

THE VIOLENCE OF CARE: AN ANALYSIS OF FOUCAULT'S PASTOR

*Introduction*

Michel Foucault begins his 1977-1978 lecture series—*Security, Territory, Population*—by stating that he will investigate the vague concept of biopower introduced in *The Will to Knowledge* and *Society Must Be Defended*.<sup>1</sup> Famously, or perhaps frustratingly, Foucault never explicitly develops the concept of biopower in *Security, Territory, Population* or in subsequent work. Rather much of *Security, Territory, Population* is devoted to a lengthy analysis of the shepherd<sup>2</sup> in Hebrew and Christian contexts as the historical root of pastoral power. This is not to suggest that Foucault's focus on the shepherd and governmental practice in *Security, Territory, Population* is a turn away from the problems of biopower introduced in *The Will to Knowledge* and *Society Must Be Defended*. Rather, I will argue with Roberto Esposito that pastoral power is “the first genealogical incunabulum of biopower.”<sup>3</sup> That pastoral power provides the first example of life itself being seized and governed. Thus Foucault's focus on the pastor in *Security, Territory, Population* will be read as an investigation into the genealogical root of biopower.

This paper will address Foucault's analysis of the Hebrew and Christian pastor and argue that Foucault's analysis of pastoral power in *Security, Territory, Population* neglects an important characteristic of the shepherd/pastor figure: violence. Despite Foucault's close analysis of the early development of the Hebrew pastor, he overlooks the role of violence and instead focuses on sacrifice. However the sacrificial pastor does not figure in the Hebrew Scriptures. The Hebrew pastor is called to lead, feed and protect the flock, not sacrifice for them. This is not to suggest that the theme of sacrifice is absent in the Hebrew Scriptures but that sacrifice is not a role attributed to the pastor until Jesus' reinterpretation of the “good

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<sup>1</sup> Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège De France 1977-78*, ed. Arnold I. Davidson, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 1.

<sup>2</sup> Shepherd and pastor will be used interchangeably throughout.

<sup>3</sup> Roberto Esposito, *Bios: Biopolitics and Philosophy*, ed. Cary Wolfe, trans. Timothy Campbell, 5 vols., vol. 4, *Posthumanities* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 41.

shepherd” in Chapter 10 of The Gospel of John.<sup>4</sup> In distinguishing the Hebrew and Christian formulations of the pastor, the roles of violence and sacrifice in each can be understood more clearly.

Beginning with the Hebrew Scriptures I will demonstrate the importance of violence in the figure of David as the first “shepherd of men”. I will argue that violence and the ability to protect the flock was a significant and determining characteristic of the Hebrew pastor. Contrary to Foucault’s assertion I will demonstrate that sacrifice was not a role attributed to the Hebrew pastor. While the words and life of Jesus provide a new sacrificial paradigm for understanding the “shepherd of men,” it is Paul who provides the foundation on which the practice of the Christian pastor is established in the Church. Therefore I will examine the writing of Paul to demonstrate the way violence operates in the Christian pastorate. I will argue that sacrifice does not replace violence but violence is subsumed in the sacrificial pastor and continues to operate. Finally I will suggest that the introduction of violence into Foucault’s analysis establishes a deeper connection between pastoral power and biopower. Thus, this connection engenders a richer understanding of the tension in Foucault’s work between care and violence in the poles of biopower: to make live and let die.

### *Part I: Foucault’s Pastor*

Foucault states that the aim of *Security, Territory, Population* is to undertake a “history of technologies of security and try to identify whether we can really speak of a society of security.”<sup>5</sup> In order to investigate security he suggests the history of “governmentality”<sup>6</sup> needs to be understood. Foucault recognizes that with his previous studies of madness, sexuality or criminality he was moving outside of one institution—the hospital, family or prison—into the global and totalizing institution of the State. Thus in *Security, Territory, Population* Foucault seeks to uncover the relations of power and technologies used by the State. He asks,

Can we talk of something like a “governmentality” that would be to the state what techniques of segregation were to psychiatry, what techniques of discipline were to the penal system, and what biopolitics was to the medical institutions?<sup>7</sup>

Foucault seeks to orientate this task by tracing the notion of government back to a pre-political concept to a period where it did not have the “rigorous statist meaning, it begins to take on in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.”<sup>8</sup> Foucault begins his inquiry into the history of governmentality with the question: whose idea was it to govern people?

Foucault initially turns to the Greeks, but concludes that for the Greeks, and the Romans, it was not the people but the city-state that was governed.

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<sup>4</sup> References are to *The New International Version*.

<sup>5</sup> Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 11.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 108.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

Foucault argues that for the Greek ruler the “object or target of government is the city-state in its substantial reality, its unity, and its possible survival or disappearance.”<sup>9</sup> Foucault concludes that the idea of governing people was neither a Greek nor a Roman idea. Rather the idea has its roots in the pre-Christian East, firstly with the Egyptians and Assyrians but primarily with the Hebrews, and then with the early Christians.

Foucault argues that for the Hebrews, with the exception of David, the “pastoral relationship in its full and positive form is therefore essentially the relationship of God to men. It is a religious type of power that God exercises over his people.”<sup>10</sup> Foucault suggests that there are three unique characteristics of the Hebrew pastoral relationship that distinguish it from a Greek notion of the relationship between a god or ruler and the city-state. The Hebrew pastoral relationship governs a people not a territory, it governs for the benefit of the people not something external to it like a State, and finally it is equally concerned for the one and the many.<sup>11</sup> Foucault suggests that these characteristics are instrumental in the formation of pastoral power, a power that was introduced to Western practices of governance through the Christian Church.

*i. Three Features of the Hebrew Pastor*

The first feature of the shepherd Foucault identifies is that the “shepherd’s power is not exercised over a territory but by definition over the flock in its movement from one place to another.”<sup>12</sup> In the context of the Hebrews the shepherd is God, and unlike the gods of the Greeks, which were territorial and connected to a town or temple, the Hebrew God is a God of movement and wandering. Foucault notes that the “presence of the Hebrew God is never more intense and visible than when his people are on the move”.<sup>13</sup> The most intense manifestation of the presence of the Hebrew God as the shepherd of his people is in Exodus when God leads them out of bondage to the Egyptians. The Exodus narrative is a formative narrative for the Hebrew people and their relationship to God.

From the Exodus narrative Foucault draws the conclusion that “pastoral power is exercised on a multiplicity on the move”<sup>14</sup> not on a unified city-state. While the Greek gods appear to defend city walls, it is precisely when the people leave the protection of the city walls that the Hebrew God appears to guide the people to where the most “fertile grasslands can be found, the best routes to take, and the places suitable for resting.”<sup>15</sup> Surprisingly Foucault neglects to mention the very event on which the possibility of the Hebrew exodus rests, the violence of the final plague in which the first-born is slain and the drowning of Pharaoh with his army. The full extent of the significance of these events cannot be addressed here, but I suggest that it was the demonstration of God’s ability to kill and protect that confirmed to

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 123.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 124.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 129.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 125.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 126.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

the people God's role as the shepherd who would lead them to 'fertile pastures' (Exodus 14:11-12).

The second characteristic of the Hebrew pastor identified by Foucault is that it is a beneficent power directed toward the end of the flock, not the end of the state or territory. Foucault acknowledges that beneficence plays a part in Greek and Roman power, but ultimately power in that context is "defined by its ability to triumph over enemies, defeat them, and reduce them to slavery."<sup>16</sup> In contrast Foucault considers pastoral power to be "entirely defined by its beneficence; its only *raison d'être* is doing good"<sup>17</sup>. Further, Foucault suggests, "the essential objective of pastoral power is the salvation of the flock."<sup>18</sup> Salvation here can be taken on three levels: firstly, in the context of the shepherd/flock relation the shepherd delivers salvation to the flock by leading them to abundant pastures where they can be properly fed. Salvation can also refer to the God-shepherd emancipating the flock from slavery and bondage as in the Exodus account. Finally, salvation can refer to delivery from spiritual bondage. In each case the power of the pastor is direct toward the flock/people for their benefit. That is, "pastoral power is a power of care"<sup>19</sup>—a power of care for the salvation of the flock. However Foucault does not address the role of the pastor in dealing with those who either impede or are excluded from the "salvation" of the flock. Here the pastor acts beneficently toward the flock by acting violently, or threatening violence, toward those that endanger the salvation of the flock.

The final feature of the Hebrew pastor is the "idea that pastoral power is an individualizing power."<sup>20</sup> This is to say that while the shepherd guides the flock as a mass it is not at the expense of the individual sheep. The flock is not an undifferentiated mass; rather the "shepherd counts the sheep [...] in the morning when he leads them to pasture, and he counts them in the evening to see that they are all there".<sup>21</sup> Thus the care of the shepherd is directed to the individual sheep just as much as it is to the flock. This places the shepherd in a paradoxical position on two levels: the first is that the shepherd must keep an eye on the one and the many; on all and on each.<sup>22</sup> The second paradox that Foucault notes is that of sacrifice. This entails the sacrifice of the shepherd for the flock and the sacrifice of the flock for a single sheep. Foucault states, "in this Hebrew theme of the flock, the shepherd owes everything to his flock to the extent of agreeing to sacrifice himself for its salvation".<sup>23</sup> At the same time the shepherd, being obligated to the individual sheep may "find himself in a situation in which he has to neglect the whole of the flock in order to save a single sheep".<sup>24</sup> The role of sacrifice of the pastor will be discussed in more detail in relation to Jesus and Paul. However, a few

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<sup>16</sup> Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 126.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 128.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Foucault delivered a lecture on this very issue at the University of Stanford, see Michel Foucault, "Omnes Et Singulatim: Toward a Critique of Political Reason," in *Power: Essential Works of Foucault*, ed. James D Faubion (London: Penguin, 2000).

<sup>23</sup> Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 128.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 128-29.

comments on Foucault's reading of the sacrificial role of the Hebrew shepherd are necessary.

The text to which Foucault appeals to support the claim that the Hebrew shepherd will 'sacrifice himself for the flock' is John 10. In this text, John reinterprets rather than describes the Hebrew tradition of the pastor. Foucault's use of this early Christian text as representative of the Hebrew shepherd is peculiar and results in a misunderstanding of both the Hebrew and Christian shepherds. John's definition of Jesus as the 'good shepherd' who lays down his life for the flock is a feature unique to the Christ-shepherd that cannot be generalized to describe the Hebrew pastor. The theme of sacrifice is repeated throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, but never attributed to the figure of the shepherd. The shepherd is called to feed and maintain the life of the flock by leading them (Ezekiel 34: 1-11), but the shepherd is not called to sacrifice himself for the flock. It is not until John's reinterpretation that sacrifice becomes attributed to the shepherd. Yet, as will be discussed below, even in the Christian context the notion of the sacrificial pastor is not unproblematic.

Despite the confusion over the role of sacrifice in the Hebrew shepherd, Foucault is right to emphasize the theme of "the one and the many". This is a tension that plays out through both the Hebrew and Christian discussions of the shepherd. As shall be discussed in further detail below, the theme of "the one and the many" will be developed more completely through Paul and plays out in a number of violent ways through Church history.

To summarize, Foucault argues that the identifying features of pastoral power are the following: a power which is exercised on a people, exercised for the care and benefit of the people, and finally that the pastor is concerned for the one and the many and, according to Foucault, is prepared to sacrifice for them. While some critical comments on Foucault's reading of the Hebrew pastor have already been offered, the curious absence of David from Foucault's analysis has yet to be addressed.

#### *ii. David: The Exception or the Rule?*

The reason why David is a curious absentee from Foucault's analysis of the pastor is that Foucault notes the exceptionality of David yet does not follow through with an analysis of the way that the Davidic pastorate alters prior conceptions of the pastor. In contrast to the Egyptians and Assyrians, "no Hebrew king, with the exception of David, the founder of the monarchy, is explicitly referred to by name as a shepherd".<sup>25</sup> The figure of the Davidic pastor alters the way that the shepherd metaphor is used in the Hebrew texts and motivates the early Christian interpretation of Jesus as the true shepherd. Further, I will argue that significant aspect of the Davidic pastor is not sacrifice, but violence.

While David was not the founder of the monarchy as Foucault claims, he was the first king to share the title 'shepherd of men' with God. Saul, the first king, did not rule like the shepherd but rather like the kings of the

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<sup>25</sup> Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 124.

neighbouring nations. As a result Saul lost favor in the eyes of the prophet Samuel and was rejected by God. It was Saul who led the Israelites into battle with the Philistines, but David who led them out. According to the narrative in 1 Samuel, on hearing Goliath's challenge to the Israelites, for "one" to fight on behalf of "the many", David requests Saul to allow him to accept Goliath's challenge. Despite being weak, not part of the Israelite army and too small to wear Saul's armour, David pleads with Saul:

Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them. (1Samuel 17: 34-36)

Saul accepts David's request and, as is well known, David kills Goliath with a blow from his shepherd's slingshot. The details that are often neglected from popular retellings of this story is that after killing Goliath with the slingshot David then approached the body, drew Goliath's sword, decapitated him, and took his head back to Jerusalem (1 Samuel 17: 50-54). The significance of this is that David, the shepherd, eliminates the threat to the flock and takes the bloody head of Goliath into the city. Thus here we see the violence of the shepherd combined with the city; a combination that prefigures the coalescing of the city-citizen game with the shepherd-flock game. Foucault argues that the combination of these two games—the survival of the city with the governance of the people—results in the modern state. In taking the decapitated head of the vanquished Goliath into the city of Jerusalem—the heart of Israel whose name is taken to stand for peace, harmony and completeness—David foreshadows a new type of rule and alters the notion of the shepherd. In the journey from the field to the city, David transforms from the shepherd-boy to the shepherd-king. Rather than separating the shepherd from the sovereign, the two are entwined.

While David is not yet king, his victory over Goliath and the parading of Goliath's head on the road to Jerusalem led to the people crying-out in song that "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands." (1 Samuel 18:7) The pre-eminence of David's rule over Saul's is founded on violence, not a willingness to sacrifice, as Foucault would suggest. The flock recognizes in the shepherd-king the care of violence. Their security and prosperity is guaranteed through the shepherd-king's ability to slay "his tens of thousands." David's kingship is defined by the role of the shepherd. In 2 Samuel it is written that God said to David: "you will shepherd my people Israel, and you will become their ruler." (2 Samuel 5:2) Importantly David's rule does not replace God's. Traditionally the authorship of Psalm 23 is ascribed to David, in which it is written, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want." (Psalm 23:1) Thus while David is the shepherd of men, his role is performed under the care of God as the ultimate shepherd. Significantly Psalm 23 describes God as shepherd not only in his ability to meet the flock's desires and lead them to "quiet waters" but to provide protection from evil— "your rod and staff comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies." (Psalm 23:4) The rod and staff of God eliminate the threat of enemies, enabling David to eat in their presence.

Thus God as the ultimate shepherd of men not only leads the flock to green pastures and still waters but also uses violence or the threat of violence to protect and secure the flock from threats of enemies.

What difference does this ancient Hebrew history make to Foucault's analysis of the pastor? Primarily it adds violence. As noted, Foucault considers the key features of the Hebrew pastor to be a power exercised on a people, for the care and benefit of the people, and that the pastor is willing to sacrifice for the one and the many. However through the inclusion of the Davidic pastor to Foucault's analysis of the shepherd an emphasis on the ability to kill threats becomes an important theme. It is David's experience of caring for the flock that taught and required him to kill for the flock. This experience is then mirrored by his care for Israel, requiring him to kill for Israel. While the Davidic pastor acts with a power that is, as Foucault defines it, "entirely defined by its beneficence",<sup>26</sup> it is this beneficence that requires David to kill.

As Foucault notes, David is exceptional as the shepherd of men in the Hebrew context, a status previously reserved for God. After David and the decline of Israel through corrupt kings and the conquests of neighbouring powers, the theme of the shepherd of men is used in two ways. The first is to denounce corrupt kings and rulers as "bad shepherds", for example Ezekiel 34: 2-3:

Woe to the shepherds of Israel who only take care of themselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock? You eat the curds, clothe yourselves with the wool and slaughter the choice animals, but you do not take care of the flock.

Secondly, the theme of the shepherd of men used after David is to point forward to the return of a shepherd-king who will rule in the manner of David. It is this second form of the shepherd that the Christian notion of the pastor picks up on, considering Jesus Christ to be the true shepherd in the line of David. Through the Christian pastorate Foucault considers the shepherd-flock relationship to entwine with political thought and practice.

### *Part II: Care, Exclusion and Violence*

Following his review of Ancient Near East, Greek and Hebrew texts discussing the shepherd, Foucault concludes that,

In the Western world I think the real history of the pastorate as the source of a specific type of power over men, as a model and matrix of procedures for the government of men, really only begins with Christianity.<sup>27</sup>

Considering the importance that Foucault attributes to Christianity as the source of the government of people in the West, it is peculiar that he does not spend much time examining the texts that provide the foundation for the

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<sup>26</sup> Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 126.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 147-48.

Christian pastor, particularly those of Paul. Apart from a cursory glance at The Epistle to the Hebrews (wrongly attributed to Paul in *STP*) and John 21, Foucault does not give much attention to the New Testament texts. Instead Foucault oscillates between texts from leaders of the early church such as Saint Gregory of Nazianzen or Saint Cyprian and those produced during the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. While both periods are extremely influential and relevant to the discussion of the pastor, Foucault's lack of attention toward Paul who more than any other figure apart from Jesus Christ has shaped the formation of the Christian Church seems odd.

I will argue that the violence of the pastor is not exclusive to David but continues in the role of the Christian pastor. Further, due to Foucault's initial neglect of the violence in the example of David he neglects to thematize the violence of the Christian pastor. Through the acceptance of violence as a significant feature of the Christian pastor the understanding of the relationship between pastoral power and biopower can be understood more clearly. Although this paper will not enter the debate directly, the significance of the argument presented here can best be understood in relation to the dispute over the foundation of biopolitics.

In *Homo Sacer* Giorgio Agamben contends that biopolitics did not emerge during the seventeenth century nor can it be separated from sovereign power, both claims central to Foucault's thesis. Rather Agamben argues, "that the production of a biopolitical body is the original activity of sovereign power."<sup>28</sup> Thus Foucault's contrast of the older sovereign power, as the power of death, with the newer biopower, as the power and administration of life, is false according to Agamben. Instead the two are entwined in the production of 'bare life', the figure in Western politics "whose exclusion founds the city of men"<sup>29</sup> which simultaneously includes bare life. Agamben argues that modern politics is founded on the exception of bare life, the life that "may be killed and yet not sacrificed".<sup>30</sup> Thus for Agamben the biopolitical administration of life does not represent a break from the sovereign threat of death, but combines with sovereign power to produce the exclusion of bare life and expose it to violence so the community is maintained.

In contrast, Mika Ojakangas argues that love and care form the unseen foundation of biopolitics. Ojakangas argues that it is not bare life's exposure "to an unconditional threat of death, but the *care of 'all living'* [that] is the foundation of bio-power."<sup>31</sup> Following Foucault, Ojakangas traces modern forms of government back through the Christian tradition of the West suggesting, "the origin of bio-political rationality can be found in the Judeo-Christian tradition of pastoral power."<sup>32</sup> However, while Agamben is criticized for turning biopolitics into a thanatopolitics, Ojakangas takes biopolitics in the other direction towards an "agape-politics", arguing it "is precisely care, the Christian power of love (*agape*), as the opposite of all

<sup>28</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 6.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>31</sup> Mika Ojakangas, "Impossible Dialogue on Bio-Power: Agamben and Foucault," *Foucault Studies* 2 (2005), 6.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.



violence that is at issue in biopower.”<sup>33</sup> Thus for Ojakangas it is the care found in pastoral power that provides the foundation for biopolitics, not the violence directed toward bare life as in Agamben.

This part of the paper will speak to this debate across three sections. The first section briefly overviews the significance of John’s reinterpretation of the shepherd as a sacrificial figure in John 10. Further, the other main reinterpretation of the shepherd as judge in Matthew 25:31-46 will be discussed. The second section will compare Foucault’s notion of sacrifice with Paul’s and argue that sacrifice is not a characteristic attributed to the Christian pastor in the care of the flock. Finally, drawing on the recent work on violence by Slavoj Žižek, I will argue that Paul as model and his instructional letters establish a systemic violence of exclusion as an important feature of the Christian pastor.

*i. The Christ-pastor: Sacrifice and Judge*

As mentioned, a pivotal text for the understanding of the Christian pastor is found in John 10. Jesus refers to himself as the “good shepherd” who knows his sheep and is willing to lay his life down for them. In this text John ties Jesus to the monarchical tradition of David as the “shepherd of men” and prophetic words of Isaiah 40 as the “true shepherd” with Isaiah 53 as the “suffering servant”. In drawing on the Hebrew tradition John both positions Jesus in the line of David and intensifies the intimacy between the shepherd and sheep. Echoing Isaiah’s description of the shepherd who “gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart” (Isaiah 40:10-11) John defines the “good shepherd” as willing to be sacrificed and who is recognized by the sheep. The Christ-pastor intimately knows the sheep and the sheep know him. This text emphasises the variety of circumstances requiring the “good shepherd” to lay down his life. John mentions thieves, robbers, strangers, wolves and hired hands, as threats to the life of the flock. Unlike David who suppresses the threat of Goliath, the Christ-pastor is willing to lay down his life for the flock, but significantly is able “to take it up again.”(John 10: 18) Thus the Christ-pastor has power of life and death in a unique manner: “I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.”(John 10:28) The ability to defeat death and eternally secure the flock is an attribute restricted to the Christ-pastor.

While the Apostles and the Christian believer can draw on the power of the Christ-pastor, they are not the source. Therefore the ability to generalize the sacrificial role as Foucault attempts or the life-giving feature of the Christ-pastor to the Christian pastor is doubtful. As the letters of Paul demonstrate, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ is a unique event and Christ has the power to defeat death. These are not roles attributable to the general Christian pastor. This will be addressed in more detail below.

A second text in which the early Christian writers reinterpret the role of the shepherd is Matthew 25:31-46. Here Matthew further demonstrates the power of the Christ-pastor over life and death through a scene of eschatological judgment when all people and nations will be assembled

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 20.

before the Son of Man who “will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.” (Matt 25: 32-33) Here the pastoral role of dividing the sheep from the goats, the blessed from the cursed, can be seen to mirror Foucault’s description of biopower as a “power to *foster* life or *disallow* it to the point of death.”<sup>34</sup> In the process of caring for the “true flock”, of blessing and fostering the life of the sheep, the shepherd excludes the goats, cursing and disallowing their life to the point of death. Thus here Matthew introduces new characteristics to the shepherd: judgement and exclusion. The division between the sheep and the goats, the believer and unbeliever, results in the exclusion of the unbeliever from life and exposure to violence and death.

Through the letters of Paul it will become clear that John 10 and Matthew 25 address a specific eschatological situation that does not apply to the duties of the Christian pastor. Rather sacrifice and eschatological judgement are roles unique to the figure of the Christ-pastor, not the general Christian pastor that Foucault argues establishes the “model and matrix of procedures for the government of men.”<sup>35</sup>

*ii. The Sacrifice of One and of Many*

In the afterword to *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, Foucault writes:

Pastoral power is not merely a form of power which commands; it must also be prepared to sacrifice itself for the life and salvation of the flock. Therefore, it is different from royal power, which demands sacrifice from its subjects to save the throne.<sup>36</sup>

For Foucault the act of sacrifice differentiates pastoral power from sovereign power, forming a buffer between sovereign and bio power. However in examining the writing of Paul it becomes clear that the role of sacrifice as a means of giving life to the flock is not a general duty of the Christian pastor, but the unique role of the Christ-pastor. What does become increasingly apparent through Paul and the use of his texts in the Church is the way the exclusion of the “one” for the security of “the many” becomes a critical role of the pastor. It is not the pastor’s duty to sacrifice themselves for the flock, but to determine and ‘sacrifice’ those in the community that threaten the salvation (spiritual safety, security or orthodoxy) of the community.

At this point it is necessary to comment on what is meant by sacrifice. Whether Foucault uses sacrifice to suggest that the pastor puts the interests of the flock before his own or that the actual sacrificial act saves the flock is not entirely clear. In *Security, Territory, Population* Foucault acknowledges the uniqueness of the Christ-pastor in asserting “Christ, of course, is the pastor,

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<sup>34</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality Volume 1*, trans. Robert Hurley (London: Penguin Books, 1998), 138.

<sup>35</sup> Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 147-48.

<sup>36</sup> Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power," in *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, ed. Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 214.

and a pastor who sacrifices himself in order to bring back to God the flock that has lost its way; who sacrifices himself not only for the flock in general, but also for each sheep in particular."<sup>37</sup> However Foucault does not make it clear how the unique sacrifice of Christ to "bring the flock back to God" translates into the general sacrifice of the pastor for the "life and salvation of the flock". According to Paul the sacrifice of Christ is a singular event understood in the context of the Jewish sacrificial system for the atonement of sins and not an attribute he associates with the role of the Christian pastor.

In the Epistle to the Ephesians<sup>38</sup> Paul locates the forgiveness of sins in Christ who "loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." (Ephesians 5:2) Likewise, in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, Paul notes the uniqueness and centrality of Christ's death and resurrection for salvation: "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." (1 Corinthians 15:3-4) Furthermore, in the Epistle to the Romans Paul writes, "God presented him [Christ] as a sacrifice of atonement." (Romans 3:25) Thus it is through Christ's sacrifice that sins are forgiven and salvation is possible. Clearly there is a great deal more that could be said on the issue of Christ's sacrifice. The point here is that Paul regards Christ's sacrifice as unique and the language used, such as "atonement" and "fragrant offering" inscribes Christ's sacrifice with the Jewish sacrificial system.

Paul also uses the language of sacrifice in relation to Christian service. Whereas Jesus' sacrifice is regarded as the unique sacrifice for the atonement of sins, the sacrifice of the Christian is a daily activity in which all participate. Whether this general sacrifice of Christian service is for salvation or a demonstration of thankfulness toward God is a matter of debate. However, Paul writes in Romans, "I urge you brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship." (Romans 12:1) Further, in the Epistle to the Philippians, Paul writes of the "fragrant offering" and sacrifice made by the Church in Philippi. (Philippians 4:18) Apart from discussion of pagan sacrifices to idols, Paul refers to either the unique sacrifice of Christ or the general sacrifice of Christian service. Neither form is especially attributed to the Christian pastor as suggested by Foucault.

While Foucault's suggestion that the pastor sacrifices for the salvation of the flock is misleading, the tension he recognizes between the "one and the many" plays an important role in Paul's discussion of the pastor's care of the flock, but not in the way suggested by Foucault. In this final section of the paper I will argue that while there is a significant shift in the form of violence employed from the Davidic to the Christian pastor, the theme of violence continues.

### *iii. Violence and Exclusion*

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<sup>37</sup> Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 152.

<sup>38</sup> This letter is traditionally attributed to Paul. However recent scholarship has debated authenticity of Paul's authorship.

Michel Desjardins argues that the reason why the theme of violence in New Testament texts is often ignored is due to the strong theme of peace. The theme of peace blinds the reader to the presence of violence. Yet Desjardins argues that both peace and violence are present in the texts and that “expectations or the points of focus allow images of peace and violence to appear and disappear in turn.”<sup>39</sup> Desjardins contends that a *trompe l’oeil* is in operation, allowing one to see either peace or violence in the same text. This final section of the paper will argue that Foucault’s notion of the Christian pastor fails to acknowledge the theme of violence due to the *trompe l’oeil* that reveals the peace or beneficence of the pastor while concealing the violence.

I am not suggesting that the violence of the Christian pastor is physical harm, nor is it instrumental and in need of implements, as defined by Hannah Arendt<sup>40</sup>. For Arendt, violence is physical conflict between individuals or groups and is marked by a need to use and develop tools as a means to achieve a particular end. Further to this, Arendt makes a distinction between violence and power, suggesting that while power is the “essence of all government”,<sup>41</sup> the use of violence serves only to evidence the powerlessness of government. Thus it would appear from Arendt’s position that the strength of Foucault’s pastoral power is precisely in the refusal to use physical violence to govern. Through beneficent power the pastor does not need to resort to violence to govern the people, rather pastoral power is so effective and pervasive in governing that violence is not required and its very requirement would only demonstrate the weakness of the pastor. Yet, it is not clear that the pastoral power employed in Western politics to govern the people, or that use by the pastor over the church, is distinct or separate from violence. While agreeing with Mika Ojakangas that “the origin of biopolitical rationality can be found in the Judeo-Christian tradition of pastoral power”,<sup>42</sup> this paper argues against Ojakangas’s thesis that pastoral care or love is the hidden foundation of biopolitics.<sup>43</sup> Rather the beneficent power of the Christian pastor has not separated or disentangled itself from the violence of the Davidic pastor, but is superimposed over it leaving violence still in operation within pastoral power. And thus biopower does have as its hidden foundation either love or violence, but the care of the flock rests on an intermingling of love and violence. It is the tension, not opposition, between love and violence in the role of the pastor that is the hidden foundation of biopower.

In *Violence* Slavoj Žižek extends the notion of violence to include aspects of social and political practice that would not ordinarily be thought of as violent. Žižek makes an initial distinction between “subjective violence” and “systemic violence”. The former is “violence performed by a clearly identifiable agent”<sup>44</sup> or a subject, while the latter is objective and anonymous: “violence inherent to this ‘normal’ state of things.”<sup>45</sup> Subjective violence is

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<sup>39</sup> Michel Desjardins, *Peace, Violence and the New Testament* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 62.

<sup>40</sup> Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (Orlando: Harcourt Books, 1970), 4.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>42</sup> Ojakangas, “Impossible Dialogue on Bio-Power: Agamben and Foucault”, 20.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> Slavoj Žižek, *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections* (London: Profile Books, 2009), 1.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

what we ordinarily understand by violence—crimes, terrorism, civil disturbance, or conflict. This is the form of violence that Arendt distinguishes from power and authority. However Žižek argues that in order to understand subjective violence, we need to understand the objective, invisible and order-sustaining systemic violence. It is the order-sustaining systemic violence that the Christian pastor is required to establish in order to secure the life of the flock.

In arguing that the violence of the pastor is systemic, it is suggested that this form of violence does not interrupt or disturb, but rather allows for and creates order. Paul, both through his actions and his instruction to pastors, targets the exclusion of two threats to the flock. Unlike the real wolf that threatened David's flock, or Goliath that threatened Israel, the wolf for Paul is either false teaching or impure living. In examining the violence of exclusion Žižek asks,

What if such an exclusion of some form of otherness from the scope of our ethical concerns is consubstantial with the very founding gesture of ethical universality, so that the more universal our explicit ethics is, the more brutal the underlying exclusion is?<sup>46</sup>

Žižek is referring to the Pauline all-inclusive dictum from the Epistle to the Galatians: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ." (Galatians 3: 28) Žižek argues that the all-inclusiveness of this statement absolutely and thoroughly excludes those who do not accept or desire inclusion in the all-inclusive community. According to Žižek, the greater the inclusion, the greater the exclusion, and the possibility of exposure to subjective violence. Žižek contends that the "Christian motto 'All men are brothers' [...] also means that those who do not accept brotherhood *are not men*."<sup>47</sup> Through the exclusion from "brotherhood," they are no longer recognized as part of humanity and can thus be exposed through systemic violence of exclusion to subjective violence.

Prior to the encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus, Paul was "breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples" (Acts 9:1) and is recorded as giving approval for the stoning death of Stephen. (Acts 8:1) However post-conversion Paul no longer appeals to physical violence in the protection of the Christian flock, though its threat is not far away. (1 Corinthians 4:21) Rather Paul seeks to protect the Christian flock from false teachers and immorality through exclusion. While not inflicting physical violence, the exclusion practised and instructed by Paul results in a systemic violence that maintains the order of the Christian flock and ultimately exposes the excluded to subjective violence.

While Paul's authorship of the "Pastoral Epistles" (1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus) is questionable, these texts serve as a powerful witness to the way the early Christian sought to structure the Church and deal with conflict. The

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

emphasis on the pastoral duty to exclude false teachers is clearly seen in the “Pastoral Epistles” and seems to echo Paul’s instruction to the Ephesian elders to be watchful as “savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from among your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them.” (Acts 20:29-30) Like Paul’s persecution of the church, his defence of true doctrine is done with zeal. In the First Epistle to Timothy, Paul stresses the importance of sound doctrine and the necessity to “command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer”. (1 Timothy 1:3; 3:1-13; 4:1-5; 6:3-5) Further Paul mentions two false teachers, Hymenaeus and Alexander, who “shipwrecked their faith”, resulting in Paul handing them “over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme.” (1 Timothy 1:20) Whether being ‘handed over to Satan’ is permanent exclusion or whether the “teaching” aspect allows for the possibility of repentance and mercy is unclear. Yet what is clear is the seriousness with which “Paul” regards true doctrine. In The Epistle to Titus, “Paul” instructs Titus to “teach what is in accord with sound doctrine” (Titus 2:1) and asserts that ‘rebellious people’ “must be silenced, because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach” (Titus 1:11). “Paul”’s concern with false teaching is that if it remains within the Church the “teaching will spread like gangrene” (2 Timothy 2:17) endangering the life of the Church. Like wolves who threaten the flock, false teachers distort the truth and threaten the Church. Therefore false teachers are to be rebuked, (Galatians 2:11) condemned (Galatians 1:9) and excluded (Titus 3:10-11) for threatening the life and stability of the Church.

In addition to being watchful and excluding false teachers Paul instructs and models for pastors the exclusion of those with impure lives. In 1 Corinthians Paul instructs the Corinthian Church to “expel the immoral brother”. Initially, Paul calls for the expulsion of a specific man in the church who married his stepmother. However, the call for exclusion is extended to any believer whose life is “impure”. Paul instructs the Corinthians, “you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat.” (1 Corinthians 5:11) Paul emphasizes that he is only referring to those within the church, stating that he does not mean “the people of this world” (1 Corinthians 5:10). Thus a division is created between the people of the church and the people of the world, and then a further division within the Church between the true believer and the false believer. Thus Paul, as the shepherd of the Corinthian flock, foreshadows, but does not fulfil, the eschatological role of the Christ-pastor in determining which sheep belong inside and which sheep (or goats, wolves, thieves) belong outside. Paul is aware that he is not the final judge but believes that, like the gangrene of false teaching – “a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough” – so too does the impurity of one affect the many. Therefore, just as they should “get rid of the old yeast” (1 Corinthians 5:7) so too they need to “[e]xpel the wicked man” (1 Corinthians 5:13) – otherwise the life and stability of the Church is threatened.

In relation to both the false teacher and immoral brother, Paul recognizes the threat of the “one” to “the many”. Unlike Foucault’s characterization of the pastor sacrificing for the many, Paul models and instructs the Christian pastor to remove the threat of the “one” to “the many”. Through the

exclusion of the one, the community of many is stabilized and secured. While Paul suggests that the unrepentant false teacher or immoral brother should be “handed over to Satan” whether this is an absolute exclusion or exclusion with the possibility of redemption requires further analysis.<sup>48</sup> However the point here is that the relevant feature of the Christian pastor, as outlined by Paul, for the governance of people is not the sacrifice of the pastor for the flock, but the exclusion of the unorthodox, the heretic and the immoral to ensure the security and stability of the community. As Žižek argues, systemic violence, of which exclusion is a part, is demonstrated through invisible and “subtle forms of coercion that sustain relations of domination and exploitation, including the threat of violence.”<sup>49</sup> The violence of exclusion as the expression of pastoral care for the flock establishes and maintains the order of the community. While I am not suggesting that Paul wished the excluded to be exposed to physical violence, there are many examples throughout Church history where the pastoral practice of exclusion of “the one” for the benefit of “the many” resulted in subjective violence. Charles Taylor argues that the imperative for social order during the Middle Ages resulted in the violent suppression of “heretics”. Taylor notes how religious belief was not a private matter, but that a single heretic, heathen or apostate living in the community threatened the stability of the whole. Thus there “was an immense common motivation to bring [the heretic] back into line” as the “deviancy of some would call down punishment on all”.<sup>50</sup>

If Foucault is correct that pastoral power is the “embryonic point of the governmentality...[that] marks the threshold of the modern state”<sup>51</sup> then the long history of violence and exclusion in Western governmental practice cannot be explained solely through the “entirely beneficent” power of the pastor. Biopolitics and Western governmentality employ the simultaneous embrace and exclusion of the Christian pastor “to *foster* life or *disallow* it to the point of death.”<sup>52</sup> This can be seen in a variety of forms, from banal public health campaigns targeting obesity to the “War on Terror” and detention of asylum seekers in concentration camps in the Australian desert. The care for the life of the population requires the exclusion of those that threaten its health, safety, and security. The violence of Western biopolitics is not separate from the beneficence of pastoral power, but entwined in it. Including violence as a feature of Foucault’s analysis of pastoral power conjoins care and violence, life and death, embrace and exclusion in an inextricable bond.

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<sup>48</sup> See Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996).

<sup>49</sup> Žižek, *Violence*, 8.

<sup>50</sup> Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 41.

<sup>51</sup> Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 165.

<sup>52</sup> Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge*, 138.

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