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TOTAL ST GALL

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Medieval Monastery as a Disciplinary Institution

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The apparatus was set up, and because it was there it had to function, and once it was functioning, it began to accelerate; once a car starts rolling in an open field, even if no one is at the wheel, it will always take a definite, even a very impressive and remarkable course of its own.

Somehow or other, order, once it reaches a certain stage, calls for bloodshed.

Robert Musil, *The Man without Qualities*

Contents

Preface

Derrida and Goffman got it right. One's inside, no matter how sacred it is held to be, has always already been invaded by the outside. It is inasmuch true of this text as it is of myself. Here are the outsides whose invasion has been more than welcome in the process of writing of this thesis. They truly deserve grateful recognition, deep breath:

Much of my gratitude goes to Olle Ferm, my main supervisor who unbeknownst to himself has spent too much time inside my head through all these years. Nevertheless, by delineating a wide ban around this thesis, Olle has left me a great deal of independence and only occasionally intervened in its content, more often by tipping me off about a good piece to read rather than direct compulsion. His ability to boil down even the most outlandish research ideas to simple, powerful questions cannot be overrated.

Gabriela Bjarne Larsson, my second supervisor, meant support and confidence to me in every possible sense. Her wise and astute comments, always assuming the role of an enthusiastic but demanding reader, have substantially enhanced the readability of every article and the introductory chapter in particular. From the level of structure and general questions to infinitesimal technicalities, Gabbi's spirit has come to permeate these lines. *Ni vet att utan er hade den här boken varit betydligt sämre.*

The thesis has principally taken shape in two research milieus. Firstly, my home institution, the Department of History at Stockholm University, which is a great conglomerate of kind and supportive persons, whom every researcher would like to be surrounded by when doing her job. Annika Brofelth, Tom Silvennoinen, Eva Eggeby, and Kjell Lundgren were always there to assist me in dealing with both trivial and important matters - from computers, through parental leave, to the weirdest bills and receipts.

Omoderna seminariet, the never-drying source of alternately bizarre and priceless comments, was where I presented, defended, and sometimes surrendered my texts and propositions. Many of the participants deserve to be mentioned here but I stand in greatest debt to Jocke Scherp, P-G Sidén, Biörn Tjällén, Fredrik Charpentier Ljungqvist, and Cordelia Heß. Christine Ekholst has earned a special thank you for always taking her time to read my texts and write insightful commentaries, opinions, and literature tips no matter in what remote part of the world she currently was. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Lars Hermanson, then Uppsala and now Göteborg University, who commented on the manuscript of my thesis and suggested many useful revisions in May 2010.

My second (and sometimes first) home was *Forskarskolan Demokratins villkor* at Örebro University, where I wrote the greater part of this text. This too is a felicitous and inspiring place to work in. Its interdisciplinary focus, from which I have greatly profited, is to blame for the disproportionate import of philosophy, and political and social theory into this thesis. *FDV* is most importantly a motley corporation of vibrant personalities. Jenny Ahlberg, Markus Klinton, Meriam Chatty, Mats Öhlén, Daniel Arvidsson, Peter Berglez, and Jan-Magnus Enelo-Jansson, to mention those just a few, have given academic sociability a new dimension. Jan-Magnus deserves special thanks for always being willing to comment on my texts. Time and again he has lent me his superb Bourdeian glasses, so important for this thesis, even though I most often cared to misuse them. *Tack så mycket!*

There are also people who may not be aware of the influence they had on my research but my debt to them has become obvious over the years. Staffan Carlshamre's graduate course in *vetenskapsteori* at Stockholm University has made a lasting imprint on how I now think about 'doing science'. Traces of his exceptional teaching and inspiring texts he gave us to read are discernible in the type of questions asked in this thesis as well as in the number of philosophy and literary studies incorporated here. *Tack!*

Gerd Althoff, my generous host at Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, has made my visit and work in Münster as enjoyable and fruitful as it could be. *Danke sehr, Herr Professor* for the asistance, our weekly meetings and inspiring discussions, as well as for inviting me to publish in the *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*.

I would also like to take the opportunity to thank my MA supervisor at the University of Warsaw, Jacek Banaszkiewicz, with whom I occasionally exchanged texts and ideas during these years. It was he, contrary to his intention perhaps, who back in Warsaw years ago taught me that reading and doing medieval history as playful literature rather than ostentatious science is so much more fun. *Panie Profesorze, wielkie dzięki.*

Certain very helpful readers of my texts, quite literally, cannot be named. Yet it is clear that the anonymous peer-reviewers have made a strong impact on the final versions of the articles included in this volume and sometimes they acted as auxiliary supervisors of my work. I'm very grateful for their comments and suggestions, in particular one of the reviewers of *Speculum*, to which Article 3 was originally submitted and eventually rejected, who recognized my work and took his/her time to substantially improve my text. I would also like to thank many people with whom over the past few years I could exchange ideas, comments, and unpublished texts on the occasion of various meetings and conferences. *Thanks!*

Finally, there is one person to whom the inside/outside distinction no longer applies. Kasia, who once dubbed me - quite rightly so! - 'an intellectual parasite', has always been my first and most attentive reader. Your critical comments and suggestions are not only scattered throughout the whole text of this thesis but are often among its finer points. You also happened to be the reader who was virtually impossible to impress; always on the watch for my eccentric intellectual short circuits, which made your approval all the more valuable. You were my first *push* to dare and my first *pull* not to dare too much.

A number of institutions, some of them more than once, have financially supported my participation in various conferences as well as my visit to Münster in 2006. These are: K & A Wallenbergs Stiftelses resebidrag, STINT, Helge Ax:son Johnsons Stiftelse, Vitterhetsakademin, Petra och Karl Erik Hedborgs Stiftelse. *Tack!*

The Part about the Aim, Scope, and Outline of the Thesis

> In the old days when Novalesa very rigidly exercised its governance over all its abbatical lands, it was customary for its abbots, as custodians of the privileges of the religions, to live separate and apart at the church of the Lord Savior, together with some half-dozen elders. All the rest of the elders, whose great number prevented their living in one place, dwelt in different cells throughout the circuit of churches. From their separate lodgings they came at appointed times to chapter and board, unless prevented by extreme infirmity. The entire body of young brothers regularly were kept enclosed under strictest supervision within the monastic enclosure.[1]

From the first sight one marks a certain lack of uniformity in the form of the monastic life in Novalesa. It departs somewhat from the acknowledged vision of the early medieval Benedictine monastery as a fairly isolated community of monks living within the walls of the cloister and, even though interacting with the outside world, nonetheless rooted to the spot by the *stabilitas loci*. Apparently, in Novalesa's case the architectural endeavor could not keep up with the rapidly expanding community, both in terms of land possession and the number of members of the convent. And yet, despite the unusual spatial distribution, there is an obvious regularity to this form of life when it comes to such issues as trust, discipline, and obedience. The younger brothers had to be strictly supervised, presumably because the authorities put no trust in their thus far weak and insufficiently molded souls. The elder brothers, on the other hand, must have been considered subservient enough to let them live in much smaller groups or on their own and were only occasionally obliged to turn up in Novalesa. No wardens, no surveillance were needed for them. The older

[1] *Chronicon Novaliciense* II, 1, MGH SS rer. Germ, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz, Hannover 1846, pp. 5-6: 'Antiquis vero temporibus, quibus ipsa Nova Lux totius abbatiae suae dominationem strenuissime regebat, mos erat illorum abbatum, ob iura sanctitatis custodienda, remoti vel separati manere, cum aliquantis senis senioribus ad aecclesiam Domni Salvatoris. Aliorum autem caterva senum, quorum multitudo in unum habitare non quibat, in diversis cellulis in circuitu manebant ecclesiarum, de quibus tuguriolis, nisi cum nimia infirmitas obstitisset, oportunis horis ad capitulum et ad mensam pariter occurrebant. Turba vero iuvenum fratrum regularium omnis summa cum custodia infra claustra inclusi retinebantur monasterii.'; English translation taken from: Walter Horn, 'On the Origins of the Medieval Cloister', *Gesta* 12 (1973), pp. 13-52, at p. 36.

monks were assumed to be their own wardens. In this thesis I will investigate the processes like these that brought about the disciplined and coherent 'forms of life' such as early medieval monks and monasteries.[2]

As the title of this thesis already indicates, I would like to employ the adjective *Total* in relation to early medieval monasteries. One of my ambitions in this text is to revive the confidence in Erving Goffman's concept of 'total institution' in studies on internal monastic life during the early Middle Ages. I would thus like to present a wider 'style of reasoning' about the relationships of power permeating monastic institutions buttressed by modern sociological theories in which the Goffmanian concept is the centerpiece. Hence, in order to make the following discussion comprehensible, I should already here tentatively define the sense of this term. In spite of the fact that the concept of 'total institution' has been in the cross-fire from some students of medieval monasticism for some time now, it still does not belong to the everyday vocabulary of medievalists, which may invite unnecessary misapprehensions. According to Goffman's shorthand formulation,

> a total institution may be defined as a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life.[3]

Further, the title of my thesis reads *Total St Gall* because the early medieval community of St Gall will stand in the center of my study although I obviously support my theses with other examples too. The St Gall community, due to its rich and detailed narrative tradition describing the life behind the monastic walls, offers, so I would like to claim, a unique opportunity for hypothesizing about relationships of power and social control that organized the life of medieval monks. Finally, in its full form, the title of this thesis is: *Total St Gall. Medieval Monastery as a Disciplinary Institution* because it is not about some chance occurrences of violence or arbitrary exercises of power but traces the structural regularities of the monastic regimes of power on different levels: on the level of individual subjects, as well as on the intersubjective and behavioral level. In rough terms, I will attempt to trace the elements of power in the ritual, cognitive, and discursive forms of monastic life. Given the broad scope of the addressed forms of power the notion of discipline must neces-

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[2] Hubert L. Dreyfus, Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, 2nd ed., Chicago 1983, p. 125: 'We are trying to understand the practices of our culture, practices which are by definition interpretations. They quite literally and materially embody a historically constituted "form of life," to use Wittgenstein's phrase. This form of life has no essence, no fixity, no hidden underlying unity. But it nonetheless has its own specific coherence.'

[3] Erving Goffman, *Asylums. Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*, Harmondsworth 1968, p. 11.

sarily retain both its Weberian[4] and Foucauldian[5] sense. That is to say, the medieval monastery seen as a disciplinary institution entails that the socially constrained and somewhat formalized practices performed by the inmates in these institutions not only reproduced the very structure of constraint in the monastic regime but also functioned as a means for the creation of the subjectivity of its inmates. Only such a conception of the disciplined subject - simultaneously inhabited by the regime yet free to act within its constraints - can account for both the obedience of the medieval monks as well as for their occasional contestation of the monastic order. This, in turn, implies that this thesis rests on a fairly broad sociological conception of institution. A conception that stresses the legitimized conventionality of a certain social grouping[6] that unavoidably generates but also is dependent on the cognitive patterns to a great extent steering the perception, decisions, and actions of the members of the group.[7] In other words, this thesis, in four acts and a protracted *preludium*, asks a Simmelian kind of question: how was monastery possible?

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[4] Max Weber, *Economy & Society. An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, (ed. & tr.) Guenther Roth, Claus Wittich et al., Berkeley-Los Angeles-London 1978, Vol. 1, p. 53: '"Discipline" is the probability that by virtue of habituation a command will receive prompt and automatic obedience in stereotyped forms, on the part of a given group of persons… The concept of discipline includes the habituation characteristic of uncritical and unresisting mass obedience.'; Robert van Krieken, 'Social Discipline and State Formation: Weber and Oestreich on the historical sociology of subjectivity', *Amsterdams Sociologisch Tijdschrift* 17 (1990), pp. 3-28.

[5] For Foucault it is the body and, by extension, the individual soul that stand at the center of discipline perceived as a technology of investing the corporeal and the psychic with the institutionally expected and promoted patterns of behavior. Technology that produces obedient and docile individuals. It is, however, also a domain of normalizing discourses, forms of knowledge, that objectify individuals as space for such an investment: Dreyfus, Rabinow, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 133-160; as Michel Foucault himself puts it (Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish. The Birth of the Prison*, tr. Alan Sheridan, London 1991, pp. 29-30): '[Soul] is born rather out of methods of punishment, supervision and constraint. This real, noncorporal soul is not a substance; it is the element in which are articulated the effects of a certain type of power and the reference of a certain type of knowledge… On this reality-reference, various concepts have been constructed and domains of analysis carved out: psyche, subjectivity, personality, consciousness etc… A 'soul' inhabits him [individual-WJ] and brings him to existence, which is itself a factor in the mastery that the power exercises over the body. The soul is the effect and instrument of a political anatomy; the soul is the prison of the body.'

[6] Mary Douglas, *How Institutions Think*, Syracuse 1986, pp. 46-48.

[7] Peter Berger, Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality. A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*, London 1991, pp. 13-41.

Writing of this long introduction is infused with a strange, chronologically reversed order, as the writing of any introduction in point of fact is. But it seems even more strange in the case of a collection of essays that have already been published. It is an order that clearly spurns the arborescent demands of the discipline. In retrospect, then, I am to reconstruct - better to say - forge and justify the choices and the whole interpretive scheme that guided my research, which will gainsay the very serendipity of these choices and nonexistence of such a scheme. 'In fact,' as Hubert Dreyfus put it, 'nobody can really justify what their intuition is. So you have to make up reasons, but it won't be the real reasons.'[8] Still, since my hope in this thesis is precisely to put forward a certain style of reasoning about power in early medieval monasteries, making up such a style that to certain extent motivates each of the articles as well as this introduction is a matter of necessity, let alone obligation. *A fortiori*, the necessity of such a style appears at once to be the very condition of legibility of the process that brings about the style itself and as such can only be envisaged *ex post*:

> One can say that the order of intelligibility depends in its turn on the established order that it serves to interpret… A 'successful' revolution, the 'successful foundation of the state'… will produce *après coup* what it was destined in advance to produce, namely, proper interpretative models to read in return, to give sense, necessity and above legitimative model in question, that is, the discourse of its self-legitimation… For there is something of the general strike, and thus of the revolutionary situation in every reading that founds something new and that remains unreadable in regard to established canons and norms of reading, that is to say the present state of reading…[9]

Therefore, in order to introduce a new structure of reading into the *doxa* of the institutional order of medieval history, one is required to 1. provide the beliefs and assumptions - the interpretative horizon - that guide one's practice with a proper justification (this is offered mainly in THE PART ABOUT STYLE AND MANNERS as well as in numerous places scattered throughout this introduction). Since 2. all new interpretations are radically dependent on preceding ones, the new ones should be introduced in a differential relationship. From this, one should argue for a new reading by 3. pointing out a relevant lack in the existing models (these are offered in the section on **previous research and scope of the thesis** as well as in THE PART ABOUT 'TOTAL INSTITUTION') and 4. by promising that this new approach will answer these deficiencies more satisfactorily (this promise is ubiquitous). Ideally, 5. one should purport to

[8] Quoted in: Bent Flyvbjerg, *Making Social Science Matter. Why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again*, tr. Steven Sampson, Chicago 2003, p. 80.

[9] Jacques Derrida, 'Force of Law: The "Mystical Foundation of Authority"', in: Drucilla Cornell, Michael Rosenfeld, David Gray Carlson (eds.), *Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice*, tr. Mary Quaintance, New York-London 1992, pp. 3-67, at pp. 36-37.

speak as a 'humble servant of the text' who is merely returning to what has always been in the text but what was astonishingly overlooked by the previous readers. This final move, however, notwithstanding its popularity and attractiveness is obviously a rhetorical one and without much content. It aims at something that cannot be done. One cannot simply 'go-back-to-the-text' for there is no description, and no *text* as such for that matter, that is not already an interpretation.[10]

Three things, I believe, make it worth going down the road this thesis paves. Firstly, the modern social theories discussed here in connection with medieval sources may shed some new light on the latter and reveal dimensions of power in medieval monasteries to which heretofore we did not attach much importance. Therewith they might contribute to reducing the intellectual distance between the Middle Ages and today. Minimally, they may help us to find new names - new qualities, as it were - for the old problems. On the other hand, this approach could open up a new area for sociological and literary tools and show new frontiers and regions of intervention for these modern approaches. Finally, opening such space may be a new attempt to break from the ever ongoing 'dialogue of the deaf' between the sociologists and historians, in which the former 'have traditionally viewed historians as amateurish, myopic fact-collectors without system, method or theory,' whereas the latter 'still regard sociologists as people who state the obvious in a barbarous and abstract jargon, lack any sense of place and time, [and] squeeze individuals without mercy into rigid categories.'[11] This strange debate is still in need of bilingualism and translation, in which some bits inevitably will get lost but others will be found. What I propose are thus different imaginable ways (via different sociological and literary concepts) of looking at the colorful context of monastic life, none of which is exhaustive in itself, many of which are to a certain extent incompatible with each other, but all of which constitute a critical mass enough to make the whole project worthwhile. In this, I will aim at sound practicality rather than philosophical orthodoxy, a kind of aspiration that Goffman described so elegantly:

> I think that at present, if sociological concepts are to be treated with affection, each must be traced back to where it best applies, followed from there wherever it seems to lead, and pressed to disclose the rest of its family. Better, perhaps,

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[10] Stanley Fish, 'What Makes an Interpretation Acceptable?', in: *Is There a Text in This Class: The Authority of Interpretive Communities*, Cambridge, MA 1995, pp. 338-355; IDEM, 'Normal Circumstances, Literal Language, Direct Speech Acts, the Ordinary, the Everyday, the Obvious, What Goes without Saying, and Other Special Cases', *Critical Inquiry* 4 (1978), pp. 625-644.

[11] Peter Burke, *History and Social Theory*, 2nd ed., Ithaca 2005, pp. 2-3; William H. Sewell Jr., 'Theory, History, and Social Science', in: *Logics of History. Social Theory and Social Transformation*, Chicago 2005, pp. 1-21.

> different coats to clothe the children well than a single splendid tent in which they all shiver.[12]

Better, no doubt, than not to give them any garments or shelter, which so many historians still do, and allow them to freeze to death.

aim of the study

Let's start with too large an objective and qualify it afterwards. *The overall purpose of this study is to render explicit and analyze relations of power and modes of social control comprising the social tissue of early medieval monasteries*. It is not claimed, however, that this thesis describes all types of relationships of power present in, for instance, tenth- and eleventh-century St Gall. A study of this kind is perhaps impossible, not because of deficiency of information but because of the essential conflict about what a relationship of power is. It is not my aim either to put to a test or, worse yet, put forward some general and universal truths about power. No, power is not given here from the beginning but is somewhat anticipated as a possible and perhaps desired but by no means inevitable point of arrival. *By bringing up the examples of tenth- and eleventh-century monasteries of St Gall, Fulda, and Bury St Edmunds, this thesis seeks to understand what power was in medieval monasteries, how and between whom it was exercised, what it affected and how, yet without claiming power to be a single super-answer in each case*. Furthermore, this text rehearses a certain style of reasoning about social relationships in enclosed institutions that speaks from a standpoint strongly underpinned by modern sociological theories, with a special place in this style reserved for Goffman's 'total institution'. Contrary to many medieval scholars who tended to disregard or reject the approach in question, I would like to contend that these theories, provided that they are properly articulated in a given context, are both relevant and useful in investigating the social, political and/or ethical practices permeating, sustaining, or, at times, subverting the institutional monastic regimes.

In order to operationalize the purpose of this study let me break it into a number of topics extracted from the articles enclosed in this book. Hence my ambition is to investigate:

- the problem of surveillance and social control through institutional gaze (Article 1)[13]

[12] Goffman, *Asylums*, p. 11.

[13] Wojtek Jezierski, '*Monasterium panopticum*. On Surveillance in a Medieval Cloister - the Case of St. Gall', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 40 (2006), pp. 167-182.

- the 'space of possibilities of personhood' in early medieval St Gall circumscribed by monastic discourses and practices (Article 2)[14]
- the activable patterns of persecution and stigmatization in the monastery of St Gall as an exemplification of the social means of manufacturing persons at the disposal of monastic communities (Article 3)[15]
- the oral and literary strategies of resolution of the internal monastic conflicts as well as the underlying monastic attitudes towards the external lay *Öffentlichkeit* activated in times of institutional crisis (Article 4)[16]

Let us tie these threads together and see how they fall back on the purpose of the study. Taking a look at the way monks in St Gall were supervised but also the ways they controlled each other will help us describe the most basic function of the medieval monastery *as* a 'total institution' - the power explicitly and deliberately exercised over its members' behavior and, in effect, their minds. Secondly, investigating the institutional and broader social demands made on a monk - the behavioral and discursive circumscription of his role - will help us understand the ways and means in which medieval monks and abbots, as well as laymen entering monasteries, were disciplined to assume a desired posture, conduct, and outlook. Shortly put, it will be a study of the correction and internalization of effects of power in the form of well-tailored and demanding social roles. Thirdly, I will look at the means of controlling, labeling, stigmatizing, and punishing a certain disobedient monk in a closed and socially dense institution that St Gall represented in the late tenth century. This should give us an idea about how human identity is conferred on people in this type of social organizations, where one's sense of self is essentially dependent on recognition by only one social group. Finally, I will try to show that the medieval monastery, like every institution for that matter, generated and rested on certain disciplined and disciplining forms of knowledge embodied in binary oppositions that organized the world of its inmates. These oppositions, in turn, yielded a larger field of possibilities for developing strategies of conflict-solving when the monks clashed with their abbots. This constitutes the main object of inquiry in the last article which, in a way,

[14] Wojtek Jezierski, '*Non similitudinem monachi, sed monachum ipsum*. An Investigation into the Monastic Category of the Person - the Case of St Gall', *Scandia* 73:1 (2008), pp. 7-35.

[15] Wojtek Jezierski, '*Paranoia sangallensis*. A Micro-Study in the Etiquette of Monastic Persecution', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 42 (2008), pp. 147-168.

[16] Wojtek Jezierski, '*Verba volant, scripta manent*. Limits of Speech, Power of Silence and Logic of Practice in some Monastic Conflicts of the High Middle Ages', in: Steven Vanderputten (ed.), *Understanding Monastic Practices of Oral Communication*, Turnhout 2011, pp. 19-44, forthcoming.

investigates the basic elements of monastic *habitus*. Naturally, all these different forms of power and social control, at work in early and high medieval St Gall, merged into each other and are not as neatly and progressively organized in separate articles but are more or less addressed in all of them. But if there is one concept that can roughly cover all these different forms of power and boil them down to a more tangible set of relationships that I will be describing in the following, it is 'conduct' as envisaged by Foucault:

> Perhaps the equivocal nature of the term *conduct* is one of the best aids for coming to terms with the specificity of power relations. For to "conduct" is at the same time to "lead" others (according to mechanisms of coercion which are, to varying degrees, strict) and a way of behaving within a more or less open field of possibilities. The exercise of power consists in guiding the possibility of conduct and putting in order the possible outcome.[17]

Now a question follows: how far does my approach depart from the commonly acknowledged view of the disciplined form of life and power relationships in early medieval monasteries?

previous research and scope of the thesis

Although each of the articles contained in this volume does introduce some elements of the previous research, even if occasionally only in embryonic form, it is worth discussing its main currents from which I draw inspiration. Yet the potential body of literature on monastic life around the tenth and eleventh centuries which could be counted under the name of power relationships and social control is vast, verging on infinite. Due to the limited space, I will only give a rather brief overview of how my own study fits into the larger field of research on discipline in medieval monasticism and then move on to the studies on St Gall and particularly to the work of two researchers, Mayke de Jong and Steffen Patzold, with whom I enter into dialogue. It should be added that a number of studies germane to the topic are discussed later in more detail, in the part dedicated to the concept of 'total institution' in studies on medieval monasticism.

Monastic discipline has for a long time been an object of inquiry and is among the most researched - and perhaps also the most taken for granted - themes within early medieval history. Not as much explored, however, are the inter-

[17] Michel Foucault, 'The Subject and Power', in: *Power. Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984*, Vol. 3, (ed.) James D. Faubion, London 2002, pp. 326-348, at p. 341.

nal power relations within particular monasteries which constitute a topic that is commonly counted into the larger topics of monastic discipline and obedience, but there is a reason to keep these separate even if it would be difficult to depart here from clear-cut definitions. Discipline and surveillance have been particularly much accentuated in relation to *pueri oblati*, young boys given to ninth-, tenth-, and eleventh-century monasteries. This was mainly because of the commentaries on the *Regula Benedicti*, like those by Hildemar of Corbie and Smaragdus of St Mihiel, which proliferated in the backwater of Benedict of Aniane's reform in the ninth century, giving substantial information on the topic.[18] It was a period where immaculacy of both the monks and monasteries was the safeguard for the task they were entrusted with, that is, successful mediation between the worldly powers and their celestial equivalents, the spiritual sources of the formers' might. In consequence, children - considered pristine and asexual and thus particularly malleable - were the best possible material for priests, provided they were carefully supervised. Their prayer, so to speak, had the greatest power. No wonder that the reformers and practitioners of monastic child rearing cared so much for their isolation from the outside world and advised their readers to monitor their pupils constantly in all matters. All this in order to develop the desired traits of character and ensure proper education.[19]

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[18] Mary A. Schroll, *Benedictine monasticism as reflected in the Warnefrid-Hildemar commentaries on the Rule*, New York 1967; Mayke de Jong, 'Growing up in a Carolingian monastery: Magister Hildemar and his oblates', *Journal of Medieval History* 9 (1983), pp. 99-128; Wolfgang Hafner, 'Der St. Galler Klosterplan im Lichte von Hildemars Regelkommentar', in: Johannes Duft (ed.), *Studien zum St. Galler Klosterplan*, St. Gallen 1962, pp. 177-192.

[19] Mayke de Jong, 'Imitatio Morum. The Cloister and Clerical Purity in the Carolingian World', in: Michael Frassetto (ed.), *Medieval Purity and Piety. Essays on Medieval Clerical Celibacy and Religious Reform*, New York-London 1998, pp. 49-80; EADEM, 'Carolingian Monasticism: The Power of Prayer', in: Rosamond McKitterick (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. II c. 700-c. 900*, Cambridge 1995, pp. 622-653; Joachim Wollasch, 'Monasticism: the first wave of reform', in: Timothy Reuter (ed.), *The New Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. III c. 900 - c. 1024*, Cambridge 1999, pp. 163-185; Gerd Tellenbach, *The Church in Western Europe from the Tenth to the Early Twelfth Century*, tr. Timothy Reuter, Cambridge 1993, pp. 101-124; Jean Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire of God*, tr. Catherine Misrahi, New York 1988, *passim*; for the problem of sexuality in Western medieval monasticism see also: V.A. Kolve, 'Ganymede/Son of Getron: Medieval Monasticism and the Drama of Same-Sex Desire', *Speculum* 73 (1998), pp. 1014-1067; John Boswell, *Christianity, social tolerance, and homosexuality: gay people in western Europe from the beginning of the Christian era to the fourteenth century*, Chicago 1980; Nanna Damsholt, 'Er en munk en mand? Refleksioner over maskulinitet i 1100-talets Danmark', in: Peter Carelli, Lars Hermanson, Hanne Sanders (eds.), *Ett annat 1100-tal. Individ, kollektiv och kulturella mönster i medeltidens Danmark*, Göteborg-Stockholm 2004, pp. 120-142.

Consequently, the literature on the surveillance and control of children in the monasteries has become definitely dominant, mainly due to the controversies surrounding the topic but also because of the early medieval bias of the sources preoccupied with this problem. Yet there are, of course, studies on the supervision of adult monks, especially in larger monasteries. Scholars have investigated the role and tasks of roundsmen, *circatores*, and other officials in the tenth and eleventh centuries, who supervised other monks and were considered to be the long arm of the discipline (*amicus disciplinae*), directly responsible to priors and abbots. They patrolled the cloistral precincts irregularly to catch those engaged in idle talk, woke up and turned in the brothers dozing off during the nocturnal or morning *officium*, they cared also for maintaining silence, and spied in the *dormitorium* during the night to surprise those transgressing the rules securing sexual purity.[20]

These are the most obvious and arguably the least disputable forms of social control exercised in monasteries. This view can be further expanded to include studies on everyday monastic life. Scholars acknowledge, of course, that monks lived a strictly organized round of life (yet how strictly organized this round was, is debatable) and moved around in the constant company of others; that the aim of the chapter meeting was, among others, to punish the disobedient or faulting brothers publicly thus setting an example for the others. A vertical axis of responsibility towards the officials and elders organized the social structure - one's place in the pecking order was made perfectly clear from the day one entered coenobitical life. Ideally, on that day the entering individual was to abandon his previous life and undergo *conversio* - become reborn. He was to assume a new identity that was conferred on him by the institution, a kind of change that echoes distinctly in the notion of *habitus* - the clothing symbolizing profound distinction and way of life.[21] Monks were to become, and in fact constituted, a separate *ordo* of

[20] Hugh Feiss, 'Circatores: From Benedict of Nursia to Humbert of Romans', *American Benedictine Review* 40 (1989), pp. 346-379; Scott G. Bruce, '"Lurking with Spiritual Intent": a Note on the Origin and Functions of the Monastic Roundsman (circator)', *Revue bénédictine* 109 (1999), pp. 75-89; Anke Biendarra, Jörg Oberste, 'Der Prior bei den Cluniazensern. Soziale Kontrolle und Kommunikation im Wandel vom 11.-13. Jahrhundert', in: Heinz Duchhardt, Gert Melville (eds.), *Im Spannungsfeld von Recht und Ritual. Soziale Kommunikation in Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*, Köln-Weimar-Wien 1997, pp. 139-171; Rupert Schaab, *Mönch in Sankt Gallen: zur inneren Geschichte eines frühmittelalterlichen Klosters*, Ostfildern 2003, pp. 225-227; Gert Melville (ed.), Oboedientia. *Zu Formen und Grenzen von Macht und Unterordnung im mittelalterlichen Religiosentum*, Münster 2005; Talal Asad, 'On discipline and humility in medieval Christian monasticism', in: *Genealogies of Religion. Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianty and Islam*, Baltimore-London 1993, pp. 125-167.

[21] Giles Constable, 'The Ceremonies and Symbolism of Entering Religious Life and Taking the Monastic Habit, from the Fourth to the Twelfth Century', in: *Segni e riti nella chiesa altomedievale occidentale (Settimane di studio del centro italiano di studio sull'alto medioevo XXXIII)*, Vol. 2, Spoleto 1987, pp. 771-834.

angels, a class-for-itself so to speak, raised high above other people, which does not fall far from the idea of a monk as having a special 'social role' advocated in Article 2. They stood close to God and his saints with whom they negotiated the well-being of the Christian world. To enforce this profound change of identity which a very close standing to the sacred implied, monks were checked on the books they were supposed to read, on the curvature of their posture, on the readiness to humble themselves in front of the superiors, on the observation of silence during meals, on the appropriateness of servitude towards the visiting high-ranking laymen and kings, as well as on obedience, relinquishing of private property, and diet. This list of disciplinary measures is potentially endless for there was hardly any movement, sound, or thought performed by a monastic subject that in one monastery or another was not under scrutiny.[22] There is then little doubt - in fact no doubt at all - *that* medieval monks were under control and custody. The question is *how* they were controlled and *what* control implied? What was it founded on, how deep did it reach into the subjects; what were its forms; what did it render im/possible for those affected by it? And how constant and oppressive was it?

It may seem that most of these questions were answered before they were even asked. The trouble is that majority of contemporary research reconstructing everyday life in medieval monasteries does so relying on information from sources which are explicitly programmatic, for instance, the Benedictine Rule and commentaries on it, custumals, decrees of episcopal synods, customaries, *ordines* etc. In addition, many types of these sources, such as Cluniac and Cistercian customaries and custumals widely employed by the scholars, proliferated after the eleventh century and the information they carry should not be projected on the era preceding them.[23] Nevertheless, the effect of this research is a rich and nuanced view of norms and rules set for behavior which, unfortunately, are too easily accepted as being a description of behavior itself; a unidirectional top-down ideal being taken for multifaceted social reality. We know what a monk's or an abbot's identity was to be like, yet we seldom see

[22] Clifford H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism. Forms of religious life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages*, London-New York 1984, pp. 97-109; Ludo J.R. Milis, *Angelic Monks and Earthly Men. Monasticism and its Meaning to Medieval Society*, Woodbridge 1992, pp. 119-124, 136-151; Lutz Kaelber, *Schools of Ascetism. Ideology and Organization in Medieval Religious Communities*, University Park, PA 1998, *passim*; Heinrich Fichtenau, *Living in the Tenth Century. Mentalities and Social Orders*, tr. Patrick J. Geary, Chicago-London 1991, pp. 4-8, 262-267, 273-279, 285-291; R. W. Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages*, New Haven-London 1966, pp. 154-169; Tellenbach, *The Church*, pp. 122-134; Jean Leclercq, 'Disciplina', in: *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, Vol. 3, Paris 1957, pp. 1291-1302.

[23] Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, p. 105; Milis, *Angelic Monks*, p. 136; Steffen Patzold, *Konflikte im Kloster. Studien zu Auseinandersetzungen in monastischen Gemeinschaften des ottonisch-salischen Reichs*, Husum 2001, pp. 20-25; Jezierski, 'Paranoia sangallensis', pp. 167-168.

its coming into being. In other words, what we often lack are the ways rules and norms were observed, enforced, and contested - the way they were deployed as social practices. There is, then, a lot of talk about *conducting* others but very little about forms of *conduct* within a field of possibilities laid down by concrete situations and human interaction.

Furthermore, focusing on those obvious forms of social control which the monastic reformers and commentators themselves considered to be crucial for the monastery as an institution to survive and reproduce itself may divert attention from other, less conspicuous and less intended but by no means less important forms of power, such as tensions between different groups within a monastic community that kept each other in check.[24] Obviously, there is no possibility to circumvent the impact and importance of programmatic texts on the form of life continuously manufactured in medieval St Gall or Fulda, but in analyzing power relations in these monasteries I will attempt to keep them in productive tension with the images of the cloistral past brought by monastic historiography instead of opting for one or other of these views as being more true. As Foucault argued, practices, even if governed by institutions and ideologies, 'possess their own specific regularities, logic, strategy, self-evidence and "reason".'[25] That is why my primary focus, at least partially unlike that of the mainstream research, is to investigate the exercise of power in practical situations occurring in medieval monasteries and only afterwards proceed to their normative implications.

If we now move to the studies on the monastery St Gall, we find a lot of useful material on control and power relations to depart from, which, however, in certain respects does not overlap with the questions guiding this thesis. Again, it is impossible to do justice to all the research. It is perhaps not necessary either since many relevant though minor texts are discussed in the following articles. Instead let's take two recent studies devoted to the inner life of St Gall which seemingly stand closest to my own approach. Rupert Schaab's *Mönch in Sankt Gallen: zur inneren Geschichte eines frühmittelalterlichen Klosters* is mainly a detailed and meticulous quantitative study of patterns and fluctuations in the recruitment of children and men to the monastery and the age monks underwent *profession*; an estimation of the size of St Gall community in the ninth and tenth centuries and the longevity of the monks; a prosopography of monks and laymen inscribed as *fraters conscripti* in the *libri vitae* of St Gall and Reichenau etc.[26] Another important concern

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[24] Foucault, 'The Subject', pp. 342-343.

[25] Michel Foucault, 'Questions of Method', in: *Power. Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984*, Vol. 3, (ed.) James D. Faubion, London 2002, pp. 223-235, at p. 225; for the distinction between the institutional order of norms and regulations, the level of social situations and practices, and the level of individual psychology see also the 'sociology of occasions' advocated by Goffman further below.

[26] Schaab, *Mönch in Sankt Gallen*, *passim*.

for Schaab, who works in the tradition of Karl Schmid, is to systematically present all the available sources for the reconstruction of St Gall community's history. However, when it comes to reconstructing the inner life itself and relations between individual brothers and groups of monks as well as St Gall's officialdom, Schaab relies heavily on the normative sources, particularly *Regula Benedicti* rather than on narrative texts. In effect, Schaab offers a very static and handbook-like picture of monastic authority and discipline that has very little to do with internal politics and the exercise of power. To a large extent, the difference between his approach and mine might be explained by a divergent classification of what the internal life and history in a closed institution consisted of. From the point of view of this thesis, power relations must have been omnipresent in the everyday life of this large abbey and thus of crucial importance.

The second recently published study of the inner life of St Gall, Andrea zur Nieden's *Der Alltag der Mönche. Studien zum Klosterplan von St. Gallen,* takes a totally different approach to the problem signaled in the title.[27] She focuses on the early ninth-century never realized Plan of St Gall[28] and gathering information from St Gall's own rich historiography (e.g. *cases* by Ratpert, Ekkehard IV, and the anonymous writers), though for the most part much later than the Plan itself, reconstructs the activities performed by the monks in different buildings indicated on the plan. The reader can hence learn a lot about what was going on in the church, what plants grew in the monastic garden, and what kind of texts the lector supposedly read during meals. Unfortunately, it is seldom explained what and how these different practices and elements meant in particular because they are rarely differentiated by their importance or how everyday or extraordinary they are. The issue of space remains just as underdeveloped theoretically. And from the point of view of power taken here, zur Nieden's study says even less, because it hardly ever seeks to explain what kind of inter- and intrasubjective relations these various practices and spaces produced. There are many other problems with this study but the most important is that it presents an idealized image of monastic life, almost paradigmatic in its candidly additive tendency to gather information from various sources also from outside St Gall, which all are taken at face

[27] Andrea zur Nieden, *Der Alltag der Mönche. Studien zum Klosterplan von St. Gallen,* Hamburg 2008.

[28] Walter Horn, 'On the Author of the Plan of St. Gall and the Relation of the Plan to the Monastic Reform Movement', in: Johannes Duft (ed.), *Studien zum St. Galler Klosterplan*, St. Gallen 1962, pp. 103-127; Walter Horn, Ernest Born, *The plan of St. Gall: a study of the architecture & economy of, & life in a paradigmatic Carolingian monastery*, Berkeley 1979, Vols. 1-3; Warren Sanderson, 'The Plan of St. Gall Reconsidered', *Speculum* 60 (1985), pp. 615-632; Alfons Zettler, 'Der Himmel auf Erden…Raumkonzepte des St. Galler Klosterplans', in: Elisabeth Varra (ed.), *Virtuelle Räume. Raumwahrnehmung und Raumvorstellung im Mittelalter*, Berlin 2005, pp. 35-46.

value. Furthermore, zur Nieden readily declines to support her research on any theory or perspective - be it social or anthropological - because these, as she declares, merely tend to complicate the obvious. Instead she opts for a 'straightforward, gripping, and source-based description'(?).[29] The effect is a book of eidetic, hyper-detailed quality yet in need of a more general guiding question.

Instead, inasmuch polemical as it attempts to be, my thesis gains main inspiration from the work of two other scholars. In her early articles, Mayke de Jong analyzed how the tension between the two most important categories, that is, *claustrum*/*saeculum*, had organized monastic life and the monks' perception of the world in both a mental, spatial, and spiritual sense. To analyze these, de Jong took her tools from Arnold van Gennep's and Mary Douglas's theories of liminal phases as well as pollution and taboo, describing how cultures and institutions put up supposedly intransigent and intransgressible categories but also enable ritual mediation between them.[30] More importantly, de Jong also read Ekkehard IV's *Casus sancti Galli* through these categories and found that in the era when great abbeys like St Gall became entangled in a tight net of close relations with their lay and secular surroundings and when kings, counts, bishops, and other visitors walked in the monastic precintcs almost on a daily basis, monks developed the idea of the cloister as a means for keeping these more or less desired intruders at bay. The cloister, both as an architectural solution and as a safe haven established in the heart of every well-disciplined monk to carry with himself even outside, secured the monastic ideals from dissolution in a world avid for the sacred embodied by monks and monasteries.[31] The more monks moved into the center of attention of the kings, emperors, and other *potentes* due to the fact that they came to occupy central place in networks of learning, power, and kinship, the more sophisticated and cunning became the exchange and barter of gifts, donations, and privileges. And the more protected its core had to become. Everybody wanted to be neighbor with Saint Peter, as Barbara Rosenwein put it, but that also meant that St Peter was keen to ban the unworthy

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[29] zur Nieden, *Der Alltag der Mönche*, p. 6.

[30] Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, tr. Monika B. Vizedom, Gabrielle L. Caffee, London 1960; Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concept of Pollution and Taboo*, London 2002.

[31] Mayke de Jong, '*Claustrum versus saeculum*. Opvoeding en affectbeheersing in een Karolingische kloostergemeenschap', *Symposion* 3 (1981), pp. 46-65; EADEM, 'Kloosterlingen en buitenstaanders. Grensoverschrijdingen in Ekkehards Casus Sancti Galli', *Bijdragen en medelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 98 (1983), pp. 337-57; EADEM, 'Internal Cloisters: The Case of Ekkehard's *Casus Sancti Galli*', in: Walther Pohl, Helmut Reimitz (eds.), *Grenze und Differenz im frühen Mittelalter*, Wien 2000, pp. 209-221; Horn, 'On the Origins', *passim*; Christopher Brooke, 'Reflections on the Monastic Cloister', in: Neil Stratford (ed.), *Romanesque and Gothic. Essays for George Zarnecki, Vol 1: Text*, Woodbridge 1987, pp. 19-25.

from his intimacies or from appropriating his due share.[32] Forces of attraction and repulsion were not only coexistent but mutually constituent. De Jong has thus argued that the Carolingian and Ottonian eras were marked by the greatest involvement and shaping of the monastic world in and by the lay and secular politics.[33] Acknowledging this, my aim is still more to sketch a picture of the internal life and power relations of a large Ottonian abbey in the times when there was supposedly very little unpolluted inside to talk about.

When it comes to Ekkehard IV's *Casus sancti Galli*, the main source analyzed in this thesis, de Jong has argued, and rightly so, that this text fits particularly well for describing and analyzing the cultural history of medieval monasteries, their codes of behavior and mentality.[34] Building upon de Jong's arguments, my ambition in this thesis is to show and put stress on how *cultural* means were invested with and translated into *political* capital suitable for governance and dominance over people and groups contained within monastic walls. It is important to point out, however, that 'power relations do not stand in an external relationship to other forms of relations',[35] and thus to understand the political and ideological dimensions of monastic obedience and occasional resistance we need to deepen the sense of culture to include its hegemonic aspect that reproduced and kept in place a certain privileged sense of the world and an uneven distribution of authority.[36]

The inspiration for this more antagonistic and conflict-oriented aspect of my study is gathered from Steffen Patzold's *Mönche im Konflikt*.[37] Patzold has conducted a rich, both wide ranging and in-depth study comparing inner monastic conflicts between abbots and their convents as well as between conventuals themselves in the Ottonian and Salian Reich. He sought to understand the causes and course of action, as well as both short-term and lasting

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[32] Barbara H. Rosenwein, *To be the Neighbor of Saint Peter. The Social Meaning of Cluny's Property, 909-1049*, Ithaca-London 1989; EADEM, *Negotiating Space. Power, Restraint, and Privileges of Immunity in Early Medieval Europe*, Manchester 1999; Antonio Sennis, 'Narrating Places: Memory and Space in Medieval Monasteries', in: Wendy Davies, Guy Halsall, Andrew Reynolds (eds.), *People and Space in the Middle Ages, 300-1300*, Turnhout 2006, pp. 275-294; Dick Harrison, 'Structures and Resources of Power in Early Medieval Europe', in: Richard Corradini, Maximilian Diesenberger, Helmut Reimitz (eds.), *The Construction of Communities in the Early Middle Ages: Texts, Resources and Artefacts*, Leiden 2002, pp. 17-37; Arnold Angenendt, *Das Frühmittelalter. Die abendländische Christenheit von 400 bis 900*, 3rd ed., Stuttgart-Berlin-Köln 2001, pp. 403ff.

[33] de Jong, 'Carolingian Monasticism', p. 623.

[34] de Jong, 'Kloosterlingen', pp. 342-343; Schaab, *Mönch in Sankt Gallen* § 385, p. 237.

[35] Flyvbjerg, *Making*, p. 121.

[36] T.J. Jackson Lears, 'The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities', *The American Historical Review* 90 (1985), pp. 567-593, at pp. 571-572.

[37] Patzold, *Konflikte im Kloster*.

consequences of these conflicts together with the ways contemporaries perceived these supposedly unhappy moments. He has also differentiated the strategies the monks involved in these conflicts employed, which reached from strictly legal adjudication, through informal mediation, up to sheer violence crisscrossing these means with oral, ritual, and literary aspects of their performance. Parallelly, Patzold attempted also to evaluate which of the many currents and approaches in research on medieval conflicts can account for and explain the occurrences he found in tenth-, eleventh-, and twelfth-century St Gall, St Trond, Fulda, Laubach, and Peterhausen. For instance, Patzold has considered the usefulness of Gerd Althoff's *Spielregeln* (which plays a considerable role in the current study), and the so-called Anglo-American conflict-research (e.g. Stephen D. White, Patrick J. Geary, Lester K. Little etc.) that accentuates the role played by social networks and judicial instances in conflict management. It would be difficult to do full justice to all the findings of this large and multifaceted study, which quite correctly analyzes 'institutions from the standpoint of power relations, rather than vice versa.'[38]

There are, however, elements that could have been carried further or framed in a different way. The differences between Patzold's approach and mine should become clear, particularly in Article 4, which reframes two of his examples from Fulda and St Gall. Some of these differences depend on Patzold's use of theory which seems to be rather implicit and mediated through other anthropologically inspired historians' work, which makes certain problems simply fall out of sight. For instance, power, especially in its minuscule, capillary behavioral forms seldom becomes the organizing concept in this approach and if it comes into the main focus it is often framed in terms of 'who has power' rather than 'what and how is power.' This often results in the analysis privileging formally established rituals and questions of legitimacy and neglecting the unconscious logic of interaction.[39] Patzold is also more focused on the ways those internal conflicts were proceeded and less concerned with the possible modes of agency and (dis)obedience - in the ultimate resort - types of monastic subjectivity revealed and implied by these conflicts. My remarks, to be sure, are not intended to belittle the obvious and undeniable merits of Patzold's study but rather point out the cracks in his approach which can be filled with more research driven by a different set of questions.

To wrap it up, as noted above, the purpose of this study is to render explicit and analyze relations of power and modes of social control comprising the social tissue of early medieval monasteries. In other words, it is politics and the governance that stand in the center of this text. Politics not in the sense of grandiose Italian plans of Otto I and not even in the sense of the role that St Gall played in far-ranging networks of power. It is about politics and

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[38] Foucault, 'The Subject', p. 343.

[39] Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge. Selected Interviews & Other Writings 1972-1977*, (ed.) Colin Gordon, New York 1980, pp. 96-97.

governance of people in an enclosed institution which emerge as necessary consequences of the fact that the social nexus is constantly reproduced, upheld, and torn apart by power relations.[40] We need then to analyze both power relations and the manners of dealing with them - the ways they are tamed or exploited - in actual situations and living interaction. We need also to investigate the practical and implicit instructions, not only normative (more precisely: the near indistinctiveness of norm and practice), for becoming the ultimate *loci* of power and corporal carriers of institutional order, that is, individual subjects. There are therefore plenty of important tracks to continue upon; both de Jong and others' studies on the making of monks as well as of the mental categories governing their perception of the social world; analyses of monastic *rites de passage* and the symbolism of clothing; studies on the general political order and conflicts as well as the *Spielregeln* of their resolution; on monastic uses of space etc. In all these topics power relations might be explored. In other words, I do not claim that nothing of what I would like to contribute with in my thesis has ever been done before. Of course it has, in one way or another, as was made clear above. Rather, the potential of this study lies in the consistent use of modern sociological and literary theories employed to account for some fresh and other already known episodes and mechanisms from the early and high medieval history of St Gall and other monasteries, which will show new dimensions and elements of these episodes and the form of life they describe. To say the same thing in a new way is exactly *not* to say the same thing. It is because the style, language, tone, and concepts employed do affect and alter the message.[41]

outline of the thesis

In this thesis, I want to understand what power was, how it was exercised, and how it saturated the life and internal relations of early and high medieval St Gall together with a few other monasteries from that period. To fulfill this task, I will first present the elements of the consciously anachronistic approach grounded in sociology that I take towards early medieval monasticism. The following chapter - THE PART ABOUT STYLE AND MANNERS - will therefore introduce some of the concepts employed in this approach, the manner in which the sources are read, and, quite importantly, the sources themselves, as well as the way my research questions are framed. Taken together, these elements will comprise the style of reasoning in which this thesis is written, a tight compound of theory, method, and specifically arranged empiricial material custom-made for this particular research problem.

[40] Foucault, 'The Subject', pp. 343-345.

[41] Nelson Goodman, 'The Status of Style', in: *Ways of Worldmaking*, Indianapolis 1992, pp. 23-40.

The subsequent chapter - **THE PART ABOUT 'TOTAL INSTITUTION'** - is in fact an excourse, a theoretical detour which is not as vital for the understanding of my empirical studies but reveals a lot about the mode of use of concepts. Basically, this part of the thesis reconstructs the checkered and every so often turbulent career of the Goffmanian concept in medieval studies and attempts to refute many of its misapprehensions. It argues furthermore that when it comes to analyzing power relations in closed institutions such as early medieval St Gall the advantages of the concept of 'total institution' and Goffman's *Asylums* in its entirety still weigh more than their possible drawbacks. Immediately after that part **A SHORT PROLOGUE TO FOUR LONG ARTICLES** is attached, which introduces the research questions within the 'total institution' framework hence establishing a common ground for reading the ensuing articles.

What follows next are four previously published articles gathered here as empirical chapters. Oversimplifying it slightly for the sake of being concise, Article 1 investigates the problem of surveillance and patterns of social control dispersed in the social tissue of the St Gall community. Article 2 studies the early and high medieval institutional expectations and means of enforcement of the monk's role. Article 3 scrutinizes an example of a persecution process and a set of defense measures in the hands of the St Gall community warding off an unwanted visitor. Article 4, lastly, examines a number of inner monastic conflicts from St Gall, Fulda, and Bury St Edmunds and strategies, both political and cognitive, guiding them. The strands and results of the articles as well as the theoretical threads of this introduction are all knitted together in, hopefully, a fairly consistent socio-political rig laid forth in the **CONCLUDING REMARKS** at the very end of the thesis.

In conclusion, it should also be pointed out that, as the reader might already have noticed, this thesis has an underlife of its own that goes on in the footnotes where many important if large quotations, discussions, excourses, and qualifications have been included. The reader is thus encouraged to take part in this hidden existence because, exactly as in the case of 'total institutions', from many angles it casts a different light on the disciplined life rushing forward on the surface.

The Part about Style and Manners

Why let things be difficult when,
with just a little more effort,
we can make them seem impossible.
Frederick W. Frey[42]

style of reasoning and controlled anachronism

As noted above, this thesis rehearses a style of reasoning charged with concepts derived from modern sociology which will help investigate relationships of power and social control in early medieval monasteries. According to Jason Glynos and David Howarth, a style of reasoning most basically comprises a

> grammar of assumptions and concepts that informs a particular approach to the social world: a way of formulating problems, addressing them, and then evaluating the answers.[43]

In the course of this thesis I shall thus introduce the most important concepts - such as power, social regime etc. - and particularly Goffman's concept of 'total institution' and indicate how they underpin all the articles comprised in this volume. I also need to state how the 'total institution' concept, which is certainly fundamental here, connects with other perspectives that amend some of its deficiencies or simply allow expanding my approach into other areas. With help of this axiomatic grammar I should then be able to formulate the problems and isolate the social phenomena in question but also rectify the concepts to better fit the problems. In other words, the sociological concepts and the 'total institution' concept in particular need to be *articulated* in the course of my research, slightly differently in each article. Some of these elements are introduced already in this chapter, the next one and obviously in the articles. The main aim of the current chapter, however, is to prepare the ground for this task by explaining why we need to speak in terms of a style of

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[42] Frederick W. Frey, 'Comment: On the Issues and Nonissues in the Study of Power', *American Political Science Review* 65 (1971), pp. 1081-1101, at p. 1095.

[43] Jason Glynos, David Howarth, *Logics of Critical Explanation in Social and Political Theory*, London-New York 2007, p. 8.

reasoning and the articulation of concepts rather than in terms of methodology. I will also present the sources on which my thesis rests, Ekkehard IV's *Casus sancti Galli* particularly, and the manner in which they are framed and read to answer the questions that guide this investigation.[44]

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[44] Obviously, the idea of style of reasoning is much larger than the shorthand version introduced here. The most important of those elements abandoned is that, according to Ian Hacking from whom Glynos and Howarth borrow their idea of style, what separates styles and paradigms from one another are the ontological issues and debates on the existential status of the objects they investigate (Ian Hacking, '"Style" for Historians and Philosophers', in: *Historical Ontology*, Cambridge, MA-London 2002, pp. 178-199, at pp. 189-190; IDEM, 'Styles of Scientific Reasoning', in: John Rajchman, Cornel West (eds.), *Post-Analytic Philosophy*, New York 1985, pp. 145-165; compare: Gibson Burrell, Gareth Morgan, *Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Analysis. Elements of the Sociology of Corporate Life*, Aldershot 1994, pp. XII, 1-4, 398-399).

The highbrow term historical ontology as an element of style of reasoning may sound awfully pretentious and unnecessarily overambitious for it seldom rings in historians' talk. But one should realize that much of the contemporary medieval research implicitly intervenes into ontology and that many of its debates hinge upon ontologically laden issues. Take the research of Gerd Althoff for example. Outwardly, the main bulk of his research since the late 1980s considers the level of social and political practices allowing for the reproduction and contestation of the political order in the absence of the state-like structures during the early and high Middle Ages. However, there is a great deal of historical ontology there. For instance, by giving names to the phenomena such as *Spielregeln* and claiming that the medieval actors did observe them in their actions he necessarily declares their *unwritten* existence (compare: Gerd Althoff, *Spielregeln der Politik im Mittelalter. Kommunikation in Frieden und Fehde*, Darmstadt 1997). In other words, Althoff's, Geoffrey Koziol's (e.g. Geoffrey Koziol, *Begging Pardon and Favor. Ritual and Political Order in Early Medieval France*, Ithaca 1992, pp. 169-170) and others' research asking questions such as 'what did the political order look like in the absence of state-like structures' necessarily engages in discussion on the ontology of such phenomena as political order, state, political rituals and even what was the essence of the acting subjects they study (compare the critique of Althoff's approach, particularly of his *Otto III* (Gerd Althoff, *Otto III*, tr. Phyllis G. Jestice, University Park, PA 2003) by Michael Borgolte, 'Biographie ohne Subjekt, oder wie man durch quellenfixierte Arbeit Opfer des Zeitgeistes werden kann', *Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen* 249 (1997), pp. 128-141; see also: Julia Barrow, 'Review article: Playing by the rules: Conflict management in the tenth- and eleventh-century Germany', *Early Medieval Europe* 11 (2002), pp. 389-396).

Regarding the current thesis, it too interrogates the existence of a number of objects and argues for re-composition or at least for rethinking their existential status. Articles 2 and 3, for instance, investigate the social constitution of monastic subjects as social roles or persons and the historical means and materials of this constitution. Article 4 rejuvenates, in its small scale, the debate whether the Middle Ages knew *Öffentlichkeit* and what this sphere might have meant to early and high medieval monks. The very question of the social conditions of possibility of medieval monasteries adopted from Simmel at the beginning of this text, which motivates this whole thesis, is ontologically laden too (Ian Hacking, 'Historical Ontology', in: *Historical Ontology*, Cambridge, MA-London 2002, pp. 1-26, at pp. 1-7, 17-23).

A question may pop up: why a style of reasoning? In a way we're all like Mounsieur Jourdain, we speak in style without knowing anything about it. It is because one cannot ascertain facts or identify objects independently of some style of reasoning or, if one prefers, without any conceptual background to check the identifications against. The sentences about these objects too can become candidates for truth or falsity only in a certain style. Better - or worse - still; it is not only that styles allow us to produce utterances but they also stipulate what objects there will be to find, what will support and prove our finding them, as well as what laws or regulations there are about them. Put bluntly, it's 'the interpretation that determines what will count as evidence for it, and evidence is able to be picked out only because the interpretation has *already* been assumed.'[45] However, styles of reasoning at no point predetermine that using them we will get at the truth; on the contrary, they merely deliver the conditions and criteria to decide whether certain propositions are true or false.[46] Finally, far better than the watered-down idea of methodology - or at least the simplistic manner in which it is frequently deployed being falsely opposed to theory and empirical material - the idea of style of reasoning forces us to rethink the lines along which we connect our concepts and evidence, what types of objects we address and what names we give to them, as well as what elements we need to include into explanations to think of them as successful. In other words, style's advantage over misconceived uses of methodology or theory - examples of which we shall see in the next chapter - subsists in simultaneously aiming at the 'what,' 'how,' and 'why' of the research procedure rather than the singular and thus empty 'how' addressed by methodology.[47]

Before we proceed, one might observe parenthetically that the mode of using concepts that will be advocated here shares a lot with Peter von Moos's recent pledging for a conscious and cautious anachronistic thinking in our approach to the past, which could not know the concepts we impose upon it now. At first sight, this proposition sounds very moderate if not completely trivial. After all, is it not so that all modern historiography is anachronistic in some sense, asking the past the kinds of questions that previously lay beyond the horizon of the thinkable? But it is rather the manner in which these

[45] Fish, 'Normal Circumstances', pp. 627-628; As Hacking has observed, there is an unfortunate though unavoidable acrid smell of circularity about styles of reasoning (Hacking, '"Style"', p. 191): 'The instant objection to correspondence theories, for sentences that have positivity only in the context of a style of reasoning, is that there is no way of individuating the fact to which they correspond, except in terms of the way in which one can investigate its truth, namely by using the appropriate style.'

[46] Hacking, '"Style"', pp. 191-192; Pierre Bourdieu, *Science of Science and Reflexivity*, tr. Richard Nice, Chicago 2004, pp. 71-84.

[47] Pierre Bourdieu, Loïc J.D. Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, Chicago 1992, pp. 26-31.

questions are asked and what epistemological claims that are decisive for the venture as a whole. 'Controlled anachronism,' then, as von Moos pleads, is about avoiding naïve, one-to-one transpositions of our conceptual framework to the past on the one hand, and about rejecting the radical otherness or absolute historicity of the past on the other.[48] Only by acknowledging that we fixedly work with double exposed images of the past developed on contemporary paper and that our concepts and language are inherently metaphorical can we actually make comparisons, trace differences, draw parallels, and identify the dimensions of otherness. It also shows that there is nothing out there either in terms of objects of study or concepts as readymades to simply hook upon but that all problems need to be properly constructed and argued for.[49] In this regard, this text attempts to control the expediency of a number of anachronisms: for instance, Article 3 asks whether modern models of exclusion of paranoiacs can help us comprehend early medieval patterns of stigmatization and persecution. Article 4 in contrast, partakes in a much larger debate whether it is appropriate to employ the notion of *Öffentlichkeit* to the pre-modern era. Finally, the very attempt to look at early and high medieval monasteries *as* 'total institutions' is just such a form of 'controlled anachronism.'

articulation and power

I insist on articulation as a part of a style of reasoning. It is because, as it will become clear from the ensuing part of this thesis, too often scholars have been fixated on the necessarily abstract definition of the Goffmanian concept of 'total institution' and its general correspondence to the historical reality instead of trying to think about their historical material with this concept and its broader sociological context. I also insist on articulation because, simply

[48] Peter von Moos, 'Das Öffentliche und das Private im Mittelalter. Für einem kontrollierten Anachronismus', in: Gert Melville, Peter von Moos (eds.), *Das Öffentliche und das Private in der Vormoderne*, Köln-Weimar-Wien 1998, pp. 3-83, at pp. 9-16, 82-83; Peter von Moos, *'Öffentlich' und 'privat' im Mittelalter. Zu einem Problem historischer Begriffsbildung*, Heidelberg 2004, pp. 6-9; Mary Fulbrook, *Historical Theory*, London-New York 2002, pp. 82-86; see also: Thomas Füser, *Mönche im Konflikt. Zum Spannungsfeld von Norm, Devianz und Sanktion bei den Cisterziensern und Cluniazensern (12. bis frühes 14. Jahrhundert)*, Münster 2000, pp. 16-17.

[49] Jacques Derrida, 'White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy', in: *Margins of Philosophy*, tr. Alan Bass, Chicago 1982, pp. 207-257; IDEM, 'Force and Signification', in: *Writing and Difference*, tr. Alan Bass, London 1997, pp. 3-30, at pp. 16 ff.; Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Translator's Preface', in: Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, tr. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Baltimore 1997, pp. IX-LXXXVII, at pp. XXII-XXVIII, see also *Of Grammatology*: pp. 270-280; more methodologically see: Glynos, Howarth, *Logics*, pp. 167-177.

speaking, doing research and using concepts are forms of social practice.[50] If so, then they are necessarily articulatory in much the same sense Wittgenstein speaks of a rule not as a permanent entity but as being reinvented yet also subtly changed in each use. The same is germane to use of concepts, which are not transposable objects externally *applied* to a given context in order to check whether they fit or not. Like any other word, they have no literal sense in themselves but obtain the meaning from the context in which they're used. In other words, the historical intervention of concepts and terms does not just exemplify them but also alters the understanding of their sense and further applicability.[51] The sense of 'total institution' in the studies on medieval monasticism, hopefully, will be different after this thesis. In contrast, to conceive of theoretical concepts as separate entities complete in their atomistic paper form is to fall victim to the scholarly fetishism fixed on definitions purified to the point of absurdity that overlooks both the histories of concepts and the methodological potential underlying them - possible parallels, analogies, or radical divergences - which can only be revealed and actualized in a particular context.[52] Hence, whereas I definitely aim at regularity in my use of Goffman's 'total institution' I have no ambition to achieve uniformity.

Let's take one example: the problem of how far one can persuasively argue for methodological isolation of early medieval monasteries from their larger social context. Each of the four articles from the standpoint of a different question placed at its center argues for different delimitations of medieval monasteries. Thus Articles 1 and 3, basically dealing with the problems of monastic surveillance and the internal social control of inmates, maintain the methodological isolation of early medieval monasteries stressing primarily the enforced physical proximity of inmates and intensity of both hierarchical authority and relationships of power. For instance, Article 3, which narrates and analyzes the visitation of Sandrat, the monastic reformer sent by Otto I to

[50] See, for instance, Catherine Bell's reconstruction of the practice of ritual theory in her *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, New York-Oxford 1992, pp. 13-29; Stanley Fish, 'Change', in: *Doing What Comes Naturally. Change, Rhetoric, and the Practice of Theory in Literary and Legal Studies*, Durham-London 1989, pp. 141-160, at p. 156: 'Theory's project - the attempt to get above practice and lay bare the grounds of its possibility - is as impossible one. Theory is a form of practice, as rooted in particular historical and cultural conditions as any other.'

[51] As Lasse Thomassen puts it (Lasse Thomassen, 'Book Review: Deconstruction after Derrida', *Ethics & Global Politics* 2 (2009), pp. 383-388, at p. 384): 'Properly speaking, the example cannot simply be subsumed to the rule or concept of which it is an example, but must be thought of as an articulation of what it exemplifies. Again it means that the rule is not given in advance of its application, but that the application is a rearticulation.'; Glynos, Howarth, *Logics*, pp. 67-68, 184-185; Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations/Philosophische Untersuchungen* §§ 201-202, tr. G.E.M. Anscombe, Malden-Oxford-Carlton 2008, p. 69.

[52] Pierre Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations*, tr. Richard Nice, Stanford 2000, pp. 61-64.

St Gall to instruct the brothers in the prescriptions of the Lotharingian monastic reform, could have been problematized differently. An alternative would be to, say, present it as a struggle between the early medieval monastic communities and their protectors or as an illustration of the resistance of monastic communities against enforced reforms of customs. Sandrat would have been conceived as a tool of intervention in the imperial hands or as a cog in wide-ranging episcopal and monastic policy coined in and shaped by Metz and Gorze. That, however, would involve different questions in which the rigid distinction between the institutional inside and outside of 'total institutions' proposed by Goffman would lose much of its relevance.

Articles 2 and 4, on the other hand, which deal with small or large scale crises of acceptability and the 'naturalness' of early medieval institutional regimes, claim that these crises might be seen as engaging both the inner monastic and the lay world outside in a form of communication or conflict. Hence they cannot be narrowed down to the physical confines of particular monasteries. Instead, both articles seek to understand certain cognitive patterns generated by these medieval 'total institutions' of how such communications or conflicts should be carried out in order to preserve the monastic institution relatively intact. In other words, Articles 2 and 4 foreground the problem of 'total institutions' more at the level of sociology of knowledge and less at the level of spatial organization as Articles 1 and 3 do, even though both these levels as well as others are involved in all four studies.

The problem of articulation links up also with the concept of power, this essentially contested and theoretically much debated concept.[53] Quite deliberately it will not be discussed in abstract terms in the course of this introduction despite, or perhaps precisely because of its importance for all four studies. The concept of power (and social control which tentatively may be defined as a more deliberate and more institutionalized type of power) will rather be articulated slightly differently in every study because each of them deals with different forms of power dependent on the concrete types of situations and relations in question. It is better to keep it simple and relatively general here in order to allow the differences and reservations in the use of concepts to become clear later. Therefore, exactly as before in relation to the concepts of discipline and conduct, I would like to accentuate the particular duality inherent in the question of power. I will speak of power exercised through influencing the behavior of others and constraining their possibility of action on the one hand, and of power involved in recognizing and affecting the subjectivity of those who engage in and exercise power on the other hand. According to Foucault,

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[53] Steven Lukes, *Power: A Radical View*, 2nd ed., London 2005, pp. 61-65, 110-111; Christine Swanton, 'On the "Essential Contestedness" of Political Concepts', *Ethics* 95 (1985), pp. 811-827.

> what defines a relationship of power is that it is a mode of action which does not act directly and immediately on others. Instead it acts upon their actions: an action upon an action, on existing actions or on those which may arise in the present or the future… A relationship of power can only be articulated on the basis of two elements which are each indispensable if it really is to be a relationship of power: that "the other" (the one over whom power is exercised) be thoroughly recognized and maintained to the very end as a person who acts; and that, faced with a relationship of power, a whole field of responses, reactions, results, and possible inventions may open up.[54]

This does not mean in the least that I will disregard the acts of direct influence like violence or express orders, conventionally counted under the name of power. But what Foucault's formulation highlights is that a power relation works also by constraining a seemingly unihibited behavior and the possibilities of acting of all the parts involved in it. Moreover, those involved do not necessarily experience it as too repressive but may deem it natural, expected, or at least not totally disarming and still feel free to act under these conditions.[55]

In any case, this general proposal should suffice for now, at least until we return to dealing with particular research problems in the articles. Instead, the two subsequent sections of this text devoted to the last two elements of this style of reasoning concern the way the historical evidence is tackled, that is, the manner of reading the sources and the procedure of case studies. Before we move on to that, we should say a few words about the main source from which this approach draws its examples and what the grounds are for articulating the problems and concepts in question.

Casus sancti Galli: ethnography of a medieval monastery

Each of the articles comprised in this volume at some point asks the question: what are the sources under scrutiny and what are their characteristics? And, perhaps even more importantly: what is it about these sources that makes them particularly fitting for answering the questions around which this thesis revolves? Although in every case this question has been answered slightly differently, it is time to collect all these answers and shed some light on the manner of reading proposed here.

The main medieval text from which this thesis (particularly Articles 1, 2, and 3) derives its examples is the eleventh-century *Casus sancti Galli*. It was written somewhere around 1050 by a monk of St Gall, Ekkehard IV (ca. 980 -

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[54] Foucault, 'The Subject', p. 340.

[55] Magnus Hörnqvist, *Foucaults maktanalys*, Stockholm 1996, pp. 27-47, 129-149.

ca. 1056),[56] whom the brothers of St Gall instigated to put down their stories into writing: 'Admonished by the brothers of our cloister, we found it worth an effort to touch upon and narrate the *fortunes* and *misfortunes* [that took place] in the house of St Gall and St Othmar, which truly is an arduous task.'[57] As Ekkehard stresses, the *Casus* recounts the stories that live in the memory of the older brothers (*patres*)[58] and treats them on a par with the information taken from written documents. Hence his account is a motley creation composed of anecdotes up to one-hundred-and-fifty years old, gossip, and stories circulating in the monastery of St Gall filtered both through the eleventh-century context and Ekkehard's lively and literary imagination.[59] Ekkehard IV, to put it otherwise, is simultaneously something more and something less than just a pen in the *Casus*. He is more than just a pen; the awareness and purpose in his selection, composition, and plotting are easily discernible; so is also the theme of *fortunia et infortunia* of the monastery that weld together the somewhat haphazard collection of stories; many of the anecdotes show also traces of his own experiences and activity at the Mainz cathedral during the 1030s. Finally, his talent for conveying situations full of drama and humor, his sense for capturing the hidden and manifest, often faked elements of human behavior as well as for catching the details of his figures which simultaneously brings forward their typological and yet somehow plausible personal traits is almost Goffmanesque.[60]

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[56] For basic information on the *Casus sancti Galli*, its manuscripts, editions, and its author see: Ernst Dümmler, '*Ekkehard IV* von St Gallen', *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum* 14 (1869), pp 1-73; Gerold Meyer von Knonau, *Ekkeharti (IV.) Casus sancti Galli*, St Gallen 1877, pp. V-LXXXII; Hans F. Haefele, 'Untersuchungen zu Ekkehards IV. Casus sancti Galli', *Deutsches Archiv* 17 & 18 (1961 & 1962), pp. 145-190, 120-170; Eberhard Url, *Das mittelalterliche Geschichtswerk "Casus sancti Galli": eine Bestandesaufnahme*, St. Gallen 1969, pp. 18-33; Hans F. Haefele, 'Einleitung', in: Ekkehard IV, *Casus sancti Galli/St.Galler Klostergeschichten*, ed. Hans F. Haefele, Darmstadt 1980, pp. 1-14; Johannes Duft, *Die Abtei St. Gallen. Beiträge zur Erforschung ihrer Manuskripte*, Vol. 1, Sigmaringen 1990; Johannes Duft, 'Ekkehardus - Ekkehart', in: *Die Abtei St. Gallen. Beiträge zur Kenntnis ihrer Persönlichkeiten*, Vol. 2, Sigmaringen 1991, pp. 211-220; Hans F. Haefele, 'Ekkehard IV. von St. Gallen', in: *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, Vol. 3, Stuttgart 1986, cols. 1767-1768; Steffen Patzold, 'Nachtrag', in: Ekkehard IV, *St. Galler Klostergeschichten*, ed. Hans F. Haefele, Darmstadt 2002, pp. 299-315.

[57] Ekkehard IV., *Casus sancti Galli/St.Galler Klostergeschichten*, 'preloquium', ed. Hans F. Haefele, Darmstadt 1980, pp. 16-17: 'Moniti a loci nostri fratribus id opere precium putantibus, quedam cenobii sanctorum Galli et Othmari cum infortuniis tradere fortunia, rem arduam aggressi sumus.'

[58] de Jong, 'Kloosterlingen', p. 342 fn. 21.

[59] Patzold, *Konflikte im Kloster*, pp. 66-67, 191-192.

[60] Hans F. Haefele, 'Zum Aufbau der Casus Sancti Galli Ekkehards IV.', in: Stefan Sonderegger, Alois M. Haas, Harald Burger (eds.), Typologia Litterarum. *Festschrift für Max Wehrli*, Zürich 1969, pp. 149-166; Ernst Hellgardt, 'Die Casus Sancti Galli und die Benediktinerregel', in: Beate Kellner, Ludger Lieb, Peter Strohschneider (eds.),

And yet, in the midst of his own text, Ekkehard is something less than a pen. Without the *patres* and their stories his predatory imagination would find no prey to feed on. His appreciation of the famous *senators* of St Gall like Notker Balbulus or Ratpert, or the obvious repugnance felt for the slanderer Sindolf, the gossip Abbot Ruodmann of Reichenau, and particularly Sandrat are all borrowed sentiments. Stored in the remembrance of the older conventuals and only thus becoming his own. Ekkehard is thus, in a sense, only a name invested with larger discourses and gossip without any assignable author,[61] and the disorganized character of the *Casus* mimics to a great degree the associative, rhizomatic patterns of the collective memory of the brothers.[62]

In order to fledge out this reasoning about the *Casus sancti Galli*, let us take just one yet telling example that shows why Ekkehard's work fits particularly well into the Goffmanian type of study and why Ekkehard's description so often defies the undeniable though narrow frames of topology, which some scholars suggest are its chief message and value.[63] On the occasion of the appointment of Notker to the abbacy in 971, the relatively young and thus unlikely candidate went to Speyer accompanied by a group of *seniores* to ask Otto I for approval. In the course of winning the reluctant Otto I for their cause, the monks of St Gall conspired both with the former monk of St Gall and then Ottonian palatine, Ekkehard II and the young Otto II, his pupil and king-to-be. Overnight, they devised a plan to appear in front of the emperor immediately after the morning mass and ask for his consent catching him off guard in this moment of spiritual uplift. However, the emperor by that time sensed that his son was up to something:

Literarische Kommunikation und soziale Interaktion: Studien zur Institutionalisierung mittelalterlicher Literatur, Frankfurt am Main 2001, pp. 27-50; Rüdiger Brandt, '*Fama volante - publica inspectio - populo moribus acceptus*. Vorstellungen von Öffentlichkeit und Nichtöffentlichkeit in den *Casus Sancti Galli* Ekkehards IV', in: Gert Melville, Peter von Moos (eds.), *Das Öffentliche und Private in der Vormoderne*, Köln 1998, pp. 609-628.

[61] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Introduction. Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography', in: Ranajit Guha, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (eds.), *Selected Subaltern Studies*, New York-Oxford 1988, pp. 3-32, at pp. 23-26; for the importance of rumor in monastic self-perception and literature on this topic see: Jezierski, '*Verba volant*', pp. 39-40, 42-43; IDEM, '*Non similitudinem monachi*', pp. 23-27; see also the example of Notker Balbulus and the lay discourses invading his *Gesta Karoli*: Matthew Innes, 'Memory, Orality and Literacy in an Early Medieval Society', *Past and Present* 158 (1998), pp. 3-36.

[62] Compare Erich Auerbach, 'Sicharius och Chramnesindus', in: *Mimesis. Verklighetsframställningen i den västerländska litteraturen*, tr. Ulrika Wallenström, Stockholm 1999, pp. 87-104, at pp. 99-100.

[63] Hellgardt, 'Die Casus', pp. 35-36; Hans F. Haefele, 'Wolo cecidit. Zur Deutung einer Ekkehard-Erzählung', *Deutsches Archiv* 35 (1979), pp. 17-32.

> As Palzo, the bishop of the city, spoke the mass, [which Otto I with his son attended], Ekkehard [II] opened the door to make sure that they [the monks of St Gall] had arrived. Seeing them, he waited for a little while and then gave Otto [II] a sign. The father, however, noticed that the son was about to leave and held him back by the mantle smiling discretely. Otto II: 'Nobody's eyes are more observant, my dear lion, than yours.' And Ekkehard added: 'Indeed, it is true what one reads about the lion that he sleeps with his eyes open.' And Palzo said:…[64]

Of course, neither Ekkehard IV nor many of the brothers contemporary to him experienced this brief exchange personally and the whole refined backstage conspiracy leading to it. At the point when the author was composing his *Casus* this whole story was nearly eighty years old. The reader senses immediately that the episode is too rich and works too smoothly to believe that it has not been literary enhanced after so many years. Even the leonine small talk, which Palzo, Otto I, Ekkehard II, and Otto II engaged in, was clearly a patchwork of identifiable Biblical quotations put together for a narrative and proverbial effect. They fit too neatly one into another to be an example of a real conversation. It may seem, then, that *topoi* and paper figures have entirely consumed this description and there is no sociology to be done here. But this overabundance of almost imperceptible details merely connecting the manifest signifying ingredients - these glances, gestures, grasps, grimaces, gazes, and giggles - the glue of interaction injected into the narrative, which the author cannot circumscribe because it pours in *en passant* from the social life surrounding him, all this is exactly what gives grounds for studying the *Casus sancti Galli* in the manner of symbolic interactionism à la Goffman. That is, in the manner of analyzing social situations, and descriptions of these, as having a logic of their own, partially independent from the political purposes of those participating in them but also of those depicting them. Situations, one should add, whose defintions were jointly created and fought for but in which even the selves of the participants were collectively manufactured.[65]

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[64] Ekkehard, *Casus sancti Galli* c. 131, pp. 254-255: 'Veniunt illi, precibus nocte munity, in aulam matutini patre cum filio iam laudes, quarum Ekkehardus simper curam egerat, audientibus. At Palzone, loci episcopo, preces recitante Ekkehardus hostium pandit, ut videat, si assint. Cumque eos conspiceret, restans paulisper Ottoni significavit. Pater autem eum egredi volentem clamide retinuit parumque subrisit. Et ille: 'Numquam oculi perspicatores, leo mi, errant quam tui.' 'Enimvero ita et de leone legitur', Ekkehardus ait, 'quia oculis apertis dormit.' Et Palzo:…'

[65] Erving Goffman, *Interaction Ritual. Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior*, New York 1982, pp. 1-2: 'The subject matter… is that class of events which occurs during co-presence and by virtue of co-presence. The ultimate behavioral materials are the glances, gestures, positioning, and verbal statements that people continuously feed into the situation, whether intended or not… A sociology of occasions is here advocated. Social organization is the central theme, but what is organized is the co-mingling of persons and the temporary interactional enterprises that can arise therefrom… I assume

Both this brief incident above and the detailed Sandrat episode analyzed in Article 3 demonstrate well enough that Ekkehard, urged to construct a meaningful but not necessarily intentionally persuasive image of social action, had his narrative constantly invaded by the infinitesimal cogs and gears of social machinery comprising his contemporary environment. Cinematically speaking, Ekkehard's narrative is full of scenes like the one mentioned above recorded using *plan américain*, meticulous close-ups, and plenty of shot reverse shot technique to depict human interaction. Paraphrasing Goffman then one might say that Ekkehard's *Casus sancti Galli* (also due to its length: 256 pages in the manuscript, 134 in the modern edition), is a particularly advantageous and enjoyable piece not only for studying medieval men and their moments but, what interests me far more, medieval moments and their men.[66]

Apart from the scrupulousness and liveliness of the *Casus's* description of social behavior there are yet further arguments speaking for analyzing this text with questions of power and social control in mind. Ekkehard IV's work belongs to St Gall's much longer tradition of narrating its own story. There is, unfortunately, no space here to go into details of what this tradition narrates. One should only mention that it was Ratpert, a monk of St Gall, who wrote the first *De origine et diversis casibus monasterii sancti Galli* ca. 890 and that Ekkehard had a number of continuators (*Continuatio Casuum Sancti Galli*) writing right after his death and carrying it on well into the twelfth century (analyzed in Article 4).[67] Two aspects of this written tradition are germane in the context of this introduction and have consequences for the way these sources are read. Firstly, the indubitable normative dimension of these, at first glance, purely narrative sources. The connections established between these texts by their authors as well as the circulation between the texts and the oral tradition reveal, unsurprisingly, a great deal of emotional attachment both to the past of St Gall and its community of brothers.[68] These texts, in other

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that the proper study of interaction is not the individual and his psychology, but rather the syntactical relations among the acts of different persons mutually present to one another'; more generally on symbolic interactionism see: Joel M. Charon, *Symbolic Interactionism. An Introduction, An Interpretation, An Integration*, 7th ed., New Jersey 2001; Erving Goffman, 'The Interaction Order. American Sociological Association, 1982 Presidential Address', *American Sociological Review* 48 (1982), pp. 1-17.

[66] Goffman, *Interaction Ritual*, p. 3.

[67] Ratpert, *St. Galler Klostergeschichten (Casus sancti Galli)*, ed. Hannes Steiner, Hannover 2002; *Casuum sancti Galli continuatio anonyma*, ed. Heidi Leuppi, Zürich 1987.

[68] Take, for instance, the opening of the *Continuatio Casuum sancti Galli continuatio anonyma*, pp. 58-59: 'It truly is praiseworthy and has been for the benefit of our monastery, that our ancient authors devoted so much space to the same topic [the monastery's history]. Namely Hartmann who wrote the first book, after him Ratpert, a learned man who continued the work until his own times. And Ekkehard the younger,

words, constituted a 'series of serious speech-acts' with authoritative truth claims and hence, like all the articles comprised here, and also other scholars have argued, their descriptions of monastic life were imbued with a serious normative charge.[69] Not only did they deliver the history and events as the object of identification but also, rather unwittingly, conveyed the contextualized norms of behavior and rules of action. Even in their most humorous and entertaining episodes, say, the bedwetting incident with Sandrat (Article 3), there was always a short step from every 'was' or 'did' to 'should have been' or 'should not have done.'[70] One might thus say parenthetically, that my reading of these texts suggests also that such normatively laden, ethical reading was performed by the medieval monks of St Gall.[71] There is,

who began with Salomo and promised to continue up to Norpert… but never completed his work hindered by death.' ('Laudabile enim et satis huis loco usitatum esset, si veteres scriptores nostros de simili materia imitati fuissent, Hartmannum scilicet, qui priorem librum de casibus fecerat, et Rathpertum, hominem doctissimum, qui eundem usque ad sua tempora librum auxerat, Ekkehardum quoque iuniorem, qui a Salomone incipiens usque ad Notpertum se singula dicere velle policitus est, sed in Notkero finivit.'; see also *Casuum continuatio* c. 1, pp. 64-65); take notice also of the *Wir-Gefühl* promoted in this tradition: Wolfgang Eggert, Barbara Pätzold, *Wir-Gefühl und* Regnum Saxonum *bei frühmittelalterlichen Geschichtsschreibern*, Weimar 1984, p. 64.

[69] Dreyfus, Rabinow, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 44-78; Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, tr. A. M. Sheridan Smith, New York 1972; see also: Stanley Fish, 'Working on the Chain Gang: Interpretation in Law and Literature', in: *Doing What Comes Naturally. Change, Rhetoric, and the Practice of Theory in Literary and Legal Studies*, Durham-London 1989, pp. 87-102; some of these observations constitute a bulk of argument to be developed in my forthcoming article: '*Speculum monasterii*. Notes on Identification, Public, and Subjectivity in the St Gall Narrative Tradition between the Ninth and Twelfth Centuries'.

[70] Hellgardt, 'Die Casus', *passim*; de Jong, 'Kloosterlingen', *passim*; EADEM, 'Internal Cloisters', *passim*; see also: Nancy F. Partner, *Serious Entertainments: The Writing of History in Twelfth-Century England*, Chicago 1977.

[71] Sometimes Ekkehard IV is quite frank about his pedagogical purposes. By the occasion of introducing the figure of Notker, the medic, musician, and subsequent abbot of St Gall (971-975), Ekkehard notes that at certain point Notker was attempting to compose a hymn praising the Holy Virgin. Unfortunately, for some time he could not find an appropriate rhyme until he asked Ekkehard, the dean, who supplied him with an appropriate word. This heartening episode was, for Ekkehard IV, quite explicitly, 'an example of humility and love between the fathers,' which he could not deny the reader (Ekkehard IV, *Casus sancti Galli* c. 123, pp. 238-239: 'Hec pro exemplo humilitatis et caritatis patrum praeterire non potui.'); More generally, on the medieval ethics of monastic reading see: Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory. A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, 2nd ed., Cambridge 2008, pp. 195-233; Meta Niederkorn-Bruck, 'Wissensvermittlung im Kloster. Unterricht für den Gottesdienst - Unterricht im Gottesdienst. Wodurch und zu welchem Ende wurde den Mönchen historisches Wissen vermittelt', *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 112 (2004), pp. 119-140.

therefore, no reason to assume that these often funny and amusing texts, clearly inviting sociability, could not at the same time carry moral lessons and contribute in reproducing lopsided power relations and ideological effects.

The second aspect of this narrative tradition pertains to the verisimilitude of particularly Ekkehard IV's *Casus* but also its *Continuatio* and the depth of insight they offer into the convent's inner life. It has been pointed out that both Ekkehard's text and *Continuatio* (with a certain reservation for Ratpert's late ninth-century *Casus*), considering their delicate and potentially scandalous content as well as the very limited spread of the manuscripts - limited to the St Gall library - were most likely written for internal use only. They were never meant to be read outside this community of monks.[72] The classified character of these *cases* (the fact that the monks of St Gall, the main source of information, were simultaneously the only intended audience of this tradition), in turn gives ground for assuming that their authors could have been more outspoken in their descriptions of the cloistral inside than they would have been if these texts had enjoyed a more public status. Such an internal audience would not settle for a too superficial or too evidently invented account. The fact that these texts were later copied, inserted into codices (see especially Codex 615 of the monastery's library in which all the medieval *cases* of St Gall are gathered),[73] and recurrently referred to implies that these indeed were serious forms of entertainment, simultaneously amusing and edifying, which can now offer an unparalleled insight into the veiled life of an early medieval monastic community.

in a manner of reading

What does my reading of these texts aim at then? Again, in each article the interpretation is guided by a different set of questions, but most generally my ambition is to circumvent the authorial intentions and arrive at those elements of their worldview which remain beyond their control and intention.

Now, it may well be true, as pragmatists claim, that we must always assume intentionality when we try to get to the meaning of texts because this is how our most basic philosophy of language works which makes meaningfulness pivot on intentionality. Hence, and this is where I abandon this line of reasoning, all theories of reading may be declared flatly worthless and abandoned because authorial intent is *the* meaning.[74] Well, the presumption of

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[72] de Jong, 'Kloosterlingen', p. 340; Hellgardt, 'Die Casus', p. 28; Jezierski, '*Verba volant*', pp. 29-30, 42-44.

[73] To investigate Codex 615 go to: http://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/csg/0615.

[74] For the whole debate between intentionalists and anti-intentionalists see: Steven Knapp, Walter Benn Michaels, 'Against Theory', *Critical Inquiry* 8 (1982), pp. 723-742; Fish, 'Change', *passim*; W.J.T. Mitchell (ed.), *Against Theory: Literary Studies*

intentionality in my reading is indubitable but intentionality is not the whole story in getting at the relationships of power in early medieval monasteries. It is because, as noted above, relationships of power did not constitute some evident topic to address for the medieval authors. Instead, my text puts forward a deconstructive reading, in the weakest possible sense of this concept,[75] of the early medieval monastic historiography. Perhaps it is more apt to give it a modest name of *reading against the grain*, which aims 'at a certain relationship, unperceived by the writer, between what he commands and what he does not command of the patterns of the language that he uses.'[76] Such a reading can thus 'never claim to have the authoritative truth of a text, it must forever remain dependent upon practical exigencies, never legitimately lead to a theoretical orthodoxy,'[77] which explains why the manner of reading needs to follow the focus of a given article and cannot be stated as such.

This way of reading at the same time preserves the fact that texts have intended meanings but for most of the time endeavors to read past this intentionality or against it aiming at the uncontrolled senses and unperceived consequences. On a number of occasions, however, I do recuperate the question of consciousness and its epistemological categories. It is simply because the terminology of the dominant epistemology (the apparatus of philosophy and literary criticism) which we employ, as deplorable as this may sound, is still permeated with metaphysics of presence and intention.[78]

To give some flesh to this reasoning: Articles 1 and 2, similarly to the manner of reading that Geoffrey Koziol attributes to Gerd Althoff, seek 'to discover the patterns of behavior and belief that are common to all writers in a society, regardless of their motivations in writing any specific text.'[79] Neither the problem of surveillance (but less so the problem of control which was explicitly addressed by the early medieval monastic authors) nor the question

and the New Pragmatism, Chicago-London 1985; see also the Yale lecture on neo-pragmatism in literary studies by Paul H. Fry, accessed at (2010-09-08): http://academicearth.org/lectures/neo-pragmatism.

[75] For deconstructive reading in the strong sense, i.e. aiming at destabilizing and collapsing the metaphysics of presence behind texts see: Jacques Derrida, *Positions*, tr. Alan Bass, Chicago 1982, pp. 6-7; Stanley Fish, 'Rhetoric', in: *Doing What Comes Naturally. Change, Rhetoric, and the Practice of Theory in Literary and Legal Studies*, Durham-London 1989, pp. 471-502, at pp. 492-493.

[76] Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, tr. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Baltimore 1997, p. 158.

[77] Spivak, 'Introduction. Subaltern', pp. 25-26.

[78] Philippe Buc, 'The monster and the critics: a ritual reply', *Early Medieval Europe* 15 (2007), pp. 441-452, at pp. 441-442.

[79] Geoffrey Koziol, 'Review article: The dangers of polemic: Is ritual still an interesting topic of historical study?', *Early Medieval Europe* 11 (2002), pp. 367-388, at p. 378; see also: Rüdiger Brandt, *Enklaven-Exklaven. Zur literarisch Darstellung von Öffentlichkeit und Nichtöffentlichkeit im Mittelalter*, München 1993, p. 49.

of social roles constituted themes of writing for the authors under scrutiny. Rather, these themes comprised the social structures in which these authors existed and additionally framed those authors' minds. Given thus the modern theories of social control or roles, it is perfectly in place to ask what this horizon of thought was like. In other words, it doesn't really matter whether the occurrences described by these authors happened the way they're described. It is enough to suppose that the readers and authors thought them cogent and true; something that *could have happened*. Simultaneously, however, Article 1 does vivisect the minds of the contemporaries, yet still ignores the question of intentionality, by asking about, for instance, their notion and scope of *Öffentlichkeit*. In a similar vein, Article 2, apart from poring over the horizon of social reality outside the reach of authorial motivation or bias (as the very sense of 'horizon' suggests),[80] does reckon with the categories of thought guiding the monastic subjects, for example, in their perception of abbots as figures necessarily conciliating the cloistral inside and outside. In both cases the motivations of the authors remain irrelevant, for them these are stories they narrate and not explicit topics they try to tackle.

Article 3, on the other hand, stands off this tendency of speaking aside the authorial intention. Instead, it takes an astigmatic look at the episode narrating the visitation of Sandrat in St Gall at once preserving the intentionality of description but nevertheless speaking against it. My reading, guided by the model of exclusion and stigmatization of paranoiacs, focuses on the sequence of events delivered in the *Casus sancti Galli*, which narrates the way the monks of St Gall treated Sandrat during his troublesome stay in the monastery in 972/3. The affinities and correspondences between the contemporary model of exclusion of paranoiacs and the episode from the *Casus* are simply too startling to pay no heed to the source's manifest content. This, in turn, entails that there are good grounds for assuming at least the plausibility of such a chain of events taking place. Yet, at the same time, Article 3 argues that the description itself was, unconsciously it seems, framed in a way that exonerated the convent of St Gall from any guilt and downplayed their somewhat violent dealings with the reformer sent by Otto I. In other words, it is argued that the Sandrat episode occupied terrain of the political unconscious in the collective memory of the convent. It hid its guilt by foregrounding the convent's own victimization and obfuscating the conflict between these two emotions. Such a manner of reading, exploiting the tension between the manifest content and its hidden, repressed meaningful counterpart, Louis Althusser calls 'symptomatic reading,'[81] which fits well into the somewhat psychoanalytic frame of Article

[80] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, tr. Joel Weinsheimer, Donald G. Marshall, London-New York 2006, p. 303.

[81] Louis Althusser, 'From Capital to Marx's Philosophy', in: Louis Althusser, Étienne Balibar, *Reading Capital*, tr. Ben Brewster, London-New York 1997, pp. 11-76, at p.

3. We shall return to the Sandrat-as-symptom theme further below when discussing the problem of enjoyment.

Article 4, finally, investigating incidents of inner monastic conflicts that involved monks and their abbots, turns the whole manner of reading yet another way round. Here, exactly as in Article 3, a social conflict stands in the center at the level of the narrated events. Yet, in contradistinction to Sandrat's episode, social conflict is clearly discernible both at the level of the story and at the level of authorial intention conveying this information. Whereas the Sandrat incident was an insider story, the stories of internal conflicts leaking outside appeared more problematic and craved more adaptive mechanisms on the part of the authors. This textual/authorial conflict comes thus in two forms. First, on the level of authorial intentions of what of this information was safe enough to reveal. Second, on the level of cognitive categories and binary oppositions, such as the notions of *Öffentlichkeit* and secrecy, which structured both the actions of people depicted in these stories and the intentions of the authors narrating them. The manner of reading employed for these narratives will therefore attempt to keep two of their initmately related aspects in sight. On the one hand, the political standings of their authors, that is, which of the groups involved in the conflicts described they supported. On the other hand, the cognitive conditions of possibility for expressing such entangled and scandalous episodes through accounts in which, as James C. Scott would put it, dominant and hidden transcripts clashed.[82]

All in all, this thesis does not attempt to reconstruct any original meanings of the sources analyzed, in particular because it does not focus on the authorial intentions. This does not mean, though, that the readings proffered here hover groundlessly over their objects of interest, nor that such a strategy of reading necessarily leads to some naïve version of relativism. Rather, the source of objectivity of these readings is not the intricate ontology[83] of the

28; Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious. Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*, London-New York 2009, pp. 44-46.

[82] James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*, New Haven-London 1990.

[83] It is again, the ontology of the objects that is contested here. Generally speaking, if we consider meaning to be a property of the text, something inherent to it and not a product of interpretation, we end up with too many unsettling questions and very few and quite wooly answers when reading the narrative tradition of the monastery of St Gall, e.g.: what kind of genre do the *Casus* and other inner monastic chronicles represent? is it literature or historiography? are we supposed to placate the obviously contradictory elements of these texts looking for the Gadamerian 'holy wholes'? (Gadamer, *Truth*, p. 392: 'Texts, on the other hand, always express a whole. Meaningless strokes that seem strange and incomprehensible prove suddenly intelligible in every detail when they can be interpreted as writing - so much so that even the arbitrariness of a corrupt text can be corrected if the context as a whole is understood.'; Peter Ekegren, *The Reading of Theoretical Texts. A critique of criticism in the social sciences*, London 1999, pp. 127-177).

texts but the conventions and procedures of reading that gain their strength from the modern sociological and literary concepts backed up by their own 'interpretative communities'. In other words, it belongs to the elements of the promoted style of reasoning that properties such as meaning, context, resemblances, differences etc. are not immanent to the objects of inquiry but are imported from the outside through the process of interpretation and hinge upon the structure of prejudices generative of this very process.[84] The particular structure of prejudices governing this thesis will be introduced in two subsequent parts of this text not only for the sake of clarity but also because the concepts it comprises need to be discussed in a wider context of their applicability in studies on medieval monasticism. Before that, however, we need to introduce one last element of this style of reasoning: the way the evidence analyzed in this thesis is framed and what it can be exemplary of.

case studies and power of exception

At the center of this thesis stands the Foucauldian 'how' of power: how was power exercised in early medieval monasteries, in what manner, by whom and over whom, and only seldom why.[85] All these questions are also typical questions asked in case studies. The articles comprised in this thesis proceed thus very much in the manner of case studies which by thickly describing and analyzing particular cases claim wider relevance and being exemplary of much more general problems and mechanisms of power. Incidentally, one might also say that it is the method of case studies as well as the type of theories employed in this thesis that are to a large degree responsible for privileging a synchronic and ethnographic focus at the cost of historical perspective.[86] The thesis thus opts for an in-depth study of concrete situations and practices

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[84] Stanley E. Fish, 'Is There a Text in This Class?', in: *Is There a Text in This Class: The Authority of Interpretive Communities*, Cambridge, MA 1995, pp. 303-321; IDEM, 'Force', pp. 511-522, IDEM, 'Normal Circumstances', *passim*; Jonathan Culler, 'Stanley Fish and the Righting of the Reader', in: *The Pursuit of Signs. Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction*, augmented ed., Ithaca, NY 2001, pp. 119-131; see the objections against this addmittedly radical form of reader-response criticism in: Arild Fetveit, 'Anti-essentialism and reception studies. In defense of the text', *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 4 (2001), pp. 173-199; Umberto Eco, '*Intentio Lectoris*: The State of the Art', in: *The Limits of Interpretation*, Bloomington, IND 1994, pp. 44-63.

[85] Flyvbjerg, *Making*, pp. 116-123; Larry Shiner, 'Reading Foucault: Anti-Method and the Genealogy of Power-Knowledge', *History and Theory* 21 (1982), pp. 382-398, at pp. 389-392.

[86] Compare Koziol, *Begging Pardon*, pp. 13-19; more generally on this approach see: Ewa Domańska, *Mikrohistorie. Spotkania w międzyświatach*, Poznań 2005, pp. 259-275; Fulbrook, *Historical Theory*, pp. 18-24, 27-30, 122-140.

which reveal the underlying structure of power relations, which is often different in different examples and monasteries but which nonetheless discloses certain regularities and coherences. This leaves out the longitudinal perspective, that is, the question of how and which types of power relations evolved over long periods of time in medieval monasteries *qua* 'total institutions' in general and in St Gall in particular.

Generally speaking, case studies put stress on the process of interpretation and, so to speak, the use and embedment of theoretical concepts in the fieldwork to analyze and convey specific situations rather than on the inevitably abstracted final product in the form of a summary.[87] As Bent Flyvbjerg has pointed out in his discussion of the role of narratives in case studies, the heuristic power of a case study is located in a good narrative itself so that it effectively can ward off the question 'so what?' being asked of the study as a whole:

> A narrative that lacks a moral that can be independently and briefly stated, is not necessarily pointless. And a narrative is not successful just because it allows a brief moral… The narrative has already supplied the answer before the question is asked. The narrative itself is the answer.[88]

It is thus worth pointing out in advance that the final chapter of this thesis for the most part recounts the articles and puts their results in a wider interpretative scheme. When it comes to observing and exemplifying what power was and how it was exercised in early medieval monasteries it is mainly dealt with in the articles themselves since they discuss concrete and telling situations from monastic history.

Another oft-raised problem of case studies is their representativeness. It is thus fully justified to ask how representative my findings in the case study of early medieval St Gall taken as a whole are. No doubt, St Gall is an unusual example in the studies on medieval monasticism. First of all, research on the history and internal life of this large community (over 130 monks in the second half of the tenth century) in the tenth and eleventh centuries abounds. St Gall together with Fulda are perhaps the best explored monasteries of that time, which may invite too easy hypostases, generalizations, and treating them as representative examples. Second, St Gall did enjoy a very close relationship with the imperial court, the German emperors did have influence on the appointments of abbots presiding over the convent, and the community itself did play an important role in the cultural and political life of the Reich. This can hardly be said of hundreds of other, much smaller, and not so well-off

[87] Sharan B. Merriam, *Fallstudien som forskningsmetod*, tr. Björn Nilsson, Lund 1994, pp. 22-73.

[88] Bent Flyvbjerg, 'Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research', *Qualitative Inquiry* 12 (2006), pp. 219-245, at p. 240.

monasteries deeply dependent in their political intricacies on their local sponsors, bishops, and laymen with whom the monks had more frequent contacts and whose decisions counted more for the future of these institutions. Thirdly, the sources. As pointed out before, St Gall's narrative tradition of stories on the internal life of a monastic community that started with Ratpert in the late ninth century, through Ekkehard's *Casus* and its continuations in the eleventh and twelfth centuries is unique in the European scale. Sources from no other monastery, from so long a period, offer so detailed an insight into the form of life usually carefully hidden behind the walls. But if there is nothing to compare these descriptions with, how can one be sure of not extrapolating local idiosyncrasies onto a general picture claiming they are relevant for a much larger class of cases? Simply put, the question goes: can one generalize from a single case?

The answer, again, goes: it depends on the character of the problems posed as well as the manner in which they're posed or articulated. Basically there is no obstacle to generalizing from a single case. It has been pointed out that large, powerful abbeys, because of their key place in the networks of early medieval power were in great measure typical for the Carolingian monasticism and its Ottonian remainders,[89] which constitute the main bulk of examples for this thesis. St Gall may thus be a particularly well researched and internally described monastic community but it is only for the better. The sole consequence is that we need to take much more information into account when asking our questions and thus have a possibility to better ground our findings in evidence. Furthermore, the stabilizing function mustn't necessarily be supplied by comparable cases. It might be done by the findings of the previous research and the theoretical framework itself, provided that the latter is sensitive to anomalies and correctly relates the objects and concepts to each other.[90] Thirdly and most importantly, it's the research object and the level at which we ask our questions that are decisive for how big and how representative our examples should be. The current thesis, as stated above, deals with relationships of power and social control which in themselves did not constitute some obviously addressable topics for the monastic actors. The interpretation of these phenomena aims at the level unperceived by the authors writing about them for whom, so I would like to claim, they constituted a common horizon of understanding more or less independent from their particular political interests. Finally, my aim is not to *prove* that the mechanisms of power and social control described here were common to *all* early medieval monasteries. The main aim of this thesis, and perhaps its most weighty contribution, is to describe and analyze the mechanisms themselves and, at best, by infer-

[89] de Jong, 'Carolingian Monasticism', *passim*; Timothy Reuter, *Germany in the early middle ages c. 800-1056*, London-New York 1997, pp. 42-44, 106-109, 241-246.

[90] Glynos, Howarth, *Logics*, pp. 187-190; Flyvbjerg, 'Five Misunderstandings', pp. 225-228; IDEM, *Making*, pp. 73-76.

ence, claim their potential relevance in other contexts - in other, also modern, forms of 'total institutions' and their derivates.[91]

In passing it might be said that this thesis as a whole is concurrently a paradigmatic and critical case study that may function as a departure point for future studies on the relationships of power in early medieval monasteries. This case study is *paradigmatic* because it seeks to propose a style of reasoning about relationships of power in these medieval 'total institutions' by 'highlighting more general characteristics of the societies in question.'[92] It is also *critical* because, given that St Gall offers the best possible insight into the inner life of these institutions, it somewhat tests this theoretically laden style in the manner of logical deduction: if this is (not) valid for this case, then it is (not) likely to apply to all cases.[93] Thus, if pressed, even though this is not my ambition here, I would risk a hypothesis that the density and extremity of internal power relations and social control might rise proportionately to the scale of monasteries in question - as one moves from the small, not so prominent monasteries to the large abbeys involved in big politics.[94]

Finally, objection might be raised that whereas Articles 1, 2, and 4 might have some wider relevance and comparative value - after all they convey information about incidents well known from previous research - Article 3 raises a totally obscure, one-time occurrence of no heuristic value whatsoever. I believe it is exactly to the contrary. When it comes to highlighting the modes of power and social control, this peculiar episode of Sandrat's visitation seems to be the most instructive and fine-grained of all four. It reveals a broad palette of institutional means of enforcing compliance and conformity pursued with great intensity that, if pulled out more separately from this episode, might be germane in more everyday and less dramatic circumstances. In other words, Sandrat's story is an extreme or, which agreeably dovetails into my purposes, a deviant case study, which tends to 'activate more actors and more basic mechanisms in the situations studied.'[95] Such extreme and exceptional cases, for instance of a monastic institutional regime being seriously dislocated, happen thus to be *extremely* instructive because they bring more knowledge and information, which often are not conveyed by typical examples. As Søren Kierkegaard and Carl Schmitt after him put it,

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[91] Carin Holmberg, *Det kallas kärlek. En sociopsykologisk studie om kvinnors underordning och mäns överordning bland unga jämställda par*, Stockholm 2009, p. 86.

[92] Flyvbjerg, *Making*, p. 80.

[93] Flyvbjerg, *Making*, p. 79; IDEM, 'Five Misunderstandings', pp. 225-226.

[94] Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, pp. 116-120; Fichtenau, *Living in the Tenth*, pp. 268-270; compare for instance the examples from Mouzon and St Gall presented in Article 4.

[95] Flyvbjerg, *Making*, p. 78; IDEM, 'Five Misunderstandings', pp. 228-229.

> the exception explains the general and itself… Endless talk about the general becomes boring; there are exceptions. If they cannot be explained, then the general also cannot be explained…The exception thinks the general with intense passion.[96]

In this regard, Articles 2 and 4 stand much closer to Article 3 than it may appear because they too deal with dislocations of the internal regimes. If examples of this kind are considered typical it is only because scholars incline towards such incidents exactly for the reason that, given their exceptional character, they bring more information than plain and typical cases. It is also because the medieval authors themselves considered such conflicts important enough to include them into their narratives.

✲ ✲ ✲ ✲

Having sketched the main directions in which this thesis moves, it is time, and this is the task of the next part of this text, to trace the genealogy of the main concept that informs this investigation. This in order to explore the theoretical and methodological possibles,[97] which the concept of 'total institution' might offer for studies on medieval monasticism that more practically will be employed in the articles.

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[96] Constantin Constantinus [Søren Kierkegaard], *Upprepningen. Ett försök i experimentell psykologi*, tr. Stefan Borg, Reboda 1995, p. 101; English translation of Kierkegaard taken after: Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology. Four Chapters on the Concepts of Sovereignty*, tr. George Schwab, Chicago 2005, p. 15, see also: IBID., pp. 5-15; Giorgio Agamben, *Homo sacer. Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, tr. Daniel Heller-Roazen, Stanford 1998, pp. 15-29; IDEM, *State of Exception*, tr. Kevin Attell, Chicago 2005, pp. 1-31; Erving Goffman, 'The Insanity of Place', in: *Relations in Public. Microstudies of the Public Order*, New York-Toronto 1971, pp. 335-390, at p. 390.

[97] Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations*, pp. 62-63.

The Part about 'Total Institution'

Le cloître est-il une prison? - Jean Leclercq asked in his 1971 essay attempting to estimate how appropriate Erving Goffman's concept 'total institution' is for research on medieval monasteries.[98] His answer was negative which is hardly unanticipated considering the fact it came from a Benedictine monk.[99] In a way, his voice set the tone for all the subsequent half-hearted endeavors to do research on the internal life of the monastery with Goffman's concept, surely not flawless and in need of a critical approach. However, with regard to the analysis of relations of power, social control, and conformity in medieval monasteries there is still much to learn from it. My ambition here is to reconstruct, at least partially, the history of the reception of the concept by

[98] Jean Leclercq, 'Le cloître est-il une prison?', *Revue d'ascetique et de mystique* 47 (1971), pp. 407-420.

[99] A chapter in the history of Western historiography that still remains worth writing is the question of the institutional belonging of some of the scholars of the monastic orders (e.g. J.-P. Deroux OSB, Joseph Reipenhoff OSB, Jean Leclercq OSB, Kassius Hallinger OSB, David Knowles OSB, Michael Casey OCSO etc.) and their scholarship on medieval monasticism. Their studies often belong to the most competent and eloquent gems we have yet are sometimes uncritical or unwilling to raise controversial issues touching upon power relations within medieval cloisters, involuntary membership, child oblation, or planned mortification of the self (see: Albert d'Haenens, 'Quotidienneté et contexte. Pour un modèle d'interprétation de la réalité monastique medieval (XI^{e}-XII^{e} siècles)' in: *Instituzioni monastiche e instituzioni canonicali in occidente (1123-1215), Settimana di studio*, Milano 1980, pp. 567-598; Megan Cassidy-Welch, *Monastic Spaces and their Meanings: Thirteenth-Century English Cistercian Monasteries*, Turnhout 2001, pp. 15-16, 129-130, 182; Mayke de Jong, *In Samuel's Image. Child Oblation in the Early Medieval West*, Leiden 1996, 'Introduction'; EADEM, 'Carolingian Monasticism', p. 640 fn. 90). The reception of Goffman's concept presented in this text is a case in point. Perhaps, as Bourdieu put it (Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of the Theory of Practice*, tr. Richard Nice, Cambridge 1977, p. 188), truly 'the most successful ideological effects are those which have no need of words, and ask no more than complicitous silence.' This is, though, not to say that secularized historians do not have their blind spots. Nor does this suggest that this idealized and anti-sociological view is shared by all hooded scholars (e.g. Tadeusz Bartoś OP, Krzysztof Bielawski, *Ścieżki wolności. Z Tadeuszem Bartosiem rozmawia Krzysztof Bielawski*, Kraków 2007, pp. 49-46, 103-106, 203-204).

medieval scholarship and point out some of its misapprehensions and their possible sources or underlying interests.[100]

For the sake of clarity I have divided these responses and rejections in two groups; rejections based on principle and rejections on the grounds of inexpediency. Roughly put, the former claim that the concept of 'total institution' cannot account for the moral and spiritual dimension of monastic institutional life. The latter, in contrast, declare that the concept cannot account for its social and, broadly speaking, political dimension. I believe that none of the claims holds under closer scrutiny. What is important, however, is that my intention here is not to salvage the concept of 'total institution' or preserve its integrity for its own sake. Rather, I would like to show how it can be adapted or concretized to better fit medieval monasticism as an area of study. Outlining the genealogy of the 'total institution' concept should thus allow me to situate my own research in the field. This will prepare the ground, in the following empirical parts of this text, for reclaiming this concept for the studies on the early medieval monasteries. It will be argued that, if expanded with other theoretical perspectives, the concept of 'total institution' might still be inspiring more than perhaps of direct explanatory value, and help find the lines where to start our theoretico-empirical explorations.

Let's begin, fairly unsurprisingly, with a definition:

> A total institution may be defined as a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life.[101]

A few pages later Goffman expands his definition with more precise characteristics:

> First, all aspects of life are conducted in the same place and under the same single authority. Second, each phase of the member's daily activity is carried on in the immediate company of a large batch of others, all of whom are treated alike and required to do the same thing together. Third, all phases of the day's activities are tightly scheduled, with one activity leading at a prearranged time into the next, the whole sequence of activities being imposed from above by a system of explicit formal rulings and a body of officials. Finally, the various enforced activities are brought together into a single rational plan purportedly designed to fulfill the official aims of the institution.[102]

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[100] For a similar juxtaposition of misapprehensions and criticisms of Foucault compare: William E. Connolly, *The Ethos of Pluralization*, Minneapolis-London 2004, pp. 207-208 fn. 28.

[101] Goffman, *Asylums*, p. 11.

[102] Goffman, *Asylums*, p. 17.

Such a defined concept, in Goffman's view, could account for a range of institutions differentiated by the purpose of their establishment. The first were 'institutions established to care for persons felt to be both incapable and harmless' such as orphanages or homes for the blind. The second were the establishments 'to care for persons felt to be both incapable of looking after themselves and a threat to the community, albeit an unintended one' such as mental asylums or leprosaria. The third type was intended to 'protect the community against what are felt to be intentional dangers to it', such as prisons, POW or concentration camps. The fourth were 'institutions purportedly established the better to pursue some worklike task and justifying themselves only on these instrumental grounds' such as boarding schools, lumber camps, or ships. The fifth, and from our point of view most crucial type of total institutions, are 'those establishments designed as retreats from the world even while often serving as training stations for the religious' such as monasteries, nunneries and the like.[103]

rejection on principle

I shall return to the definition in due course to explore it in more detail but let us first focus on how it was received by the scholars of medieval monasticism for this was admittedly a freezing reception. Leclercq, who seems to have been the first to react to this concept, denied its usefulness altogether. Yes, he wrote, one can speak of a monastery as resembling a prison but only in two radically opposed senses, the first one being absolutely wrong though of some sociological use, and the second being historically or, as he claims, even spiritually true though of no analytical use whatsoever. One can thus either contemplate the superficial similarities like organizational outline at the cost of overlooking some fundamental differences like voluntary entry. Or, and this Leclercq does himself in the quoted text, one can reconstruct the medieval discourse of likening the monastery to a very special kind of prison, again, entered voluntarily and for the sake of union with God. Leclercq reconstructs this discourse starting with Tertulian who, in his *Ad martyres*, revised the oppressive prison view and reckoned it as a chance for Christians to live the same kind of secluded, contemplative life as the desert enabled the prophets to live. In Tertulian's dialectic of confinement and freedom the world as such is a

[103] Goffman, *Asylums*, p. 16; Goffman has been criticized, to certain extent rightfully, that his image of monastic life is almost solely supported on two sources: *Regula Benedicti* (St Benedictus, *Regula Benedicti/Die Benediktusregel*, ed. on behalf of the Salzburg commission of abbots, Beuron 2001) and Kathryn Hulme, *The Nun's Story*, London 1957; the first one strictly normative, the latter mediating a biased and oppressive vision of monastic life. As the findings of this thesis will show, Goffman's model holds also for more *balanced* and *descriptive* sources from monastic history.

prison and indeed a more perilous one because so tempting with its frivolities. So only under the protection of the actual prison of the monastery can the Christian spirit float freely:

> The Christian, even when out of prison, hath renounced the world; but, when in prison, a prison also. It mattereth not where ye are in the world, who are without the world: and if ye have lost any of the joys of life, it is a goodly traffic to lose somewhat, that you may gain the more.[104]

In a way, everything that comes after Tertulian's text is just a number of variations on this theme. Archbishop Leon of Ravenna, previously the abbot of Nonantola, in the early eleventh century admonished his monks drunk with the ideas of the desert fathers and too eager to leave the monastery to lead a life in this vein, that the monastery was exactly the kind of prison they were looking for. Entered voluntarily, it was a place in which one could cheerfully give up one's free will on behalf of the superior and which promised the sight of God. The positive view of the *carcer - claustrum* connection was similar for Bernard of Clairvaux and other authors well into the late Middle Ages.[105]

The strange quality of the discourse reconstructed by Leclercq is its resilience that verges on immortality. It has simply never ceased to exist but is now in modern garb instead. Its contemporary versions abound even if this discourse has now found its way into science. I might be accused of conflating two separate levels of discussion but in point of fact it is the authors discussed here that collapse the distinction between them. Michael Casey, for instance, in his exploration of St Bernard's teachings on the sense and purpose of the monastery, concludes that Bernard never conceived of the solitude as being an alternative to common fraternal life. One entered (enters) the monastery voluntarily and, once inside, was (is) allowed to choose the way of life appropriate to him. The monastery, rather than like an army, is like a village 'which makes it possible for individuals to seek a greater measure of solitude within

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[104] Tertulian, 'An address to the martyrs', *Library of the Fathers* 10 (1842), tr. C. Dodgson, pp. 150-157, taken from: http://www.tertullian.org/articles/lof/martyrs.htm; for the Latin text see: http://www.tertullian.org/latin/ad_martyres.htm: 'Christianus etiam extra carcerem saeculo renuntiavit, in carcere autem etiam carceri. Nihil interest, ubi sitis in saeculo, qui extra saeculum estis.'

[105] Leclercq, 'Le cloître', pp. 412-418; Juliane Ohm, 'Der Begriff *carcer* in Klosterregeln des Frankenreichs', in: Joachim F. Angerer, Josef Lenzenweger (eds.), Consuetudines monasticae. *Eine Festgabe für Kassius Hallinger aus Anlass seines 70. Geburtstages*, Rome 1982, pp. 145-155; see however: Walther Laske, 'Zwangsaufenthalt im frühmittelalterlichen Kloster. Gott und Mensch im Einklang und Widerstreit', *Zeitschrift der Savignysstiftung für Rechtsgeschichte, Kan. Abt.* 95 (1978), pp. 321-330; K.L. Noethlichs, 'Das Kloster als "Strafanstalt" im kirchlichen und weltlichen Recht der Spätantike', *Zeitschrift der Savignysstiftung für Rechtsgeschichte, Kan. Abt.* 80 (1994), pp. 18-40; Angenendt, *Das Frühmittelalter*, pp. 416-418.

the unity of the common life.'[106] Monastery is thus essentially a free space simply supported through 'doctrinal and practical formation' in which an individual self may develop. As Casey claims, 'the attraction of contemplation is a gift of grace; it cannot be institutionalized.'[107] Whatever this last postulation might mean, one cannot help but conclude from this that the Goffmanian concept can tell us nothing about the monastery as an institution since:

> It is only when the monastery degenerates into a total institution, demanding uniform observance in a way that St Benedict would never have envisaged, that solitude and community become alternatives.[108]

The problem with this approach is that considering the self or a free individual and institution in isolation from each other this approach cannot say anything of value about either of them. There is no connection here, no relation between the two despite a common focus; the one does not influence the other. Instead, the useful distinction between 'ideal type' as a scientific tool, which 'total institution' was meant to be, is blurred with *idealization* based on personal conviction and moral judgment. Such conflation is even more palpable in the case of Sarah Foot, maybe the most outspoken, even if perhaps the most inadvertent representative of this discourse. Foot took issue with the notion of 'total institution' quite recently in her book on Anglo-Saxon monasticism.[109] She rejected the concept on the ground of principles, again, because entering the monastery occurred voluntarily and because neither the formal separation of the inmates from the staff nor the bureaucratic administration and bunch-like treatment of individuals was ever *intended* by St Benedict, John Cassian, Jerome, or Columbanus. In consequence, it never did become reality in early medieval monasteries.[110] Thus:

> The total institution that is the modern prison or mental hospital may be well equipped for the treatment of the non-conformist, but it has no place for the discovery of the individual soul: it rather seeks to change the personalities within that artificial society towards an abstract, non-spiritual but highly disciplined goal.[111]

By opposing the mental asylum or prison as an *artificial* type of society to the monastery, Foot implicitly suggests that the latter is or was some kind of *natural* organization in which independent and immutable personalities are

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[106] Michael Casey, '*In communi vita fratrum*. St Bernard's Teaching on Cenobitic Solitude', *Analecta Cisterciensia* 46 (1990), pp. 243-261, at p. 245.

[107] Casey, '*In communi*', p. 246.

[108] Casey, '*In communi*', p. 245.

[109] Sarah Foot, *Monastic Life in Anglo-Saxon England, c. 600-900*, Cambridge 2006.

[110] Foot, *Monastic Life*, pp. 38-42.

[111] Foot, *Monastic Life*, p. 42.

found. The catch is that monastery is no less artificial or politically constructed an institution than any other, contrary to the assumption underlying this argument. Like every institution, the monastery too is (and was), to borrow Elmer Schattschneider's pun phrase, a 'mobilization of bias', that is, a certain cluster of social and power relations that suppresses particular conflicts and exploits others.[112] There is no doubt that the kinds of goals, values, and intentions that were its foundation during the Middle Ages were different from those of contemporary mental hospitals or concentration camps. But these do not exhaust the possible organizational transformations or foreclose the personal experience of oppression. Nor do they cancel the basic fact that in both types of establishment conformity always remained an issue which necessarily made them permeated by relations of power and social control. The ethical dimension of research cannot be limited and thus to reduce, for instance, the question of the Benedictine timetable or confession to its sole spiritual intention and downplay its disciplinary potential as Foot does,[113] is precisely to overlook that quite often the side-effects of certain solutions are more formidable and politically useful than their explicit rationales.[114] Authorial intention, simply put, cannot ever entirely govern the dissemination of use.[115]

As for voluntary entry which seems to form the backbone of argument against using Goffman's concept, the way these authors frame this problem makes it hard to debate the issue constructively. It goes without saying that the early and high medieval sense of liberty in monasticism in the West, especially in the early era of child oblation as the predominant form of recruitment,[116] was radically different from ours. Giles Constable has poignantly

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[112] Elmer Schattschneider, *The Semi-Sovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America*, New York 1960, p. 71, quoted in: Lukes, *Power*, pp. 6-7.

[113] Foot, *Monastic Life*, p. 41: 'The careful structuring of the rhythm of the monastic day was, however, made for an explicitly spiritual purpose, not simply for reasons of order or discipline or to improve individual productivity, let alone to facilitate crowd-control.'

[114] Feiss, '*Circatores*', *passim*; Bruce, '"Lurking"', *passim*; Cassidy-Welch, *Monastic Spaces*, pp. 119-126, 129-132; Jezierski, '*Monasterium panopticum*', *passim*; see also: Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 149 ff.; The late Foucault, asked in an interview about the ethical dimension of his research seemingly preoccupied with the reconstruction of the history of the 'repressive West', responded (Michel Foucault, 'On the Genealogy of Ethics' in: Dreyfus, Rabinow, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 229-252, at pp. 231-232): 'My point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous, which is not exactly the same as bad. If everything is dangerous, then we always have something to do. So my position leads not to apathy but to a hyper- and pessimistic activism'.

[115] Niall Lucy, 'intentionality', in: *A Derrida Dictionary*, Malden-Oxford-Carlton 2004, pp. 56-59.

[116] de Jong, *In Samuel's Image*, *passim*; IDEM, '*Imitatio Morum*', *passim*; Foot, *Monastic Life*, pp. 140-146.

observed that for the monastic authors of the eleventh and twelfth centuries personal freedom consisted in living a contemplative life in the confines of the monastery and renouncement of the external world. A monk's obedient love towards the abbatial authority and the elders, ultimately towards God, was the hallmark of his liberty, whereas pandering to the whims of one's self-will connoted the hardest burden and spiritual imprisonment. Deeper into the twelfth century, however, the more stress was shifted from this spiritual sense of liberty *qua* conformity towards the personal opinion and freedom of choice in entering the monastic life.[117] The argument about the voluntary entrance is hence hardly appropriate for this long and barely homogenous period.

More importantly, however, and this time on the ground of principles, the mistake to which all three authors seem to have fallen victim is that they oppose freedom with constraint rather than seeing them as interrelated and conditioning each other. It is perhaps most clear, as it was signaled above, in their separate treatment of the individual or self and the institution, even though one can only speak persuasively of institution as embodied in the individual or of a self as an *artificial*, as Foot would have it, emanation of institution.[118] It is obvious not only in the case of a true believer, totally devoted to the goals of a given social regime that simultaneously appropriates the zealot. It is equally obvious in the case of a cynic who, as we shall learn from Article 4, appears to have seen through the machinery of the ruling ideology, purportedly adopted an external posture and is now able to manipulate the system to his own advantage, but who, in fact, is the greatest product of this system's political unconscious.[119] No one escapes the structure of power of the institution.

It follows that when speaking of voluntary entrance and stay in a medieval monastery one needs to think of it against a dense background or structure of restrictions and other available choices. One needs to conceive of subjectivity as the *locus* where power is exercised and the effect of this exercise. Freedom as such is a nonsensical, empty idea that explains nothing.[120] One is thus

[117] Giles Constable, 'Liberty and free choice in monastic thought and life, especially in the eleventh and twelfth centuries', in: George Makdisi, Dominique Sourdel, Janine Sourdel-Thomine (eds.), *The Concept of Freedom in the Middle Ages, Byzantium and the West*, Paris 1985, pp. 99-118.

[118] Goffman, *Interaction Ritual*, pp. 5-10, 85; Spencer Cahill, 'Erving Goffman', in: Charon, *Symbolic Interactionism*, pp. 187-201, at p. 192, see also IBID., pp. 72-96; IDEM, 'Toward a Sociology of the Person', *Sociological Theory* 16 (1998), pp. 132-148; Bourdieu, *Pascalian*, pp. 128-163; IDEM, *The Logic of Practice*, tr. Richard Nice, Cambridge 2006, p. 57; Loïc Wacquant, *Body & Soul. Notes of an Apprentice Boxer*, Oxford-New York 2004, p. 149 and fn. 135.

[119] Louis Althusser, 'Marxism and Humanism', in: *For Marx*, tr. Ben Brewster, London-New York 1996, pp. 224-247, at pp. 233-235.

[120] Stanley Fish, 'Critical Self-Consciousness Or Can We Know What We're Doing?', in: *Doing What Comes Naturally. Change, Rhetoric, and the Practice of Theory in*

prone to conclude that what has been reconstructed by Leclercq is something he was also unconsciously partaking in and actively contributing to. That is, a discursive formation, essentially an act of power aligned with knowledge. This formation stretches from Tertulian's to Leclercq's, Casey's, and Foot's[121] idealizing texts that 'make up monastic subjects' as *actually* or *truly* free persons, in some *deeper*, spiritual sense.[122] In its place, this empty gesture of cheerful and voluntary acceptance of what is nevertheless imposed - this *amor fati* as Pierre Bourdieu would have it, or this 'institutionalized act of grace' as Casey would not - should constitute the proper object of study. This is the unknown in need of explanation sooner than a safe ground to depart from.[123] As Talal Asad, hardly a devoted supporter of 'total institution' as a concept suitable for the analysis of monasteries, put it:

> A remarkable feature of monastic discipline is that it explicitly aims to create, through a program of communal living, the will to obey.... This is certainly one important difference between the medieval Christian monastery and other "total institutions", such as prisons and hospitals, with which the monastery has sometimes been classified. The point is not that force has no necessary place

Literary and Legal Studies, Durham-London 1989, pp. 436-467, at p. 459: 'This may seem counterintuitive to those who are accustomed to identify freedom with the *absence* of constraints, but, in fact, such a state, if it could be achieved, would produce not free actions, but *no* actions. An action is only conceivable against a background of alternative paths, a background that is already a constraint in that by marking out some actions as possible it renders unavailable others that might emerge as possible against a different background. … It follows, then, that it makes no sense to imagine conditions of *no* constraint, and it follows, too, that there can be no continuum which differentiates institutions or structures as being more or less constrained, more or less free, because freedom, in whatever shape it appears, is another name for constraint. Rather than a continuum, what we have is an array, an array of structures of constraint, no one which is more constraining than any other, and each of which is differently productive of actions that are, in the only sense the word can have, free.' [emphasis in the original]; see also: Foucault, 'The Subject', pp. 326-348; IDEM, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 29-30.

121 Foot, *Monastic Life*, pp. 1 ff.

122 Nikolas Rose, *Powers of Freedom. Reframing Political Thought*, Cambridge 2000, p. 95: 'One must discard the presupposition that one can criticize regimes of power to the extent that they falsify and distort human subjectivity and utilize the extent of this falsification as a yardstick by which power can be evaluated: regimes of power establish, deploy, promote and intensify the truths of our selves. In short, one must abandon the political calculus of domination and liberation. This is not because we live in some consensual universe. It is because power also acts through practices that 'make up subjects' as free persons.'; Joseph Rouse, 'Power/Knowledge', in: Gary Gutting (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Foucault*, New York 1994, pp. 92-114, at pp. 110-113.

123 Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction. A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, tr. Richard Nice, Cambridge, MA 1984, pp. 243-244, Slavoj Žižek, *How to read Lacan*, London 2006, pp. 12-15; Lukes, *Power*, pp. 134-144; Jackson Lears, 'The Concept', *passim*.

> in monasteries; of course it has. It is that force is a crucial element in a particular transformation of dispositions, not merely in the keeping of order among inmates.[124]

Of course Goffman knew that motivations involved in entering a monastery, both now and in the past, are and were radically different from the feelings accompanying detention in a prison, madhouse, or a *Konzentrationslager*. It is also beyond question that the mortification processes in religious institutions has always received different rationalizations from those developed in penal colonies or army barracks. So it was too with the acceptance of this mortification which was traditionally substantial in monasteries when compared with other institutions. It has been therefore equally obvious for Goffman that monasteries, as organizations less equipped with means of direct coercion, depended on the consent of their inmates to a higher degree than the institutions more obviously forcing their inmates to cooperation. Finally, the amount of underlife in monasteries has been, statistically speaking, less and not as rebelliously destructive as in, say, POW camps, mainly because inmates of monasteries recognized and desired apparent advantages and benefits of this form of life acquired in exchange for compliance and obedience.[125] The issue here is therefore not, as in Leclercq's erroneously formulated question, whether a monastery - medieval or modern - *is* a prison. Of course it isn't, and if so, only very sporadically. The issue is whether the concept of 'total institution' can help us understand something more or something new about the monastic form of life if we compare and juxtapose it with power relations prevalent in madhouses or leprosaria. If we see the monastery *as* a prison.

rejection on inexpediency

In contradistinction to this straitlaced and principled view of 'total institutions' discussed above, the sophomore bulk of criticism fired by the scholars dealing with medieval monasticism focused on the usefulness and analytic accuracy of Goffman's concept for the pre-modern reality. Here, however, voices were more divided and there were some positive reactions. Albert d'Haenens proposed an elaborate model of interpretation of monastic reality and everyday life in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, which was explicitly to put into question the precedence of internal experience of the monastic subjects.[126] In its stead d'Haenens proffered, with a clear functionalistic touch, a number of social processes, as he calls them, that with changing intensity structured the monastic reality. Those processes put special

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[124] Asad, 'On discipline', pp. 125-126.

[125] Goffman, *Asylums*, pp. 49-51, 108-114, 262-263.

[126] d'Haenens, 'Quotidienneté et contexte', *passim*.

stress on monastic proclivity towards utopia, totality, concentration, rupture, *différance*,[127] exceptional status of the word and orality, and rejection of the flesh. Importantly, d'Haenens's model, itself a motley construct taking inspiration from several sources, was intended primarily for comparing different institutions with each other and secondarily as a tool for analyzing individual institutions. It basically took over some of Goffman's insights, for example, about the all-embracing visibility and 'ceremonies of admission' characteristic of total institutions and suggested expanding it with, among others, Emile Servais's and Francis Hambye's methodology for the analysis of monastic organizations.[128] The latter authors, they too with a comparative ambition in mind, proposed a distinction between two axes or dimensions structuring monastic life - the institutional dimension (dependent on internalized cultural patterns; voluntary obedience; members are responsible for the institution to function) and the organizational dimension (formal command; coercion; responsibility falls on the staff). The monastery, according to them, is inclined to combine both these dimensions in the most intense manner. Furthermore, Servais & Hambye in line with d'Haenens has catalogued a number of social phenomena such as spontaneity, individuality and informal solidarity, but also obedience, the pastoral model of authority and cultural coherence that either constitute a problem to solve by the organization or are possible channels of solving them.[129]

The value of both models, which makes them still worth visiting, lies in providing a conceptual map for identifying the basic distinctions and a set of logics saturating monastic life. Both stress also the importance of investigating the more coercive though latent functions and side-effects so often disregarded or openly contradicted by scholars directly involved in monastic life. There are, however, areas where both d'Haenens's model and Servais's & Hambye's methodology fall short. First of all, more than these authors would like to admit, their observations rely heavily on the overtly normative discourses, such as *Regula Benedicti* and the like, and thus lean more towards ideal types rather than descriptions of reality, as at least d'Haenens claims.[130] The more weighty trouble with these models is that because of their bias towards the concerns of the system and its functions their explanatory value is very limited. They are mostly preoccupied with identifying spheres of life and social phenomena which are effects of self-sustaining processes that spring from the

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[127] One is puzzled finding *différance* in this enumeration, since, as it is obvious from d'Haenens's description (p. 581), it aims at the over-determination of differences (e.g. the *claustrum/saeculum* tension) so prevalent in monasteries and has nothing to do with the term coined by Derrida.

[128] Emile Servais, Francis Hambye, 'Structure et Signification: problème de méthode en sociologie des organisations claustrales', *Social Compass* 18 (1971), pp. 27-44.

[129] Servais, Hambye, 'Structure', pp. 36-42.

[130] Patzold, *Konflikte im Kloster*, p. 312 fn. 36.

tacitly presumed *needs* of the system rooted in the normative foundations of medieval monasteries.[131] These norms and needs are supposed to explain everything and be the sole source of change.

A less orthodox use of 'total institution' was made by Jane Sayers who, in her study of violence in English medieval monasteries investigated narrative sources as well as Cistercian *Statuta* between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries.[132] Using Goffman's concept, she located several lines of tension, e.g. between the abbot and the convent, between the lay brothers and monks, *oblates* and *conversi*, *seniores* and *iuniores* structurally inbuilt in both Benedictine and Cistercian monasteries which she backed up with a number of convincing examples. For instance, in high medieval English monasteries the grudges were harbored over the right to private property but also, very much in the classical vein, over the property torn between the convent and the abbot, over obstruction of Cistercian *conversi* to climb up the social ladder within the monastic hierarchy and over the sharing of power and responsibility. Sayers's merit rests in that departing from Goffman's ideal type she provided both explanations of the monastic conflicts and pointed at the underlying conflict-ridden interests of the involved parties.

Similarly, Thomas Füser, in his investigation of how the high medieval Cistercians and Cluniacs handled the norms, deviance, and sanctions in their internal conflicts, picked up the fitting elements of 'total institution' to include into his elaborate discussion on social control instead of taking over the concept in its entirety.[133] In the same vein as Sayers, Füser accepts the basic Goffmanian premises conceiving of medieval monasteries as isolated social entities with a top-down model of authority. For Füser, what was crucial in Goffman's concept were the sanctioning components, such as the control of inmates both in terms of surveillance of cloistral space as well as in the form of individual confession, punishments etc. He was also interested in the institutionally enforced processes such as gradually depriving the inmate of the previous social roles, conversion to a new self (*conversio totalis ad Deum cordis* as the anonymous twelfth century author put it);[134] and finally, the adaptive strategies and modes of resistance developed by the inmates within this oppressive milieu. All these elements, freely chosen from a larger reper-

[131] Burrell, Morgan, *Sociological*, pp. 49-68, 106-108.

[132] Jane Sayers, 'Violence in the Medieval Cloister', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 41 (1990), pp. 533-542.

[133] Thomas Füser, *Mönche im Konflikt*, esp. pp. 1-38; see also his: IDEM, 'Der Leib ist das Grab der Seele. Der institutionelle Umgang mit sexueller Devianz in cluniazensischen Klöstern des 13. und frühen 14. Jahrhunderts', in: Gert Melville (ed.), De ordinae vitae. *Zu Normvorstellungen, Organisationsformen und Schriftgebrauch im mittelalterlichen Ordenswesen*, Münster 1996, pp. 186-245.

[134] Füser, *Mönche im Konflikt*, p. 22 fn. 45.

toire delivered by Goffman and other sociologists,[135] have served Füser to explore the institutional mechanisms of the regulation of deviance that were aimed at achieving conformity both on the broader scale of monastic orders and within particular monastic houses. Even if the very attempt to regulate deviance was inadvertently producing what it was supposed to merely confine.[136]

Contrary to this apparent well-being of 'total institutions' in the studies on medieval monasticism and generally in the historical research, the concept has recently landed in the crosshairs and subsequently a great deal of criticism has been fired at it. Criticism, one should add, that seriously casts doubt on the suitability of the 'total institution' concept in the first place. Steffen Patzold, to start with, in his book, on the causes and consequences of inner monastic conflicts in the Ottonian and Salian Reich asserts that 'total institution' is far from appropriate for this area of study. For him, a single, strictly hierarchical, top-down structure of authority in monasteries and orders came much later, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, simultaneously when the Western monasticism became more isolated and moved to the margins of the society. In the early Middle Ages, in contrast, in the era of *Eigenkirchen*, *Eigenklöster*, and royal abbeys, the monasteries stood in the midst of social life. In consequence, these institutions were not and could have not been so enclosed as following Goffman would suggest. The external relations of power did permeate the internal structure of authority; both abbots and individual brothers and convents taken together had their supporters outside they could turn to if need be.[137] As Patzold maintains, there was no uniform institutionalized system of solving conflicts. Quite the opposite; the range of potential means and strategies was wide and the examples multifarious - reaching from open violence, through mediation, to adjudication etc. What is observable are context-dependent *regularities* in how certain strategies were used and how

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[135] In the same way, that is, without accepting the model *a toto* but choosing what she sees fit, Megan Cassidy-Welch uses Goffman's description of the group therapies in mental hospitals and makes parallels with the public confession during the meeting of a Cistercian chapter; or between the deliberate torturing to death of the inmates in a concentration camp in front of their co-inmates and public 'commitment ceremonies' of accusation and corporal punishment of monks as cases in point of a far-reaching monastic goal of manufacturing docile bodies and acquiescent souls (Cassidy-Welch, *Monastic Spaces*, pp. 129-132).

[136] Füser, *Mönche im Konflikt*, pp. 25-30; Kai T. Erikson, *Wayward Puritans. A Study in the Sociology of Deviance*, New York 1966, pp. 1-29; IDEM, 'Notes on the Sociology of Deviance', *Social Problems* 9 (1962), pp. 307-314; Jezierski, '*Paranoia sangallensis*', pp. 149-150.

[137] Patzold, *Konflikte im Kloster*, pp. 306-325.

this use evolved over time and space rather than, be they even implicit, *Spielregeln* of behavior and binding normative codes.[138]

All in all, Patzold's study carries three main consequences for 'total institution's' applicability; 1. early medieval monasteries, because of their political importance, were not and seldom were meant to be isolated total institutions but remained open, approachable social conglomerates; 2. individuals entering them did preserve a great deal of their external roles, statuses, kin relations, and attachments so they could manipulate the conditions of living to their own advantage.[139] An abbot's position, to give an example, was sometimes challenged or, at least, was always challengeable both from the outside and from the inside, so St Benedict's ideal of the abbot's exclusive and absolute power never won a real foothold. 3. one can barely speak of a single, official aim for these institutions since, given that varied parties were involved in their life on the local level e.g. emperors, bishops, lay founders, and abbots, their aims too must have been variously and often contradictorily defined. All things considered, by rejecting the basic premise of the totality of 'total institutions', that is, the strict separation between the inner world and the outside, Patzold rejected also, as he wrote, the ideal rather than reality-based postulates of d'Haenens, Servais & Hambye, Sayers, and Füser of explaining the power relations solely from the inside: 'Nicht aus der Isolation einer monastischen Gemeinschaft *von* der, sondern erst aus ihrer Einbindung *in* die Welt waren daher ihre internen Auseinandersetzungen zu erklären.'[140]

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[138] Patzold, *Konflikte im Kloster*, p. 334: 'In methodischer Hinsicht erweist das Beispiel daher, wie wichtig es ist, möglichst genau zwischen der *Praxis* und den ungeschriebenen *Normen* der Konfliktführung zu differenzieren, also bei der Analyse früh- und hochmittelalterlicher Konflikte schärfer als bisher zu trennen zwischen regel*mäßigen* und regel*gemäßen* Verhaltensweisen der Kontrahenten.', see also: IBID., pp. 326-341; Philippe Buc, 'Die Krise des Reiches unter Heinrich IV., mit und ohne Spielregeln', in: Claudia Garnier, Hermann Kamp (eds.), *Spielregeln der Mächtigen. Mittelalterliche Politik zwischen Gewohnheit und Konvention: Politische Spielregeln im Mittelalter*, Darmstadt 2010, pp. 43-75, at pp. 71-72, accessed at (2010-09-09): http://www.stanford.edu/dept/history/people/buc/fsalthoffbuc.pdf;

An intriguing revision of the Althoff-Patzold dispute on *Spielregeln* has been presented by Theo Riches in his paper ('Once Upon an Iron Age: Telling the Story of the Long Tenth Century Between Carolingians and Ecclesiastical Reform') presented at the International Medieval Congress in Leeds, 12-15 July 2010. Riches, quite rightly, argues that Patzold's strong insistence on strategies of power does not really prove the non-existence of *Spielregeln*. It only shows that the rules of political life themselves were contestable and that the ability to set them was a form of power and political goal. In effect, Riches stresses the complementarity of Althoff's and Patzold's approaches. I would like to thank Theo Riches for sharing his paper with me.

[139] A perfect example here is the conflict of 965 between Victor, monk of St Gall backed by the convent and Abbot Craloh: Ekkehard IV, *Casus sancti Galli* cc. 69-78, pp. 146-162; Patzold, *Konflikte im Kloster*, pp. 63-90.

[140] Patzold, *Konflikte im Kloster*, pp. 312-313; Foot, *Monastic Life*, pp. 42 ff.

Patzold's criticism lends support to Falk Bretschneider's short essay on the anachronistic fallacy of Goffman's 'total institutions'.[141] Goffman's text, Bretschneider avows, appeared in a very particular moment in the history of American psychiatry, but more generally in the history of the Western counter-culture, when the currents that culminated in 1968 were gradually gaining in significance.[142] Counter-culture, as we know, that not only brought such films as Miloš Forman's *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* or Samuel Fuller's *Shock Corridor*, but also nested in academia breeding books like Michel Foucault's *Histoire de la folie* or Thomas S. Szasz's *The Myth of Mental Illness*, and the obedience experiments by Philip Zimbardo and Stanley Milgram. Goffman's bestselling and oft-cited book published at the start of this intellectual wave greatly influenced not only popular culture but also legal proceedings.[143]

From this point of view it hardly comes as a surprise that Goffman, similarly to the authors mentioned, envisioned the mental hospital as a repressive, almost sadistic organization where an inmate's mental instability can only exacerbate until it finally disintegrates but where regaining health and self-respect is never a plausible option. Further, Bretschneider stresses, Goffman, whose model of 'total institution' integrates the usually separated three spheres of life, that is, work, leisure, and sleep under a single roof, implicitly departs from a somewhat idealized form of the Western bourgeois society. A form which this society assumed only very recently, say in the early

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[141] Falk Bretschneider, 'Die Geschichtslosigkeit der "Totalen Insitututionen". Kommentar zu Erving Goffmans Studie "Asyle" aus geschichtswissenschaftlicher Perspektive', *Wiener Zeitschrift zur Geschichte der Neuzeit: Totale Institutionen* 8:1 (2008), pp. 135-142.

[142] For the historical context of writing of *Asylums*, the anti-psychiatry movement of which Goffman was a member (see especially his essay with explicit references to Szasz 'The Medical Model and Mental Hospitalization. Some Notes on the Vicissitudes of the Tinkering Trade', in: *Asylums*, pp. 281-336), and the reception of his concept by the sociologists see: Raymond M. Weinstein, 'Goffman's *Asylums* and the Total Institution Model of Mental Hospitals', in: Gary A. Fine, Gregory W.H. Smith (eds.), *Erving Goffman. Sage Masters of Modern Social Thought*, Vol. 3, London 2000, pp. 280-304, Christina Vanja, 'Das Irrenhaus als "Totale Institution"? Erving Goffmans Modell aus psychiatriehistorischer Perspektive', *Wiener Zeitschrift zur Geschichte der Neuzeit: Totale Institutionen* 8:1 (2008), pp. 120-129, at pp. 120-123; Ian Hacking, 'Between Michel Foucault and Erving Goffman: between discourse in the abstract and face-to-face interaction', *Economy and Society* 23 (2004), pp. 277-302, at p. 292; Norman Dennis, 'Sociology and the Spirit of Sixty-Eight', *The British Journal of Sociology* 40:3 (1989), pp. 418-441, at p. 430; see also the biographical essay about Goffman by Phillip Manning, 'Erving Goffman (1922-1982)', in: George Ritzer (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Social Theory*, Thousand Oaks 2005, Vol I, accessed at (2010-06-17): http://danm.ucsc.edu/~abtollef/Physical_Poetry/Goffman%20Encyclopedia%20Soc%20Theory.doc.

[143] Weinstein, 'Goffman's *Asylums*', pp. 284-289, 292-297.

nineteenth century, whereas the opposite was most often the case in the past, let alone in the Middle Ages.[144]

In Bretschneider's view, Goffman, due to his modern bourgeois bias, overestimated the value of personal autonomy and the attachment to the self. This, in turn, inclined him to attach too much value to the harshness of mortification procedures and despair felt by the inmates over loss of identity. But this appreciation of personal self and liberty is, again, of very recent origin. Likewise historically untrue is the strict horizontal separation of the inside world of the inmates and the outside world of the society, as well as the vertical divide between the staff and the inmates or the supposed homogenous structure of authority. The early modern armies or mental institutions knew more than one top-down line of command; nobility and social origin did play a role in the army in spite of the internal hierarchy of grades; the spheres of life were never strictly separated and soldiers' families and other people habitually followed the moving forces; the borders were porous and recruits did desert; the inmates and lower staff in mental institutions often stemmed from the same social class which made them prone to solidarity; decisions and orders were tacitly negotiated, not simply commanded; even the initial personal identities of people who became inmates in *Konzentrationslager* were more stable despite the most extreme means of extermination and so on. When all's said and done, it is not just wrong but flatly absurd to use a concept that at its core is so ahistorical, static, flatly structuralistic, abstracted from any social reality including its contemporary, as well as contemptuous of human contrivance and sturdiness.[145]

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[144] See also Martin Scheutz's comments derived from Anthony Giddens's critique of Goffman: Martin Scheutz, '„Totale Institutionen" - missgeleiteter Bruder oder notwendiger Begleiter der Moderne? Eine Einführung', *Wiener Zeitschrift zur Geschichte der Neuzeit: Totale Institutionen* 8:1 (2008), pp. 3-19, at pp. 9-10; see however Carlos Watzka's comment on Bretschneider's and others' critique (Carlos Watzka, 'Zur Interdependenz von Personal und Insassen in "Totalen Institutionen": Probleme und Potentiale von Erving Goffmans "Asyle"', in: Falk Bretschneider, Martin Scheutz, Alfred S. Weiß (eds.), *Personal und Insassen von Totalen Institutionen - zwischen Konfrontation und Verflechtung*, Leipzig, *forthcoming*, I would like to thank Carlos Watzka for sharing his paper with me at an earlier stage): 'Das Argument, Goffman habe mit seinen Überlegungen allzu sehr auf die Gegebenheiten der Mittelschichten fokussiert, wie der Gebrauch des Begriffs "bürgerliche Gesellschaft" zeige, ist wenig stichahltig, handelt es sich hierbei doch schlicht um eine nicht besonders geglückte Übersetzung des englischsprachigen "civil society".'

[145] Bretschneider, 'Die Geschichtslosigkeit', pp. 139, 141-142; Bretschneider is perhaps the most radical and most critical voice of the newly awaken mostly Austria-based interest in Goffman's concept's historical applicability, see: Martin Scheutz (ed.), *Wiener Zeitschrift zur Geschichte der Neuzeit: Totale Institutionen* 8:1 (2008); see also: Johann August Schülein, '"Asyle" - Über Goffmans Analyse und Kritik sozialer Ausgrenzung und Kontrolle', *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 32/2 (2007), pp. 32-52; Gerhard Ammerer, Arthur Brunhart, Martin Scheutz, Alfred Stefan Weiß (eds.), *Orte der Verwahrung. Die innere Organisation von Gefängnissen, Hospitälern und*

subsuming what?

One is baffled by the harshness of this criticism. Exactly as before, in the case of authors who rejected Goffman's approach by principle, it seems that Bretschneider's and Patzold's attention did not last long enough to take them beyond the definition of the concept or the first chapter into the rest of Goffman's book where, as Carlos Watzka has also argued, the Chicago sociologist deconstructs his own concept or puts it under erasure.[146] To be sure, there are areas in relation to medieval monastic studies where the notion of 'total institution' turns out to be insufficient. For instance, its biggest deficiency lies definitely in the question of inmates' reasons for obedience and conformity and we shall return to this problem in the enclosed articles. It is likewise true that because of this and other shortcomings the concept needs to be confronted with other theories of action or power. It is also beyond doubt that the kind of modern institutions Goffman did his research in were fairly better isolated from their broader social context than their pre-modern counterparts.

But, overplaying this slightly, from the absolute standpoint adopted by Bretschneider and to certain extent by Patzold, it seems that any permeability of the borders between the inmate world and the outside society necessarily makes the Goffmanian model fall into pieces. A truly *total* 'total institution' would be physically impossible to leave, the inside would comprise a perfectly homogenous space, and the inmates would have to be not even totally brainwashed but lobotomized out-and-out as they would not be able to tell how they even got there in the first place. In point of fact, if the isolation was to be absolute, the outside as a very category of thinking would never appear. Which amounts to saying that an inmate would not even know on the *inside* of what s/he was and that, at the end of the day, would deprive speaking about any kind of institution of any sense.[147] It would equate to a Leibnizian monad, a perfectly self-contained world. It's exactly because the outside, even

Klöstern seit dem Spätmittelalter (Geschlossene Häuser. Historische Studien zu Zuchthäusern, Gefängnissen und anderen Institutionen der Verwahrung Bd. 1), Leipzig 2010; see also the forthcoming volume from the recent conference in Vienna, 01.-03.10.2009: Bretschneider, Scheutz, Weiß (eds.), *Personal und Insassen*, *forthcoming*.

[146] Watzka, 'Zur Interdependenz', *forthcoming*; see also: Stanley Fish, 'With the Compliments of the Author: Reflections on Austin and Derrida', in: *Doing What Comes Naturally. Change, Rhetoric, and the Practice of Theory in Literary and Legal Studies*, Durham-London 1989, pp. 37-67, at pp. 57-67.

[147] Goffman, *Asylums*, pp. 23-24: 'The full meaning for the inmate of being 'in' or 'on the inside' does not exist apart from the special meaning to him of 'getting out' or 'getting on the outside'. In this sense, total institutions do not really look for cultural victory. They create and sustain a particular kind of tension between the home world and the institutional world and use this persistent tension as strategic leverage in the management of men.'

if only as an epistemological category, is always on the inside, because there's always a faint possibility of leaving since the setting of any frontier necessarily sets the conditions of its porosity and deconstruction,[148] and because even in the least total of all total institutions, as the students of medieval monasteries would have it, the borders and limitations still have to be articulated, dealt with and at no point are simply an unproblematic line to cross[149] - only because of all this, can one actually measure the gradations or different structures of totality, speak of its dimensions, make comparisons etc. But in order to do exactly this one needs a conceptual raster, a cluster of vectors and indicators of what to look at in the life of institutions. Not a ready-made hypothesis to check against *reality* established on some *objective* and independent basis. Returning for a moment to the problem of style of reasoning, one could say that the way the concept of 'total institution' is formulated allows precisely for such criticism to appear because it delivers criteria for determining how close a given institution stands to this 'ideal type.' It offers, in other words, the necessary conditions for candidates for truth and falsehood to emerge and become evaluated.

The problem with this critique runs consequently deeper than its authors would be ready to acknowledge. It seems to be silently informed by a positivistic approach to the role of concepts and theory and by an unattainable ideal of science in general that keeps concepts and empirical objects apart. Yet, as I pointed out previously, concepts and methods are not readymades or tick-off checklists that either fit the reality one studies or not.[150] It's what one can make of them, that is to say, what one can make of them immersed in one's local, context-ridden area of study that determines their *practical* value, which in the long run is *the only* value. Every instance of research is therefore necessarily empirical and theoretical at the same time. The construction of the object and the tools of its construction are not detachable but imbue each other, which makes debating concepts *in abstracto* nonsensical to say the least.[151] The opposite tendency, which might be recognized in the above-reported critique, Glynos and Howarth call the 'problem of subsumption'. It is

[148] Niall Lucy, 'differance', 'hymen', 'inside-outside', 'metaphysics', in: *A Derrida Dictionary*, pp. 25-27, 47-50, 52-56, 76-79; Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, pp. 71-73.

[149] Albert d'Haenens speaks of the experience of monastic organization as structured by rupture: d'Haenens, 'Quotidienneté et contexte', pp. 580-581.

[150] This fallacious logic of *testing* whether institution X is a 'total institution' is discernible in some of the contributions, for example by Maria Heidegger (see also: Maria Heidegger, Elisabeth Dietrich-Daum, 'Die k.k. Provinzial-Irrenanstalt Hall in Tirol im Vormärz - eine Totale Institution?', *Wiener Zeitschrift zur Geschichte der Neuzeit: Totale Institutionen* 8:1 (2008), pp. 68-86), Christine Schneider (see also: Christine Schneider, 'Frauenklöster der Frühen Neuzeit als Totale Institutionen - Gleichheit und Differenzen', IBID., pp. 20-33) of the forthcoming volume (Bretschneider, Scheutz, Weiß (eds.), *Personal und Insassen*.

[151] Bourdieu, Wacquant, *An Invitation*, pp. 26-35; Bourdieu, *Pascalian*, pp. 62-65.

a manner of conducting research 'in which objects are gathered under concepts without the object or the concept undergoing any modification during the process of subsumption.'[152] At first glance it may appear that there is no disagreement here and that the above-mentioned critics are only trying to warn against the same naïve use of deduction or blind application of concepts. On a second glance, though, it becomes obvious that this critique implicitly hinges upon the idea of induction that purports to speak in the name of *bare historical facts*, as if understanding did not produce the objects of its attention.

To repeat the already mentioned charge; deeply embedded in this critique is exactly the same unwarranted distinction between concepts and objects of knowledge that misrecognizes what it nevertheless does, that is, tacitly conceptualizes *reality* from a certain perspective informed by a *different* set of assumptions, where both assumptions and facts are tightly weld together.[153] *Die geschichtswissenschaftliche Perspektive*, to make a pun of Bretschneider's title, is a noble and ostensibly respectable point of view but it also happens to be a point of view which is impossible to take in practice. No such thing as a pure, non-controversial, and criterion*less* historical perspective has ever been demonstrated, let alone implemented. Hence, if interpretation pinned on beliefs and conceptual criteria is indispensable to the sewing of the *facts* and pieces of evidence together on the model, the only option is to appreciate what there is about the model itself that makes it particularly suitable for a loose-fit. This is what I will do now.

ideal types, family resemblances, or how to think with metaphors

As I signaled initially, the objective here is not to salvage the concept of 'total institution' for its own sake. What I seek instead is a practical gain. I also

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[152] Glynos, David, *Logics*, p. 16, see also pp. 165-166: 'We take the [problem of subsumption] to consist of four inter-related elements. First, a conception of employing laws, general rules, or causal generalizations to explain specific cases, in which a variety of empirical elements, or a set of empirical cases, are subsumed under overarching universal laws, causal mechanisms, or law-like causal generalization. Second, a particular understanding of the relationship between a concept and an object, in which the former is seen to exhaust completely or contain the latter. Third, the idea that the process of applying abstract concepts to concrete phenomena leaves the former untouched by the practice of application itself. Fourth, in what amounts to a pure inversion of the foregoing, a kind of 'empiricism' or 'pure descriptivism', in which particular empirical cases or self-interpretations are assumed to constitute 'explanations in themselves'.'

[153] Glynos, Howarth, *Logics*, p. 188: 'Subsumption relies on the idea that the very process of explanation is exterior to the explanation itself.'; Stanley Fish, 'Being Interdisciplinary Is So Very Hard to Do', in: *There's No Such Thing as Free Speech and it's a Good Thing, Too*, New York-Oxford 1994, pp. 231-243; IDEM, 'What Makes', p. 355; Fullbrook, *Historical Theory*, pp. 76-82.

share some of the criticism, as will be obvious later, even if I do not share the conviction that it invalidates its use altogether. Let us then briefly return to the original definition of the 'total institution' to see how the concept invites a freer attitude. Two such elements included there seem to be of interest; 1. Goffman conjures up his concept as a Weberian 'ideal type', from which it follows that 2. none of the elements of the concept is necessarily present with the same intensity in all of the types of institutions he spells out, nor is any of the characteristics distinctive about total institutions. It is a matter of 'family of attributes.'[154]

First of all, then, as an 'ideal type', that is, as a scientifically generalized and one-sidedly defined set of characteristics or explanatory elements, 'relatively lacking in fullness of concrete content,'[155] the concept of 'total institution' badly fits the rigorous role of a falsifiable hypothesis, into which some scholars try to push it. In point of fact, the idea of a strictly falsifiable hypothesis when mechanically transplanted from the natural sciences becomes an unattainable ideal which is very hard to apply constructively in the writing of history or cultural studies.[156] This ambition, besides, is plainly ridiculous in respect of a scientific tool such as 'ideal type' that openly declares that 'it is probably seldom if ever that a real phenomenon can be found which corresponds exactly to one of these ideally constructed pure types.'[157] 'Ideal type', simply put, is a good road map but a poor realistic painting.

Second, speaking of 'family attributes' joining different examples of 'total institutions,' Goffman not so distantly echoes the late Wittgensteinian 'family resemblances', that is, a set of features that a given number of phenomena gathered under a single name share to a certain extent with each other, save that there is no single attribute that is common to all. To use the oft-cited phrase: 'the strength of the thread does not reside in the fact that some one fibre runs through its whole length, but in the overlapping of many fibres.'[158] The 'total institution' concept should be therefore classified as a 'polythetic' concept as opposed to 'monothetic', where all the members of a set share at

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[154] Goffman, *Asylums*, p. 17.

[155] Weber, *Economy & Society*, Vol. 1, pp. 19-21; IDEM, 'Samhällsvetenskapernas objektivitet', in: *Vetenskap och politik*, tr. Aino Andersson, Sten Andersson, Göteborg 1977, pp. 96-163, at pp. 130, 138-39, 142-43; see also: Ulrike Froschauer, 'Erving Goffmans "Totale Institutionen" und die Organisationsforschung', *Wiener Zeitschrift zur Geschichte der Neuzeit: Totale Institutionen* 8:1 (2008), pp. 150-155, at p. 151.

[156] Jackson Lears, 'The Concept', pp. 578-579; Glynos, Howarth, *Logics*, pp. 18-48, 210-213.

[157] Weber, *Economy & Society*, Vol. 1., p. 20; Sung Ho Kim, 'Max Weber', in: Edward N. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2007 Edition), http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/weber/#IdeTyp (2010-04-30); Fulbrook, *Historical Theory*, pp. 89-94.

[158] Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* § 67, p. 28, see also §§ 66-68, pp. 27-28.

least one but preferably more common features.[159] There are two consequences that follow from this proposition. First, dealing with polythetically defined sets or groups is less arbitrary, makes one more sensitive to borderline cases, and undercuts the predisposition to essentializing which would see a *core* or *substance* of social phenomena. In effect, polythetic groups are more open to the cases surrounding them, suggesting that the elements privileged by the set nonetheless share a number of features with pieces of a bigger whole and thus cannot be declared absolutely unique. The second corollary is in fact the first one just raised to the meta-scientific level and accounts for the heuristic benefits following with polythetic concepts. As it has been already pointed out with regard to extreme case studies, groups based on 'family resemblances' tend to bring more knowledge, for one is pressed to give explanations for all the elements in a given set, even the extreme ones, instead of simply explaining away the idiosyncrasies and discrepancies between the elements as irrelevant to their 'elementary forms.' In other words, they offer meta-understandings about understandings, for we need to stay alert in relation to the grounds on which we compose our concepts or sets rather than being content with monocausal explanations.[160]

Both these elements, that is, 'ideal typicality' and 'family resemblances', in my opinion, make the concept of 'total institution' stretchable and open for selective application without necessarily accepting the whole package. Ironically enough, this plasticity and loose construction of the concept anchored in Weber and Wittgenstein have been turned against Goffman, exposing him to charges of deliberately providing too vague and too encompassing a definition in order to, paradoxically, make the concept watertight for critique. Nick Perry went through all four components of the original definition and showed that given their ambiguity, on the one hand, there are too many potential examples of institutions, such as states, merchant ships, or regular hospitals which for Goffman would surpass the scope of the term, that nonetheless fulfill the conditions set by himself. On the other hand, as a comparative tool, which also was Goffman's ambition, the model of 'total institution' is bound to fail, for in this regard it is defined too narrowly and too much in a functionalistic vein. It is also, regrettably, not provided with a contrasting type that would allow for assessing the resemblances or divergences between different institutions.[161]

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[159] Burke, *History and Social*, p. 31.

[160] Rodney Needham, 'Polythetic Classification: Convergence and Consequences', *Man: New Series* 10 (1975), pp. 349-369; Richard Paul Chaney, 'Polythematic Expansion: Remarks on Needham's Polythetic Classification', *Current Anthropology* 19 (1978), pp. 139-143.

[161] Nick Perry, 'Two cultures and the total institution', *The British Journal of Sociology* 25 (1974), pp. 345-355; The same deficiency was pointed out by Christie Davies (Christie Davies, 'Goffman's Concept of the Total Institution: Criticisms and Revisi-

However, what starts off as a promise of a devastating critique in the end turns out to be praise, convoluted and uneasy but praise all the same. In Perry's view, Goffman's concept may fail in many strictly analytical respects but its proper even if somewhat ambivalent and precarious strength lies in the pursuit of excessive metaphors in almost literary fashion. And, as many others have observed, Goffman's ironic style and poetics as well as easily discernible interest in particularly existentialistic literature are virtually inseparable from his sociology, for only thanks to them could he build up his at the same time partisan though detached position towards the objects he studied.[162] Perry himself makes two such connections between Goffman's sociological legacy

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ons', in: Gary Alan Fine, Gregory W.H. Smith (eds.), *Erving Goffman. Sage Masters of Modern Social Thought*, London-Thousand Oaks-New Delhi 2000, pp. 239-254), who successfully amended the problem. Davies stated that in order to give the concept's totality a gradable value there are three areas that need to be taken into consideration: the degree of openness and closedness; the dominant mode of eliciting compliance; and a given institution's purpose of functioning. There is no need or space here to go into details of his diagrams of different institutions according to these criteria and how they can be manipulated to enhance their explanatory value.

Crucial is the contrasting type provided by Davies. He suggests that the type polar to Goffman's 'total institution' is Lewis Coser's 'greedy institution', the former being characterized by the totality of residence, the latter by the totality of commitment. According to Coser, the members of 'greedy institutions', for instance the Bolsheviks or Jesuits, refuse the array of social roles and by their own will totally commend themselves to the institutions they are members of and continue to live in the society at large. The uniformity of the institutions has to be secured by the sharp opposing of *we* and *them*, where *we* is a group of ascetic elects, an exclusive *society of saints* strongly committed to the *cause* of bringing about a profound change in the world, whereas *them* is the epitome of corruption, the undifferentiated mass of fallen and comfortable weaklings in need of strong leadership (Lewis A. Coser, *Greedy Institutions. Patterns of Undivided Commitment*, New York 1974). Hence, 'greedy institutions', as an 'ideal type', in order to preserve their uniformity are permanently involved in procedures of social control, persecution of internal heretics, testing obedience of their members, and severing those members' personal, that is, alternative to institutional attachments to each other (see also: Jezierski, '*Paranoia sangallensis*', p. 162).

Monasteries in Davies's comparative formulation of which basic premises I accept, rather than being seen as straightforward 'total institutions' (whatever the 'straightforward' adjective might mean) are better conceived of as a mixture of *total* and *greedy* elements, that is, institutions characterized both by a totality of residence and totality of obedience - neither of which reaches the extremes of, say, a concentration camp with its absolute closedness and murderous purpose on one side of the spectrum, or of a revolutionary political party with its demands of absolute loyalty on the other; and whose hierarchy remains relatively open for an inmate to potentially reach the position of the leader (Davies, 'Goffman's Concept', pp. 244-247).

[162] Paul Atkinson, 'Goffman's poetics', *Human Studies* 12 (1989), pp. 59-76; Gary Alan Fine, Daniel D. Martin, 'A Partisan View: Sarcasm, Satire, and Irony as Voices in Erving Goffman's Asylums', *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 19 (1990), pp. 89-115; more generally: Goodman, 'The Status of Style', *passim*.

and contemporary literary works, that is, William S. Burroughs's *Naked Lunch* and Albert Camus's *The Plague*.[163] 'The merit of a literary approach to Goffman is that it facilitates the discussion of the moral and philosophical issues which his work does, and cannot but, raise.'[164]

There is then perhaps little coincidence in the fact that not only Goffman but also Foucault have been said to put forward specific and idiosyncratic styles of reasoning instead of clear-cut theories or models about total institutions and power respectively.[165] As Steven Lukes maintains, Foucault's approach to power especially in *Discipline and Punish* shares a lot with the ideal-typical way of reasoning describing the full-bodied, idealized mechanisms of disciplinary power and not their concrete historical forms.[166] These

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[163] Taking a quote from Daniel Dafoe which Camus used in his novel - 'It is reasonable to represent one kind of imprisonment by another, as it is to represent anything that really exists by that which exists not.' - Perry pinpoints the affinities and differences between Goffman's, Burroughs's, and Camus's use of metaphors and symbolism. Whereas for Burroughs the metaphor of that 'all the world's a junky hooked on one drug or another is used to articulate his experience, for Goffman the experience of others is used to articulate the metaphor.' The relationship with *The Plague* is slightly more sophisticated: 'Just as Camus' novel is literally concerned with personal relationships, and metaphorically concerned with, respectively, politics and metaphysics, so too is Goffman's concept of the total institution. Viewed thus, the total institution is at once an empirical organization, a symbolic presentation of organizational tyranny, and a closed universe symbolizing the thwarting of human possibilities.'

[164] Perry, 'Two cultures', p. 353. A likewise deliberately excessive style of reasoning with metaphors was recently presented by Giorgio Agamben. In his genealogical *homo sacer* project he starts from Walter Benjamin's eighth thesis on the philosophy of history that today the state of exception has become the rule (Walter Benjamin, 'On the Concept of History', tr. Dennis Redmond accessed at (2010-09-09): http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/benjamin/1940/ history.htm), which forces us to rethink the concept of state not only at its current stage but also retrospectively and find out how the structure of exception, that ever present possibility of naked violence underlying every legal order which makes its subjects into unprotected, disposable *homines sacri*, has guided European history from Ancient Greece through the Middle Ages until the present (Agamben, *Homo*, *passim*).

[165] Perry, 'Two cultures', p. 351; Barbara A. Misztal, 'Normality and Trust in Goffman's Theory of Interaction Order', *Sociological Theory* 19 (2001), pp. 312-324; Horst J. Helle, 'Erving Goffman: a symbolic interactionist?', in: Luigi Tomasi (ed.), *The Tradition of the Chicago School of Sociology*, Aldershot 1998, pp. 179-190; Randall Collins, *Four Sociological Traditions*, New York 1994, pp. 218-224, 276-289; Simon Williams, 'Goffman, Interactionism, and the Management of Stigma in Everyday Life', in: Gary Alan Fine, Gregory W.H. Smith (eds.), *Erving Goffman. Sage Masters of Modern Social Thought*, London-Thousand Oaks-New Delhi 2000, pp. 212-238, at pp. 223-224; Burrell, Morgan, *Sociological Paradigms*, pp. 190-192.

[166] Lukes, *Power*, pp. 93-94; David Garland, '"Governmentality" and the Problem of Crime', *Theoretical Criminology* 1 (1997), pp. 173-214; Dreyfus, Rabinow, *Michel Foucault*, pp. 184-188; on the political aspect of Foucault's work see: Shiner, 'Reading Foucault', pp. 383-389, 396-397.

observations add one more element to the idea of style of reasoning - that language, rhetoric and literary figures are not some trifling and easily exchangeable elements of scientific reasoning but are the integral building blocks of making, presenting, and articulating the evidence in question.[167] A kind of quality that nicely dovetails into my ambition of working without strict sociological models but rather within a theory-ridden style of reasoning guided by the use of metaphors and parallels that exploits the tension between early medieval history and modern social theories.

Concluding this section, one might repeat that 'total institution', like any other concept, is not a finished product but something that has to be adjusted, re-invented so to speak, in order to function properly in new research environments. A sensible take-what-you-need & do-what-you-like kind of tool rather than an integrated, glittering gizmo to fix one thing and one thing only. It is also an opportunely unconfined frame that cannot answer all questions but which might encompass and incorporate other perspectives, in particular those dealing with power and hegemony, better attuned to account for particular circumstances and more concrete research problems. Examples of such expansions and supplements will be shown in the ensuing articles. It is, finally, a manner of thinking which offers a fairly unified conceptual and metaphorical language for naming and describing social situations and processes in closed milieus. It is thus time to see what kind of service this now properly prepared and *liberated* concept renders in this thesis.

[167] Koziol, *Begging Pardon*, p. XIV; Wojtek Jezierski, Geoffrey Koziol, 'Postscriptum: Wywiad z Geoffrey'em Koziolem'[interview with the author in the Polish translation of his book], in: Geoffrey Koziol, *Błaganie o przebaczenie i łaskę: Porządek rytualny i polityczny we wczesnośredniowiecznej Francji*, Warszawa 2009, pp. 425–458, at pp. 452-456; Fish, 'Rhetoric', *passim*; Davide Panagia, 'Review: "Words Cloth'd in Reasons Garb": Stanley Fish's Aesthetics and Politics', *Political Theory* 31 (2003), pp. 720-733, at pp. 722-726.

A Short Prologue to Four Long Articles

Having sketched the methodological or *stylistic* possibles of the 'total institution' concept it is time to briefly consider how this concept informs the four following articles that comprise the main bulk of this thesis. Yet the preceding part as well as this short introduction might come as a surprise to the reader. Why devote so much space and energy to discuss a concept that conspicuously occupies so little room in each of the articles and at no point seems to operate as the main guiding idea for any of them? Especially given that the articles already contain the required theoretical apparatus to render them intelligible and can be read outside the frame of this thesis. I would like to claim, nonetheless, that this concept constitutes - in spite of some of its deficiencies - a master link between the different concepts or theorems that more substantially and provisionally drive the analysis of more concrete problems such as monastic surveillance, persecution, or strategies of conflict solving. The aim of this short prologue then is primarily to construct the problems of the study within the 'total institution' frame in order to provide a red thread for the reading of the articles.

Article 1 presents and explores practices of surveillance and available measures of social control of monks in the early medieval St Gall. It discusses the restrictive methods and absolute attitude towards supervision that emerge from the normative sources of that time and argues that in the everyday monastic life uses and importance attached to the apparatus of surveillance were far more nuanced and adjustable to circumstances. The point of departure in Goffman's book is obviously the original definition that it is characteristic of 'total institutions' that they organize a tightly administered and supervised way of life for their inmates, where everyone is required to perform the same kind of task in the company of other alike-treated inmates.

Article 2, on the other hand, argues that it is not enough to focus on those practices of social control that monks themselves considered important and explicitly performed in order to preserve rule and order in the monastery. One needs also to pay attention to the more implicit institutional and broader social demands put on monks and abbots, as well as laymen entering monasteries disciplining all these groups and individuals to assume a desired posture, conduct, and outlook. In the center of Article 2 stand therefore the demanding social roles promoted in medieval monasteries as well as the means for their enforcement and internalization. As for Goffmanian inspiration for studying this problem, one should quote his research proposition, which is observably exaggerated in the context of medieval monasteries, but which offers a good starting point to be qualified in due course:

> I am interested in the fact that expected activity in the organization implies a conception of the actor and that an organization can therefore be viewed as a place for generating assumptions about identity… To engage in a particular activity in the prescribed spirit is to accept being a particular kind of person who dwells in a particular kind of world… To forgo prescribed activities, or to engage in them in unprescribed ways or for unprescribed purposes, is to withdraw from the official self and the world officially available to it. To prescribe activity is to prescribe a world; to dodge a prescription can be to dodge an identity.[168]

In a way, Article 3 continues on the same track. It investigates the miscarried visitation to St Gall paid by a monastic reformer, Sandrat of St Maximin in Trier. Sandrat was an imperial though unwelcome and notorious messenger sent by Otto I. Article 3 thus explores early medieval mechanisms of social control and the collective 'manufacturing' of scapegoats and deviants in the monastic milieu. The investigation proceeds with help of the contemporary sociological models of exclusion and persecution of paranoiacs asking whether they can account for the strikingly similar situation from the late tenth century. The point of departure here is, again, Goffman's observation that 'total institutions' have both the propensity and means to confer extreme and strictly moralistic interpretative schemes of human nature on their subjects:

> The translation of inmate behaviour into moralistic terms suited to the institution's avowed perspective will necessarily contain some broad presuppositions as to the character of human beings… Both desired and undesired conduct must be defined as springing from the personal will and character of the individual inmate himself, and defined as something he can himself do something about… Having to control inmates and to defend the institution in the name of its avowed aims, the staff resort to the kind of all-embracing identification of the inmates that will make this possible. The staff problem here is to find a crime that will fit the punishment.[169]

As Althusser would say, 'total institutions', given their dense structure of power, tend to interpellate subjects in the form of dense social roles[170] and as we shall learn from the episode depicted in Article 3, the convent of St Gall did so indeed in an unusually intransigent and moralistic pitch. In the matter of fact, Article 3 will attempt to show that if we perceive medieval monasteries as 'total institutions', we can better understand how they sometimes engaged in a

[168] Goffman, *Asylums*, pp. 169-170.

[169] Goffman, *Asylums*, pp. 82-83.

[170] Frederic Jameson, 'Introduction', in: Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and other essays*, tr. Ben Brewster, New York 2001, pp. VI-XIII, at pp. IX, XIV.

forceful implementation of an extreme version of human nature almost exclusively underpinned by moralism.[171]

Article 4, finally, leaves the topic of monastic identities and their production aside and dives into the problem of monastic strategies of conflict management taking examples of internal conflicts between abbots and their monks in St Gall, Fulda, and Bury St Edmunds. As Article 4 suggests, it might be methodologically useful to avoid attributing a single mentality to these seemingly self-contained, harmoniously organized institutions, but rather explore their in-built tensions or, better put, their harmonious impossibility.[172] The focus in Article 4 lies particulary on the oral and literary means of the resolution of conflicts. In this way it explores also the cognitive categories organizing monastic practices and experience of space. In particular, Article 4 studies the monastic senses of *Öffentlichkeit* (both inner-cloistral and external-secular), secrecy, institutional borders; all in all, it investigates the elements of political geography of medieval monasteries hence returning to the original definition of the 'total institution' concept. As we shall learn from Article 4, the rough distinctions made by Goffman that 'total institutions' basically comprise three types of reality, i.e.,

1. that which is concealed from inmates
2. that which is revealed to inmates
3. that which is shown to visitors[173]

are in acute need of qualification and nuance, of which Goffman himself was well aware.

Taken together all four articles will try to answer the questions of what power relations and social control looked like and how they set conditions for

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[171] Acting in a moralistic attitude and applying equally disproportionate means, especially in moments of crisis, to enforce the institutional interpretation of the inmate seems to be one of the hallmarks of 'total institutions'. I take the issue of moralism here after Terry Eagleton, *After Theory*, London 2003, p. 143: 'Moralism believes that there is a set of questions known as moral questions which are quite distinct from social and political ones. It does not see that 'moral' means exploring the texture and quality of human behavior as richly and sensitively as you can, and that you cannot do this by abstracting men and women from their social surroundings. This is morality as… opposed to those who believe you can reduce it to rules, prohibitions and obligations'; Moralistic logic of action, however, that is ubiquitous in Article 3 is better elucidated by Donald Black, *The Social Structure of Right and Wrong*, San Diego 1993, pp. 144-147: 'Moralism is a tendency to treat people as enemies… Moralism is a product of its social environment… and a direct function of social remoteness and superiority… Another feature of moralism is a propensity to use force… where punishment seems to be the only rational response to immorality.'

[172] Jackson Lears, 'The Concept', *passim*; Sayers, 'Violence', *passim*.

[173] Goffman, *Asylums*, p. 99.

monastic *conduct* in early and high medieval St Gall and other monasteries around the year 1000.

‘*Monasterium panopticum*.
On Surveillance in a Medieval Cloister -
the Case of St. Gall’

Frühmittelalterliche Studien 40 (2006), pp. 167-182

‘*Non similitudinem monachi, sed monachum ipsum*.
An Investigation into the Monastic Category
of the Person - the Case of St Gall’

Scandia 73:1 (2008), pp. 7-35

‘*Paranoia sangallensis*.
A Micro-Study in the Etiquette of
Monastic Persecution’

Frühmittelalterliche Studien 42 (2008), pp. 147-168

‘*Verba volant, scripta manent*. Limits of Speech, Power of Silence and Logic of Practice in some Monastic Conflicts of the High Middle Ages’

in: Steven Vanderputten (ed.),
Understanding Monastic Practices of Oral Communication
(Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy 21), Turnhout 2011,
pp. 19-44, forthcoming

Concluding Remarks

The writing of this thesis has been a long, intellectually haphazard process. No wonder that my view on certain problems, such as monastic surveillance for instance, has shifted considerably since Article 1 was published back in 2006. There is likewise little coincidence in the fact that the aims and results of the articles do not perfectly match the purpose and conclusions of this thesis as a whole. Instead of a nice and desirable overlap, we have certain threads and questions abandoned and new ones coming in their place quite unexpectedly. This final chapter does not so much summarize the articles, which after all still remain fairly self-sufficient pieces of work, but attempts to set some of their results in a more overarching socio-political frame.

What will be offered here are necessarily provisional generalizations about the historical 'how' of monastic power relationships in medieval St Gall and other monasteries as well as the consequences for the concepts and style of research employed here. This should also reveal what were the impossible points of arrival for this analysis. By impossible points of arrival, to be presented as the final element of this part, I mean the in-built blind spots of particular theorems and the approach as a whole. Their 'ways of not seeing'.[1]

* * * *

Here we come to the final political question - the same one that Georg Simmel asked of society - which constitutes a coda for this text: how was monastery possible? Or, differently put, what did the power relations in early medieval monasteries look like? What was the compliance of monks founded on: conformity, value consensus, fear, consent, resignation, cheerful or mindless obedience, free will, coercion? These questions propelling this thesis, even considering the fact that we have spoken of an apparently easily isolable social entity such as early medieval St Gall and other monasteries, have not been

[1] Steven Lukes, 'Political Ritual and Social Integration', *Sociology* 9 (1975), pp. 289-308, at p. 301: 'every way of seeing is also a way of not seeing'; Louis Althusser puts it more elaborately (Louis Althusser, 'From Capital', p. 26 quoted in: Ekegren, *The Reading*, p. 28): '[some objects and problems are] necessarily *invisible* in the field of… [a] theory, because they are not objects of this theory, because they are *forbidden* by it… they are invisible because they are rejected in principle, repressed from the field of the visible, and that is why their fleeting presence when it does occur… *goes unperceived*.'

motivated by virtue of reference to a common object or constancy of the concepts. Rather, they were motivated by a certain regularity or a certain common theme at the most.[2]

Hence the question of how the medieval monastery was possible has to be answered that it was not possible in one way only. There was no famous factor X,[3] no universal social glue that kept these institutions together but a mass of often contradictory factors. There is therefore no single theory or concept that can account for all these different phenomena and, as the preceding articles have shown, one is forced to fabricate analytical collages to rein in the multifaceted reality. One thing is clear; what primarily kept early medieval monasteries in place but could just as easily make them perish - disregarding the external factors for a moment - was the activity of their members engaged in social practices which reproduced the structures of compliance and, most often, asymmetrical power relations. On the other hand, due to their iterable, articulatory nature, these more or less established social practices on the occasion of their every repetition were performed slightly differently. This opened possible spaces for resistance and transformation of the dominant power relations.

surveillance: subordination

Every regime is a regime of practices. That is to say, in order for a regime to stay in place it has to be instituted and reproduced by the ongoing, structuring practices performed by its subjects.[4] Typically, social practices do not entail much self-consciousness. Surveillance of monks in monasteries, however, which undeniably was a form of social practice, first, carried in itself a deal of cognizant surplus value and, second, it was often consciously designed to preserve the institution.

The investigation of the problematizations[5] of, and self-interpretations within the practice of monastic surveillance which were expressed by the early

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[2] Foucault, *The Archeology*, pp. 31-39; Ernesto Laclau, Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy. Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, London-New York 2001, pp. 105-106; Glynos, Howarth, *Logics*, p. 139.

[3] Collins, *Four Sociological*, *passim*.

[4] Glynos, Howarth, *Logics*, pp. 104-108.

[5] The idea to investigate relationship between problematizations and practices is here taken obviously from Foucault: Michel Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure. The History of Sexuality*, Vol. 2, tr. Robert Hurley, New York 1990, pp. 11-12: 'I seem to have gained a better perspective on the way I worked… on this goal, whose goal is a history of truth. It was a matter of analyzing, not behaviors or ideas, nor societies and their "ideologies," but the *problematizations* through which being offers itself to be, necessarily, thought - and the *practices* on the basis of which these problematizations are formed. The archeological dimension of the analysis made it possible to examine

medieval monastic founders and reformers such as St Benedict, Hildemar of Corbie etc., but also partially by Ekkehard IV suggests that the contemporaries did see the elements and a general need of surveillance, even if they did not reify the phenomenon the way it is done nowadays. For instance, the practices of control and oversight performed by the *circatores* were perceived inasmuch as care for souls as care for the unity of the institution. Yet the picture that emerges from the normative texts considering the problem of control, partially due to the fact that many of them were concerned with the supervision of children rather than adults, is far more stern, top-down, and all-encompasing than what appears from the analysis of social interaction brought by the texts like the *Casus*. Here, the image is not as ambitiously 'total' as for instance in the Marbach customary presented in Article 1. There is hardly any desire for an absolute visibility of all monks at all times but rather periodic inspection.

Furthermore, these contextualized self-interpretations and idealized blueprints for a social control system do not account for all types of social practices in early medieval St Gall that we, given the ideas of Jeremy Bentham or Foucault, could count under the name of surveillance. For example, a monk's private bed, the signs on the wall for Salomo to hang up his habit by, or the two custodians allotted to the senile monk Gerald officially to look after him would all fall out of the scope set by the interpretations delivered by monastic subjects. One thus needs to add that there was a great deal of mutual social control in early medieval St Gall, not necessarily ordered from above, and that those monks did see themselves as seen but often also felt responsibility to be watchful of others, e.g. as in the Sindolf episode. In other words, whereas the monastic ideas about surveillance may suggest that we should speak of this phenomenon in terms of a designed system, the analysis of practices in St Gall suggests that we should think of social control just as much in terms of a dispersed, self-regulating gaze, actively even if unwittingly taught in an informal manner via social osmosis.

However, the trouble is not only that the self-interpretations stop short of providing a full sense of the given social phenomenon. Also the social practices themselves are not enough to allow us to see all of the surveillaince's dimensions. To end here would be equivalent to remain, using the Heidegerrian distinction, on the ontical level of inquiry, that is, on the level of practices that are taken for granted.[6] Therefore we have to pass this *substructural* level of social practices and see what kind of *superstructure* in terms of sociology of knowledge, or what kind of ideological worldview they produced.[7] We need, in other words, to query the ontological bearing of these controlling practices

the forms themselves; its genealogical dimension enabled me to analyze their formation out of the practices and the modifications undergone by the latter.'

[6] Glynos, Howarth, *Logics*, pp. 108-109, 159-162.

[7] Berger, Luckmann, *The Social*, p. 18.

for the institution, the way they constituted the regime's very possibility to operate.[8] The question is: was this generalized gaze necessary for the monastery as a 'total institution' to stay in place? And what consequences did it have for the monastic subjects?

The findings of Article 1, but also of the other three, point at an affirmative answer to the first question. The exceptional example of Abbot Notker raised in Article 1, that the gaze of the abbot was periodically removed from the monastery in order to let the internal tensions find their resolution is a good case in point. Superficially, it contradicts the necessity of constant social control. But it can also be interpreted the other way round which would confirm the observations of Foucault and Bentham.[9] It is not only the fact that monks kept each other in check when the officials were absent, but it was also the very possibility of control, the presumption of being in the gaze, the mere prospect of reprimand or punishment always lurking in the shadow but not actualized in a given moment that was enough to make the institution *tick* and to make the subjects comply most of the time.[10] Occasional suspension of surveillance was simply a controlled form of social chaos that changed nothing about the structure of power or its ubiquity. Paradoxically, in the long run it only gave surety to the effectiveness of both.[11] Whichever of these answers we choose to opt for, both suggest that social control in early medieval St Gall was more *ad hoc* and attunable to circumstances, but that it definitely was there.

So much for the level of organization. But, of course, if the organization's ontology was underpinned by social practices, the practices themselves needed to be underpinned by, but also be constitutive of, a particular ontology of the subjects performing them. This infra-subjective dimension is, unfortunately, comparatively wanting in Article 1, rather presumed than rendered explicit.

[8] Glynos, Howarth, *Logics*, pp. 134-137.

[9] Jeremy Bentham, *Panopticon. En ny princip för inrättningar där personer övervakas*, tr. Frans Lundgren, Nora 2002; Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 202-203: 'He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection.'

[10] Goffman, *Asylums*, pp. 42-44, 151.

[11] Goffman, *Asylums*, pp. 173-174: 'And some of these activities [secondary adjustments of the inmates that usually are meant to counteract the total institution] are not merely ones that are soon to be made legitimate but rather ones that must remain unofficial if they are to be effective. As Melville Dalton has shown, special capacities of a participant may have to be underwritten with rewards that no one else of his category receives. *And what the courted participant may see as something he is getting away with* - a secondary adjustment - *may be deliberately allowed him by a conscientious official acting solely from a desire to see the over-all efficiency of the organization sustained* [emphasis mine].'

Save for one instance which clearly is a very powerful expression, namely, Ekkehard IV's proverbial formulation 'regularis monachus absque abbate esse non poterit.'[12] It is an open assertion of a certain truth that most of the time went without saying - in actual fact, the greatest success of which depended exactly on being silently misrecognized - that the defining criterion for a monk's form of life was his being politically underwritten with an absolute subjection to the institutional authority. A monk, as in the Foucauldian 'pastoral power', was 'always within sight and often earshot of someone, if only his fellow inmates,'[13] but, more than that, even if the first condition failed, he was always within his own seeing and hearing presence.

Finally, Article 1 carries important consequences for the use of 'total institution' concept. I would like to claim that Goffman's concept allows us to contour the most typical and significant features of medieval monasteries seen both as formal organizations, that is, with their varieties of staff, inmates and their characteristic roles, types of spaces they tend to occupy etc., but also as forms of patterned behavior through which they construct their separate or clashing social realities. Furthermore, the example of Abbot Notker deliberately sealing off his community from the outside discussed in Article 1 taken together with the findings of particularly Article 3 also suggest that we may speak of *totalization* as a certain, admittedly sporadic, aspect of monastic disciplinary practices and rigidity of their performance that fluctuated even within one and the same institution over time.[14] *Totalization* would be thus a possible turn, a latent direction which many institutions, perceived broadly as regulated forms of behavior and not narrowly as formally established organizations, can and could start rolling towards under certain circumstances.[15]

Let's stop here for a moment. It may seem far-fetched to locate the greatest momentum of the monastic regime at the level of social practices, which were supposed to simultaneously structure it as well as be subjected to the regime's structuration. The answer to this problem, however, lies perhaps in the fact that almost all types of practices studied in Article 1, rather more unconsciously than not, directly aimed at the preservation and reproduction of that regime.[16] Because of their quiescence, ubiquity and pervasiveness, ironically, their significance may have been easily overlooked. They worked in contained way[17] or, to borrow a term from Glynos and Howarth, in the 'subordination way', that is, in a manner which appeared 'not to invite or need public contes-

[12] Ekkehard IV, *Casus sancti Galli* c. 138, p. 270.

[13] Goffman, *Asylums*, p. 33.

[14] Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, p. 105.

[15] Froschauer, 'Erving Goffmans', *passim*.

[16] Foucault, 'The Subject', p. 343.

[17] Goffman, *Asylums*, pp. 180-181.

tation of social norms.'[18] As a result, attention in the subsequent articles was turned to those types of monastic practices that were either disruptive or those which, in reaction to the former, worked in the 'domination way', that is, 'appeared to actively prevent the public contestation of social norms from arising in the first place.'[19] Simply put, Articles 2, 3, and 4 paid more attention to minor and major dislocations within the regime in order to see its *naturalness* in a proper perspective. Addressing the ways these dislocations were answered, in turn, helped to investigate how the monastic regime's hegemony got reinstituted.

social roles: reproducing and dislocating the regime

Article 2 returns then, in a way, to the Heidegerrian distinction between the ontical and ontological levels of inquiry in order to study the institutional conditions of possibility underlying the role of a monk. That is, St Gall's institutional presuppositions located at the level of the subjects. Article 2 studies them less in the manner of studying the official prescriptions for monks found, for instance, in the *Regula Benedicti*, and more by focusing on the dislocations[20] occurring within the structure of subjects in their everyday life. Putting it simply, I have investigated the ways monks and others took upon themselves their social roles and what kind of strains these procedures involved. Consider the following example from the late ninth century:

> After that - as the circle of time continued to roll - Abbot Grimald, whose lifetime's greater part had already passed, began to spend more and more time in our monastery [St Gall] with the desire to pass the remaining days of his life in serenity and servitude of Christ... And even though Grimald was still in

[18] Glynos, Howarth, *Logics*, p. 120; the original idea comes from: Laclau, Mouffe, *Hegemony*.

[19] Glynos, Howarth, *Logics*, p. 121; see also: Hörnqvist, *Foucaults maktanalys,* pp. 231-246.

[20] Dislocations, according to Glynos and Howarth (*Logics*, p. 110): 'are those occasions when a subject is called upon to confront the contingency of social relations more directly than at other times.' As it was noted above when discussing the problem of extreme case studies, these usually rare and short moments are particularly instructive. It's because they give insight into what ontologically laden meanings pregnant with political effects hide beyond the acknowledged, ontical façade of institutional practices (Glynos, Howarth, *Logics*, p. 155: 'The practice of *ethico-political* interpretation shares certain affinities with cognate approaches. Of particular relevance in this regard is the work of Connolly, who highlights the centrality of the *ontopolitical* dimension involved in any socio-political analysis. The 'onto' in ontopolitical is important for him because it 'invokes a set of fundaments about necessities and possibilities of human beings', including what they are composed of, how they relate to nature, to each other, and so on. (Connolly, *The Ethos*, p. 1)').

> charge of a number of monasteries and other settings, he wished above all to await the last of his days in this monastery and thus began eagerly to train himself in the monastic discipline. And even though he was not a monk by the habit, he nonetheless lived according to monastic conversion and calling. He was so persistant in his prayings and so generous in almsgiving that he was, and rightly so, called *pater pauperum*. He grew old daily pursuing these and other good virtues and eventually, when his days filled with true faith came to an end, he was taken from this light to, we trust, God's eternal lightness.[21]

The episodes like this one and those of Salomo, Abbot-Bishop of Constance and St Gall, as well as those of other abbots of St Gall, Fulda, or Bury St Edmunds studied in Article 2 all reveal that the greatest dislocations and contestations within the structure of medieval monks as subjects occurred at the threshold between the inner monastic and external world of larger society. This hardly comes as a surprise. When these two worlds met, the borderline between them ran the risk of becoming fuzzy and so the more forcefully it had to be reaccentuated so that these worlds, after all, could remain separate. Persons like Grimald - abbots whose role was to fuse what ideally was not to be united - expressed the attributes and markers of status of both the monastic and secular world. At appropriate times some of these attributes, for instance, the habit or signs of humility, became of primary importance and had to be foregrounded. On other occasions, in meeting with laymen for example, they became only auxiliary and could be toned down or wholesale shunned.[22] As Article 2 argues in its entirety, this is the way early medieval monks saw people - both these who looked like monks and weren't them and those who didn't look like them at all but were nevertheless considered so. Everybody was acting but the act of some was regarded as fake, whereas the performance of others seemed natural, uncontroversial, and necessary.

Secondly, the examples studied in Article 2 divulged a set of practices driven by a context-dependent logic of adjusting, taming, and disciplining (by means of clothing, formal rituals, subtle comments and open confrontations,

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[21] Ratpert, *St. Galler Klostergeschichten (Casus sancti Galli)* c. 9 [28], pp. 216-219: 'Post hec igitur temporum transeunte curriculo Grimaldus abbas, cum iam etatis plurimos dies haberet, cepit sedulo in nostro monasterio commorari, cupiens reliquum vitae suae tempus cum quiete transigere et in Christi ducere servitute… Ipse autem Grimaluds, cum alia loca et monasteria suae dicioni habuisset subiecta, in hoc monasterio praecipue cupiens finem dierum expectare, cepit studiosissime monachicis se exercere disciplinis, et licet habitu non esset, conversatione tamen et voto monachus existebat. Orationibus sepius insistebat, elemosinarum largitatem solus prae ceteris possidebat, in tantum ut pater pauperum vocaretur et esset. His itaque aliisque similibus bonarum virtutum profectibus cottidie crescens, senex et plenus dierum in confessione vere fidei de hac luce Domino vocante altitudinem conscendit, ut credimus, lucis perpetue.'

[22] Everett Cherrington Hughes, 'Dilemmas and Contradictions of Status', *The American Journal of Sociology* 50 (1945), pp. 353-359; Brandt, *Enklaven-Exklaven*, pp. 58-59, 325 fn. 38; Fichtenau, *Living in the Tenth*, pp. 64-71.

suggestions and express orders, joined creation of times and spaces of transition or fractured identities and names for these such as Salomo's *praemonachus* etc.) monastic subjects but also lay and secular people visiting St Gall to fit the narrow frame of subjectivity promoted in the monastery. In other words, sometimes situations emerged which revealed the social arbitrariness of distinctions and the political contingency underlying monastic regimes. Accordingly, they were very often 'covered over' or responded to in a 'domination way' by those, like Abbot Grimald, who yielded to the demands imposed upon them or those, like the senate of St Gall discussing Salomo's case, who imposed those demands. The changes in structure of subjects were thus tacitly negotiated in social interactions often between peers, but occasionally even in bottom-up movement, as in case of abbots corrected by their convents in the process of social control from below, and not exclusively imposed through a unilateral top-down oppressive traffic.

Whichever the case, the conclusion of Article 2 is that the selves of medieval monks and of those working hard to resemble them were the positive products, not only oppressed objects, of a collective manufacture through means of power and social control. Very much in the same degree as *pueri oblati*, who traditionally were perceived that way in the scholarship. It follows that to view the medieval monastery as a space where the individual self was found or discovered, as Casey or Leclercq and many others would argue, instead of seeing it as a place where 'the 'self' [was] itself always production rather than ground,'[23] is to put the carriage before the horse. As Goffman writes:

> Each moral career, and behind this, each self, occurs within the confines of an institutional system, whether a social establishment such as a mental hospital or a complex of personal and professional relationships. The self, then, can be seen as something that resides in the arrangements prevailing in a social system for its members. The self in this sense is not a property of the person to whom it is attributed, but dwells rather in the pattern of social control that is exerted in connexion with the person by himself and those around him. This special kind of institutional arrangement does not so much support the self as constitute it.[24]

However, as the second part of Article 2 argued, the narrow institutional frame of a single monastery is not enough to explain the manufacturing mechanisms in full. In order to get a wholesale grip of the institutional processes and the cogency and durability of their effects coming in the form of monastic identities the Goffmanian model of 'total institution' must be transcended. Precisely because the dislocations occurred at the threshold of the monastic and the lay world surrounding it, one needs to look into the larger discourses defining monks and their place in the world, e.g. issued by the

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[23] Spivak, 'Subaltern', p. 22.

[24] Goffman, *Asylums*, p. 154.

papacy, lay lords, monastic reformers, local bishops etc. This larger conceptual category of monks as 'human kinds', as Hacking argues, involved thus both infra-institutional practices and labels with an individual monastic self at the centre *à la* Goffman and the viewpoint of the archeology of discourses *à la* Foucault.[25] Through such a methodological confluence we were able to see how the sublime colonized the mundane and corporeal very much in the manner described by Bourdieu that even in the most banal command such as 'stand up straight!' a whole cosmology was inscribed.[26] This interface of discourse and institutional practices in Article 2, in other words, allowed for investigating how a person outwardly resembling a monk mutated and became a monk himself.[27] Goffman was thus correct when he wrote that 'total institutions' were 'forcing houses for changing persons… a natural experiment on what can be done to the self.'[28] During the early Middle Ages, it should be added, in certain respects they did so by borrowing both some of the bits and pieces as well as the tools to work with from a larger society, which in point of fact is a conclusion that Goffman, I believe, would not go up against.

Articles 1 and 2 induce us therefore to speak of a twofold gaze, internal and external, organizing the conduct of individuals in early medieval monasteries. A monk in medieval St Gall, but even the convent as a whole, was inescapably a doubled creature, the knowing subject but also the object of knowledge,[29] always more or less consciously accompanied by a doppelgänger made up of obligations and opinions that affected his actions. It is no coincidence that medieval monastic authors, see both Ekkehard IV, Lampert, and Jocelin in Articles 2 and 4, paid so much attention to the matters of face - gossip and opinion circulating about a given monastery - that these institutions exhibited to the surrounding society. It is no chance either that monks of St Gall were ready to make their most prominent guests or even some of their most notorious intruders conform at least outwardly to the monastic

[25] Hacking, 'Between', pp. 277-302; see also: Michel de Certeau, 'Foucault and Bourdieu', in: *The Practice of Everyday Life*, tr. Steven Rendall, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London 2002, pp. 45-60.

[26] Bourdieu, *Outline*, p. 94; As Catherine Bell puts (*Ritual Theory*, p. 100): 'In other words, the molding of the body within a highly structured environment does not simply express inner states. Rather, it primarily acts to restructure bodies in the very doing of the acts themselves. Hence, required kneeling does not merely *communicate* subordination to the kneeler. For all intents and purposes, kneeling produces a subordinated kneeler in and through the act itself.'

[27] Foucault, 'On the Genealogy', p. 250: 'So, it is not enough to say that the subject is constituted in a symbolic system. It is not just in the play of symbols that the subject is constituted. It is constituted in real practices - historically analyzable practices. There is a technology of the constitution of the self which cuts across symbolic systems while using them.'

[28] Goffman, *Asylums*, p. 22.

[29] Spivak, 'Subaltern', *passim*.

forms of expression. Appearances counted both on the inside and on the outside.

paranoia: radical dislocation, extreme subjectivity, and enjoyment

Article 3 continues to explore two themes touched upon previously yet under dramatic circumstances. First, the theme of identities - in this case exactly one, that of Sandrat - and a regime shattering in a moment of radical dislocation. Second, the theme of practices charged with political logics that aim at defending the existing hegemonic order but which heuristically gave us insight into the ways the monastic order and its foundations could be contested.[30]

Firstly, the Sandrat episode revealed a whole palette of more and, as the time went on, less and less subtle means which could make communication between a tightly weld group and an unwelcome individual turn into blatant combat. Combat, it should be added, in whose final stage there was virtually no move that wouldn't count as one below the belt. Virtually all forms of talk and interaction became blows, punches, and insults. Even failure to give an answer in reasonable time, which may have seemed truly harmless but which in fact was an answer given off, a form of asocial non-responsivity.[31] Not only was this communication perceived that way by the ostensibly thin-skinned and unbalanced individual, but also intended that way by his likewise mind-set oppressors. Thus, even though Sandrat's formal status was preserved for a long period during this bloody episode in which open confrontation alternated with conspiracy, the first conclusion is that an early medieval monastery had full potential to persecute, denigrate, and simply make life ubearable for an individual if the group of monks chose to do so. As Goffman put it:

> A system of informal social control can easily go awry. Tact and secrecy can have the ultimate consequence of constructing a real paranoid community for the paranoid.[32]

Secondly, in Article 3 more than anywhere else in this thesis, it became clear that subjectivity or the self was not something possessed by a monk but something that was conferred upon that person through his relationship with the social environment. The Sandrat story was therefore not a journey into how

[30] Glynos, Howarth, *Logics*, pp. 104-108, 133-164, esp. pp. 141-145.

[31] Erving Goffman, 'Felicity's Condition', *The American Journal of Sociology* 89 (1983), pp. 1-53, at p. 49; Johan Asplund, *Om hälsningsceremonier, mikromakt och asocial pratsamhet*, Göteborg 1998; more generally see: Bourdieu, Wacquant, *An Invitation*, p. 144; Pierre Bourdieu, 'Authorized Language. The Social Conditions for the Effectiveness of Ritual Discourse', in: *Language & Symbolic Power*, tr. Gino Raymond, Matthew Adamson, Cambridge, MA 1991, pp. 107-116.

[32] Goffman, 'The Insanity', p. 361.

this monk's dark self underwent a profound change of attitude in an inflicted discovery of a new, truer, and better self. It was rather an investigation into how a single reference group in an isolated institution could confer identity on people in the form of the most sinister labels and classifications.[33] Even if those forms of identity were conferred merely in parchment form, this nonetheless bears strong evidence of a lasting collective trauma. As we learned already when discussing Salomo's example, face was something primarily borrowed from others and only secondarily something attached to one's head.[34] But in the case of accounts describing situations when extreme, shameful faces were forced onto others, which almost automatically declared those enforcing them as normal and praiseworthy, we can no longer speak of human beings but two radically antagonistic positions joined in symbiotic and tempestuous relationship. 'The normal and the stigmatized are not persons but rather perspectives,' as Goffman put it.[35]

Thirdly, the process of facial re-composition described in Article 3 coincided with a radical dislocation, gathering in strength, of the stability of St Gall's order that the antagonism between Sandrat and the convent set in motion. I call this dislocation radical because it unearthed the radical contingency of this political order which here erupted in a momentary state of exception in which the *Regula Benedicti* and abbot's supremacy were set aside opening a political void. The way the convent responded to this explosion was

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[33] Paraphrasing the title of Szasz's essay, we can no doubt speak of monastic classification as a strategy of personal constraint (Thomas S. Szasz, 'Psychiatric Classification as a Strategy of Personal Constraint', in: *Ideology and Insanity. Essays on the Psychiatric Dehumanization of Man*, London 1983, pp. 190-217;

As Durkheim would claim, and it is exactly along this line Article 3 proceeds, in such dense social groupings equipped with high moral standards such as monasteries, deviance is not so much occasionally found but is actively, if unconsciously, produced in the ongoing process of social control assuring the observance of these standards by the inmates (Émile Durkheim, *The Rules of Sociological Method*, tr. W. D. Halls, New York 1982, p. 100): 'Imagine a community of saints... a perfect cloister of exemplary individuals. Crimes, [commonly] so called, will there be unknown; but faults, which appear venial to the layman will create there the same scandal that the ordinary offense does in ordinary consciousness. If then, this society has the power to judge and punish, it will define these acts as criminal and will treat them as such.'

[34] Erving Goffman, 'On Face-Work. An Analysis of Ritual Elements in Social Interaction', in: *Interaction Ritual. Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior*, New York 1982, pp. 5-45, at p. 45: 'Universal human nature is not a very human thing. By acquiring it, the person becomes a kind of construct, built up not from inner psychic propensities but from moral rules that are impressed upon him from without… And if a particular person or group or society seems to have a unique character on its own, it is because its standard of human-nature elements is pitched and combined in a particular way.'; Glynos, Howarth, *Logics*, pp. 127-132.

[35] Erving Goffman, *Stigma. Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, New York 1986, p. 138.

political too. The void was filled with violence preserving the ruling hegemony, which symbolically hammered Sandrat's identity for good.

Incidentally, it would be an oversimplification to consider the problem of decomposition of identity debated in Article 3 as a mere by-product of the conflict between Sandrat and the convent. On the contrary. The question of Sandrat's identity constituted a certain phantasm, just hinted at in Article 3, that propelled the whole conflict giving it both direction and energy. Take note of the logic of equivalence established in the description of this incident between Sandrat, Judas, and Satan in order to build up a common front among the monks against the intruder.[36] To put this differently, in the literary and moral economy of Ekkehard IV's *Casus sancti Galli*, but more broadly in the economy of St Gall's identity, the Sandrat episode served as a moment of Lacanian enjoyment (*jouissance*). To explain this briefly; enjoyment marks a moment consciously experienced by the subject as suffering and guilt accompanying 'the transgression of an officially affirmed ideal' - in this case the obligation of the brotherly love of the other - which nevertheless 'must be understood as *unconscious* pleasure' - in this case the joy over the success of warding off the villain.[37] Simply put, enjoyment in the Sandrat episode was what engaged the monastic subjects so passionately in defense of their monastery. It was also the logic of enjoyment that subsequently tainted the collective memory of St Gall which, as I argued, repressed this violent transgression of the convent's dealings with Sandrat and remembered the whole episode in a self-pitying mood.

Finally, Article 3 carries two major consequences for the use of 'total institution' within the context of medieval monasticism that stay in, I hope, creative tension with the findings from the two articles discussed previously. It may be proper, as it was shown above, to see staff and inmates of monasteries as constituting one group most of the time. There may be occasions, however, such as the one described, when re-introducing the staff-inmate divide is worth an effort for analytical purposes. By remaining sensitive to local contexts one may become prone to see the staff-inmates cleavage as a variable, and not as a constant characteristic, that may shift even within one institution over time and may be, for different purposes, alternately foregrounded or concealed by the subjects. The same applies to the divide between the inner monastic world and that of the environing society. At times it is more useful to see the external forces operating on the inside and whence blurring the allegedly impassable divide as Patzold has argued; occasionally, however, one may reap heuristic

[36] Glynos, Howarth, *Logics*, pp. 143-152.

[37] Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, London-New York 2008, pp. 47-50, 184-185, 204; IDEM, *How to read*, pp. 79-90; Glynos, Howarth, *Logics*, p. 107.

benefit from isolating different geographies for different institutional practices.[38]

silence: from hegemony to public contestations

The examples of larger crises and minor dislocations demonstrated that in spite of the appearance of eternalness and stability, at times medieval monasteries such as St Gall during Sandrat's visit or under Abbot Gerhard in the late 990s, or Fulda under Abbot Widerad in 1063, revealed their ramshackle, precarious political constructions. If we are to perceive them as a continuous process of reproduction of their internal hegemonic structure, we must also presume possible, even if most often quieted, forms of counter-hegemony fomenting on the inside, relations of dominance going always hand in hand with resistance.

In the focus of Article 4 stood thus a number of inner monastic conflicts in which the conventuals clashed with their abbots. It was argued that a particular logic of practice or, if one prefers, a particular grammar of means guided these conflicts, which concerned the appropriateness of disclosing insider information and dirty details about what happened on the inside. Two aspects of how these disclosures came about were crucial. First, whether the disclosures occured in face-to-face interaction and with the help of oral means or if they were made in textual form. This distinction was fundamental because, as I concluded in Article 4, in such cases monks considered writing uncontainable and, in consequence, as too great a danger of leaking the valuable information to undesired recipients. The second aspect regarded how the content of the revealed message was attuned to the audience to which it was addressed. These two aspects, I believe, should be taken together when considering the conflicts of this kind. It is because the monks confronting their abbots publicly, that is, involving the lay world in their internal struggles, on the one hand, had to avoid causing public scandal but, on the other hand, needed to make the dirty secrets about their abbots known widely enough to make the weight of the public opinion tip to their side of the scale.

Of course, it is clear that the analysis of the social practices of monastic conflict management inevitably flows into the domain of the political. A crucial question in this respect, then, is: what could count as a public political demand in these monastic conflicts?[39] Glynos and Howarth argue that 'a

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[38] Patzold, *Konflikte im Kloster*, pp. 306-325; Goffman, *Asylums*, pp. 111-113; Davies, 'Goffman's Concept', *passim.*

[39] Article 4 takes therefore part in a more fundamental debate whether using the notion of public sphere or, as I preferred, *Öffentlichkeit* is appropriate for the Middle Ages, which directly goes back to the issue brought up by Peter von Moos of how we should control our anachronisms. The best known example of reluctance towards the applica-

demand is political to the extent that it publicly contests the norms of a particular practice or system of practices in the name of a principle or ideal.'[40] It is

tion of this notion is presented by Jürgen Habermas. He questions the existence of such a sphere in the medieval world spare when the status of a person (especially a king) was publicly represented (Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere. An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, tr. Thomas Burger, Cambridge, MA 1991, pp. 5-12).

Many medievalists, however, who entered into polemics with Habermas's statement (see, for instance, the critique of Habermas in: Gerd Althoff, 'Demonstration und Inszenierung. Spielregeln der Kommunikation im mittelalterlicher Öffentlichkeit', in: *Spielregeln der Politik im Mittelalter. Kommunikation in Frieden und Fehde*, Darmstadt 1997, pp. 229-257, at pp. 229-233; see also IDEM, *Macht der Rituale. Symbolik und Herrschaft im Mittelalter*, Darmstadt 2003, pp. 18 ff.), have successfully shown that a public image of a person, or of an institution as in our case, in the early and high Middle Ages was not simply staged but rather publicly and secretly negotiated and its acceptance was seldom given from the beginning. In this sense, we may say that the medieval *Öffentlichkeit*, or pre-*Öffentlichkeit* if one prefers, was not only representative but also evaluative as its products were effects of a more or less but always collective and public judgment (von Moos, 'Das Öffentliche und das Private', pp. 16-18, 35 fn. 59, 44-45; see also the very interesting discussion and exemplification of this issue in Theo Riches's, 'Once Upon an Iron Age').

Furthermore, the medieval perception of secrecy as negative and inferior was not as one-sided as Habermas wants it to be - there are numerous examples, also from the studies on monasticism including those in Article 4, which reveal that the sphere of secrecy was meant to protect *Öffentlichkeit*, for instance from a scandal whose victim it would have been if a shameful sin had become a public issue (von Moos, *'Öffentlich' und 'privat'*, pp. 31-32; IDEM, 'Das Öffentliche und das Private', pp. 30-32, 39-44). The sociological understanding of the notion of institution that informs Habermas's standpoint is very narrow, too legalistic and too much state-oriented (Habermas, *The Structural Transformation*, p. 7: 'Sociologically, that is to say by reference to institutional criteria, a public sphere in the sense of a separate realm distinguished from the private sphere cannot be shown to have existed in the feudal society of the High Middle Ages'). In this regard, all other types of institutions in broader meaning (e.g. the family, monastery, and in some of its functions even the court) that have no significance for the society as a whole and which cannot be established as a 'separate realm' are refused the public and private aspect of their functioning.

Following Rüdiger Brandt and toning down Habermas's unnecessary limitations, I believe we should rather speak of *Öffentlichkeit* as latent possibility inscribed in every social practice often simply constituent of many spheres of social life (Brandt, *Enklaven-Exklaven*, pp. 24-28).

[40] Glynos, Howarth, *Logics*, p. 115; Glynos and Howarth add one more stipulation to their definition. For political demands to count as public and official they must be 'addressed to and expressed by individuals acting in their official capacity.'(Glynos, Howarth, *Logics*, p. 122); Compare Hannah Arendt's comments reversing the traditional relationship between *Öffentlichkeit* and freedom fed by liberalism, which to a certain extent informs the standpoints of Leclercq, Casey, and particularly Foot mentioned above. Theirs is a standpoint that associates private, enclosed life within the confines of small institutions or the family with freedom and full expression of the self, while associating the opposite with the dirt of political public life. Arendt reverses this

clear that the examples from St Gall and Fulda satisfy this condition in full and the case of conflict from the twelfth-century Bury St Edmunds does it only to a certain extent. Moreover, political demands come in two basic forms as either radical or hegemonic (even though a combination of both is possible). A radical political demand, which would publicly contest the fundamental norms of the monastic practices and regime, was however simply unthinkable in the early Middle Ages. Not even the famous ninth-century examples, fairly moderate because isolated, of monastic rebels such as Lambert of Schienen or Gottschalk - who left their monasteries (Schienen and Fulda, respectively) and then publicly, even with the pope, contested the involuntary practice of child oblation and their own monastic profession - would satisfy the criteria set by Glynos and Howarth.[41]

What we encountered here instead, especially in the case of St Gall in which the charge of simony was leveled against Abbot Gerhard, were sooner hegemonic political demands, that is to say, representing 'a challenge to aspects of a *regime* of practices by successfully *generalizing* its relevance to other institutions and practices.'[42] It follows, as Patzold insists, that in the case of conflicts which surpassed the narrow institutional frame of monasteries such as these, Goffman's model cannot be the sole guidance. One is better off, on the one hand, by carefully distinguishing different levels of analysis: from the seemingly innocuous forms of grievances expressed between the inmates to full-fledged public rebellions. On the other hand, one should remain sensitive to the possibility of such types of power relations - in Article 4 one such example is given, that of the obligation of discretion - that cut across all these levels erasing these only allegedly unsurpassable borders and motivated all of these levels at the same time.

Finally, there was a great deal of practicality and context-dependence in monks' approach to the sphere of *Öffentlichkeit* as well as its hidden counterparts - *Nichtöffentlichkeit* and secrecy - in the early Middle Ages. The use they made of these spheres was guided by the particular interests of the monks in particular political circumstances and not so much by some absolute positive or negative attitudes and values. The early medieval monastic sense of *Öffentlichkeit*, the way it appears from the examples gathered in Article 4, was that it was not some single super-thing but rather 1. a manner of voicing and

relationship insisting, similarly as the examples mentioned in Article 4 seem to be showing, that going public in the name of one's freedom could enhance one's agency and fundamentally change the supposedly isolated, *private* conditions for the better. A true individual or collective self, according to her, needed a public expression (Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, Chicago 1998, pp. 28-29, 50-58; see also: Michael Warner, 'Public and Private', in: *Publics and Counterpublics*, New York 2005, pp. 21-63, at pp. 58-63).

[41] de Jong, *In Samuel's Image*, pp. 73-99.

[42] Glynos, Howarth, *Logics*, pp. 115-116.

negotiating political interests, 2. a certain context of publicness available, the interested gaze of others, 3. the object of political desire into which one wished to organize one's interests while organizing out those of the opponents.[43] It seems, however, that in the case of internal conflicts, the larger lay *Öffentlichkeit* was approached with considerable hesitation and caution. The stakes became high when monks went public against their abbots. Even within the monastic walls, *Öffentlichkeit* enjoyed the same status of a desired object yet there were regularities in the access to this arena for pursuing one's interests. The conflicts in question revealed hence the internal *doxa* in thinking how these conflicts should be managed, which was often questioned by *iuniores* who usually were in a subjugated position and were therefore the more radical to make their voices heard. On the other hand, this *doxa* was protected, covered over if one prefers, by orthodox and discrete *seniores*, who traditionally occupied the dominant position within the structure of monasteries.

the sense of an ending

It's an uncanny task to become one's own critic in the end. Yet it has become more than obvious that while the style of reasoning and concepts employed could account for certain socio-political phenomena in early medieval St Gall and other monasteries, they did not succeed in accounting for others. Worse yet; not only were they unsuccessful but, in fact, given the internal construction of this approach and style, they were doomed to fail, bound to overlook certain problems and aspects.

To give one such example, the approach taken here has almost entirely ignored the administrative aspect of the functioning of 'total institutions' and disregarded the material basis of inner cloistral power, the aspect of which Goffman himself was well aware. Although, as intimated by Clifford H. Lawrence, it would be perfectly in place to adopt, for example in the case of the eleventh- and twelfth-century Cluny, the metaphor of factory or a large human resources center rather than that of a prison.[44] On this account many theories and sociological approaches presented above would lose their relevance and explicit management and control would have to be stressed at the expense of capillary power or its effects at the level of the subject. Furthermore, the disregard of or perhaps outright blindness to the economic basis and the impact of a larger social structure on inner cloistral power relations may also be seen as a serious drawback of the presented thesis, making these relations a mere matter of behavior, abstracted authority or ephemeral subjectivity, all free-floating above any material grounding. Even though, as it was

[43] Jackson Lears, 'The Concept', pp. 572-574.

[44] Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, pp. 107-108.

argued above, my theoretical stance exactly through such decisions of deliberate ignorance was able to show many traits and effects of monastic conduct which, in return, this socio-economic approach disregards.

My approach's arguably most serious blind spot, however, is located elsewhere. It regards the role of the divine or, more precisely, the almost absolute absence of it in this thesis when analyzing early medieval monastic form of life. Is it not necessary to call upon theology, invoke belief in God, and bring forth indigenous monastic categories in order to fully describe and explain the internal power relations of tenth- and eleventh-century St Gall? To be precise; my question does not relate to the already hinted issue of who today writes the history of Western monasticism, i.e., monastic or secular scholars. Rather, it refers directly to John Milbank's influential even if somewhat outdated discussion of the unrecognized and hence more powerful legacy of theology that social theory carries within itself. So it is social theory as well as the sociology of religion and not medieval history that is targeted here or, more precisely, the dubious 'dialogue of the deaf' between them.[45] In Milbank's own words:

> Sociology is only able to explain, or even illuminate religion, to the extent that it conceals its own theological borrowings and its quasi-religious status… "Scientific" social theories are themselves theologies or anti-theologies in disguise. Contemporary theologies which forge alliances with such theories are often unwittingly rediscovering concealed affinities between positions that partake of the same historical origins.[46]

Milbank's departure point is Schmitt's powerful and just as well-known statement that 'all significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularized theological concepts.'[47] Builidng on this, Milbank argues that modern sociology has replaced theology in its claims to become a meta-discourse explaining the sense of human activity. In effect, theology today resorts to sociology to analyze its own history and religious phenomena in order to

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[45] For an example of a trenchant critique of naïve applications of social theory in medieval studies which strongly relies on Milbank's thesis and the hot debate it set in motion see: Philippe Buc, *The Dangers of Ritual. Between Early Medieval Texts and Social Scientific Theory*, Princeton 2001; Koziol, 'Review article', *passim*; Buc, 'The monster', *passim*; Alexandra Walsham, 'Review Article: The Dangers of Ritual', *Past and Present* 180 (2003), pp. 277-287.

[46] John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason*, 2nd ed., Malden-Oxford 2006, pp. 3, 52.

[47] Schmitt, *Political Theology*, p. 36: 'All significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularized theological concepts not only because of their historical development - in which they were transferred from theology to the theory of the state, whereby, for example, the omnipotent God became the omnipotent lawgiver - but also because of their systematic structure, the recognition of which is necessary for a sociological consideration of the concepts.'

legitimize itself. The *cause célèbre* of this substitution is Durkheim's *dictum* that 'society is God', traditionally interpreted as a vision of a self-sufficient and self-perpetuating organism.

Milbank's *Theology & Social Theory* is a rich, provocative, and highly polemical book but for my own purposes one particular aspect is of interest. His crucial assault is directed at the explanatory potential of social theory (for instance, the traditional Weberian or Marxist sociology as well as their post-structural revisions by Foucault, Derrida and others) in respect to pre-modern societies and particularly pre-modern religious societies. According to Milbank, the most basic and simultaneously the least questioned analytical distinction for modern social theory is the tension between the individual and society. Incidentally this is also the basic category of the modern secular society which is being introduced into history studies through the back door. How, Milbank asks, can this distinction be projected back on communities for which the hierarchical relations were primary and the concern of an individual's freedom towards the surrounding community was negligible? How can one deduce God from the equation, if the divine constituted exactly this tenet that saturated all intentions, relations, and actions performed in those societies? In Milbank's view, there are no 'social' relations. There are and have been, for instance, linguistic, power, paternal, religious, and marital relations but 'social' is just an unhappy and utterly bewildering shorthand for all of these. Putting it bluntly then: is the sublime reducible to the already reduced social?[48]

One should at least nod approvingly to Milbank's opinion that the adjective 'social' and its derivates have now become an overused master *explanans*. Yet conceptual shorthands, to briefly return to the idea of 'controlled anachronisms', are as unhappy as they are inescapable and necessarily loaded with assumptions. In my attempt to illuminate the monastic form of life I did not seek to obfuscate the theological roots of the craft of sociology, nor to actively forget them. Nor did I attempt to explore their potential. Partially following Bourdieu, I do not really think we need to choose between naïvely consensual social theory in a functionalistic vein and militant social theology fighting secular reason. We don't need to choose because, from the perspective of my thesis, the Durkheimian postulation that 'society is God' concerns only what society/the monastic institution *qua* divine creative force can or could do in the past.[49] Society or, as in my case, the monastic community is, however,

[48] Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory*, pp. 51-144, 278-326.

[49] Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations*, pp. 244-245: 'By giving himself 'body and soul' to his function and, through it, to the *corporate body* which entrusts it - *universitas*, *collegium*, *societas*, as the canonists put it - the legitimate successor, whether dignitary or functionary, helps to ensure the eternity of the function which pre-exists him and will outlive him, and that of the mystic body which he partakes, partaking thereby of its eternity.

no longer the presupposed entity, as post-structuralists correctly claim. Rather, its impossibility is what is presupposed; how it is possible is to be explained, not assumed. In other words, Milbank's choice is false because all social action is burdened with and dependent on added sublime value, an ideological surplus whose origin and support - divine or social - remain fairly uninteresting as long as we focus on *how* they function. And in explaining aspects of the functioning of the monastic form of life - power relations and practices organizing it - the theories and tools employed hopefully proved prolific.

This is of course not to say that the answers given in this thesis about what internal power relations in early medieval St Gall looked like are definite. On the contrary, every positive proposition always carries an element of negativity, a sense of possibility, and traces of excluded alternatives - a quality that pertains both to medieval sources and our modern interpretations of these.[50] The question of what power was in an early medieval monastery remains thus as open as it was at the beginning of this text, particularly because the contested conditions for answering this inasmuch fascinating as notorious question remain the same. However, some thinkable suggestions and examples from St Gall together with a few helpful tools to facilitate this task have been hinted at. A humble ending is therefore in place, which, following Goffman once again, could just as well go like this: 'I ask that these papers be taken for what they merely are: exercises, trials, tryouts, a means of displaying possibilities, not establishing fact.'[51]

Rites of institution give an enlarged and particularly visible image of the effect of the institution, an arbitrary being which has the power to rescue from arbitrariness, to confer the supreme *raison d'être*, the one constituted by the affirmation that a contingent being, vulnerable to sickness, infirmity and death, is worthy of dignity, transcendent and immortal, like the social order, that he is given… And sociology thus leads to a kind of theology of the last instance: invested, like Kafka's court, with an absolute power of truth-telling and creative perception, the State, like the divine *intuitus originarius* according to Kant, brings into existence by naming and distinguishing. Durkheim was, it can be seen, not so naïve as is claimed when he said, as Kafka might have, that 'society is God'.'

[50] Jezierski, Koziol, 'Postscriptum', pp. 445-446, 451-452; Glynos, Howarth, *Logics*, pp. 155-156; Robert Musil, *The Man without Qualities*, tr. Sophie Wilkins & Burton Pike, New York 1996, pp. 10-11: 'But if there is a sense of reality, and no one will doubt that it has its justification for existing, then there must also be something we can call a sense of possibility… So the sense of possibility could be defined outright as the ability to conceive of everything there might be just as well, and to attach no more importance to what is than to what is not.'

[51] Erving Goffman, *The Forms of Talk*, Philadelphia 1981, p. 1.

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