fallen absorption in *consuetudo carnalis*, Heidegger's text is profoundly and notoriously ambivalent about the ontological status of our fallen absorption in *das Man*. Augustine's texts oscillate between a figuration of bodily habit as, on the one hand, a post-lapsarian metaphysical weight that drags down the mind according to the natural law of a pre-personal past; and on the other hand, as the accumulated momentum of the past choices of the individual, thus susceptible to alteration through ἄσκησις. Importing Heidegger's terms, we would say that Augustine equivocates as to the ontological status of bodily habit, positing it as at once ontological and ontic. Interpreted as post-lapsarian weight (i.e., as ontological), bodily habit is not some ontical property of the subject that the latter might free itself of through taking up alternative practices and modes of relating to itself and others (i.e., through, as it were, inhabiting a new concrete way of being). Rather, it is a structural, inextricable component of fallen human being.

Heidegger likewise oscillates between interpreting Dasein's habitual sociality (*das Man*) as, on the one hand, an ontological structure of Dasein (i.e., an essential

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[119] *BT* 167/*SZ* 129.

[120] *Romans* 7:15–20.

existential),[121] and on the other hand, as an ontic inflection of Dasein's being (i.e., an inauthentic existentiell modification of the authentic self).[122] Indeed, the very issue of the translation of the term *das Man* reflects the philosophical problems at the heart of Heidegger's equivocation with respect to *das Man*'s ontological status. Grammatically, *das Man* is an impersonal pronoun roughly equivalent to the English 'one,' as in, for example, the sentence 'If one wants to be a professional dancer, one has to practice every day.' It refers to a generic subject, an abstract or average (which is to say, not factically existent) human being; not you, not I, but anyone, as Heidegger writes, 'the neuter' (*das Neutrum*). But *das Man*, like the French equivalent *on*, is grammatically specialized in a way that the English 'one' is not, as it is used to construct pronominal verbs, which can function in place of the passive voice in cases where the subject of the action is not expressed. So, for instance, '*man glaubt dass...*' could be translated as 'they believe that…,' 'one believes that…,' or 'it is believed that....'

It is for this reason that the most common translation of *das Man* is 'the they'—an idiomatic translation that Macquarrie and Robinson use, as they qualify, "trusting that the reader will not take [it] too literally."[123] Taking their translation 'too literally' would, of course, work contrary to Heidegger's manifest purpose in introducing the concept, since it implies that *das Man* is distinguished from *me*, whereas Heidegger's ostensible point is that Dasein *is* the they-self. It is not an extraneous or coercive force interfering with Dasein's understanding from without. "*The 'they' is an existential*," he emphasizes, "*it belongs to Dasein's positive constitution*."[124]

For this reason, the Berkeley school of Heidegger interpretation, following the lead of Hubert Dreyfus, translates *das Man* as 'the one' or 'the anyone' instead of 'the they' in order to guard against the possibility that the reader might take Macquarrie and Robinson's translation "too literally" and misconstrue the authentic self as being detached or separate from the social normativity of the they-self.[125] For, Heidegger insists: "*Authentic selfhood* does not rest upon an extracted condition (*Ausnahmezustand*) of the subject that has been detached (*abgelösten*) from the 'they'; *it is rather an existentiell modification of the 'they' as an essential existential*."[126] By

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[121] *BT* 167, 168/*SZ* 129, 130.

[122] "Proximally and for the most part Dasein is *not* itself but is lost in the they-self, which is an [inauthentic] existentiell modification of the authentic self" (*BT* 365/*SZ* 317).

[123] *BT* 149, translators' note 1.

[124] "The self of everyday Dasein is the *they-self* (*Das Selbst des alltäglichen Daseins ist das* Man-selbst)" (*BT* 167/*SZ* 129).

[125] See Hubert Dreyfus, *Being-In-The-World*. Other members of the Berkeley School include William Blatner, John Haugeland, Mark Okrent, Charles Guignon, and Taylor Carman.

[126] *BT* 168/*SZ* 130. Heidegger reiterates this claim in his account of resoluteness: "Resoluteness, as authentic selfhood, does not detach (*löst ab*) Dasein from its world, nor does it isolate it so that it becomes a free-floating 'I'. […] Resoluteness brings the self right into its current concernful being-

rendering *das Man* as 'the one', the Berkeley School seeks to emphasize the social normativity of *das Man*, its constitutive role in establishing the basis of common intelligibility. For *das Man* not only "prescribes the kind of being of everydayness," it also "articulates the referential context of significance," and "determines what and how one 'sees'"[127] The publicness of *das Man* is an essential ontological dimension of any shared human world as such. What Heidegger suggests by it is that the world is always already given primarily as the common world. *Das Man* establishes the social norms that always already govern one's concrete possibilities, furnishing already instituted practical rituals and environments, and specifying proper comportments and standards that constitute the intelligibility and public availability of equipment.

Habitual intentionality or comportment is thus a function of the anonymous normativity inherent in our embodied understanding of what entities are and of what it makes sense to do in any given context. One does not understand a telephone by throwing it, but by knowing how to dial it, hold it to one's ear, and communicate with others through the receiver or by knowing that it is normally used for communicating with others. Similarly, one does not understand a swaddled newborn by wiping the kitchen countertop with him or her, but by comporting oneself toward him or her in a caring mode of consideration, even if this be in a deficient mode of inconsideration (i.e., indifference).

This is what Heidegger means when he writes that it is the 'one-self', not the authentic self, that articulates the referential context of significance. Public norms of intelligibility constitute the *being* of things in Dasein's average everyday world. "This common world, which is there primarily, and into which every maturing Dasein first grows, governs, as public, all interpretations of the world and of Dasein."[128] "Dasein is never able to extricate itself (*sich entziehen*) from this everyday interpretedness that it has grown into in the first place. In it, out of it, and against it, all genuine understanding, interpretation, and communication, all rediscovery and renewed appropriation are performed."[129]

On the other hand, the 'dangerously idiomatic' translation of *das Man* as the 'they', while conflicting with Heidegger's manifest discourse, happens, incidentally, to fall squarely in the stream of Heidegger's derisive rhetoric. For, while he insists that *das Man* is an existential, i.e., not just some ontic contingency that Dasein could be/do without, he relentlessly casts *das Man* and fallenness in a disparagingly inauthentic light. In this light, the process through which human existence is brought back (*zurückbringen*) to its authentic self appears as a form of violent dis-habituation. Through this dis-habituation, Dasein is taken back (*zurückgenommen*) or wrested away (*abgerungen*, *abzuringen*) from the mundane relationships and concerns in

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alongside what is ready-to-hand, and pushes (*stößt*) it into solicitous being with others" (*BT* 344/*SZ* 298).

[127] *BT* 164, 167, 213/*SZ* 127, 129, 170.

[128] *The History of the Concept of Time* 246.

[129] *BT* 213/*SZ* 169.

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which it ex-orbitantly drifts back and forth (*hin- und hertreiben*), entangles itself (*verfängt*), and loses itself in itself (*verlieren sich in sich selbst*).[130]

Heidegger refers to this retraction that brings Dasein back to authentic selfhood as a call (*Ruf*). And he describes it as a disclosure-tendency (*Erschließungs-tendenz*) possessing the momentum of a blow (*Stoße*), a haltingly upsetting jolt (*abgesetzten und anhaltende Aufrüttelns*).[131] Appealing "only to the *self* of the they-self," this trenchant call drives a wedge between the authentic self and the socially involved, inauthentic they-self, dislodging the self from its mundane social involvement and robbing (*berauben*) it of the social shelter (*Schutz*) in which it hides from and accommodates itself.[132] In this process of extrication, which "summons Dasein's self from its lostness in the 'they'" and isolates (*vereinzelte*) the self in its homelessness (*Unheimlichkeit*) and nakedness (*Nacktheit*), the call thrusts (*stößt*) the they into insignificance, causing it to collapse (*sinkt zusammen*) beneath the authentically summonsed self, which "remains closed off (*verschlossen*) from the they-self."[133]

The movement of authenticity that Heidegger describes is fundamentally one of *retraction* or withdrawal; in grasping or taking hold of itself (*ergriefen*), authentic individual Dasein draws itself violently back from its engaging and constitutive social involvements with others; it wrests itself (*abzuringen*) from the falling tendency of its being.[134] The genuine self-understanding and projection that the self achieves through this process of dis-habituation is dis-sociative; it does not involve others. Revealing the self as primarily unsupported (*primär ungestützt*) by concernful mutual caring with others,[135] authentic understanding is not accomplished through or made possible by intersubjective dialogue or intercorporeal interrelation, but through reticence (*Verschwiegenheit*) and authentically keeping silent (*eigentliches schweigen*). Such authentic (so-called) 'discourse' beats down (*niederschlagen*) the idle talk of the they,[136] doing violence (*Gewaltsamkeit*) to it by countermanding its (purportedly

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[130] *BT* 394–95, 223, 421/*SZ* 344, 178, 369.

[131] *BT* 316/*SZ* 271.

[132] *BT* 317, 214/*SZ* 273, 170.

[133] *BT* 319, 322, 308, 317, 232–33, 334/*SZ* 274, 277, 264, 273, 187–89, 288.

[134] "Dasein falls and therefore the authenticity of its ability-to-be must be wrested from Dasein *in spite of* this tendency of its being (*das Dasein verfalle und deshalb sei ihm die Eigentlichkeit des Seinkönnens* gegen *diese Seinstendenz abzuringen*)" (*BT* 361/*SZ* 313; my emphasis).

[135] Heidegger claims that authentic understanding, achieved via Dasein's authentic being-toward-death, reveals the self as "primarily unsupported" (*primär ungestützt*) by concernful solicitude with others, and grants the self "a freedom which has been detached (*gelösten*) from the illusions of the 'they' (*BT* 311/*SZ* 266).

[136] "Authentically keeping silent is possible only in genuine discoursing. […] In that case one's reticence makes something manifest, and beats down idle talk" (*Nu rim echten Reden ist eigentliches Schweigen möglich. [...] Dann macht Verschwiegenheit offenbar und schlägt das 'Gerede' nieder*)" (*BT* 208/*SZ* 165). Macquarrie and Robinson conceal the violence of the verb *niederschlagen* in their translation of this passage, writing that reticence "does away with" rather than "beats down" idle talk. I am indebted to Mechthild Nagel for drawing my attention to this attenuation of Heidegger's militaristic

intrinsic) inauthentic tendency toward distorting sedimentation—i.e., toward closing-off (*verschließen*) and covering up (*verdecken*) primordial phenomena and relations, thereby leveling down (*einebnung*) possibilities of being and cutting human existence off (*abgeschnitten*) from itself.[137]

In other words, though Heidegger's account accords to each existential structure of Dasein an undifferentiated, authentic, and inauthentic concrete mode, *das Man* would seem to be an exclusively inauthentic mode of Dasein's being-with-others—merely an ontic detour (*Umweg*) through which Dasein passes, and from which it severs itself, in achieving authentic self-transparency. If fallen existence in the 'they' is exclusively inauthentic, and if Heidegger's account has built these markers of inauthenticity into Dasein's ontological structure, there could not be a particular concrete state of Dasein that did not manifest them, in which case authentic existence would be inconceivable for inauthenticity would be inevitable. This would amount to a conception of Dasein as inherently perverse or fallen, which would make it difficult to accept Heidegger's claim that "ontically, we have not decided whether man is 'drunk with sin' and in the *status corruptionis*, whether he walks in the *status integratiatus*, or whether he finds himself in an intermediate stage, the *status gratiae*."[138]

Between Heidegger's manifest protestations on the one hand—e.g., "this term (*Verfallenheit*) does not express any negative evaluation"; "the fallenness of Dasein must not be construed as a 'fall' from a purer and higher original state (*Urstand*);" "authentic selfhood does not rest upon an extracted condition of the subject that has been detached from the 'they'"; "authentic existence is not something which floats above falling everydayness; existentially, it is only a modified way in which such everydayness is seized upon"—and his disparaging rhetoric on the other hand—e.g., "the downward plunge of Dasein's fallenness constantly tears the understanding away from authenticity and into the 'they;'" "in falling, Dasein turns away from itself"—a conflict latently unfolds and produces explicit contradictions in his discourse. (One can almost hear in such symptomatic contradictions the lamenting voice of Augustine's *mihi quaestio*: "I have become a question to myself, and that is my

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rhetoric in translation. See "Thrownness, Playing-in-the-World, and the Question of Authenticity," *Feminist Interpretations of Heidegger*, 289–306 (esp. 300 and 306 n. 22). For Heidegger's explicit avowal of the methodological violence (*Gewaltsamkeit*) inherent to his existential analysis, see *BT* 359, 360, 374/*SZ* 311, 313, 327.

[137] In Heidegger's account of Dasein's authenticity vis-à-vis the social world, one discerns the iterations of a distinctly Augustinian anthropology. Augustine insists that the soul can authentically be itself (as an image of God) only insofar as one resists *consuetudo carnalis* in the effort of ordering and possessing oneself in self-collected security. *Consuetudo carnalis* overdetermines our "choice" of love object, pre-inclining our interest and desire toward changeable, mortal entities, to the detriment of spiritual values and our authentic created selves. To break the hold that worldly values and entities have on us in virtue of our habitual bodies, he insists that we hate all bodily relationships (*carnales necessitudines*), that we hate the existing self (*odium sui*) and, through such hatred, tear our authentic selves loose from our habitual selves, which inauthentically make their home in the world. See Chapter One, esp. Section 1.3.

[138] *BT* 224/*SZ* 180.

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infirmity. […] I labor within myself to grasp my own self, but I have become to myself a land of difficulty and a source of sweat beyond measure.")[139]

Consider the following contradictory couplets regarding the ontological status of the 'they':

> (1) Authentic selfhood […] is an existentielle modification […] of the 'they' as an essential existential.[140]

> (2) The 'they' […] is an existenielle modification of the authentic self.[141]

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> (3) When Dasein […] brings itself back from the 'they' the they-self is modified in an existentiell manner so that it becomes *authentic* selfhood.[142]

> (4) [The call of conscience appeals] to the *authentic self*. […] And because only the *self* of the they-self gets appealed to and brought to hear, the *'they'* collapses (*sinkt zusammen*). […] Precisely *in passing over* the 'they' the call pushes it into insignificance (*stößt in die Bedeutungslosigkeit*). But the self, which the appeal has robbed of this lodging and hiding-place [in the 'they'], gets brought to itself by the call.

Heidegger equivocates over which is more basic: the authentic self, or the they-self. When Dasein's habitual, fallen ingredience in worldly sociality is viewed as part of Dasein's ontological structure, authenticity is figured as simply a novel concrete way in which Dasein takes up, reinhabits, and lives this sociality. However, Heidegger can't seem to shake-off (*Abschüttelung*) from the fore-having of his inquiry, the Augustinian (Christian Neoplatonic) notion that Dasein's fallenness into worldly sociality is a degenerative modification of a deeper, truer, authentic, antecedently given *pre-lapsarian* self. And it is in following this habitual fore-having intention that Heidegger fashions the process of becoming-authentic—or, more precisely, of returning (*zurückbringen*) to authenticity—as one in which a pre-lapsarian self is released from its fallen state; a process by which this spiritual self is disencumbered of the bodily, worldly, social habitations that it inauthentically inhabits by concernfully lodging and hiding itself in them. The 'they', when mistakenly given a place in

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[139] *Confessions* X.33.50; X.16.25.

[140] *BT* 168/*SZ* 130; reiterated at *BT* 312/*SZ* 267.

[141] *BT* 365/*SZ* 317.

[142] *BT* 313/*SZ* 268.

authentic selfhood, assumes that role by collapsing and being pushed into insignificance.[143]

Like Augustine, who seeks the blessing (*benedicere*) of a generically disembodied mode of seeing that would enable his soul to rise up (*adsurgere*) with invisible eyes (*invisibiles oculos*) to the light of God, cutting off (*praecidere*) and expelling (*dispellere*) from itself the buzzing distraction (*circumstrepant*) of everyday life (*quotidianam vitam*) that tugs on the soul through its lived bodily senses and captures the soul in vacant care (*vana cura*); Heidegger not only seeks, through his method, to obtain a generically disembodied mode of access (*Zugang überhaupt*) to Being that is cut off from the 'most difficult' lived body.[144] Heidegger's Dasein also aspires to achieve this authentic, ontologically-clarified self-transparency by means of a resolute act of self-possession in which "all its relations to any other Dasein are undone (*gelöst*)," i.e., by means of a clearing-away (*Wegräumen*) and breaking up (*Zerbrechen*) of the concealments and obscurities of Dasein's habitual dispersion (*Zerstreuung*) in the everydayness (*Alltäglichkeit*) of embodied social existence (*das Man*).[145] The worldly others from which Heidegger's authentic Dasein resurrects itself collapse (*sinkt zusammen*) beneath this authentically summonsed self and are pushed into (*stößt*)—or shall we say *buried* in insignificance.[146]

Dreyfus and the Berkeley School attempt to rescue Heidegger's account of the fallenness of *das Man* from the confusion and conflation it consistently makes between an ontological-existential and an ontic-existentielle sense of falling. Attempting to stabilize Heidegger's fluctuating discourse, Dreyfus introduces a distinction between the tendency of *das Man* to fall into *conformity*, which is structural, normatively neutral, and essentially constitutive of average social intelligibility; versus the tendency of *das Man* to flee into *conformism*, which is motivated and normatively degraded.[147] Dreyfus maintains that Heidegger, "influenced by Kierkegaard's attack on the public in *The Present Age*, does everything he can to blur this important distinction."[148]

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[143] I say 'mistakenly' not simply because Heidegger's references to authentic social being or mutual caring are miniscule. The attribution of authenticity to *das Man* in proposition (3) above is a mistake in Macquarrie and Robinson's translation. The German, rather than saying that "the they-self is modified in an existentiell manner so that it *becomes* authentic selfhood," it says that Dasein's bringing-itself-back from the 'they' [is] an existentielle modification of the they-self *toward* authentic selfhood (*Das Sichzurückholen aus dem Man [ist] die existenzielle Modifikation des Man-selbst* zum *eigentlichen Selbstsein* (*BT* 313/*SZ* 268; my emphasis).

[144] See Section 2.2. Augustine, *Confessions* X.35.54–57. In his reading of this passage of *Confessions*, Heidegger says: "The *benedicere* (blessing) endows one with *sight in the authentic sense*" (*The Phenomenology of Religious Life* 165).

[145] *BT* 294/*SZ* 250.

[146] As Heiddegger notes, one cannot become familiar with the caller "when one's understanding of Dasein has a 'worldly' orientation" (*BT* 319/*SZ* 274).

[147] Hubert Dreyfus, *Being-In-The-World* 227. See also John Haugeland, "Heidegger on Being a Person," *Noûs* 16 (1982): 15–26.

[148] Hubert Dreyfus, *Being-In-The-World* 154.

As a result, Heidegger conflates the conformity necessary for shared social intelligibility—i.e., a basic ontological feature of Dasein's existence insofar as it is a participant in a public world, always already engaged in activities within common contexts of significance—with the conformism into which this ontological conformity can concretely degenerate. Such conformism, which domesticates the future, leveling down possibilities that fail to fit within the rigidly predelineated frameworks of intelligibility and sensibility that social norms have outlined in advance, is distinct from the structural necessity of Dasein's being habitually absorbed in coping with things. For as Heidegger fleetingly concedes, even the authentic self "must forget itself if, lost in the world of equipment, it is to be able 'actually' to go to work and handle something,"[149] And by constantly conflating conformism (an inauthentic way of being-with-others) with conformity (a structural feature of social existence), Heidegger ends up suggesting, contrary to his express purpose, that Dasein's "fallen" absorption in sociality is a motivated, hence contingent, result of Dasein's psychological temptation to "flee" from its authentic self. He suggests that Dasein both *can* and *ought* to aspire to exist *over against* rather than *in* the social world, which is precisely among the metaphysical presuppositions that the project of *Being and Time* sets out to displace. As Caputo puts it: "Enlightenment rationality and existential resoluteness are siblings of the same subjectivism."[150]

But while one can rescue from Heidegger's analysis of *das Man* a less conflicted (and less conflictual) distinction between conformity and conformism than Heidegger was able to articulate, we must ask ourselves whether this attempt to stabilize Heidegger's discourse might not cover over the unarticulated Christian patristic moral-theological understanding of the habitual body and the social world that such a distinction reflects *in its very conflation*.[151] In *Being and Time*, *das Man*

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[149] "Für die Zeitlichkeit, die das Bewendenlassen konstituiert, is ein spezifisches *Vergessen* wesentlich. Um an die Zeugwelt 'verloren' 'wirklich' zu Werke gehen und hantieren zu kōnnen, muß sich das Selbst vergessen" (*BT* 405/*SZ* 354). See also *BT* 262, 388–89/*SZ* 219, 339.

[150] Caputo, "The Absence of Monica: Heidegger, Derrida, and Augustine's *Confessions*," 160.

[151] I'm here drawing on a point made by Dorothy Leland, "Conflictual Cultures and Authenticity: Deepening Heidegger's Account of the Social," in *Feminist Interpretations of Heidegger*, eds. Nancy J. Holland and Patricia Huntington (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2001), 123.

In posing this question, i.e., whether the Berkeley School's attempt to salvage Heidegger's confused account of *das Man* covers over the Christian moral understanding of habitual social existence that such an account *in its very confusion* carries forward, I do not mean to suggest that the Berkeley School ignores this genealogical connection. Dreyfus and Jane Rubin devote a fifty page appendix of Dreyfus' *Being-in-the-World* to explicating the way that the conflation of falling and fleeing in Heidegger's account of authenticity results from his attempt to secularize Kierkegaard's notion of Religiousness A, a kind of spiritual self-annihilation before God, while at the same time foregoing the faith, unconditional commitment, and more robust conception of selfhood that define Kierkegaard's notion of Religiousness B. This work ought not be overlooked or undervalued, as it has considerably shaped and guided my own reflections on Heidegger's Christian inheritance.

In pressing deeper into the Augustinian anthropological iterations that motivate and frame Heidegger's account of authenticity as an ontic ideal, however, the present work seeks to expose the cultural and gender specificity of the Dasein that Heidegger takes to be exemplary in formulating that ideal. In doing so, it seeks to dislodge this framework and open a critical space in which issues of

appears under the double guise of a common social world and the turbulent dictatorship of a platitudinous way of life. Within the horizon opened up by the foregoing genealogy of Heidegger's Christian precursors, one is able to see that while the secularized, post-metaphysical intention of *Being and Time* moves toward the former of these guises of *das Man*, Heidegger persists in fashioning social existence as a downfall of authentic Dasein. In doing so, he reiteratively repeats Augustine's androcentric axiological account of worldly discourse and intercourse as defluxions (*defluere, Zerstreuung,* a flowing down, scattering, dispersion) of self—dispersions into which an antecedently given, pre-lapsarian subject is drawn through the concatenations of bodily and social habit (*consuetudo carnalis* and *consuetudo popularum*).

Drawing from, while covering over (and thus reiteratively repeating), this moral-theological system of predicates, Heidegger is led to formulate an ideal of authenticity that is disturbingly reminiscent of the Augustinian ascetic project of continence (*continentia*), of that daily war (*bellum quotidianum*) that the soul wages against the habitual body and its worldly interrelational attachments: "Through continence we are pulled together (*colligere*) and led back (*redigere*) to the unity from which we were dispersed (*defluere*) into multiplicity."[152] "[I]nauthentically existing Dasein […] is driven about by its 'affairs.' […] Dasein *loses itself in such a manner that it must, as it were, only subsequently pull itself together* (*zusammenholen*) *out of its dispersal* (*Zerstreuung*) *and think up for itself a unity in which that 'together' is embraced.*"[153]

Through the doctrine of Original Sin, the *mihi quaestio* that Augustine turned about in his experience of conversion, his early investigation of the habitual body, which led to an existential account of the self as an axis of ontological dehiscence, came to be grafted onto a metaphysical, gendered axiology. The intrinsic alterity of the temporalizing, bodily subject—the cleavage within the "I" between its intrinsic pressure toward future possibilities and the past-weighted inertia in its capacity to press into those possibilities—was projected into externality. The subject that is identified with self-possession and transcendence and that is demarcated and shored up through that projection was marked as masculine (*animus*). The habitual bodily "subject" that is involved with the immanence of temporal, worldly affairs, and with fleshly, social relationships, was marked as feminine (*anima*) and was divided off and

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authenticity and moral responsibility might be rethought beginning from the finite horizons of habitual bodily beings situated by multiple and overlapping cultural histories and practices as well as axes of domination and subordination.

See Dreyfus and Rubin, "Appendix: Kierkegaard, Division II, and Later Heidegger," in Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World* 283–340. See also Taylor Carman, "Must We Be Inauthentic?" in *Heidegger, Authenticity, and Modernity: Essays in Honor of Hubert L. Dreyfus, Volume 1*, eds. Mark Wrathall and Jeff Malpas (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press,), 13–27; and Carman, *Heidegger's Analytic: Interpretation, Discourse, and Authenticity in* Being and Time, 264–314.

[152] "Per continentiam quippe colligimur et redigimur in unum, a quo in multa defluximus" (*Confessions* X.29.40.

[153] *BT* 441–2/*SZ* 390–91 (original emphasis).

displaced from the authentic spiritual subject, whose only dependency was upon God, in whose image he was made. Through this procedure of projecting self-alterity into externality, Augustine dissociated, delimited, and insulated rationality and spirituality from habituality. Rather than embracing the latter as an epistemically constitutive aspect of human reason and an ontologically dilating engine of authentic human reality, Augustine cast bodily habit as the source of error and a force of ontological constriction—an emasculation of the (disembodied) will.

In a distressing reiteration, Heidegger also grafts the *mihi quaestio*[154] turned about in the preparatory fundamental analysis of Dasein onto a gendered axiological framework. He fashions factical life with others as a movement of falling, as a *tentatio*, a temptation, a trial, a test, a tribulation, a turbulent ocean into which his Dasein is sucked, occasioning its downward plunge or downfall.[155] In this tumult— what Augustine refers to as a muddy whirlpool (*gurges caenosus*)—Dasein either is vanquished or emerges victorious; it either drifts in the complacence of habit (*das Behagen des Gewohnheit*), or thrusts aside and beats down the obfuscations of shared social existence, pulling itself together out of its dispersal by means of a manly resoluteness (*Entschloßenheit*).[156] Authentic Dasein is thus constructed as "a scene of mastery and self-possession."[157] "In the moment of vision, indeed, and often just 'for that moment,' existence can even gain mastery (*meistern*) over the 'everyday;' but it can never extinguish or annihilate it (*auslöschen*)."[158]

Complicit with the spiritual tradition which his discourse resurrectively repeats, the moment of vision in which Heidegger's Dasein's way of being-in-the-world momentarily shifts from inauthenticity to authenticity, from falling to resoluteness, elevates a spiritual 'body' at the expense of fallen lived bodies. The term Heidegger uses to signify this moment of vision (*Augenblick*), as mentioned in passing in Section 2.1, is a repetition of an axiological-theological predicate concatenated through a patristic genealogy that extends from Kierkegaard through Luther to Saint Paul. This predicate and the conceptual structure *centered* on it circulate around the notion of the habitual body, which in the *Augenblick* is left behind—perhaps not extinguished or annihilated, but collapsed, pushed into insignificance, buried. After all, the body of *cura*—named *homo*—was received from and so must return to the earth.[159]

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[154] For Dasein, in its very being, that being is an *issue* for it (*in seinem Sein* um *dieses Sein selbst geht* (*BT* 32/*SZ* 12).

[155] "Dasein's facticity is such that *as long as* it is what it is, Dasein remains in the throw, and is sucked into the turbulence (*hineingewirbelt*) of das Man's inauthenticity" (*BT* 223/*SZ* 179; original emphasis).

[156] *Trinity* XII.9.14; *Confessions* II.2.2; *BT* 422/*SZ* 370–71. Augustine's texts consistently exhibit boundary distress, which frequently manifests in a moralizing metaphorics of fluidity and formlessness (*mare*, *materia*—*mater*?). See *Confessions* XIII.5.6–7.8.

[157] Caputo, "The Absence of Monica: Heidegger, Derrida, and Augustine's *Confessions*," 156.

[158] *BT* 422/*SZ* 371.

[159] *BT* 242/*SZ* 197–198.

(35)But someone may ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?" (36)How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. (37)When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. (38)But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body. […] (42)So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is corruptible, it is raised incorruptible; (43)it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; (44)it is sown a *natural body*, it is raised a *spiritual body*. […] (50)I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. (51)Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but *we will all be changed*—(52)*in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye* […]. (54)When the corruptible has been clothed with the incorruptible, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: 'Death has been swallowed up in victory.' […] (58)Therefore, my dear brothers, *stand resolute*. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.[160]

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[160] Saint Paul, *First Letter to the Corinthians* 15:35–58:

35Ἀλλὰ ἐρεῖ τις, Πῶς ἐγείρονται οἱ νεκροί; ποίῳ δὲ σώματι ἔρχονται; 36ἄφρων, σὺ ὃ σπείρεις οὐ ζῳοποιεῖται ἐὰν μὴ ἀποθάνῃ· 37καὶ ὃ σπείρεις, οὐ τὸ σῶμα τὸ γενησόμενον σπείρεις ἀλλὰ γυμνὸν κόκκον εἰ τύχοι σίτου ἤ τινος τῶν λοιπῶν· 38ὁ δὲ θεὸς δίδωσιν αὐτῷ σῶμα καθὼς ἠθέλησεν, καὶ ἑκάστῳ τῶν σπερμάτων ἴδιον σῶμα. […] 42Οὕτως καὶ ἡ ἀνάστασις τῶν νεκρῶν. σπείρεται ἐν φθορᾷ, ἐγείρεται ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ· 43σπείρεται ἐν ἀτιμίᾳ, ἐγείρεται ἐν δόξῃ· σπείρεται ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ, ἐγείρεται ἐν δυνάμει· 44σπείρεται **σῶμα ψυχικόν**, ἐγείρεται **σῶμα πνευματικόν**. […]50Τοῦτο δέ φημι, ἀδελφοί, ὅτι σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα βασιλείαν θεοῦ κληρονομῆσαι οὐ δύναται, οὐδὲ ἡ φθορὰ τὴν ἀφθαρσίαν κληρονομεῖ. 51ἰδοὺ μυστήριον ὑμῖν λέγω· πάντες οὐ κοιμηθησόμεθα, **πάντες δὲ ἀλλαγησόμεθα, 52ἐν ἀτόμῳ, ἐν ῥιπῇ ὀφθαλμοῦ** […].54ὅταν δὲ τὸ φθαρτὸν τοῦτο ἐνδύσηται ἀφθαρσίαν καὶ τὸ θνητὸν τοῦτο ἐνδύσηται ἀθανασίαν, τότε γενήσεται ὁ λόγος ὁ γεγραμμένος, Κατεπόθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νῖκος. […] 58Ὥστε, ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί, **ἑδραῖοι γίνεσθε**, ἀμετακίνητοι, περισσεύοντες ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ τοῦ κυρίου πάντοτε, εἰδότες ὅτι ὁ κόπος ὑμῶν οὐκ ἔστιν κενὸς ἐν κυρίῳ.

Sed dicet aliquis quomodo resurgunt mortui quali autem corpore veniunt? Insipiens tu quod seminas non vivificatur nisi prius moriatur et quod seminas non corpus quod futurum est seminas sed nudum granum ut puta tritici aut alicuius ceterorum. Deus autem dat illi corpus sicut voluit et unicuique seminum proprium corpus. […] Sic et resurrectio mortuorum seminatur in corruptione surgit in incorruptione, seminatur in ignobilitate surgit in gloria, seminatur in infirmitate surgit in virtute, seminatur *corpus animale* surgit *corpus spiritale*. […] Hoc autem dico fratres quoniam caro et sanguis regnum Dei possidere non possunt neque corruptio incorruptelam possidebit. Ecce mysterium vobis dico *omnes quidem resurgemus* sed non omnes inmutabimur *in momento in ictu oculi* […]. Cum autem mortale hoc induerit inmortalitatem tunc fiet

Following Paul's prognosticatory proclamation, Heidegger writes that the term 'moment of vision' "must be understood in the active sense as an ecstasis. It means the resolute rapture (*Entrückung*)—a rapture which is *held* in resoluteness—in which Dasein is carried away to whatever possibilities and circumstances are encountered in the situation as possible objects of concern."[161]

In a lecture following shortly after the publication of *Being and Time*, Heidegger says: "The task is to see that being-in-the-world […] fundamentally transforms the concept of subjectivity and of the subjective."[162] As the foregoing reflections have exhibited through differing repetitions, the movement of Heidegger's analysis toward a disembodied understanding of Dasein suggests that the existential analytic's 'own' repetitions of the Christian tradition are, with respect to the concept of subjectivity, perhaps more reiterative than transformative. One thing has become unmistakable: the preceding genealogy of habitual bodily being cannot sustain the claim to primordiality. In its fore-having was only ever the ontologically constrictive valence of habit, of habit as a closing down of possibilities. Seeking to hand ourselves a possibility which we have inherited and yet chosen, we might ask whether and how Heidegger's 'moment of transformation' might itself be transformatively repeated in a way that holds onto the habitual body and its primacy. Could we repeat this 'moment' so as to pull together into the horizon of our fore-having the structure of habitual bodily being in its ontologically dilational valence? Might this serve as a lever of intervention? Might it serve as an extracted predicate that, while permitting us to maintain a grasp on the Christian conceptual and institutional arrangement from which it arises, could in turn be grafted and extended through a different conception of social, political, and self transformation?

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sermo qui scriptus est absorta est mors in Victoria. […] Itaque fratres mei dilecti *stabiles estote* et inmobiles abundantes in opere Domini semper scientes quod labor vester non est inanis in Domino.

[161] "Dieser Terminus [i.e., Augenblick] muß im aktiven Sinne als Ekstase verstanden warden. Er meint die entschlossene, aber in der Entschlossenheit *gehaltene* Entrückung des Daseins an das, was in der Situation an besorgbaren Möglichkeiten, Umständen begegnet" (*BT* 387/*SZ* 338).

[162] *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* 195.

It is as much of my essence to have a body as it is the essence of the future to be the future of a certain present. Such that neither scientific thematization nor objective thought can discover a single bodily function strictly independent of existential structures, or reciprocally a single 'spiritual' act which does not rest on a bodily infrastructure. Moreover, it is not only essential to me to have a body, but to have *this* body.

–Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* E501/F493

Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock or livery,
That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night,
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence: the next more easy;
For use almost can change the stamp of nature.

–William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* III.4: 160–68

CHAPTER THREE

The Variable Amplitude of Existence:
Habit as Dilation and Re-horizoning of Being

As Nietzsche warns, "when you look (*blickst*) long into an abyss (*Abgrund*), the abyss also looks into you."[1] When Augustine begins to look deeply into the abyss of habitual bodily being, he begins to sense that intentionality is inextricable from habituality or, using the vocabulary of contemporary phenomenology, that all constitution is in some deeply structural sense institution.[2] Probing this abysmal kinship which, stretching through his habitual lived body, seems to irrevocably bind the itineraries of his intellect to a dimension shared in common with the beasts, Augustine not only has personal difficulty sustaining his continent resolve, he has theological difficulty maintaining the doctrine of the existence of free will.[3] He finds it necessary to equivocate. On the one hand, *consuetudo carnalis* is figured as post-lapsarian metaphysical weight, which drags down the mind according to the natural

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[1] "Wer mit Ungeheuern kämpft, mag zusehn, dass er nicht dabei zum Ungeheuer wird. Und wenn du lange in einen Abgrund blickst, blickt der Abgrund auch in dich hinein" (Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. Walter Kaufmann [New York: Vintage, 1966], Epigram 146).

[2] Writing of the later Merleau-Ponty's notion of flesh (*carne*), an ontological principle put forth precisely to account for the *Fundierung*-relation between constitution and institution, Renauld Barbaras writes, for instance: "The dynamism of the flesh must be grasped as institution rather than as constitution: the flesh is made of levels, of axes around which 'subject' and 'object' turn" (Barbaras, *The Being of the Phenomenon* 175).

[3] Augustine explicitly marks as feminine that medium of soul (*anima*) that is forever vulnerably affiliated with "the fleshly, or […] sensual, motion of the soul which is stretched forth (*intenditur*) through the senses of the body, and which is common to us and the beasts," but which "is shut off (*seclusus*) from the reasoning of wisdom." The term Augustine employs to describe the fleshly motion of the soul that is "stretched forth through" the senses of the body is *intenditur*, the passive form of the verb *intendo*, which is the basis of the Latin *intentio*, intentionality. Augustine thus consciously refers to a form of intentionality that operates in and through the body, but he portrays it in the passive voice, attributes it to the soul, and (following both his Neoplatonic and Pauline influences) relegates it to the lowest axiological order of the person. "[…] carnalis, uel ut ita dicam qui in corporis sensus intenditur sensualis animae motus, qui nobis pecoribusque communis est, seclusus est a ratione sapientiae" (*Trinity* XII.12.17).

law of a *pre-personal* past that, having never been fully present, can only be overcome via the transcendent intervention of divine grace. On the other hand, Augustine figures habit as the accumulated momentum of the past choices of the *individual*—a momentum whose intensity can be attenuated and whose sense and directionality can be refashioned through the intervention of ecclesiastical authority (*auctoritas*) and the daily war (*bellum quotidianum*) of disciplinary practice (*disciplina christiana*), which consists in turning inward (*redire in se ipsum*), confession (*confiteri*), renouncing and disdaining the bodily self (*odium sui*) along with its affective and social ties to the world (*odium necessitudines carnales et temporales*), and extracting (*extraho*) the soul from its habitual encumbrances by cultivating a love that goes forth from the world (*de mundo amor noster exit*) by taking as its object an abstract human nature free of bodily condition (*diligere natura humana sine carnali conditione*).

In a manner reiterative of Augustine's equivocation regarding the human soul's fallen absorption in *consuetudo carnalis*, Heidegger's text is profoundly and notoriously ambivalent about the ontological status of Dasein's fallen absorption in *das Man*. On the one hand, Dasein's habitual sociality is interpreted as an ontological structure of human existence (i.e., an essential existential)—a structure that, in constitutively interlacing individual Dasein with a common dimension of instituted sense, both establishes and governs the range of Dasein's basic familiarity with the world and ontologically tilts Dasein toward a kind of conformity necessary for shared social intelligibility. As such, the tendency of Dasein to inhabit a common world, or, more precisely, its having always already habitually fallen in sync with common contexts of significance, is not a mere ontic contingency that Dasein could be/do without. On the other hand, Heidegger interprets Dasein's habitual being-in-the-world as an ontic inflection of Dasein's being—an inauthentic modification of a more basic authentic self. In this register, habitual being-in-the-world is fashioned as a tempting, tranquilizing, turbulent ocean that disintegrates and alienates Dasein from its authentic self—a web of inauthentic interrelations in which Dasein becomes entangled and closed off from its authentic possibilities, but from which authentic Dasein can resolutely re-collect (*zusammenholen*) and take hold of itself (*ergriefen*) through a form of violent dis-habituation in which Dasein retracts or wrests itself away (*abgerungen*, *abzuringen*) from mundane relationships and concerns.

In their respective ontologies, Augustine and Heidegger each equivocate on the subject of habit. This indefinite equivocation, however, itself points to a positive phenomenal characteristic of habitual bodily being. Though commonly termed a 'second nature,' habit is continually mistaken for the first. When we are *subject to* habit, i.e., when we are led by specifically situated motivations and relations of force to take up a thematizing stance toward the operative intentionality of our habitual bodies, habit seems in its obtrusiveness like an intractable force of nature, an element of alterity. When we are the *subject of* habit, i.e., when we are directed toward and geared into our world through the self-effacing operation of its prepredicative understanding, habit recedes into existential transparency, making itself inconspicuous in the fluency of our activity. In either instance, it eludes the light of self-consciousness.

As a consequence of habit's intrinsic tendency to fall into the folds of necessity, Augustinian anthropology upholds that "every habit is a fetter," for every

habit is at once the product and the source of sin.[4] Though Augustine rarely discusses them, even "good" habits are considered corrupt from the standpoint of reason because, while they may be deposits of past forms of rationality, they constitute a shadowy, "unself-conscious background" of rationality—the wake of unreason that trails behind it as its necessary counterpart and a reminder of the human soul's fallen fleshly attachments.[5]

Whether construed as post-lapsarian weight, the law of sin, or the law of nature, as in Augustine, or as the turbulent downfall, the tranquilizing, self-dispossessing movement of sociality, as in Heidegger, habit appears exclusively as a structure of ontological constriction. This conception bears a degree of descriptive integrity that must be granted a certain phenomenological validity. Through the institution and routine deployment of sedimented patterns of perception and response, constrictive habits close down the threshold of futurity. They domesticate the future, leveling down possibilities that fail to fit within the rigidly predelineated frameworks of intelligibility and sensibility that such habits have outlined in advance. Through the habitual body, not only one's own past life, but the life of the common, imply themselves in the fabric of the present and hem in one's future. In Augustine's case, that which he experiences as closed off by the prison of refractory habit is the future possibility of obedience to God the sovereign. In Heidegger's case, it is the possibility of authentic, self-possessed, forerunning resoluteness unto death.

In its constrictive modality, habit gives rise to the assumption of an objectifying intentional subject over against which habit appears just as fixed, intractable, and alien as do 'nature' or 'other minds,' regions of apparent alterity that embody intrinsic directionalities that transcend subjectivity. The constrictive structure of habit, however, is entrenched within the 'subject' itself in a distinct way. Paul Ricoeur aptly articulates this concept of habit in his discussion of *Fallible Man* (1960): "Habit *fixes* our tastes and aptitudes and thus shrinks our field of availability; the range of the possible narrows down." In identifiably Augustinian-Heideggerian terms, he calls this tendency of life to harden into set systems "a primordial inertia that is intermingled with the spontaneity of life and will."[6] It is precisely this aspect of habit that leads Augustine to interpret habit as man's post-lapsarian metaphysical weight, intractably restricting his embodied soul from attaining freedom, and leaving it helplessly in need of the intervention of an external sovereign authority. This is also the dimension of habit that Heidegger keeps in view when he interprets habitual everydayness as a signal of Dasein's ontological fallenness, as an inherent yet alienating pull (*Zug*) that sucks human existence into the self-dispersing turbulence and inauthenticity of social existence.

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[4] *Confessions* IX.12.32.

[5] I borrow the expression "unself-conscious background" from David Morris's incisive discussion of the role of lived time and habit in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, "Lived Time and Absolute Knowing."

[6] Paul Ricoeur, *Fallible Man*, trans. Charles A. Kelbley (New York: Fordham UP, 1986), 56–57 (original emphasis). See also Ricoeur, *Freedom and Nature: The Voluntary and the Involuntary*, trans. Erazim V. Kohák (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1966), Part II.

Both Augustine and Heidegger point to an essential tendency of human existence toward what French phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty referred to in his early work as *depersonalization*. Employing the inherited language of 'consciousness' that his own analysis will eventually dissolve, Merleau-Ponty describes this depersonalization with characteristic flair: "In so far as consciousness is consciousness of something only by allowing its furrow to trail behind it, and in so far as, in order to conceive an object one must rely on a previously constructed 'world of thought', there is always a depersonalization at the heart of consciousness."[7] In its constrictive modality, habit manifests this tendency in the form of an ontological closure. Constrictive habits calcify into necessities and curtail uninhabited possibilities of being.

Fortunately, however, closure and constriction constitute but one valence of habit's tendency toward depersonalization. Ricoeur calls attention to this ambi-valent ambiguity of habit.

> On the one hand, the acquisition of habits liberates attention by entrusting action to habitual systems that start and unwind like supervised automatisms. Thus the body is the node of powers, of motor and affective structures, of interchangeable methods whose spontaneity is at the disposal of the will. It is enough to watch our familiar gestures in action to see how the body leads the way, tries out and invents, answers our expectations or eludes us. This practical mediation of the body extends beyond *motor* habits in the strict sense. Our skills are also a kind of body, a psychical body, at it were […]. But […] every habit is the start of an alienation that is inscribed in the very structure of habit, in the relation between *learning* and *contracting*. Habit is possible because the living person has the admirable power of changing himself [*sic*] through his acts. But by learning, man affects himself; his subsequent power is in the situation no longer of beginning but of continuing; […] what is learned is acquired (*habitudo*), and what is acquired is contracted. […] That is why our habits are very ambiguous; it is not by chance that they lend themselves to two opposing systems of interpretation, in terms of life that 'learns' and life that 'automatizes,' in terms of spontaneity and inertia.[8]

It is not by chance. And it is no accident that the confliction internal to the ontologies of Augustine and Heidegger exemplifies in each case, often despite the authors'

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[7] *PP* E158/F159. See also *PP* E250/F249. For a discussion of the language of 'consciousness' in the development of Merleau-Ponty's ontology, see M.C. Dillon, *Merleau-Ponty's Ontology*, second edition (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1997), esp. Part Two. In his later work, *The Visible and the Invisible*, Merleau-Ponty acknowledges the conceptual limitations that the inherited ontological vocabulary of consciousness placed on his early work: "The problems posed in *Phenomenology of Perception* are insoluble because I start there from the 'consciousness'-'object' distinction." *The Visible and the Invisible*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1967), 200.

[8] Ricoeur, *Fallible Man* 56–57 (original emphasis).

express intentions, this fundamental ambi-valence at habit's heart. However, the manifest text of their discourses in each case discloses this ambi-valence in a manner that covers over a more radical (if ambiguous) understanding of habitual bodily being. For, while every habitual acquisition is a contraction, not every contraction is a constriction. We must distinguish between constrictive contractions and dilational contractions. Dilational contractions give birth to new forms of life, new ways of being—and they do so with a sense, direction, and intentionality that eludes and sometimes unseats the powers of representation.

Augustine discerned this power of materiality and, in the only reference to 'good habit' that I have encountered in his texts, he attempts to harness this power in service to strengthening the axiologizing intentions of an ostensibly disembodied reason. We ought not understand the punishments that God imposed upon Eve—namely, that she will experience greatly increased pain in childbirth—simply in terms of "this visible woman" (*ista visibili muliere*), he writes. Rather our minds ought to also be recalled to "that secret woman" (*illum muliere secretiorem*) inside each one of us: bodily intentionality (*voluntate carnali*).

> For there is no restraint of bodily intentionality which does not have pain in the beginning, until habit (*consuetudo*) is turned or bent (*flectatur*) toward the better part. When this has come about, it is as though a child is born; that is, the good habit (*consuetudo bonum*) disposes our intentions toward the good deed. In order that this habit might be born, there is a painful struggle (*reluctatum dolore*) with bad habit (*consuetudini malae*). Hence scripture's post partum dictum [to the woman]: 'You will turn to your man, and he will rule over you.' […] What can this mean except that, when that feminine part of the soul (*anima*) held fast in bodily joys by the grip of bad habit has, in willing to conquer a bad habit, suffered difficulty and pain and, bringing forth a good habit in this way, it now more carefully and diligently obeys reason as its husband (*viro*)? And, taught by its pains, it turns to reason and willingly obeys its commands lest it again flow downward (*defluere*) to some pernicious habit (*consuetudinem perniciosam*). Hence, those things which are perceived to be curses are commandments, if we do not read those spiritual things in a carnal way. For the Law is spiritual.[9]

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[9] "[Q]uod nulla abstinentia fit a voluntate carnali, quae non habeat in exordio dolorem, donec in meliorem partem consuetudo flectatur. Quod cum provenerit, quasi natus est filius, id est ad bonum opus paratus est affectus per consuetudinem bonam. Quae consuetudo ut nasceretur, cum dolore reluctatum est consuetudini malae. Nam et illud quod post partum dictum est: *Erit tibi conversio ad virum tuum, et ipse tui dominabitur*. […] Nisi quia illa pars animae, quae carnalibus gaudiis tenetur, cum aliquam malam consuetudinem gaudiis tenetur, cum aliquam malam consuetudinem volens vincere, passa fuerit difficultatem ac dolorem, atque ita pepererit consuetudinem bonam, cautius iam et diligentius rationi obtemperat tamquam viro; et ipsis quasi erudita doloribus convertitur ad rationem, et libenter servit iubenti, ne iterum in aliquam perniciosam consuetudinem defluat? Ista ergo quae videntur maledicta, praecepta sunt, si non carnaliter spiritalia legamus. *Lex* enim *spiritalis est*" (Augustine, *On Genesis Against the Manichees* II.19.29; quoting first *Genesis* 3:16, then *Romans* 7:14).

In Augustine's 'spiritual' analogy between habit-formation and childbirth, habit is figured as negative, pernicious, the occasion of pain and struggle, and gendered as feminine (*consuetudini malae*, *consuetudinem perniciosam*) when it is conceived and held fast in the grips of bodily joy, that is (if we deign to read carnally), in the womb of woman.[10] The bodily intentionality of habit is bent or turned toward the better when, through toilsome labor, it produces a good habit (*consuetudo bonum*) by being delivered to the rule of reason/man (*ratio*/*viro*). Here, dilational habits are figured as ones that have been retracted from the intentionality of the body and, under the rule and at the disposal of reason, operate free of bodily contractions. The contractions of the habitual body are, according to this unitary conception, *ex vi termini* constrictive. No distinction is made between constrictive contractions and dilational contractions, because the perspective from which such a distinction might be made is abandoned, ordered to obediently turn away from and relinquish its own intentional activity.

Constrictive and dilational habitual contractions must be distinguished. We can begin to do so by defining habitual bodily being, borrowing an expression from Merleau-Ponty, as *the variable amplitude of our existence*.[11] Habit is the root, or structure of disposedness, that gives rise to our commonly shared practices of rationality and sensibility, not only opening up and limiting what we can *think*, *say*, and *do*, but establishing the processes of subjectivation that both limit and open up what we can *become*. Habit continually stages a confrontation between that which one *has been* and that which one *desires to be*, and it is precisely this two-fold confrontation that ignites the spark of subjectivity. Having traced the genealogy of the habitual body back to the early Christian discourse of the human soul's struggle to master the "habits of this life" (*consuetudo huius vitae*), having then uncovered the fissures in this unitary, ontologically constrictive conception of habit as it comes to be articulated in the works of Augustine and Heidegger, as well as the authentic, dis-habituated notion of self that such a conception negatively serves to define, I would like now to turn to the transindividual subtensions of corporeal subjectivity that this ontological history seeks to regulate. I would like to try to develop a more enabling vocabulary for analyzing and evaluating the ontological possibilities that circulate through the structure of habitual bodily being, to desubjugate an alternative conception of habitual bodily being as the variable amplitude of existence, which, I argue, is the common (though non-identical) structure through which humanity must grasp its future.

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[10] According to Augustine, whatever comes into being by natural birth is bound by original sin because it is invariably the product of bodily desire (*carnis concupiscentia*), which he calls the daughter and mother of sin (*filia et matre peccati*). Bodily desire, which escapes the rule of the will, is the daughter of sin insofar as it is the latter's product; prior to the Fall, the bodies of Adam and Eve obeyed their respective wills without remainder. Bodily desire becomes the mother of sin when it yields assent to the commission of sinful deeds. See Augustine, *On Marriage and Concupiscence* I.24.27. On the politics of Augustine's distinction between 'carnal' and 'spiritual' interpretation in biblical hermeneutics, according to which he castigates the 'carnal' habit of giving literal readings of figurative expressions, see Section 1.2.1 above.

[11] The original passage refers to the habitual body's motivity as "the variable amplitude of my being-in-the-world (*l'amplitude variable de mon être au monde*)" (*PP* E244/F243).

To do this I will analyze habit not only in its constrictive modality, but also in its most transparent, and thus least recognized, modality—namely, as a structure of *ontological dilation.* For habit is not only that which has a hold on us. Only in its reified instances is habit that which is strictly automatic in us, sculpting our thought and behavior as if by some external agency. Habit is primarily that which permits us our hold upon the world, through which we actively in-habit our surroundings. Habit, in this expansive sense, can be redirected not only to refashion the routines through which we inhabit our shared habitats, but also to transform the rituals through which we inhabit truth and come to understand ourselves and our communities. By developing an appreciation of habitual bodies as ontological structures of disposedness that both limit *and* open, contract *and* dilate, I want to disclose the fundamental ambivalence of habituation, with its two-fold movement of sedimentation and spontaneity, as well as the habitual body's specific manner of efficacy and historicity.[12] In doing so, I wish to suggest the indispensible import of such an understanding of habit for any post-humanist ethico-political project.

3.1   Variable Structures of Bodily Habit

Through concrete analyses of habitual bodily being-in-the-world, it becomes evident that subjectivity is not a pure consciousness, not a disincarnate, antecedently given gaze that, through its own transparent power, synoptically unfolds the mosaic contents of the objective world, synthesizing them into a determinate unity without remainder. Experience is fundamentally characterized by resistance, complications, obstacles, and ambiguities. It becomes equally clear that human being is also not simply, nor most definitively, a present-at-hand object coextensive with other objects or a piece of available equipment sutured into an already instituted totality of assignments, tasks, and goals. Rather human beings are socially situated patterns of bodily comportment, crossing points of cultural systems and rituals of sense. We are incessantly and subtly shifting settlements of identity that constantly, yet tenuously, attain stabilization through, as feminist philosopher Judith Butler writes of gender identity, "a stylized repetition of acts through time," a "corporealization of time."[13]

The thinking, perceiving, acting bodily subject and its perceived world are merely transitory moments of a transindividual circuit of constitution, consumption, and exchange. The momentary body—the personal body that utters 'I'—is the fleeting spark that flies up at various points of friction within this circuit: between the customary   body   and   the   virtual   body,   between   the   established   channels   of

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[12] "The world-structure, with its double moment of sedimentation and spontaneity, is at the core of consciousness" (Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E150/F152). The habitual body is the open region through which the world inhabits intentionality; it is also the region through which the possibility of refashioning both the world and intentionality is afforded.

[13] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge Classics, [1990] 2006), 192. Merleau-Ponty calls the lived body the stabilized structure (*structure stabilisée*) of existence (*PP* E373/F369.

comportment and the affective intensities and relational virtualities that exceed them.[14] Subjectivity is fashioned by the configuration and conflict of transindividual assemblages. Some of these assemblages settle into ruts of response molded to the shapes of situations and institutions whose purpose has expired. These habits embody constricting rituals of routine and, in their reiterative exercise, they exert a silent normalizing pressure upon the possibilities of feeling, acting, and thinking. Ultimately, this modality of habit diminishes our power and separates us from what we can do. It is habituat*ed* rather than habituat*ing*, regularized rather than inventive.

There is a different dimension of habit, however, which bears within it an alternative efficacy. This latter dimension is the one that John Dewey and Maurice Merleau-Ponty invoke when they describe habit as the vehicle for the expansion of our power and the transformation of our existence. Descriptions of habit in this modality are antithetical to the constrictive conception of the same bodily structure. Against the conception of habit as an alienating inertia that "shrinks our field of availability" and "narrows down the range of the possible," Merleau-Ponty argues that "habit expresses the power that we have to *dilate* our being-in-the-world, or change our existence by appropriating fresh instruments."[15] Likewise, Dewey maintains, "habit-forming is an expansion of power not its shrinkage," in as much as "habits are ways of using and incorporating the environment."[16] Drawing on these arguments, we can begin to better understand the intrinsic variability of the structure of habitual bodily being and, thus, to grasp its affirmative possibilities.

In this section, as a means of fleshing out the structure of habitual bodily being as the variable amplitude of our existence, I will outline three basic structural features of habit, focusing on both the ontologically dilational and constrictive modalities of each. These basic structural features are *incorporation*, *orientation*, and *vital disburdenment*.

3.1.1 Incorporation

Through the unself-conscious agency of ontologically dilating habits, the body inhabits, which is to say, it incorporates the space of its surroundings. Humanism's most prized and protected style of being, as Heidegger describes it, manifests itself in "the procedure (still customary today) of setting up knowing as a 'relation between subject and object,'" a procedure which engenders a "mode of dwelling autonomously (*Sichaufhaltens*) alongside entities within-the-world" by "holding-one-self-back

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[14] I adapt the expression "affective intensities and relational virtualities" from Foucault, who employs it to describe the ontological possibilities of homosexuality as a constitutive political practice. (*Essential Works* 1: 136–138). I discuss these claims in further detail in Section 3.2 below, as well as in "The Passions of Michel Foucault." The distinction between the "momentary body," the "habitual body," and the "virtual body," though differently deployed here, derives from Merleau-Ponty's groundbreaking analysis of habitual bodily being (*PP* E95, 291/F97, 289). I will further develop this account in Section 3.2.

[15] Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E166/F168.

[16] John Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2002), 99, 15.

(*Aufenthalt*)" from bodily involvement with the world. But as Heidegger was the first to explain, such knowing is always rooted in a style of "being absorbed in and by the world (*Aufgehens in der Welt*)." Building upon Heidegger's account of being-in-the-world, but insisting that existential structures are constitutively inextricable from the lived body that perceives, acts, and contracts habits, Merleau-Ponty famously writes that "we must […] avoid saying that our body is *in* space or *in* time. It *inhabits* (*habite*) space and time."[17] This everyday, habitual mode of bodily-being-in-the-world is displayed in the phenomenon of incorporation, for which Merleau-Ponty provides insightful descriptions:

> To get used to [*s'habituer à*] a hat, an automobile, or a stick is to settle into them, or conversely, to incorporate them into the voluminosity of the body proper. […] When the typist performs the necessary movements on the typewriter, these movements are governed by an intention, but the intention does not posit the keys as objective locations. It is literally true that the subject who learns to type incorporates the keybank into his bodily space.[18]

When entities are incorporated in the habitual body, they cease to present themselves as objects of perception apart from the body. They are 'simply put to work' as part of the assemblage of capabilities through which the body fashions itself and its world.[19] The incorporative capacity of the habitual body embraces spatial directions and dimensions as well. A case in point is how the spatial layout of one's inhabitance comes to nest "in one's hands and legs" in the non-representational form of an habitual body memory or body schema, rather than represented "in one's mind" in the form of a cognitive map.[20] For example, since adolescence I have frequented a swimming hole tucked away in the Sierra foothills of Central California, which my childhood friends and I named "Big Pools." To this day, I could not draw a map to instruct someone how to get there, because I do not possess a mental representation of the route. Given that the location is accessible only by means of undulating, unmarked dirt roads and foot trails, I can direct myself or someone else there only through enacting the habitual bodily memories that, in the very acts of driving and walking,

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[17] Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E161/F162 (original emphasis).

[18] Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E166–67/F168–69.

[19] In *Queer Phenomenology*, Sara Ahmed articulates the role that repetition plays in the "disappearance" of habitual labor and the histories sedimented in such labor: "[H]istory 'happens' in the very repetition of gestures, which is what gives bodies their tendencies. […] The labor of such repetition disappears through labor: if we work hard at something, then it seems 'effortless.' This paradox—with effort it becomes effortless—is precisely what makes history disappear in the moment of its enactment. The repetition of work is what makes the work disappear" (Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* [Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006], 56).

[20] The term "body schema" comes from Merleau-Ponty. The characteristic efficacy of "habitual body memory" is explored in detail by Edward S. Casey, *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study*, Second Edition (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, [1987] 2000), Part III.

guide me down familiar paths, which through reiterated action, have become incorporated into my body schema.

On a more expansive register, consider the immaterial labor that political theorists Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri describe as the general tendency of labor in the age of biopolitical production.[21] In contrast to the material labor of the factory (i.e., the paradigmatic kind of labor in industrial society), which tended toward fixed, specialized activities repeated over extended periods, immaterial labor requires the ability to constantly adapt to new tasks and contexts. This kind of labor does not produce material goods like cars or typewriters, but rather ideas, symbols, codes, strategies, or affects such as a feeling of ease, well-being, satisfaction, or excitement. It is a kind of labor that has incorporated common, non-representational knowledge passed down from others (e.g., habits of communication, collaboration, and cooperation). Then, on the basis of these common, habitually incorporated meanings and skills, the products that immaterial labor produces are new social relations and modes of cooperation, new habits and habitual forms of being, which in turn serve as anchorage for further production and so on *ad infinitum*. When Hardt and Negri describe the "spiral, symbiotic, expansive relationship" through which the production of subjectivity is in turn the production of *the common*, they give expression to the ontologically amplifying dimension of habitual incorporation.[22]

Habitually incorporated elements become bodily constituents that shape and rearrange the habitual assemblages of the body schema.[23] The incorporative rearrangement of the body schema augments the body's aptitude and responsiveness, integrates the habitual body and its habitat, and optimizes their reciprocal interrelation into a mutually reinforcing, tightly woven fabric, as when painter, palette, paintbrush, and canvas become so fluidly commingled that it seems as though the painting paints itself.[24] The body is amplified by admitting that which it is 'not.'[25] When it absorbs the structure of the perceived, allowing itself to be saturated by new incarnate significances (*sens incarné* or *moteur*), the body acquires new capacities and directions, new possibilities of fluency, orientation, and cultivation.[26] The habitual

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[21] See Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004), 103–115.

[22] Hardt and Negri, *Multitude* xv, 189, 196–202, 350.

[23] Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E164/F166.

[24] "My body is the common fabric into which all objects are woven (*la texture commune de tous les objets*), and it is, at least in relation to the perceived world, the general instrument of my 'comprehension'" (*PP* E273/F272). Merleau-Ponty also refers to the existential or habitual body as the common fabric of all facts, actions, or events (*fait*) (*PP* E193/F194) as well as the fabric through which the incarnate subject is interwoven with the relations of a landscape (E61/F64), and through which the I and the Other, along with their thoughts, are interwoven (*PP* E xiii, 413/F vi, 407).

[25] Merleau-Ponty describes incorporation as a "drawing together, by the subject, of the sense diffused through the object, and [a drawing together] by the object, of the subject's intentions," a "taking up of external by internal and of internal by external" (*PP* E152-53/F154).

[26] See Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E152, 164, 192/F154, 164, 193; and Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology* 115.

body fashions a specifically bodily knowledge, which grasps sense as it is possessed and performed by the body without the need of conscious participation. As Edward Casey argues, "Part of the very meaning of embodiment is the capacity to in-corporate items (whether they be thoughts, emotions, or other residua of the past) so thoroughly that they become one with the body, yet do not require auxiliary acts of cogitation or recollection."[27] Rather than effecting a loss of availability and a leveling down of possibilities, as in the constrictive depersonalization of routinized action, the dilational valence of habitual depersonalization opens the subject to new possibilities of being and new domains of meaning.

Not all incorporative rearrangements of the habitual body are dilational, however. One of the features of habitual bodily being that the phenomenon of incorporation reveals is its inherent porousness and sociality. For this reason, an account of habitual bodily being must always by necessity be an account of habitual bod*ies*, i.e., of particular socially situated habitual bodies, differentiated by their gender, race, class, ethnicity, sexuality and other culturally-loaded differences. This is why the project of fundamental ontology, by seeking to fence off the ontological from the ontic and thus methodologically excluding any serious consideration of significant differences between individuals, ends up not only giving a monolithic account of sociality, which leads to an 'ontologizing' of politics, but also positing a version of Dasein that, while purportedly exemplary, is indeed culturally specific in such a way that its cultural specificity is never made available for critical interrogation.[28]

Through the reciprocal processes of habitual incorporation, bodies both shape and are shaped by their habitats. So, when a body internalizes an environment that inhibits its mobility, vitality, and invention, incorporation can also disintegrate the body's aptitude, cutting it off from what it can do. Such racialized modes of embodiment as those described by Frantz Fanon and Richard Wright, like gendered modes of embodiment of the kind that Iris Marion Young elaborates, exemplify the disintegrating possibilities of habitual incorporation.

> In the white world the man of color encounters difficulties in the development of his bodily schema. Consciousness of the body is solely a negating activity. It is a third-person consciousness. The body is surrounded by an atmosphere of certain uncertainty.[29]

> [F]eminine comportment and body movement [as rooted in a sexist society] are frequently characterized [...] by a failure to make full use

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[27] Edward S. Casey, "Habitual Body and Memory in Merleau-Ponty," *Man and World* 17 (1984): 291–92.

[28] See Tina Chanter, "The Problematic Normative Assumptions of Heidegger's Ontology," and Dorothy Leland, "Conflictual Culture and Authenticity: Deepening Heidegger's Account of the Social," both in *Feminist Interpretations of Heidegger*, eds. Nancy J. Holland and Patricia Huntington (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2001), Chapters 2 & 3.

[29] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove, 2008), 110.

of the body's spatial and lateral potentialities […] an existential enclosure [obtains] between herself and the space surrounding her, in such a way that the space that belongs to her and is available to her grasp and manipulation is *constricted* and the space beyond is not available to her movement.[30]

The social sedimentations of racism and sexism show us that habitual assemblages are inherently normative formations. While certain habitational and institutional arrangements extend the reach of *some* bodies, those same arrangements can inhibit and constrict others, selectively impeding bodies from inhabiting social and practical space in a dilational manner.

The incorporative rearrangement of habitual assemblages can thus be integrating or disintegrating, dilating or constricting, dependent on the normative dimensions of the transindividual field that situates and configures it. As Dewey argues, "only in a society dominated by modes of belief and admiration fixed by past custom is habit any more conservative than it is progressive."[31] Only in a habitat that is resistant to the formation of new habits, and to the non-exclusive extension of habitability, do we find habit more constrictive than dilational.

3.1.2 Orientation

As Merleau-Ponty argues, "the analysis of motor habit as an extension of existence leads to an analysis of perceptual habit as the coming into possession of a world," because "every habit is at once motor and perceptual"; every habit is at once "a fundamental function that delimits our fields of vision and action," and "a process of grasping a meaning that is made by the body."[32] By delimiting our fields of vision and action and making unself-conscious use of sedimented meanings, habits stabilize experience. They establish themselves as domiciles around which we organize our thoughts, desires, and activities, and from which we project ourselves into the future. In this capacity, habits function as *orientation devices*. They cast intentional threads around the body so as to anchor it in an environment, tracing out the regions of the body's actual and potential reach, delineating its field of perceptibility, and thereby establishing a vital horizon within which subjectivity is at once opened and geared into its world.

Merleau-Ponty describes the actions of a trained organist who, with minimal preparations, comes to feel at home with an organ that is differently arranged and equipped than the organ he is accustomed to playing:

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[30] Iris Marion Young, *On Female Body Experience: "Throwing Like a Girl" and Other Essays* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 32, 40 (my emphasis).

[31] Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct* 66.

[32] Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E175–7/F177–9.

During the short rehearsal preceding the concert, he does not comport himself like one who is about to draw up a plan. He sits on the seat, works the pedals, pulls out the stops, gets the measures of the instrument with his body, incorporates its directions and dimensions within himself; *he settles into the organ as one settles into a house*.[33]

Thanks to the orientations of the habitual body, we direct our momentary bodies toward virtual bodies that have not yet been inhabited. We are able to take hold of a situation and act in an ordered way only by means of the anchorage that the habitual body provides. But the habitual stabilization of identity—the "we" or "I" that directs and orients the momentary body toward its possible projects and inhabitances—is produced in and through the transitory, reiterative movement of orienting itself. Like the gendered body, the virtuoso body achieves stabilization through "a stylized repetition of acts through time," the repetition of a "tending toward" that orients the body toward certain objects and activities and away from others.[34] On the one hand, as Sara Ahmed points out, "orientations are effects of what we tend toward."[35] On the other hand, what we tend toward is always already shaped by an anterior history of orientations, incorporations, and inhabitations. This temporal paradox leads Merleau-Ponty to describe bodily subjectivity as an "existence which runs through me, yet does so independently of me," "an anonymous life which subtends my personal one," "another subject beneath me, for whom a world exists before I am here, and who marks out my place in it."[36]

It is the orienting function of the habitual body—not the unified intentionality of a sovereign rationality—that constitutes the self.[37] As "a system of possible actions"—a system that is necessarily to some degree, though never entirely, *open*—the habitual body gears the momentary body into the world that solicits it.[38] Just as habitats lend themselves to the incorporative extension of certain bodies over others, so are they structured to solicit the oriented inhabitation of some bodies over others. Some habitats prevent the habitual body from establishing the footholds necessary to come into possession of a world. Thus when Bigger Thomas, the African American protagonist of Richard Wright's *Native Son* (1940), leaves his place in the south side of Chicago and enters the home of a wealthy white liberal family, his body is overcome with a sense of constriction. It seems to collapse beneath him.

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[33] Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E168/F170 (my emphasis).

[34] Butler, *Gender Trouble* 192.

[35] Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology* 20.

[36] Merleau-Ponty,*PP* E191–192, 296/F192–193, 294.

[37] Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct* 25.

[38] Merleau-Pony *PP* E163, 291/F165, 289.

> Why had he come to take this goddamn job? He could have stayed among his own people and escaped feeling this fear and hate. This was not his world […]. With cap in hand and shoulders sloped, he followed, walking over a rug so soft and deep that it seemed he was going to fall at each step he took. […] He sat and […] felt that the position in which he was sitting was too awkward and found that he was on the very edge of the chair. He rose slightly to sit farther back; but when he sat he sank down so suddenly and deeply that he thought the chair had collapsed under him. He bounded halfway up, in fear; then, realizing what had happened, he sank distrustfully down again. […] He had not expected anything like this; he had not thought that this world would be so utterly different from his own that it would intimidate him. […] He was sitting in a white home; dim lights burned round him; strange objects challenged him; and he was feeling angry and uncomfortable.[39]

The "white world" not only fails to support his body—the rug and chair feel like they are giving way beneath him—its objects also seem to "challenge" him. The place deprives Bigger Thomas of the implicit bodily knowledge to orient action in the "white world"—the kind of knowledge that Merleau-Ponty calls "knowledge in the hands […] a knowledge bred of familiarity."[40] This world fills his body with the non-thematic sense that any attempt to undertake oriented action within that world would be perceived by whites as 'threatening' and serve as an implicit 'solicitation' of anti-black violence.

> He stood with his knees slightly bent, his lips partly open, his shoulders stooped; and his eyes held a look that went only to the surface of things. There was *an organic conviction* in him that this was the way white folks wanted him to be when in their presence; none had ever told him that in so many words, but their manner had made him feel that they did. […] He felt guilty, condemned. He should not have come here.[41]

With his sense of familiarity or 'at homeness' thus destabilized, and the shared sense of a common world denied him, Bigger Thomas' own body habitually fails him, and his fluency with the world is unsettled. He is overcome by a sense of alarm and is unable to give himself over to the 'anonymous' control of his habitual body, preventing him from inhabiting and sharing in the orientations of the 'white world.' Such instances of disorientation privatively reveal habit's orienting function and the

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[39] Richard Wright, *Native Son*, restored edition (New York: Perennial Classics, 1998), 44–46.

[40] Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E166/F168.

[41] Wright, *Native Son* 48–49 (my emphasis). In his incisive descriptions of the mid-twentieth century colonial situations in France and Algeria, Fanon makes parallel claims regarding the fragmentation and disorientation of the colonized subject's habitual body. See *Black Skin, White Masks*, Chapter 5 and *Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2004), Chapter 1.

indispensible role it plays not only in enabling bodies to unself-consciously make their way about the world, but in constituting (or, in this case, failing to constitute) a common world in which such unself-conscious action is possible. Racist social arrangements dismantle the basis for commonality by silently (and sometimes violently) instituting stratified norms of habitual comportment for differently racialized bodies. They disarticulate the habitual body's capacity for orientation and adaptation.

3.1.3 Vital Disburdenment

When habitably articulated, however, the stabilizing function of orientation brings about the *vital disburdenment* required for spontaneous action and innovation. Insofar as habits dispense with the need for concerted attention to accomplish certain actions, they free our cognitive, sensorimotor, and affective coping capacities for more expansive production and innovation rather than leaving them endlessly engaged in the task of reorientation or reactivation of sense. Habitual body memories, Casey writes, "liberate us from the necessity of constant reorientation. In their very regularity, they allow us to undertake actions lacking regularity—free and innovative actions difficult to predict […]."[42] Homelessness diminishes one's innovative capacity by compelling the continual reconstruction of one's habitation. Similarly, an organist would no longer be capable of musical variability if she had to start from scratch, recomposing her habits of performance each time she sat down to her instrument. By off-loading epistemic and energetic resources, dilating habits function as springboards for more complex spontaneous acts as well as acts of invention.[43]

In order to engage in multiform activities such as scientific inquiry, theoretical reflection, technical invention, artistic creation, dialogue, skilled coping, mutual caring, sexual partnering (to be distinguished from mere copulation), and political action in concert—all of which are constituent modalities of self-making—each of our particular responses to the world and others must cease to fill our whole field of action. The elaboration of these micro-responses, instead of occurring at the center of our existence, must take place on the periphery and finally the responses themselves must no longer demand that on each occasion some specialized, focused posture be taken up, but must rather be predelineated in a certain generality.

This dilational valence of habitual disburdenment is what Nietzsche intended with his notion of active forgetting (*aktiven Vergesslichkeit*).

> Forgetting is no mere *vis inertiae* as the superficial imagine; it is rather an active and in the strictest sense positive faculty of repression,[44] that

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[42] Casey, *Remembering* 152.

[43] William James is among the thinkers that have articulated this point: "Habit simplifies the movements required to achieve a given result, makes them more accurate, and diminishes fatigue [by diminishing] the conscious attention with which our acts are performed" (*Principles of Psychology*, vol. 1 [New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1918], Chapter 4, qt. p. 112).

[44] The term that Nietzsche uses here is *Positives Hemmungsvermögen* and must be distinguished from Freud's later development of the concept of repression (*Verdrängung*).

is responsible for the fact that what we experience and absorb enters our consciousness as little while we are digesting it […] as does the thousandfold process involved in physiological nourishment […]. To close the doors and windows of consciousness for a time; to remain undisturbed by the noise and struggle of our underworld of utility organs working with and against one another; a little quietness, a little *tabula rasa* of the consciousness, to make room for new things, above all for the nobler functions and functionaries, for regulation, foresight, premeditation […] that is the purpose of active forgetfulness, which is like a doorkeeper, a preserver of psychic order, repose, and etiquette: so that it will be immediately obvious how there could be no happiness, no cheerfulness, no hope, no pride, no *present*, without forgetfulness.[45]

There is no self-presence without the unself-conscious operation of the habitual body. In its intrinsic self-effacement, this body makes itself unconscious and actively disburdens epistemic, sensorimotor, and affective resources for further production. Merleau-Ponty had a similar appreciation for forgetting as a necessary and original structure of time, rather than simply a lapse or difficulty to be overcome. In his reading of Husserl's notion of institution (*Stiftung*), Merleau-Ponty calls such forgetting a "noble memory," the "power to forget origins" that is essential to the institution and transformation of tradition.[46] For habit *relieves us of the trouble* of interpreting.[47] The musician's incorporation of any number of spatial relationships and musical meanings involved in playing the organ frees him or her to focus the energies of the momentary body on the intricacies of composition and performance. The more fluent its efficacy and perspicacity, the more unself-consciously a habit operates. But the unself-consciousness of habit is not in itself unconscious, I want to stress. It is not the product of repression or psychic resistance. Habit *makes itself* unconscious by withdrawing into existential transparency and thereby serves as the ballast for creative production. "[I]it is by renouncing part of his [*sic*] spontaneity, by becoming involved in the world through stable organs and pre-established circuits that man can acquire the mental and practical space that in principle releases him from his environment and allows him to *see* it. […] It is an inner necessity for the most integrated existence that it at once give itself and be given (*se donner*) a habitual body."[48]

The vital disburdenment afforded by the habitual body is precisely such an active passivity or renunciation of spontaneity. It is phenomenologically instructive to

[45] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufman (New York: Modern Library, 1992), Second Essay, Section 1 (original emphasis).

[46] Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, trans. Richard C. McCleary (Evanston, IL: Northwestern Univeristy Press, 1964), 59, 159.

[47] "[L]'habitude ne *consiste* pas à interpréter […] elle nous *dispense* de le faire" (Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E176/F178).

[48] "[C]'est une nécessité interne pour l'existence la plus intégrée de se donner un corps habituel" (Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E100–101/F102–103).

point out a grammatical feature of the expression that Merleau-Ponty uses to describe this phenomenon. *Se donner* is a pronominal form of the verb *donner*, which means "to give, bestow, produce, effect." *Donner* is also the French verb used to translate Husserl's concept of sense-bestowal (*Sinngebung*)—a central component of the structure of intentionality as formulated within the horizon of static phenomenology.

In brief, Husserl's project of static phenomenology, which began as a form of epistemological internalism, set out to articulate the structure of intentionality as a formal structure of consciousness. And it did so by methodologically suspending or abstracting away from questions of temporality, facticity, historicity, corporeality, and intersubjectivity, i.e., questions concerning the *becoming, genesis,* or *institution* of intentionality. In Husserl's static account, all meaning can ultimately be traced back to the sense-bestowing or sense-giving acts of consciousness, the ultimate source of intelligibility. However, as Husserl eventually came to discover, there exists a distinctly habitual mode of intentionality, which he called operative intentionality (*fungierende Intentionalität*), that disturbs this subjectivist model of sense constitution. Heidegger set out to describe and ontologically account for a similar mode of absorbed intentionality in his account of habitual dealing (*Umgang*) or comportment (*Verhalten*).[49] As was witnessed in our account in Chapter Two, the phenomenon of habitual intentionality contributed to disclosing the inadequacy (or provisionality) of the static method of phenomenology and, with it, the Cartesian model of intentionality according to which an empty, ahistorical, disembodied 'subject-pole' was intentionally directed toward an equally empty and ahistorical 'object-pole.'

Merleau-Ponty significantly advances this transformation of phenomenology with his account of the habitual body and he draws attention to this development with his use of the pronominal verb *se donner* to describe the habitual body's emergent formation. For, in French, a pronominal verb such as this can operate in at least two ways. On the one hand, it can function as an (active) reflexive verb. In this form, *se donner* means "to give (to) oneself, produce or effect (for) oneself." The expression, read in this way, suggests activity, autonomy, self-sufficiency—e.g., a bestowal of sense on the part of the subject. On the other hand, a pronominal verb can be used in place of the passive voice in cases where *the subject of the action is not expressed*. In this passive form, *se donner* means "to be given," or "to have produced or effected." Read in this way, the expression implies a passivity and dependency on the part of the grammatical and existential subject—an institution at the heart of constitution, a passivity inherent in activity, habituality in intentionality.

The expression itself is true to the phenomenon it was deployed to describe. For, the phenomenon of inhabitation, i.e., of the situated emergence and eventual stabilization of a habitual body, can by necessity be viewed from two perspectives. Regarded primarily in its *generality*, i.e., as a coarse-grained form of response or operative intentionality that is pulled by and geared into habitually overdetermined

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[49] "Comportments have the structure of directing-oneself-toward, of being-directed-toward. Annexing a term from Scholasticism, phenomenology calls this structure *intentionality*." Heidegger uses 'comportment' to refer to our directed activity, precisely because the term has no mentalistic overtones. *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* 58 (original emphasis).

incarnate significances (*sens incarné* or *moteur*) which fall outside the thematic horizon of explicit awareness, habituation can appear as an outsourcing or even an usurpation of spontaneity, a degeneration or compromise of epistemic and moral responsibility. Western thinkers too numerous to name, placing extraordinarily high valence on the criterion of *claritas*, especially the type of clarity that is achieved by holding-one-self-back from bodily involvement with the world, have long focused, as it were, on habituation from this perspective. That is, of course, when they have deemed the habitual body worthy of epistemic consideration or as capable of stepping into the *lux* of *veritas* at all.[50]

The philosophical tradition has thus overwhelmingly ignored or disparaged the vital disburdenment enacted by the habitual body, chronically misconstruing the latter's distinctive mode of operatively absorbed intentionality as a senseless mechanism of nature or an inauthentic loss of self-possession. One reason for this is that the self-effacing disclosiveness of bodily habit does not bring its deliverances forward into what Husserl has described as "the sharply illuminated circle of perfect presentation."[51] Indeed, the embodied sense of the habitual body resists such illumination precisely because it is what contributes to rendering possible such acts of objectivating intentionality, and it does so *in the very effacement of its operation.*[52] Viewed as a process of actively off-loading and thus freeing up intentional resources—i.e., when regarded primarily as habituat*ing* rather than habituat*ed*—habit thus appears as a dilation of being-in-the-world and a temporal and historical enrichment of the perceptual realm. In this way, Merleau-Ponty's choice of verbal formulations to describe the way that we *assume* a habitual body— "It is an inner necessity for the most integrated existence to at once give itself and be given (*se donner*) a habitual body"—couldn't be more appropriate. The donative action that

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[50] In his groundbreaking phenomenological study of the multifarious modalities of remembering, Edward Casey discusses the way that the logocentric tendency to link *veritas* with *lux* has led the western philosophical tradition to posit recollection, i.e., representational remembering, as the prized paradigm of remembering. See Edward S. Casey, *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study*, Second Edition (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, [1987] 2000).

[51] Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book: General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology*, trans. Fred Kersten (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1982), 154, 157.

[52] Husserl comes to appreciate the constitutive depths of this pre-objective sphere in his later analyses of the role of the lived body in perception, passive synthesis, and the *Fundierung*-relation. As he puts it in *Ideas II*, "the solitary subject, the subject thought of ideally as isolated, […] in a certain sense remains forgotten to itself and equally forgotten by the one who is doing the analysis." He takes up this self-forgetfulness (*Selbstvergessenheit*) in his later theory of sedimentation and the life-world, which he designates as "a deeply functioning subjectivity (*letztfungierende Subjektivität*)," "a realm of subjective phenomena which have remained 'anonymous.'" Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, Second Book: Studies in the Phenomenology of Constitution*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1989), 60; and *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*, trans. David Carr (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970), 111–114. See also Merleau-Ponty, "The Philosopher and His Shadow," in *Signs*, 159–181.

makes possible the subject of intentional expression is one that is itself enacted by a subject that is not expressed.

As was witnessed in Chapters One and Two, the ambi-valence at the heart of the disburdenment of habit, considered as an off-loading action that subjectivates by means of an unself-conscious agency, manifested itself repeatedly in the texts of Augustine and Heidegger. We are now in a position to see that Heidegger's entire disquisition against the inauthentic pull of *das Man* is an elaborate critique of the vital disburdenment enabled by social normativity when it becomes rigidly habituated. This constrictive mode of disburdenment leads to an ontological disburdenment (*Seinsentlastung*) through which Dasein perniciously loses touch with the openness and possibility of its being. As Heidegger writes, "In Dasein's everydayness, the agency through which most things come about is one of which we must say that 'it was no one.' Thus the particular Dasein in its everydayness is *disburdened* (*entlastet*) by the 'they' […] disburdened of its being (*Seinsentlastung*)."[53]

Custom supplies highly structured, though often unformalized (and unformalizable) possibilities for acting, thinking, feeling, and relating to others and oneself. The normative force of custom is such, Heidegger writes, that it often "*prescribes* the kind of being of everydayness."[54] Habitual meanings, which habit disburdens one from explicitly taking hold of when one makes use of them, become reified in the customary body. Disburdening the momentary body of having to account for meanings unself-consciously held in its habitual assemblages, reified habits conceal the inherent variability of bodily existence. Instead of opening bodily existence to the ontological possibilities of variation and amplification, reified disburdenments constrict the amplitude of our being, concealing the contingency and vulnerability of ontological arrangements by shrouding them in the veils of 'nature' and 'necessity.'

But even though Heidegger consistently and monolithically disparages the disburdenment of habit, whether with respect to the inauthentic sociality of *das Man* (under the name of *Seinsentlastung*) or with respect to the inauthentic temporality of Dasein (under the name of *Vergessenheit*, following Heraclitus' λανθάνει), he also concedes the indispensability of habitual disburdenment: "A specific kind of *forgetting* (*Vergessen*) is essential for the temporality that is constitutive for letting something be involved. The self *must forget itself* if, lost in the world of equipment, it is to be able 'actually' to go to work and handle something."[55] The withdrawal of sense that the habitual body enacts, putting bodily knowledge to work as an unself-conscious background, is essential for spontaneous creation and invention.[56]

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[53] Heidegger, *BT* 165/*SZ* 127.

[54] Heidegger *BT* 164/*SZ* 127; my emphasis.

[55] Heraclitus, Fragment 1; "Für die Zeitlichkeit, die das Bewendenlassen konstituiert, is ein spezifisches *Vergessen* wesentlich. Um an die Zeugwelt 'verloren' 'wirklich' zu Werke gehen und hantieren zu kōnnen, muß sich das Selbst vergessen" (Heidegger, *BT* 405/*SZ* 354). See also *BT* 262, 388–89/*SZ* 219, 339.

[56] The epistemically disburdening withdrawal of self-awareness that the habitual body occasions in its skilled activity also enables and is accompanied by a correlative epistemically disburdening withdrawal

However, because Heidegger understands the habitual sedimentation of sense primarily through an Augustinian lens, his attitude toward the vital disburdenment of habit is overwhelmingly negative, interpreting it as only ever an expression of the fallenness of human existence—as a hardening (*Verhärtung*) or rigidification (*Versteifung*) of sense that covers up (*verdecken*), closes down (*schließen*), and closes off (*verschließen*) the primordial possibilities of existence.[57] He thereby contributes insightful descriptions to the longstanding tradition that conceptualizes habit exclusively in its reified, ontologically constrictive modality. But in drawing from that tradition and insisting that the only authentic relation to the habitual sedimentation of meaning is one that necessitates violence (*Gewaltsamkeit*) and destruction (*Destruktion*)—a struggle (*Kampf*) or countermanding (*Gegen-zug*) that beats down (*niederschlagen*) habituality in the effort to uncover and wrest free (*gerungen*) 'primordial experiences'—Heidegger becomes overly absorbed in the activity of ontologically explicating and resisting the pull (*Zug*) of reified habits. In the process, he ends up, as it were, reifying the meaning of habit, conceptualizing it as wholly defined by its constrictive modality. Attributing no positive role to habitual sedimentation, which not only covers over primordial existence but also functions to historically enrich the realms of perception, action, and interrelation, Heidegger's discourse itself covers up the dilational valence of habituality that opens bodily existence to the ontological possibilities of variation and amplification.

When understood as a structure of variable amplitude, as can be seen in the phenomenal features of incorporation, orientation, and vital disburdenment, habit reveals itself as an aptitude for augmenting and enriching our being-in-the-world as well as a potential impediment to change and spontaneity. Situated between the

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of the 'objects' with which one is involved. Heidegger points this out in his account of readiness-to-hand or availability (*Zuhandenheit*), the kind of being specific to equipment (*Zeug*), which we encounter in circumspection (*Umsicht*), what he calls the kind of sight specific to action (*Handeln*) or dealing (*Umgang*): "The peculiarity of what is proximally ready-to-hand is that, in its readiness-to-hand, it must, as it were, withdraw (*zurückzuziehen*) in order to be ready-to-hand quite authentically" (*BT* 99/*SZ* 69). "We do not always and continually have explicit perception of the things that surround us in a familiar environment, certainly not in such a way that we would be aware of them as expressly available. […] In the indifferent imperturbability of our habitual dealings (*gewohnten Umgangs*) with them, they become accessible precisely with regard to their unobtrusive presence (*unauffälligen Anwesenheit*)" (*Basic Problems of Phenomenology* 309). What ontologically separates habitually available equipment from present-to-hand objects is precisely the former's withdrawal-character—its inconspicuousness (*Unauffälligkeit*) or unobtrusiveness (*Auffälligkeit*). Privative expressions such as 'inconspicuousness' and 'unobtrusiveness', Heidegger writes, point to "a positive phenomenal character of the being of that which is proximally ready-to-hand," i.e., "the character of holding-itself-in (*Ansichhaltens*) and not emerging (*Nichtheraustretens*)" (*BT* 106, 111/*SZ* 75, 80). This withdrawal of the tool and the attendant epistemic disburdenment of the user are both the fruitful products of the habitual body at work, which is ontologically prior to various modes of theoretical or epistemic subjectivity.

[57] John Protevi provides a shrewd analysis of Heidegger's negative attitude toward linguistic sedimentation that, through contrast with Merleau-Ponty's account of habitual sedimentation, clarifies the way that the "formalization" of fundamental ontology "cuts off the sensible body." See John Protevi, "The 'Sense' of 'Sight': Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty on the Meaning of Bodily and Existential Sight," *Research in Phenomenology* 28.1 (1998): 211–223.

individual and the social, habit discloses itself as at once the motor and fetter of social and political transformation. This is the fundamental ambi-valence of habit and the subjectivities that emerge from it.[58] By understanding habit as the variable amplitude of our existence, we are given a new grasp on identity as nothing more or less than "a stylized repetition of acts through time."[59] We are enabled to comprehend how there can be no question of ridding ourselves of habits entirely, as Hamlet would have us rid ourselves of the trappings and suits of custom, which bind and conceal the authentic identities that subtend them.[60] Habits are not the chains that restrain our will. As Dewey put it, "In any intelligible sense of the word will, [habits] *are* will."[61] They are the very channels through which change becomes possible. As Butler argues of the practices that construct one's gender, such habits constitute "a domain of constraints without which a certain living and desiring being cannot make its way."[62]

Creatively carrying forward the Foucaultian notion of power relations as "both intentional and non-subjective," and as not merely prohibitory and regulatory but productive and constructive, Butler argues: "If power is not reduced to volition […] and the classical liberal and existential model of freedom is refused, then power-relations can be understood, as I think they ought to be, as *constraining and constituting the very possibilities of volition*. Hence, power can be neither withdrawn nor refused, but only redeployed."[63] The habitual body is precisely that "relay" through which power passes, migrates, and is transformatively or reiteratively repeated.[64] As such, the habitual body orients all possible ways of being that might be

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[58] Hardt and Negri express this ambivalence with respect to the multitude as a political subject: "[T]he multitude does not arise as a political figure spontaneously […] the flesh of the multitude consists of a series of conditions that are ambivalent: they could lead toward liberation or be caught in a new regime of exploitation and control" (*Multitude* 212).

[59] Butler, *Gender Trouble* 192.

[60]   *Seems*, madam! nay, it is; I know not *seems*.
          'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
          Nor customary suits of solemn black,
          Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,
          No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
          Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
          Together with all forms, moods, shows of grief,
          That can denote me truly; these indeed seem,
          For they are actions that a man might play;
          But I have that within which passeth show;
          These but the trappings and suits of woe. (*Hamlet* I.2: 76–86)

[61] Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct* 25.

[62] Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 94.

[63] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: The Will to Know*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1990), 94; Butler, *Gender Trouble* 168–69 (my emphasis).

[64] Michel Foucault, '*Society Must Be Defended*': *Lectures at the Collège de France 1975–1976*, ed. Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, trans. David Macey (New York: Picador, 2003), 29–30.

desired or inhabited. And although the self-effacement intrinsic to its orienting functions can conceal the limits and conditions of the horizons that it opens up, it is also the case that no matter how reified an habitual configuration may become, it is always tenuous and subject to subversion.

3.2   Habitual Bodies as Nodes of Social Production and Moral Response-ability

> *[W]e truly incline only toward something that in turn inclines toward [...] our essential being, by appealing to our essential being as the keeper who holds us in our essential being. What keeps us in our essential nature holds us only so long, however, as we for our part keep holding on to what holds us.*
>   *–Martin Heidegger*[65]

> *Sometimes our bodies resist even without our conscious participation.*
>   *–Susan Bordo*[66]

In this section, I seek to follow the latent intentional threads that, through the mediation of our habitual bodies, connect us to others and interweave us with a shared social world—what the later Merleau-Ponty called our "natal bond" (*notre lien natal*) with the shared sensible world.[67] In articulating the structure of habitual bodily being in both its constrictive and dilational valences, I have noted the way that the valence of any given act of habituation is shaped and configured in relation to the transindividual social field in which it emerges. By attending to some particular aspects of gendered and racialized modes of habitual embodiment, as described by Iris Young, Frantz Fanon, and Richard Wright, I have also sought to highlight the way in which the fields in which habitual assemblages—and with them social identities—take form are necessarily fields of force and relations of power. I now wish to deepen this dimension of the analysis of habit, to bring into focus the way that, on my account, habitual bodies are nodes of social production and moral response-ability. In doing so, I would like to begin by carrying forward some indications put forth by Merleau-Ponty, who

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[65] Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking?,* trans. J. Glenn Gray (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 3.

[66] Susan Bordo, "Bringing Body to Theory," in *Body and Flesh: A Philosophical Reader*, ed. Donn Welton (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1998), 96.

[67] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible* 32.

describes bodily subjectivity as an intersubjective field (*champ intersubjective*) that is centered outside of itself (*excentrique à moi-même*).[68]

The lived body, according to Merleau-Ponty, is not only a system of motor or perceptual powers, it is the vehicle (*véhicule*), pivot (*pivot*), or medium (*moyen*) of being-in-the-world—one's general power of inhabiting all worldly milieux (*mon pouvoir général d'habiter tous les milieux du monde*).[69] Being a body is to be constitutively intervolved in (*se joindre á*), or intertwined (*entrelacé*) with a definite environment, to coincide with (*se confondre avec*) certain projects and communities, and to be continually committed to or engaged in (*s'engager*) them.[70] Merleau-Ponty uses the pronominal verb *s'engrèner*, a verbal combination of the French word for 'gear' (*engrenage*) and the adjective 'meshed' (*engrené*), to describe the way that the habitual bodies are "geared into" their social and practical worlds—an interrelation he later describes as a "cohesion without concept."[71]

Reflecting in the final chapter of the *Phenomenology of Perception* on some of the political implications of his analysis of habitual embodiment, Merleau-Ponty claims that "[w]e are involved in the world (*mêlé au monde*) and with others in an inextricable entanglement (*confusion inextricable*)," which in principle excludes any instance of absolute or unencumbered freedom both at the origin and the terminus of our commitments (*engagements*). Rather than taking our abiding and ambiguous habitual bodily involvement—even confusion—with others, in Augustinian-Heideggerian fashion, as an occasion for articulating an account of authenticity and moral responsibility in terms of a spiritual-axiological project of violent self-retraction and dissociation, Merleau-Ponty looks outwards and downwards, as it were, rather than inwards and upwards. "The phenomenological world is not pure being, but the sense that shows through where the paths of my various experiences and those of others intersect, gearing (*engrenage*) themselves into one another."[72]

"In having a habit," as Casey points out in a discussion of Merleau-Ponty, "we possess a world at once sedimented and open to free variation."[73] How is this free variation to be understood within the ethico-political horizon in which we are conducting our questioning? To take up a slogan from the counter-globalization

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[68] "Je suis un champ intersubjective" (*PP* E525/F515); "Il faut que je me saisisse d'emblée comme excentrique à moi-même" (E521/F512); "[J]e suis d'emblée hors de moi et ouvert au monde" (E530/F520).

[69] Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E94–95, 163, 169, 177, 363/F97, 165, 171, 179, 359.

[70] Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E94/F97; *The Visible and the Invisible*, Chapter Four.

[71] Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible* 152. "The lived body (*corps propre*) is in the world as the heart is in the organism: it continually keeps the visible spectacle alive; it inwardly animates and sustains the latter; the lived body forms, with the world, a system" (*PP* E235/F235).

[72] "Le monde phénoménologique, c'est, non pas de l'être pur, mais le sens qui transparaît à l'intersection de mes expériences et à l'intersection de mes expériences et de celles d'autrui, par l'engrenage des unes sur les autres" (Merleau-Ponty, *PP* Exx/Fxv).

[73] Edward S. Casey, "Habitual Body and Memory in Merleau-Ponty," *Man and World* 17 (1984): 286.

movement and pose it in the form of a question: How is another world possible? How do our common, though as yet uninhabited possibilities of being attain to recognizability? Or rather, more precisely, how do they attain to habitability? With what mode of attention or engagement are we to discern them? How and by whom is this free variation conducted?

Casey's formulation "having a habit," consistent with everyday language, seems on its surface to imply the correlative existence of a subject, of a substratum underlying (*subjectum*) these habitual possessions. (Or perhaps it is our deeply sedimented, and resolutely constrictive habit of identifying or seeking to identify a settled subject at the source of every action and intention.) Who is this 'we' that 'has' a habit and, in so having, possesses this world of habitual sense that is at once sedimented and open to variation? Surely it is not the transcendental ego that Husserl placed at the source of the free variation involved in the static phenomenological method of eidetic intuition (*Wessensschau*)—that disembodied, socially divested, freely directed regard that takes the perceptually given and, by an unquestioned act of volition, produces a multiplicity of successive figures in the effort to peel back from them the invariant general *eidos* without which the object could not be thought.[74] It is not Kant's formal, autonomous subject which serves as a kind of ever-present normative guide or governing agency legislating the norms according to which it conducts itself at all times.[75] It is also not Heidegger's Dasein; for, while being-in-the-world, on Heidegger's account, is "*thrown possibility* through and through" and thus an intrinsically situated scene of incessant sedimentation, its openness as being-possible (*Möglichsein*), as an ability-to-be (*Seinkönnen*) with the possibility of cultivating itself (*sich auszubilden*) *as possibility*, is only disclosed, worked out, and developed (*ausbilden*) through the interpretive projects of a disembodied understanding that tears Dasein away from the fallenness of its social existence.[76]

The 'subject' of habit rather—in both its constrictive *and* dilational modalities, as both thrown *and* projecting, sedimented *and* open to free variation—is a lived body. This body is in each case a temporal thickness, a socially saturated, historically and culturally situated node within a transindividual field. The ontological discourses of Augustine and Heidegger each disclosively approach this transindividual field through their respective concrete analyses of the worldliness and sociality constitutive of human being. But each does so only to then shrink back in the face of, turn away from, and militarily shore up a construction of coherence over against this transindividual field—this field which each habitual lived body itself *is*. The interpretive oscillations,

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[74] In eidetic reduction, the world, i.e., "the firmest and most universal of all our habitualities" that "bond [us] to being," is put consciously out of play in the aim of achieving a perfect purity of intuition, "freed from all connection to experience and all experiential validity." Edmund Husserl, *Experience and Judgment*, ed. Ludwig Landgrebe, trans. James S. Churchill (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 340–352.

[75] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. and eds. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), §§15–27; *Critique of Practical Reason*, trans. and ed. Mary Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), Part I.

[76] Heidegger, *BT* 183–189/*SZ* 143–149.

equivocations, and conflictions that I have (perhaps irreverently) repeated in my treatment of these discourses are each in their own way symptoms of this shrinking back. But if we are to authentically embrace our habitual bodies in their existential variability, if we are to engage in the type of free variation that opens up and prepares us to inhabit alternative ways of being, we must do so *in and through* these bodies, that is, by *being* our bodies *existentially*.

Merleau-Ponty saw this with unprecedented acumen. He claimed that the projects of being-in-the-world that Heidegger describes presuppose that one is able to move his or her body, to act, to perceive, and that this bodiliness is essential to being-in-the-world as thrown, as falling, *and* as projecting. Contrary to Heidegger, who subordinates spatiality to temporality and thus structurally inclines existence away from the complexities and ambiguities of bodily experience (though in his later work he will seek to retract this principle), Merleau-Ponty claims:

> It is as much of my essence to have a body as it is the essence of the future to be the future of a certain present. Such that neither scientific thematization nor objective thought can discover a single bodily function strictly independent of existential structures, or reciprocally a single 'spiritual' act which does not rest on a bodily infrastructure. Moreover, it is not only essential to me to have a body, but to have *this* body. […] Our open and personal existence rests on an initial basis of acquired and stabilized (*figée*) existence. But it could not be otherwise […].[77]

This is so not only because we are temporalizing and historizing (*thrown projection* through and through), as Heidegger argued, but because we are temporalizing and historizing *bodies*—bodies that emerge from, participate and take shape in a transindividual circuit of constitution, consumption, and exchange. It is in this field, which Heidegger neglects and disparages, and which is always already there, necessarily presupposed in each of our projects, that the paradox of human responsibility dwells.

Through our habitual bodies, we can come to appreciate how as conscious, we must become opaque in order to transparently disclose; how we must actively forget in order to make present, act, and create; and how there is perhaps no more striking answer to the problems of self, freedom, and moral responsibility than that *we are habits, nothing but habits—the habit of saying 'I.'*[78] Indeed, as Casey argues, "all that we call 'the person,' 'personal identity,' and the like—everything, in short, that pertains to an individual's life-history—is rooted ultimately in body memory […]. However much its specific schemata may change over time, and however much it is vulnerable to the incursions of accident or disease, it is present throughout our life. It

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[77] Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E501–502/F493–494.

[78] Deleuze makes this claim in the context of a discussion of empiricism and subjectivity. "We are habits, nothing but habits—the habit of saying 'I'. Perhaps there is no more striking answer to the problem of the Self." Gilles Deleuze, *Empiricism and Subjectivity: An Essay on Hume's Theory of Human Nature*, trans. Constantin V. Boundas (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), x.

is thus not just something that we merely have; it is something we *are*: that constitutes us as we exist humanly in the world."[79] Through the reiterative exercise of our habitual bodies, embedded as they are in circuits of collectively instituted sense and normalizing ritual practices, we are constructed as subjects and in this sense are fashioned by historical forces.

Conceiving subjectivity in terms of the habitual bodies through which it necessarily manifests allows us to more clearly discern the way that, as Butler claims, "construction is neither a subject nor its act, but a process of reiteration by which both 'subjects' and 'acts' come to appear at all;" that "there is no power that acts, but only a reiterated acting that is power in its persistence and instability."[80] At the same time, conceiving construction as the reiterative practice of habitual bodies, which are *in their very existential structures open to variation*, allows us to provide greater concreteness and specificity to the notion of 'construction' which, when articulated exclusively in terms of disembodied discursive practices (as Butler and some of her readers are sometimes prone to do), can obfuscate rather than elucidate the common habitual bases from which alternative social identities and arrangements might themselves be constructed.

Just as an individual habit is an opening onto a world that is at once sedimented *and* open to free variation, any given institutional arrangement of power, which structures and limits the field of possible action of a community of subjects, enacts itself through a reiterative practice that, while persistent, is *at one and the same time* inherently unstable. Conventional norms "are grounded in no other legitimating authority than the echo-chain of their own reinvocation."[81] As Butler argues of the assumption of a sexual identity:

> Identifications are never fully and finally made; they are incessantly reconstituted and, as such, are subject to the volatile logic of iterability. […] To the extent that the 'I' is secured by its sexed position, this 'I' and its 'position' can be secured only by being *repeatedly* assumed, whereby 'assumption' is not a singular act or event, but, rather, an iterable practice.[82]

It is important to stress, however, that the constituted practices of power are not solely a signifying chain of texts and performative speech acts. Some versions of postmodern feminism and poststructuralist political theory maintain that our experiences are organized largely (if not exclusively) by linguistic cultural structures. Calling attention to the way that these immanent structures operate within us so as to predelineate, prior to the level of our conscious awareness, the relations according to which our thoughts and perceptions are organized, such accounts often entail (if not

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[79] Casey, *Remembering* 176, 163.

[80] Butler, *Bodies that Matter* 9.

[81] Butler, *Bodies that Matter* 107.

[82] Butler, *Bodies that Matter* 105, 108.

explicitly posit) that there can be no meaning in excess of *semiotic* structures. Analyses that operate with this presupposition maintain their descriptive integrity when put to work within the domain of predication, i.e., the domain of signifying chains that have already acquired a certain solidity and autonomy such that they develop modes of regulation intrinsic to themselves. But the descriptive integrity of this sort of analysis breaks down to the degree that the latter overextends itself to the region of habitual perception and action—that is, when it overwrites the normativity proper to the socially-sedimented habitual body.[83]

The body, considered as a thematized object of knowledge and discourse, certainly admits of a genealogy. And many genealogical accounts have been (and ought to continue to be) given of "the body" as an object of discourse—how various institutionalized discourses of the body intervene in the relation between lived body and world and to a certain degree *constitute* the way we think about and comport our bodies vis-à-vis the world. It is in this spirit that feminists from the Boston Women's Health Collective to Barbara Kruger and Susan Bordo refer to the body as a "battleground."[84] Indeed, Chapters One and Two of the present work were directed toward providing just such a genealogy, namely of the concept of bodily habit as it came to be normatively constructed in Christian discourse, and to thereby release an alternative conception of habitual bodily being. But the aim of such an enterprise is ultimately, in releasing such an alternative conception, to offer it up for *subversive reinvestment*—a reinvestment that would be inventively taken up in the multiform, reiterative practices (both discursive *and* non-discursive) of habitual bodily subjects. Such efforts are not equivalent to maintaining, as some postmodern theorists do, that the normativity proper to the body is reducible to that of discursive or symbolic practices.

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[83] The discursive, archaeological method of analysis set in motion by Michel Foucault, for example, which "questions the *already-said* at the level of its existence," and from which many postmodern approaches draw inspiration, did not aim to overwrite the region of habitual perception and action. Nor did it foreclose the possibility of productive interchange between transcendental and empirical registers with respect to the other-than-discursive domain.

> In the descriptions for which I have attempted to provide a theory, there can be no question of interpreting discourse with a view to writing a history of the referent. […] Such a history of the referent is no doubt possible; and I have no wish to exclude from the outset any effort to uncover and free these 'prediscursive' experiences from the tyranny of the text. But what we are concerned with here is not to neutralize discourse, to make it the sign of something else, and to pierce through its density in order to reach what remains silently anterior to it, but on the contrary to maintain it in its consistency, to make it emerge in its own complexity.

See Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon, 1972), 131 (my emphasis), 47–49.

[84] See Boston Women's Health Book Collective, *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, 35th anniversary edition (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005); Susan Bordo, "'Material Girl': The Effacements of Postmodern Culture," in *Body and Flesh: A Philosophical Reader*, ed. Donn Welton (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1998), 53.

In her theorization of *performativity*, which she defines as "not a singular act, but a repetition and a ritual, which [constructs identity] through its naturalization in the context of a body, understood, in part, as a culturally sustained temporal duration," Butler's discourse at times inclines in this direction; for instance, when she over-extends the concept of "discourse" by vaguely subsuming "social action" under its penumbra;[85] or when she refers to the tacit performativity at work in the habitual bodily reiteration of gender norms as part of "a citational chain lived and believed at the level of the body."[86] The background of prepredicative sense constituted/instituted by bodily habituality cannot itself be made the explicit object of some form of theoretical analysis that would reveal articulate *beliefs* with propositional content. Bodily intentionality is not an object-directed mental state or doxic positing; it is not a speech act or semiotic citation; and habitually embodied sense is not a system of sedimented beliefs, either explicit or implicit. Our bodily habits are not learned as beliefs, they are not acquired or contracted as beliefs, nor do they function in our comportment as beliefs. Habit, as Merleau-Ponty writes:

> is knowledge in the hands (*un savoir qui est dans les mans*), which is forthcoming only when bodily effort is made, and cannot be formulated in detachment from that effort. […] My body has its world, or understands (*comprend*) its world, without having to pass through 'representations,' without having to make use of my 'symbolic' or 'objectifying function.' […] It is the body which 'understands' in the acquisition of habit. This way of putting it will appear absurd, if understanding is subsuming a sensible given under an idea, and if the body is an object. But the phenomenon of habit is just what prompts us to revise our notion of 'understand' and our notion of the body.[87]

Though neglecting to take seriously the lived specificities of gendered experience, Merleau-Ponty joins many feminist philosophers in developing an account of political agency that begins with and remains tethered to the concrete sustainability of intercorporeal arrangements. Grasped concretely, freedom is always a co-operative negotiation and "mutual realization" of corporeal selves, as feminist philosopher Caroline Whitbeck puts it, "and [freedom] deteriorates," Merleau-Ponty argues, "without ever disappearing altogether, in proportion to the diminishing *tolerance* of the bodily and institutional givens of our lives."[88] I wish to distinguish this claim at the

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[85] "Because discourse is not restricted to writing and speaking, but is also social action, even violent social action, we ought to […] understand rape, sexual violence, 'queer bashing' as the category of sex in action" (Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* 225 n. 26). While the meanings of such actions are no doubt shaped by the discursive formation of sex, an important descriptive dimension of these events is obfuscated by reducing the constitution and reconfiguration of embodied sense to a discursive practice. See also *Gender Trouble* 185.

[86] Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 155.

[87] Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E166, 162, 167/F168, 164, 169.

[88] "Concrètement prise, la liberté est toujours une rencontre de l'extérieur et de l'intérieur […] et elle se dégrade sans devenir jamais nulle à mesure que diminue la *tolerance* des donneés corporelles et

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outset from the sense of tolerance emptily espoused as a liberal ideal of 'celebrating multiculturalism.' As political philosopher Wendy Brown has persuasively argued, the liberal rhetoric of tolerance, disguised as a benevolent, unchallenged, everyday virtue, not only depoliticizes a wide range of differences and inequalities (e.g., cultural, racial, ethnic, and sexual), but surreptitiously sustains the abjection of the tolerated.[89]

The sense of tolerance that I wish to extrapolate from Merleau-Ponty points rather to a phenomenological, bodily basis for constructing and reorienting ethical and political relations. Tolerance, in this phenomenological sense, like the Latin *tolero*, which means 'to sustain, support, or nourish,' refers to a set of arrangements (affective, intercorporeal, praxical, institutional) that would at once sustain, support, and uphold, as well as nourish and affirm an expansive degree of existential variation, an amplified space for reciprocity and difference, including sexual difference. Distinguished from liberal contractarian conceptions of human rights, which take as their starting point an ostensibly generic, self-governing individual viewed as a social and moral atom, naturally armed with rights and reason, and actually or potentially in competition or conflict with others; a phenomenological account of habitual bodies as variable and inextricably interrelational existential structures, furnishes us with a concrete, *sensible* model for reconceptualizing the subject of ethics and politics and the dynamics of social and political transformation. Such an account also establishes a dynamic reciprocal circuit between the domains of ethics and politics since by conceiving subjectivity as a habitual body constituted in and through social practices, self-transformation becomes inseparable from social and political transformation. What I am proposing is something akin to what the later Foucault enigmatically called "a new *relational right*" that tears a breach in the relational fabric of normalizing institutions, allowing for, and in fact necessitating, relational openness, experimentation, and variation.[90]

As momentary stabilizations of a recursive temporal, spatial, and transindividual circuit, our habitual bodies silently, invisibly, and through "a knowledge bred of familiarity," anchor our lives.[91] They not only anchor our lives in physical space, establishing such dimensional features of lived space as level, distance, and directionality that effectively attune our bodies to their surroundings. Our habitual bodies are responsible for what Merleau-Ponty calls the active intentional

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institutionelles de notre vie" (Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E528/F518; original emphasis). Caroline Whitbeck, "A Different Reality: Feminist Ontology," in *Beyond Domination: New Perspectives on Women and Philosophy*, ed. Carol Gould (New York: Rowman and Allanheld, 1984), 64–88.

[89] Wendy Brown, *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006).

[90] I will discuss this in greater detail below. Also see my essay "The Passions of Michel Foucault," *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 14.1 (2003): 22–52; and Michel Foucault, "Friendship as a Way of Life" and "The Social Triumph of the Sexual Will," in *Essential Works 1:* 135–40, 157–62.

[91] "If habit is neither a form of knowledge nor an involuntary action, what then is it? It is knowledge in the hands (*un savoir qui est dans les mans*) […] a knowledge bred of familiarity (*savoir du familiarité*). […] The body is our anchorage (*ancrage*) in a world" (Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E166–167/F168–169).

arc (*arc intentionnel*) "which projects round about us our past, our future, our human setting, our physical, ideological, and moral situation, or rather which results in our being situated in all these respects."[92] In this way, our habitual bodies anchor us in what Charles Taylor calls "moral space" or what the later Foucault called a "mode of life" (*mode de vie*), carrying forward a general set of non-thematic (and often non-formalizable) yet modifiable valuations and investments that constitute our fundamental ethical orientation.[93]

Merleau-Ponty (too closely following Heidegger) describes the tacit valuations of the habitual body primarily in instrumental terms, as the weaving together of bodily intentions and environmental solicitations into a fabric of in-habitable possibilities or affordances for oriented instrumental action.[94] Following the ethico-political intentions of the current project, however, and taking some inspiration from the later Foucault, I will transformatively repeat Merleau-Ponty's instrumental account with a newly fore-structured regard toward the transindividual field of social practice. I will transpose the analysis of the latent intentions of the habitual body from those of a laboring body in the work world of tools and tasks to those of an affective body in the social world of ethical relations and political formations. Through this transpositional repetition, I also aspire to expropriatively reorient the Christian-Heideggerian conception of the *Augenblick* that was extracted in Chapter Two, i.e, the moment of transformation in which Dasein achieves authenticity by victoriously overcoming its fallen embodiment and sociality. I seek to graft and extend this extracted predicate through a secular, embodied conception of social, political, and self transformation. Let us first outline Merleau-Ponty's instrumental account.

In the *Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty attempts to account for the ambiguity of the know-how through which our lived bodies gear us into our familiar worlds. He seeks to faithfully describe the "knowledge bred of familiarity" by means of which, for example, I am able to skillfully and understandingly negotiate the familiar space of my apartment, seamlessly navigating its furnishings without casting a ray of thematic attention or reflection on either the position or movements of my

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[92] Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E157/F158.

[93] Charles Taylor, *Source of the Self* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), Chapter Two.

[94] The concept of affordances derives from J.J. Gibson's ecological approach to visual perception. Affordances are the allowable actions specified by the structural coupling between the sensorimotor possibilities of a perceiver and his or her environment. What we primarily perceive in our practical-habitual involvement with the world are not the dimensions and properties of objects, but the possibilities for action that they afford us. For example, my basic perceptual experience of a mailbox is neither as a determinate object with physical (e.g., geometric, textural) properties, but as an affordance for transmitting my written communications. "The theory of affordances," Gibson argues, "is a radical departure from existing theories of value and meaning. It begins with a new definition of what value and meaning *are*. The perceiving of an affordance is not a process of perceiving a value-free physical object to which meaning is somehow added in a way that no one has been able to agree upon; it is a process of perceiving a value-rich ecological object. […] The possibilities of the environment and the way of life of the animal go together inseparably." The environment constrains what a body can do but, within limits, a human body can alter the affordances of the environment, while remaining a product of his or her situation. See James J. Gibson, *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1986), 138–143.

body or on the location and dimensions of the objects around me. Or when I enter my kitchen and the array of coffee cups, plates, and pans near the sink exerts a pragmatic pull upon my body, arousing in me habitual intentions that effectively draw me into the region of the sink to assume the familiar network of manipulatory movements and motor meanings that constitute the activity of washing the dishes.

Merleau-Ponty accounts for the ambiguous bodily knowledge at work in such cases by suggesting that our bodies are comprised of two distinct layers (*couches*): that of the habitual body (*corps habituel*) and that of the momentary body (*corps actuel*).[95] The habitual body is a system of possible movements, a weft of operative intentional threads that have been contracted (*con-trahere*, drawn together) and that are held-in-readiness. Merleau-Ponty describes these habitual possibilities at once kinetically and epistemically, for, as he maintains, habit is always composed of motoric and perceptual elements in an inextricable mixture.[96] Motorically described, the intentions of the habitual body are an inner diaphragm (*diaphragme intérieur*) of nascent movements (*mouvements naissants*) in our bodies, a current of activity (*courant d'activité*) flowing toward the world.[97] Epistemically regarded, they compose a latent, habitual, or global bodily knowledge of the world (*savoir latent, habituel,* or *global*), a fore-knowledge (*prescience*) that deceptively appears to be involuntary because it is a knowledge bred of familiarity (*savoir du familiarité*), or what he even calls an implicit or sedimented science (*science implicite ou sédimentée*).[98]

Merleau-Ponty also struggles at many turns in the *Phenomenology* to describe the form of being of the habitual body: calling it a "near presence," or "ambivalent presence," "a milieu between presence and absence," an "opaque being" or "third genus of being" between subject and object.[99] He describes the habitual body as an "impersonal being" with an "historical thickness," an "existence which runs through me, yet does so independently of me," "an anonymous life which subtends my personal one," "another subject beneath me, for whom a world exists before I am here, and who marks out my place in it."[100]

The nascent movements of my habitual body pass through my momentary body, from which they have disappeared, establishing *a reciprocal circuit of latent*

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[95] *PP* E95/F97.

[96] Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E175–7/F177–9. See also Casey, "Habitual Body and Memory in Merleau-Ponty" 285.

[97] *PP* E92, 91, 90/F95, 93, 92.

[98] *PP* E277, 251, 166–167, 254/F275. 250, 168–169, 253.

[99] Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E93, 94, 209, 408/F96, 210, 402. See also Casey, "Habitual Body and Memory in Merleau-Ponty" 287. "We must discover, as anterior to the ideas of subject and object, the fact of my subjectivity and the nascent object (*l'objet a l'état naissant*), that primordial layer in which both things and ideas are born (*naissent*)" (*PP* E255/F254).

[100] Merleau-Ponty, *PP* E95, 277, 191–192, 296/F98, 275, 192–193, 294.

solicitation between me and my surroundings.[101] Through the mediation of the inner diaphragm of my habitual body, my nascent movements solicit certain kinds of responses from my environment and, reciprocally, my environment solicits certain responses from me. Like a silently working shuttle, the habitual body passes back and forth, seamlessly weaving together its weft of operative intentional threads, which it has previously drawn together, with a warp of incarnate significances that are pre-discursively articulated into a pre-logical or pre-objective unity.[102] In this way, Merleau-Ponty claims, "the habitual body can act as a guarantee (*se porter garant*) for the momentary body," as the latter's anchorage or orientational support—"a perceptual *ground* (sol *perceptif*), a basis of my life, a general milieu for the coexistence of my body and the world."[103]

It is important to point out that the vital horizon of support sutured together through the operative intentional threads of the habitual body is a *normative arrangement* into which the momentary body tenuously comes to rest (*s'installer*). Through these general intentions or spontaneous evaluations (*valorisations spontanées*), which virtually evaluate my surroundings (*valorisent virtuellement mon entourage*), a bodily pact (*pacte*) is established with the world.[104] The world offers our bodies familiar points of anchorage (*points d'ancrage*) and preferential planes (*plans privilégiés*) that are summonsed by our bodies as systems of certain possible movements. These points and planes *motivate* rather than necessitate a particular way of relating to space; they function like a series of experiential 'questions' posed to my body—questions which solicit familiar responses, but which always remain open questions.

> [M]y body is geared into the world when my perception offers me a spectacle as varied and as clearly articulated as possible, and when my motor intentions, as they unfold, receive from the world the responses they anticipate. This maximum distinctness in perception and action defines a perceptual *ground*, a basis of my life, a general milieu for the coexistence of my body and the world.[105]

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[101] "[T]o move one's body is to aim at things through it; it is to allow oneself to respond to their solicitation (*sollicitation*), which is made upon [the body] without any representation" (*PP* E160–161/F161.

[102] Merleau-Ponty repeatedly refers to the pre-objective circuit between the habitual lived body and the world, i.e., habitual-being-in-the-world, as a woven fabric (*texture*). "My body is the common fabric into which all objects are woven (*la texture commune de tous les objets*), and it is, at least in relation to the perceived world, the general instrument of my 'comprehension'" (*PP* E273/F272). See note 24 above and the surrounding discussion. On the pre-logical or pre-objective unity of the body schema, see *PP* E270, 367/F271, 363.

[103] *PP* E95/F98.

[104] *PP* E511–512, 292/F502–503, 289.

[105] *PP* E292/F290 (original emphasis).

This pact and the variable amplitude of the horizon of freedom that it opens up are conditioned by a multiplicity of factors. Included among the unspoken terms of the pact are environmental conditions (gravitational field, ambient light), morphological and sensorimotor conditions (sex; muscular tonicity; the number, lateral reach, and ambulatory potential of appendages; aptitude of sense organs and vestibular system), habitual contingencies (typology and tractability of habitual skill sets), instrumental contingencies (typology and availability of equipment), and motivational contingencies (need, drive, desire, aspiration).[106]

The non-cognitive yet normatively rich relation that this bodily pact establishes with the perceptual milieu provides us with what Merleau-Ponty calls a spatial level (*niveau spatial*). A spatial level is a sense of bodily equilibrium that, in Taylor Carman's words,

> determines which postures and orientations allow us to perceive things *properly*, and which, by contrast, constitute liabilities, incapacities, discomforts, distortions. We have, and feel ourselves to have, optimal bodily attitudes that afford us a 'best grip' on things, for example the best distance from which to observe or inspect an object, a preferred stance in which to listen or concentrate, to achieve poise and balance within the gravitational field.[107]

It is for this reason that Merleau-Ponty describes the lived body as "an ensemble of lived meanings that moves toward its equilibrium."[108] Our bodies seek out and find equilibrium in a spatial level, a living harmony between our own bodily directedness and the directions in things.[109]

Importantly, however, this pact, this momentary stabilization or equilibrium of habitual-bodily-being-in-the-world is subject to constant renegotiation. It is always vulnerable to alteration—not only by limit cases of bodily injury or disease, but also in light of variations among any of the contractual terms listed above, e.g., environmental modifications, new habitual acquisitions, new motivations or existential commitments. As Merleau-Ponty argues, contra Hegel and Sartre, "I am not […] 'a hole in being,' but a hollow, a fold, which has been made and which can be unmade."[110] The bodily complicity that normally anchors perceptual and spatial relationships of motivation within a certain preferential spatiality is able to *shift*.

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[106] On the gravitational field as an invariable natural condition for bodily poise, see Samuel Todes, *Body and World* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), 122–129.

[107] Taylor Carman, "Sensation, Judgment, and the Phenomenal Field," in *The Cambridge Companion to Merleau-Ponty*, eds. Taylor Carman and Mark Hansen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 69.

[108] *PP* E177/F179.

[109] See John McCurdy, *Visionary Appropriation* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1978): 113–138.

[110] "Je ne suis donc pas […] un 'trou dans l'être,' mais un creux, un pli qui s'est fait et qui peut se défaire" (*PP* E250/F249).

Merleau-Ponty illustrates this by recounting a perceptual experiment in which a subject's bodily pact with its perceptual milieu is artificially disturbed. The experimental subject is placed in a room in which he is only able to see his surroundings through a mirror in front of him. This mirror, however, is tilted at an angle 45° away from the vertical. The subject initially sees the room 'slantwise' (*oblique*), and reports that "A man walking about in it seems to lean to one side as he goes, and that "A piece of cardboard falling down the door-frame looks to be falling in a slantwise direction." The general effect is 'queer' ('*étrange*').[111] Merleau-Ponty interprets these results in terms of the spatial level that the subject still inhabits, the anchoring points of which are still habitually embedded in the room around him and not the room reflected in the mirror.[112] These anchoring points continue to motivate his visual experiences in accordance with the spatial level in which they inhere, even though he cannot actually see the room around him, rather than this new and 'queer' orientation suggested by the view of the room in the mirror.

But after a few minutes, a change spontaneously occurs: "the room in the mirror ceases to appear slanted, and the walls, the man walking about the room, and the line in which the cardboard falls become vertical." The visible spectacle abruptly brings the subject's perceptual field as a whole into conformity with a particular spatial orientation within it, drawing him into a new bodily pact, as it were. In relation to the spatial level that the subject had inhabited before the experiment, "the spectacle in the experiment at first appears slantwise (*oblique*), [but] over the course of the experiment this spectacle induces (*induit*) another level in relation to which the whole of the visual field can appear right anew (*peut de nouveau apparaître droit*)."[113]

Let us look at the passage in which Merleau-Ponty describes the experiential shift that takes place.

> What matters for the orientation of the spectacle is not my body as it in fact is, as a thing in objective space, but as a system of possible actions, a virtual body (*corps virtuel*) with its phenomenal 'place' defined by its task and situation. My body is wherever there is something to be done. From the moment that [the] subject takes his place in the apparatus (*dispositif*)[114] prepared for him, the area of his possible actions—such

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[111] *PP* E289/F287.

[112] I am here following Maria Talero's insightful analysis of Merleau-Ponty's notion of spatial level. See Maria Talero, "Perception, Normativity, and Selfhood in Merleau-Ponty: The Spatial 'Level' and Existential Space," *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 43 (2005): 443–461.

[113] *PP* E289–290/F287.

[114] I would like to flag the term *dispositif* at this juncture, for it will come to serve below as a lever of intervention through which we can, with the help of Foucault, graft Merleau-Ponty's instrumental account of the momentary body and the virtual body onto a sociopolitical account geared toward social and political transformation. *Dispositif* is a central Foucaultian concept that appears in many of Foucault's works and has no strict English equivalent. A *dispositif* is an arrangement of power-knowledge, comprising both discursive and (non-discursive) visible components working in concert, that produces subjects and objects of knowledge and structures the field of shared intelligibility in a given social formation. Alan Sheridan translates *dispositif* as "mechanism" in *Discipline and Punish*,

as walking, opening a cupboard, using a table, sitting down—outlines in front of him, even if he has his eyelids shut, *a possible habitat* (*un habitat possible*). At first the mirror gives him a room differently canted, which means that the subject is not at home with the utensils it contains, he does not inhabit it (*il ne l'habite pas*), he does not co-inhabit it (*il ne cohabite pas*) with the man he sees walking to and fro. After a few minutes, provided that he does not reinforce his initial anchorage by glancing away from the mirror, a marvel is produced in which the reflected room calls up (*évoque*) a subject capable of living in it. This virtual body ousts (*déplace*) the momentary body to such an extent that the subject no longer has the feeling of being in the world where he actually is, and that in place of his actual (*véritables*) arms and legs, he feels that he has the arms and legs that *he would need* (*qu'il faudrait*) to walk and act in the reflected room; he inhabits the spectacle (*il habite le spectacle*).[115]

Several points need to be made on the basis of this experiment for my purposes. A crucial thing to note is that, in accordance with our analysis in Section 3.1, the orientation of a body in space is not simply an invariant physiological 'given'; in other words, it is not simply a function of having a physical body equipped with a sensorimotor apparatus. Rather it is a habitual accomplishment.[116] What the experiment discloses with great precision is that our bodily orientation in space springs from a structure of habitual *commitment* that has specified the world in a particular manner. As Maria Talero indicates in a discussion of this passage, "the visible spectacle or the spatial surroundings actually visible to the [experimental] subject […] do not function as objective *causes* of spatial orientation. If they did, there would be no reason for the initial 'failure' in reorientation. Rather, they function through the mediation of the spatial level as motivations for a transformation and reorganization of the subject's spatial 'compact' with the world."[117]

This shift of orientation in which a virtual body ousts a momentary body, reestablishing a newly configured spatial level that had been latently solicited by virtualities in the phenomenal field, is preceded and hurried along by a certain tension felt in the momentary body-world arrangement, what Merleau-Ponty describes in a parallel discussion as "a vague feeling of uneasiness" (*une vague inquiétude*)."[118] At

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Colin Gordon translates it as "apparatus" in *Power/Knowledge*, and Robert Hurley translates it as "deployment" in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*. For a discussion of the concept, see Gilles Deleuze, "What is a *Dispositif?*" in *Michel Foucault: Philosopher*, trans. Timothy Armstrong (New York: Routledge, 1992), 159–168.

[115] *PP* E 291/F288–289 (my emphasis).

[116] "[T]he body, as a mosaic of given sensations, has no specific direction; however, as an agent, it plays an essential part in the establishment of a level" (*PP* E290/F288).

[117] Maria Talero, "Perception, Normativity, and Selfhood in Merleau-Ponty" 447.

[118] *PP* E20/F24–25. What Merleau-Ponty describes as a vague feeling of uneasiness correlates with what pragmatist John Dewey might have called, using a hybrid natural-social psychological vocabulary,

such a (dis)juncture, which we might call a crisis of spatial equilibrium, the momentary body fluctuates between two normative arrangements: one rooted in the lived-through past, the other stretching forth from the virtualities of the future. This is the space of corporeal agency; it is traversed by the habitual body. And to fully account for it, we must modestly reconfigure Merleau-Ponty's conceptual schema. The reconfiguration that I propose is not inconsistent with Merleau-Ponty's overall account; it simply is more insistent in marking a distinction that I have been tracing throughout this entire work, namely between the constrictive and the dilational valences of habitual bodily being. By introducing a demarcation between the *customary body* and the *habitual body* our analysis will be put in a position to more sustainably think through the expansive issues of social and political transformation, and to do so in a manner of thinking that maintains its link to the concrete dimension of lived embodiment.

Our habitual bodies "give to our lives the form of generality, and develop our personal acts into stable dispositional tendencies." In this sense, Merleau-Ponty highlights, our habitual nature "is not long-established custom (*coutume*), since custom presupposes the form of passivity derived from nature."[119] When the variable, versatile possibilities of our habitual bodies fall into the ruts of routine, strictly committed to the fixed channels of ready-made response, they constrictively contract into a customary body. The paradigmatic instance or ideal limit of a customary body can be found in cases of addiction. Addiction is a formerly habitual (which is to say, stable though flexible) tendency that has since hardened, taking on the form of passivity derived from nature, having petrified into what seems like an utterly inert and unshakeable background of our life. As fixed, the customary body narrows down the range of the possible, hems in one's future, and demands uniformity from its environment. Confronted with a differently oriented visual field, like Merleau-Ponty's experimental subject, a momentary body who was embedded in the encrusted orientational framework of his or her customary body would effectively override the visual pull exerted by the unfamiliarly organized field, recalcitrantly reinforcing his or her initial anchorage and thus not only refusing to inhabit the virtual body called up by the situation, but *failing to sense it as a habitable possibility at all*.

A momentary body not thus embedded, however, could, uneasily suspended in the disjunctive interval opened up by the destabilization of a spatial level, be directed by its habitual body to re-root itself in the virtual system of possibilities latent in the field. As open versatile organizations of possible actions, our habitual bodies are not only able to gear us into familiar settings. Through their invisible orientating activity, they can direct our momentary bodies toward virtual bodies that have not yet been actualized, i.e., toward virtual bodies that *have not yet been inhabited*.

We are now in a position to fully transpose our account into the transindividual field of social practice. For, when Butler argues that "[t]he gap between redundancy

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a "plasticity of impulse." "Impulses are the pivots upon which the re-organization of activities turn, they are agencies of deviation, for giving new directions to old habits and changing their quality" (*Human Nature and Conduct* 93). Habits, on Dewey's account, do not exist in addition to impulses; rather, habits are the patterns impulses exhibit once they are meaningfully organized.

[119] *PP* E169/F171.

and repetition is the space of agency," she is speaking precisely to the difference that has here been cast in terms of the distinction between constrictive and dilational habits, the fissure between the customary body and the virtual body that the habitual body traverses in its iterative, though potentially innovative, efficacy.[120] What such an account also makes clear, is that Saint Augustine was right about habitual bodily being in one crucial respect: namely, that reason alone is insufficient to the task of changing habits; it is insufficient to the task of bringing the unself-conscious background of the customary body into the foreground for deliberate modification.

> Do not lose your way outside. Return within yourself. Truth inhabits the inner man. And if you find that your nature is mutable, transcend also yourself. But remember that the moment you transcend yourself, *you transcend reason*. Tend, therefore, to that from which the light of reason springs forth. What does every good reasoner attain but truth? And yet truth is not reached by reasoning, but is itself the goal of all who reason. There is an assemblage (*convenientia*) than which there can be no greater. Convene (*conveni*), then, with it. Confess that you are not as it is. It has to do no seeking, but you reach it by seeking, not in space, but by an affection/dis-position of the mind (*mentis affectu*), so that the inner man may assemble itself (*conveniat*) with its inhabitor (*inhabitatore*) in a pleasure that is not low and carnal, but supremely spiritual.[121]

Extracting this Augustinian counter-intention from the theological-axiological framework in which it is embedded and by which it is ultimately guided toward gratuitous declinations ("lowly carnal pleasures," etc.), we see that Augustine goes beyond Enlightenment humanisms in so far as the experience of the constrictive force of habit leads him to realize that transformation of the human is only possible through processes that exceed the individual's rational control—i.e., through the unself-conscious background of habitual bodily being which arises from a time beyond that of rational analysis. Augustine is right that "human nature" is mutable and that it both can and ought to be overcome. He's also right that reason is insufficient to the task of overcoming this false stabilization of our being, as such a task demands that we tend to "that from which the light of reason springs forth."

However, this is the (dis)juncture at which our habitual bodies must uproot themselves from the customary horizon of Christianity and, through their innovative

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[120] Butler, *Excitable Speech* 129.

[121] "Noli foras ire, in teipsum redi; in interiore homine habitat veritas; et si tuam naturam mutabilem inveneris, transcende et teipsum. Sed memento cum te transcendis, ratiocinantem animam te transcendere. Illuc ergo tende, unde ipsum lumen rationis accenditur. Quo enim pervenit omnis bonus ratiocinator, nisi ad veritatem? cum ad seipsam veritas non utique ratiocinando perveniat, sed quod ratiocinantes appetunt, ipsa sit. Vide ibi convenientiam qua superior esse non possit, et ipse conveni cum ea. Confitere te non esse quod ipsa est: siquidem se ipsa non quaerit; tu autem ad eam quaerendo venisti, non locorum spatio, sed mentis affectu, ut ipse interior homo cum suo inhabitatore, non infima et carnali, sed summa et spiritali voluptate conveniat." (Augustine, *On True Religion* 39.72).

efficacy, direct our momentary bodies toward virtual bodies that have not yet been actualized. For, that from which the light of reason springs forth is not, I submit, God or any other transcendent(al) sovereign unity. Moral response-ability is not grounded in the autonomous upheaval of a disembodied 'resolution' or a free choice of the rational will; nor is it the mysterious gift of divine grace. Moral response-ability is rather the product and participant of a transindividual circuit of repetitive, habitual bodily practice—a circuit that is temporally paradoxical with respect to the time of reason.

The temporal structure of the habitual body that we have outlined—which comprises the existential elements of the customary body, the momentary body, and the virtual body—leads us to a fuller comprehension of the task of self-, and ultimately social and political transformation. As Aristotle points out, no one action establishes a habit.[122] To sculpt ourselves as ethical subjects and sustainably refashion our social habitats and modes of co-existence, to draw ourselves toward the ethical habits and institutional arrangements of a livable future, we must deliberately and experimentally yield to the exploratory practices of our distinctly situated and constituted habitual bodies, constructing and placing our momentary bodies in environmental contexts and social organizations that challenge and destabilize the normative arrangements from which we derive our existential and moral bearings.

To engage in the practice of social production or ethico-political transformation through habit in an authentic fashion, one must comprehend and embrace its distinctively paradoxical temporal structure. This structure, which David Morris perspicaciously articulates, disturbs the rational structure of action and the unitary subject dominantly presumed to be its source.

> Although habits run us from our past, we cannot directly act in the present to change our future habits. To change a habit, we have to repeatedly act *as if* from habit and wait until the habit-to-be actually becomes a fixed part of our behavior. Wanting to change a habit, then, is inherently paradoxical: the act of change can never be directly initiated in the present, and there is a sense in which it is not an act, since we do not directly affect the change. If one does not comprehend this paradoxical structure, then the attempt to change a habit fails to appear to be an act, since it does not exhibit the straightforward rational structure of action, in which some decision on our part is comprehensible as leading to some decisive change in our world. To experience an attempted change of habit, then, without comprehension of its structure, is to experience one's choosing as *dissipating [!] into a future not yet comprehended by one's present*; it is to throw oneself into an endless repetition of a ritual that seemingly can never yield change and is thus to immerse oneself in an almost messianic future that is integral to oneself yet remote.[123]

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[122] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* II.4, esp. 1105a15–b5.

[123] David Morris, "Lived Time and Absolute Knowing" 390–391 (my emphasis).

The transformation of one's existence (which is to say, one's habits of orientation, interrelation, action, and affection, which themselves give rise to stabilized modes of self-relation, understanding, and being in the world), like the transformation of one's spatial level in perception, as Merleau-Ponty illustrates, entails a reorganization of one's bodily pact with the world and others. It also initially involves a vague feeling of uneasiness, during which one engages in repetitive acts *as if* from habit.

In the context of the therapeutic treatment of substance addiction, for example (i.e., a most entrenched and maladaptive modality of habit) this *acting as if* is often referred to by the aphorism *fake it till you make it*. An alcoholic who awakens each day with an agonizing desire to drink is told by his Alcoholics Anonymous sponsor to throw him- or herself into ritual practice, even though it might often feel inauthentic. "Hit the floor and get on your knees every morning and ask God, as you understand him, to free you of this torturously binding habitual desire. Repeat this ritual at night. Hit the floor, get on your knees, and thank God, as you understand him, for the substance-free day that has passed. It does not matter what you say, what you think or even what you believe. All that matters is what you *do*." After all, as Heidegger claims, one *is* what one *does*.[124] "If you go through the motions of living a sober existence and continue doing them for long enough, what you think, say, and believe will miraculously change." Through such ritual practice, we might say, the recovering alcoholic *inhabits* sobriety; he or she settles into it as one settles into a house. What at first is felt (in some instances with great agony) as merely 'going through the motions' becomes an involved and committed way of life. The habitual body gears one into what had been an as-yet-uninhabited (if not apparently uninhabitable) possibility, provided of course that one does not reinforce one's customary anchorage by divaricating from the constituent practices that establish new points of anchorage.

Like the perceptual experiment in which the reflected room called up a subject capable of living in it, the horizon outlined by ritual practice calls up a subject capable of inhabiting it. But the iterations of ritual foreground action that ultimately invoke the virtual body that displaces the customary body are initially experienced as fake, as a mere *acting as if* from a settled disposition. In the interval between normative habitual arrangements—i.e., between the customary body and the virtual body, between the established channels of comportment and the affective intensities and relational virtualities that exceed them—the momentary body whose existential orientation is rooted in a past-become-routine hangs in suspense, treading in a vague state of uneasiness, even anxiety. This uneasiness is an anxiety in the face of the prospect of giving up some definite way of existing in favor of an unfamiliar future—a future which appears to the reflective lights of conscious presence as a distant, uninhabitable island, separated from the present by an ocean of endless repetitions bereft of rational order, intention, and control.

Augustine and Heidegger each fail to comprehend the paradoxical temporal structure of habitual bodily being. In identifying the authentic self with a faculty of understanding that is severed from the unself-conscious habitual bodily background

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[124] *BT* 163, 283/*SZ* 126, 239.

from which understanding necessarily emerges, they each experience and conceive of bodily habit as a dispersion or defluxion that tears the authentic self away from itself.[125] They consequently fail to discern habitual bodies as the ontological bases of response-ability and the oblique agents of existential transformation.

The subtle yet profound ethico-political project that Foucault explores at the end of his life, on the other hand, aims to comprehend and creatively enact this paradoxical work of habitual embodying and self-fashioning. The later Foucault shifts his attention from the subject regarded as an object of knowledge and power, to the "affective and relational virtualities" immanent to habitual bodily subjectivity and to the experimental creation of new forms of life (*modes de vie*) through friendship.[126] As Casey points out, "The body is engaged […] in the construction […] of massively layered and richly overladen actual presents shot through with virtualities."[127] Such virtualities not only pertain to the sorts of spatial-instrumental arrangements that we are capable of inhabiting, which Merleau-Ponty (following Heidegger) focuses his attention on. These virtualities are also affective and relational.

Foucault argues that "We live in a relational world that institutions have considerably impoverished. Society and the institutions which frame it have limited the possibility of relationships because a rich relational world would be very complex to manage. We should fight against the impoverishment of the relational fabric."[128] I would argue that the glib explanation Foucault provides here to account for the limited relational possibilities within the contemporary institutional framework—"because a rich relational world would be very complex to manage"—is a considerably depoliticized one. However, his point remains: the relationships and alliances made possible by the established society are limited and impoverished. The customary bodies and institutional arrangements from which we so often derive our orientation, and which rigidly and constrictively draw out the framework of intelligible (which is to say, habitable) relational possibilities available to us, close down the affective intensities and relational virtualities that beckon us to inhabit new modes of life, new relations with "multiple intensities, variable colors, imperceptible movements and changing forms."[129]

It is thus that Foucault proposes we "escape as much as possible from the type of relations that society proposes for us and try to create, in the empty space where we are, new relational possibilities."[130] This empty space at the threshold of constituent ethico-political praxis is akin to the disjunctive interval inhabited—or, more precisely,

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[125] "Rationality wants to constitute a rational sense for action, but the sense that rationality foregrounds depends on a background whose constitution is extra-rational (not irrational!), a background that arises in a time beyond that or rational analysis" (David Morris, "Lived Time and Absolute Knowing" 392).

[126] Foucault, *Essential Works 1*: 138.

[127] Casey, "Habitual Body and Memory in Merleau-Ponty" 294.

[128] Foucault, *Essential Works* 1: 158.

[129] Foucault, *Essential Works* 1: 137.

[130] Foucault, *Essential Works* 1: 160.

not-yet-inhabited—by the subject of perception when suspended between the spatial level of his customary body and that of a virtual body. In inhabiting the differently oriented visual field, which with respect to the spatial level of his customary body at first appeared 'slantwise,' the subject's habitual body directs his momentary body toward the virtual body *he would need* in order to walk and act in the reflected room.[131] It is not the self-transparent subject of rationality that accomplishes this reorientation, nor does the subject cognitively apprehend in advance what this future pact will be between his future body-world. The subject's habitual body outlines in front of him a possible habitat.

Foucault proposes an *ethico-political experiment* involving habitual bodies in their affective and relational virtualities—an experiment which he advances under the title of the 'technologies of the self.' Within this experiment, which is not a political program, ethical subjects, i.e., habitual bodies, are called upon to fashion and inhabit differently oriented social and political arrangements that would allow and affirm a more expansive variability of human relationships.[132] Unlike asceticism as customarily understood (via our Christian inheritance), the ethical ascesis that Foucault advances does not aim at our becoming conscious of our antecedently given authentic, true desire. Nor is its objective to liberate our authentic selves from the pleasures and obscure, inauthentic intentions of our fallen fleshly nature. Rather, the ascesis Foucault proposes aims to produce, through pleasure, another 'nature':

> [W]hat we need to do is not to recover our lost identity, or liberate our imprisoned nature, or discover our fundamental truth; rather, it is to move toward something altogether different. A phrase by Marx is appropriate here: man produces man. How should it be understood? In my judgment, what ought to be produced is not man as nature supposedly designed him, or as his essence ordains him to be—we need to produce something that doesn't exist yet, without being able to know what it will be.[133]

In particular, for Foucault, the gay community bears a special potential to forge alternative ethico-political itineraries or modes of life by virtue of its strategic position within society—a position from which it stands to disrupt the customary institutional and affective structures of the established order. "Homosexuality is a historic occasion to reopen affective and relational virtualities, not so much through the intrinsic qualities of the homosexual but *because the 'slantwise' (*en biais*) position of the latter, as it were, the diagonal lines he can lay out in the social fabric allow these virtualities*

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[131] *PP* E 291/F288–289 (my emphasis).

[132] Foucault is insistent that relational experimentation or ascesis not degenerate into a political program. Such inventive and exploratory practices make possible "the instruments for polymorphic, varied, and individually modulated relationships. But the idea of a program of proposals is dangerous. As soon as a program is presented, it becomes a law, and there's a prohibition against inventing. […] The program must be wide open" (*Essential Works* 1: 139).

[133] Foucault, *Essential Works 3*: 275.

to come to light."[134] As he claims, "homosexuality is not a form of desire but something desirable."[135] And its desirability consists in the potential it bears to constitute affections and relationships that exceed the framework of possibility drawn by contemporary institutions, to cultivate relational virtualities that pull us toward a future undergirded by what postcolonial feminist writer Gloria Anzaldúa calls "a tolerance for ambiguity." Building upon the existential orientation of inhabiting two or more cultures, Anzaldúa posits "the new *mestiza* consciousness" as a mode of self-understanding and relating to others that acknowledges and embraces conflicting and meshing identities. "The work of *mestiza* consciousness is […] a massive uprooting of dualistic thinking in the individual and collective consciousness […] the beginning of a long struggle that could, in our best hopes, bring us to the end of rape, of violence, of war."[136]

The relational experimentation that Foucault suggests is not only or not even primarily sexual in any conventional sense of the word. Indeed, as Foucault argues, "the development toward which the problem of homosexuality tends is one of friendship."[137]

> [A]ffection, tenderness, friendship, fidelity, camaraderie, and companionship [are] things that our rather sanitized society can't allow a place for without fearing the formation of new alliances and the tying together of unforeseen lines of force. I think that's what makes homosexuality 'disturbing': the homosexual mode of life (*mode de vie*), much more than the sexual act itself. To imagine a sexual act that doesn't conform to law or nature is not what disturbs people. But that individuals are beginning to love one another—there's the problem. The institution is caught in a contradiction; affective intensities traverse it which at one and the same time keep it going and shake it up. Look at the army, for instance, where love between men is ceaselessly summonsed or called upon (*appelé*) and shamed. Institutional codes can't validate relations with multiple intensities, variable colors, imperceptible movements and changing forms. Such relations short-circuit [institutional codes] and introduce love where there's supposed to be only law, rule, or custom.[138]

In their theorization of the multitude as a political subjectivity that exceeds the customary framework of liberal individualism and its basis in the theory of

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[134] Foucault, *Essential Works* 1: 138 (my emphasis).

[135] Foucault, *Essential Works* 1: 136.

[136] Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, second edition (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, [1987] 1999), 101–102.

[137] Foucault, *Essential Works* 1: 136.

[138] Foucault, *Essential Works* 1: 136–137.

sovereignty, political theorists Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri argue that, "insofar as the multitude is neither an identity (like the people) nor uniform (like the masses), the internal differences of the multitude must discover *the common* that allows them to communicate and act together."[139] They locate the ontological basis for this commonality in the social productivity of habitual bodily being—a structure for which this work has attempted to provide greater specificity.

> Habit is the common in practice: the common that we continually produce and the common that serves as the basis for our actions. [...] Habits are not really obstacles to creation but, on the contrary, are the common basis on which all creation takes place. Habits form a nature that is both produced and productive, created and creative—an ontology of social practice in common.[140]

By recognizing and taking hold of habit as a variable structure of our existence, by making manifest the operative intentionality through which it produces and gears us into a common world, we can modify our understanding of ourselves and transform our habitual ways of being. We can take on the task of developing, through investigation of concrete habits and habitats, a more determinate body of knowledge through which to understand the fields of possibility that are strengthened, and those that are shut down, by the commonality of our habitual bodily practices. These fields of possibility determine not only the sorts of entities that show up for us as thinkable and perceivable, and the courses of action that appear to us as available. They also determine the sorts of entities we ourselves *are* and are capable of *becoming*. For, habit constitutes our social nature. By articulating and lending greater specificity to the normative possibilities of our habitual bodies, investigating their particular manners of inhabiting and being inhabited by their habitations, we might be led to reconceptualize our vital priorities. We would generate a fund of new figures through which to imagine how our habits and habitats might be refashioned in order to construct the possibilities of what Luce Irigaray calls a "livable future," or what Judith Butler calls a "livable life."[141] This task is indispensible to any post-humanist ethico-political project, for as Dewey puts it, morals are neither more nor less than "established collective habits."[142] The habitual practices of the multitude not only undergird the established mechanisms of command, they constitute the very agency through which such mechanisms are disrupted. Through their inventive iterations, habitual bodies construct the ethico-political arrangements of the future. And they do so by directing

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[139] *Multitude* xv.

[140] *Multitude* 197–198.

[141] Irigaray, *Democracy Begins Between Two* 96. Butler, *Undoing Gender* 226. On Irigaray's particular conception of "life," see also "A Chance to Live" in *Thinking the Difference* 1–36; as well as "I Won't Get AIDS" and "Your Health: What, or Who, Is It?" in *Je, Tu, Nous* 61–66, 101–106.

[142] Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct* 75.

us toward the virtual bodies that we would need in order to inhabit those arrangements.

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