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***Ora et Labora*?:**
On the Ritual Refusal of Work

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Ora et Labora?:
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An abstract of
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Abstract

***Ora et Labora*?:**
On the Ritual Refusal of Work
By Kyle R. Tau

This dissertation demonstrates the ways in which current constructions of work exhibit a range of pathologies tied to the commodification of time and the exploitation of waged labor. Modern economic forces have steadily eroded the benefits of work, even as its supposed intrinsic virtues and rewards are trumpeted by politicians, arm chair moralists, and many theologians alike. In light of this, the author argues that time has been structured as a means to reinforce social inequality, paying particular attention to the modern disciplining of the poor through the moral rhetoric of time thrift and monetary compensation as the just reward for one's industrious attention to constant work.

Traditional theological analyses of work have failed to mark a distinction between purposeful activity more generally and work that is socially obligatory and necessary. Thus, they fail to radically challenge the dominance of the waged form of work over human life. Leaving this fact unchallenged ignores the possible variety of freely offered forms of soladaristic activity that are crowded out by paid work and reinforces a form of the work ethic tied to alienated labor.

This project offers a strategic challenge to such theologies of work by arguing for an initial *refusal of work* on the basis of Christian daily prayer. Daily prayer is presented as an ongoing interruption of the day with a ritual rehearsal of one's covenantal identity as constituted by the ever-present address offered by God through the resurrected Christ. This address defines the good end and ontological grounding of human life in God's Sabbath joy, celebration, freedom and rest. From such a vantage point the author argues that human life is fundamentally defined in non-instrumental terms and that obligatory and necessary waged work ought to be limited as much as possible so as to increase the time and space available for spontaneous and free delight in God, creation and neighbor. Daily prayer thus ritually refuses the dominance of work over life in order to enlarge the arena in which the dual love of God and neighbor may be exercised outside the coercive confines of waged labor.

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Introduction

In the briefest of his "Untimely Theses on Apocalyptic" Johann Baptist Metz writes, "The shortest definition of religion: interruption."[1] This work is about the interruption embodied in Christian daily prayer and the challenge it poses to a central feature of our social and economic existence, namely our work. At the present historical moment we have been through an extended period of economic turmoil that has issued in a kind of cultural obsession with work. The last thirty years have seen a major transformation in our economic life and in the world of employment. With the last economic collapse, the worst in a series of boom and bust cycles that have plagued our economic life as of late, soul searching related to our culture of work has gone mainstream. No longer solely the purview of academics, globalization skeptics, and frustrated progressives, such soul searching has become a regular part of our daily political and cultural discourse. While the fault lines separating political ideologies have been widening and agreement over how to proceed in the wake of the latest economic crisis does not seem forthcoming, one senses a general tenor of dissatisfaction with current economic patterns and policies across the country, the world, and on both ends of the political spectrum.

However, often lost in the whirlwind of statistics regarding GDP, unemployment numbers, and newly created jobs are broader questions about the very purpose, goal and limits of human work. Underneath debates about the very real problem of the quantifiable income gap between the 1% and the 99% lie more basic questions about the social arrangements that can make such distributional inequality seem so natural to so

[1] Johann Baptist Metz, *Faith in History and Society: Toward a Practical Fundamental Theology*, trans. J. Matthew Ashley (New York: The Crossroads Publishing Company, 2011), 158.

many. What we need in the midst of these discussions is a pause, a break, an interruption that challenges us to see not only numbers and distributions but to question the assumptions that make these abstract points of reference seem intelligible in the first place.

For we live in a world that is dominated by work. Our lives are over-determined by work, specifically by paid employment and the unpaid domestic and caring work that sustains it.[2] This over-determination of one's life by work is as prevalent for those family units and individuals with no access to paid work as it is for those that have it. Today, one's chances for obtaining any degree of well-being in life is all but totally dependent upon one's ability to sell one's labor for wages, the amount of money one secures in wages, and the working conditions under which those wages are earned. The current conditions of work exhibit a range of pathologies that severely limit the life prospects of billions of people, both in the "developing" economies as well as in the largest and most prosperous economy in the world.

In this project I will argue that fixed hour daily prayer represents an ongoing interruptive repetition of the *refusal of work* and its domination over human life. The fact that it is a qualified refusal that recognizes a legitimate space and need for work should not turn our attention away from the startling fact that daily prayer radically calls into question the primacy of work as an ontologically constitutive aspect of human existence.[3]

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[2] Feminist Marxist have coined the term "reproductive labor" to refer to unpaid domestic work and have argued that the economic and political import of such work has too often escaped analysis. Such work, they argue, is presupposed by the productive labor that takes center stage in Marx's analysis and thus must be explicitly analyzed as a key component in the capitalist mode of production. Recognition of the explicit economic and political importance of reproductive labor inspired the "Wages for Housework" movement of the 1970s.

[3] In "The Refusal of Work in Christian Ethics and Theology: Interpreting Work from an Anti-Work Perspective" (Unpublished paper, Sherman, TX, 2015) Jeremy Posadas has argued

In light of daily prayer I will argue here that work ought to be wholly subordinated to the good end of human flourishing which is characterized in the non-instrumental terms of mutual celebration and joy. As such work should be viewed as secondary to human life, even if it remains practically necessary in order to sustain it. The *homo faber* and *homo economicus* are subordinated to the *homo adorans* and *homo liturgicus*.

In light of this, it will not do simply to argue on theological grounds for more and better work, as many theologians have done in recent years.[4] Rather, I will instead argue more radically for a drastic limitation of the space, time and importance work is assigned to human existence. In so doing I will refuse the dominant place work takes in determining the shape and possibilities of our lives. Only from this standpoint will I then proceed to briefly outline the contours of "good work" and how it might be assessed theologically.

This way of framing the argument draws heavily on the work of critical social theorist Kathi Weeks in *The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics and Postwork Imaginaries*, as well as recent work by Jeremy Posadas that brings

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convincingly that a near universal trend in theological construals of work is the assumption that work is "ontologically necessary" or "part of what defines human being as such." He seeks to push against this assumption and in doing so has provided much material for my own reflections here.

[4] See for instance the following: Miroslav Volf, *Work in the Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work* (Oxford: OUP, 1991; Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2001), citations below refer to the Wipf and Stock edition; David H. Jensen, *Responsive Labor: A Theology of Work* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006); Darrell Cosden, *A Theology of Work: Work and the New Creation* (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster Press, 2004) and *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work* (Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster Press, 2006); Esther D. Reed, *Good Work: Christian Ethics in the Workplace* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010); Darby Kathleen Ray, *Working* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2011); Joshua R. Sweeden, *The Church and Work: The Ecclesiological Grounding of Good Work* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014); John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1981).

Weeks's insights to bear on the task of Christian theology and ethics.[5] The anti-work perspective presented by Weeks and appropriated by Posadas seeks to challenge the seemingly commonsense assumption that a lifetime of hard work is an intrinsically good and necessary feature of human existence. This strong assumption, which renders any claim to the contrary almost automatically absurd, is propped up according to Weeks by the twin apparatus of the "work society" and the "work ethic."

An anti-work perspective argues that extolling the virtues of often long and arduous periods of work is the crucial means by which the working class is disciplined, both externally and internally. First, workers are disciplined externally by the "work society" which orients all of one's life around work. Work, especially the waged from of work in advanced capitalist societies, is the most basic and universal means by which persons gain access to income in order to secure life's necessities. But it doesn't stop there. As Weeks notes, waged work is the primary means of gaining social status, access to healthcare and retirement benefits, and is the "most important, if not sole, source of sociality for millions" outside the family.[6] Creating productive workers capable of securing employment has also become a central goal of parenting, education, medicine, psychology, social work, and what remains of a deeply attenuated social safety net. More and more of life seems to revolve around and point one toward securing paid work or creating family units dependent upon someone's access to paid work.

Second, in addition to these external features that make paid work the core element around which society is constructed, the disciplining of the workforce requires

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[5] Kathi Weeks, *The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics and Postwork Imaginaries* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011). For Posadas, see notes 3 above and 8 below.

[6] Weeks, p. 6.

an internalizing of work values that creates subjects willing to accept the dominance of waged work over life. This is the core task of the moral rhetoric surrounding the work ethic. Drawing upon Weber's classic argument in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* and pointing to the extension of the work ethic in modern day notions of professionalism and one's emotional identification with the "mission" of one's employer, Weeks writes of the work ethic:

> The ethic is advice not just about how to behave but also about who to be; it takes aim not just at the consciousness but also at the energies and capacities of the body, and the objects and aims of its desires. The ethic's mandate is not merely to induce a set of beliefs or instigate a series of acts but also to produce a self that strives continually toward those beliefs and acts. This involves the cultivation of habits, the internalization of routines, the incitement of desires, and the adjustment of hopes, all to guarantee a subject's adequacy to the lifetime demands of work.[7]

The formation of subjects who learn to orient their hopes, dreams, desires, habits and activities around work is the key function of the work ethic. Together with the work society, the work ethic renders the moral and social necessity of a life devoted to work a commonsense norm. The constructed arena for the enforcement of this norm, Weeks argues, is waged employment. By these means life becomes dominated by work, such that it becomes increasingly impossible to imagine the meaning of one's life without work, or to conceptualize forms of creative and productive social engagement without referring back to paid work as the central category.

Posadas points out that many modern theological analyses of work, even in attempting to make work more humane and balance it with worship and rest, continue to perpetuate a version of the work ethic.[8] Across the spectrum, he argues, work is viewed

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[7] Ibid., p. 54

[8] Jeremy Posadas, "The Problem with Work in Christian Theology and Ethics," presented to the Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection Group of the American Academy of Religion

as "intrinsically good," "ontologically necessary," and divinely instituted. Indeed, the work ethic haunts the pages of contemporary theological assessments of work as this literature continues to valorize the place of work in human life, analyzing the category of work with reference to an expansive range of human and divine activities. Posadas notes the variety of works, including those by David Jensen, Darby Kathleen Ray, John Paul II, Miroslav Volf, and Esther Reed,[9] that advance some form of the argument 'God works (creation, covenant, sustaining, redemption, eschatological consummation), therefore humanity works.' Thus, for instance, Jensen describes "God the Worker" writing, "The God of Israel and Jesus Christ works for us, freeing us to work for and with each other."[10] Similarly, Ray asserts that, "God's personhood is at least partially constituted by work, as God is portrayed in scripture as a diligent, attentive, and profoundly imaginative worker."[11] On the basis of this claim, and in light of humankind's having been created in God's image, Ray further claims that, "we can assume the centrality of work to human identity and action."[12]

This supposed analogue between divine and human work is often applied in perplexing ways. A major difficulty in the literature offering theological assessments of work is a failure to carry through with a distinction between work that is carried out under the conditions of obligation and necessity and purposeful activity more generally. Virtually any form of creative engagement with the world can be analyzed as an analogue

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(November 21, 2015). A longer version of the argument can be found in the as yet unpublished paper cited above in note 3.

[9] See note 4 above.

[10] Jensen, p. 44.

[11] Ray, p. 108.

[12] Ibid., p. 45.

of divine work. For instance, consider the definition of work offered by John Paul II in *Laborem Exercens:*

> And work means any activity by man, whether manual or intellectual, whatever its nature or circumstances; it means any human activity that can and must be recognized as work, in the midst of all the many activities of which man is capable and to which he is predisposed by his very nature, by virtue of humanity itself.[13]

It is hard to think of a definition of work that would be more all encompassing than this. Even Volf who begins by limiting "work" with a more precise definition, falls into blurring the lines between work and creative activity in general. At the outset Volf defines work as "honest, purposeful, and methodologically specified social activity" which is characterized by its instrumentality in "satisfy(ing) the needs of working individuals or their co-creatures."[14] Here work is defined over and against leisure, which is defined as any activity pursued for its own sake. Yet Volf will go on to say that he means to examine not "drudgery or gainful employment" but the *vita activa* more broadly (excluding leisure activity), and does so at various points by substituting "positive cultural involvement" for the term work.[15] Again, Reed analyzes a range of possibilities for what "work" might mean, and this parsing of the term in her opening chapter of *Good Work: Christian Ethics in the Workplace* does offer some additional clarity. She even gives a nod to anti-work proponent André Gorz, who defines work primarily in terms of class-based political oppression. Yet in the end she settles for her broadest possible definition of the word (activity or effort expended toward an end) in order to subject all purposeful human activity to theological scrutiny under the term "work."[16]

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[13] John Paul II, opening paragraph (unnumbered).
[14] Volf, p. 10-11.
[15] Ibid., pp. 13, 91.
[16] Reed, p. 92.

Yet allowing for such an indiscriminate range of human activities to be brought under the umbrella analogy of divine work simply muddies the analysis. For instance, tending a community garden as a free expression of my participation in social life is certainly "activity expended toward an end" but it is absolutely and altogether a different kind of activity than paid farm labor undertaken under the conditions of personal and familial necessity. To valorize both activities as a human means of responding to God's "work" ignores the coercive elements in paid and unpaid work performed out of necessity (such work simply has no divine analogue and applies only to conditions of human finitude) and activities which flow freely from one's solidaristic concern for one's neighbors and creation (such work has obvious divine analogues). That is not to say that there is never overlap between these distinct kinds of human work, but it is to suggest that this distinction is crucial for any theological analysis of the ultimate place of work in human life.

Thus, for the sake of clarity of analysis, I will limit my consideration here to work that does not properly speaking apply to divine activity. I propose to analyze work under this limitation: *work as the application of force or effort to achieve some desired instrumental end, carried out under conditions of necessity and obligation. In a wage-based society such as ours we must start with the recognition that this kind of work is carried out almost entirely under the auspices of paid employment and the unpaid reproductive labor necessary to sustain the workforce.* I argue that any attempt to subject work to theological analysis in today's world must begin here. Talk about the "intrinsic value" or "divine constitution" of work that does not distinguish coerced and necessary work from forms of freely offered productive and creative activity, simply furthers the

valorization of work that has fueled religious and secular forms of the work ethic and has thrown people more deeply at the mercy of their employers. My fear is that abstracting from employment and the current wage system to analyze work in general theological terms risks taking this system for granted and then applying a theological intervention to an unaddressed, unanalyzed, and seemingly natural system of distribution. Even if one comes out in a critical fashion regarding the way in which waged work is structured, it is unlikely that this approach will be able to muster a more thorough challenge to the presuppositions that prop it up.

Thus, most "theologies of work," even when decrying the ills of economic exclusion on one hand and overwork on the other, generally seek to remedy the situation through increasing access to *more and better paid work*. That is to say they assume that the best way to increase the dignity of the poor is to increase opportunities for employment, or to allow for unpaid work supported by one who is gainfully employed. Here one might argue in favor of "full employment" or a "living wage" but not ask the question as to why life itself should be so subject to waged employment in the first place. This is particularly true of Jensen, who seems incapable of imagining any kind of assistance for the poor that isn't tied to shaping poor persons into desirable employees for the private market through training programs. If one in need does not land a job after going through such training, Jensen offers that the government could function as an "employer of last resort" for unemployed "skilled laborers," but that wages in such a scenario should be set "slightly below private sector norms, so as to maintain incentives to find work outside government programs."[17]

[17] Jensen, pp. 106-07.

The question I seek to address, then, is not about whether our action in history builds upon divine creativity, our covenantal charge to cultivate the earth, the Spirit's animating power, the fecundity of Triune life, or Christ's own salvific action as many and sundry have argued. All of this is certainly on target as far as it goes. Rather, the question I wish to take up is why we have allowed these theological themes to become captive to the capitalist mode of production by arguing almost exclusively for the creation of more and better paid work and failing to offer an alternative to individual private sector employment as the chief means of distributing the necessities of life. To counter this we must begin by challenging the domination of human life by paid employment in the modern world, and to enlarge the space in which we can imagine human action, relationships and indeed vocation *outside* waged work. That is, we must begin with the *refusal of work.*

Therefore I will focus on an analysis of the wage system and the practical social distortions that result from the commodification of time and human persons within it. Moral, theological and economic visions of time and the social conventions that accompany such visions have long been chief instruments in the domination of one class of persons over others. The wage system, with its equation of time with money and subordination of the outcomes of work to efficient profit maximization, has been one powerful temporal strategy for reinforcing vast inequalities in power and access to resources. Thus, this way of structuring work and the distribution of desirable goods ought to be refused at the outset as a *theological* aberration in the construction, use, and valuation of time.

In focusing on the social distortions of the wage system, I do not pretend to offer a full-scale theological analysis of work here. Rather, the key purpose of my argument is to call into question this seemingly commonsense reality: Today we can't survive without money, and we can't gain access to money apart from selling our labor for wages. This basic fact renders virtually any kind of work subject to the coercion of powerful market actors. Even work that pays well and which one enjoys doing is done under the presupposition that without the money earned from work oneself and one's family members would starve. This is quite evident in the increasing anxiety, competition, and insecurity currently felt from the top to the bottom of the income distribution. In this situation there is blatant and purposeful imbalance of power between employers and employees with respect to organizing the conditions and rewards of work. Theological analyses of work that do not begin by radically calling this state of affairs into question at the outset, irrespective of the number of qualifications they offer about the need for rest, better pay, and more input in work processes (all good things in and of themselves, of course), participate in the perpetuation of the work society. In such a situation we need, as Posadas argues, an intervention that does not simply ask about the good of work in light of its current conditions, but one that calls work itself as a way of life into question, that challenges the grip of the work ethic on our theological imaginations.

The challenge I seek to mount here, a challenge inspired by my interpretation of daily prayer, is that we cease to begin theological analyses of work by building upon the unstable and easily co-opted foundation of a Christian work ethic, however modified. Given the total dominance of work by the wage system and its many distortions, we must first begin from an initial insistence upon the refusal of work and only work backwards

from there to address the ways in which we think about work as a human good. To do so, I will argue in these pages, will be to make Sabbath enjoyment and covenantal love as extended into the rest of the week through daily prayer, the defining features of human life. Work must be viewed as secondary to these and thus minimized in order to create more room for them and to extend their benefits and joys to everyone. The key point here is that the good end of human life is ultimately captured in the non-instrumental activities of celebration, play, delight and rest. Living wholly out of God's love and gracious offer of covenant partnership, these forms of activity are better human analogues for divine work, which is wrought without necessity and compulsion. As such they ought to be viewed as more fundamental to human life than instrumental work performed out of material necessity.

On the flip side of this realization, we can then address improving the work that remains so that it is less domineering, takes up less space in our lives and self-understanding and is itself made to look more and more like playfulness and celebration in its own right, even as it will never be freed from all traces of obligation and necessity under the conditions of finitude. Put another way, let us ask first what constitutes a good *life* before we ask what constitutes good *work*. Let us understand vocation in terms of a good life lived in the particular contexts and circumstances in which we find ourselves and only then ask the role "work" plays in such a life.

Ora et Labora?

The challenges of mounting such an analysis are on full display in the Benedictine mantras *ora et labora* and *laborare est orare,* along with the checkered history of Benedictine labor practices and reform movements. While neither of these phrases

appear directly in the Rule of Saint Benedict they draw upon two of the major emphases within the Rule. While the pattern is one of regulated alternation between these two activities, the Rule of St. Benedict views these alternating activities in parallel terms. Of course, central to the practice of Benedictine monasticism is the recitation of the Divine Office also referred to within the Rule as the *opus Dei.* The centrality of this pattern of daily prayer is highlighted in chapter 42 of the Rule, where Benedict writes, "As soon as the signal for the time of the office is heard, let everyone, leaving whatever he has in his hands, hasten with all speed, yet with gravity, that there may be no cause for levity. Therefore, let nothing be preferred to the Work of God." The seriousness with which Benedict enjoins this practice is further underscored by the only linguistic parallel to this instruction in the Rule. This occurs in chapter 4, where he commands that those following the Rule "prefer nothing to the love of Christ," or again in chapter 72, where he enjoins, "let them prefer nothing whatever to Christ." Here the preference for Christ in the spiritual affections of the monk is mirrored or expressed in his preference for liturgical prayer above all other daily activities.

While the recitation of the Divine Office, the daily attending to the *opus Dei*, is the central feature of monastic life, Benedict also highlights the importance of manual labor within the life of the community. Chapter 48 of the Rule makes provisions for manual labor, citing both its practical as well as spiritual import. It is important first because "idleness is the enemy of the soul," and second as a support for the community. The importance of work to monastic identity is also stressed in this chapter, where Benedict writes, "If the needs of the location or their poverty should require that the monks labor at gathering in the crops by themselves, they should not be saddened.

Indeed then they are truly monks because they are living by the labor of their own hands as our fathers did and the apostles before them." Thus, while nothing in practice is to be preferred to the *opus Dei*, it is only with reference to manual labor that the Rule locates so explicitly what it means to "truly" be a monk.

Such a dual emphasis within the Rule has lead to diverging interpretations of the relationship between asceticism and labor in Benedictine practice. On the one hand, for instance, George Ovitt, Jr. notes that both Lewis Mumford and Max Weber saw in the labor of Benedictines incipient forms of the rationalization of work and the systematic attention to work as a religious discipline in its own right that would characterize the advent of capitalism with its imposed work ethic and factory discipline.[18] Mumford in particular argued that the marking of the hours with prayer only contributed to the "iron discipline of the rule" which turned the monk into a regularly performing machine of production.[19]

Thus, one possible result in drawing work and prayer together is perpetuating a work ethic that invests labor with exaggerated sacred importance and draws upon the practice of daily prayer to inculcate a disciplined approach to time use that supports it. This is particularly a danger when work itself is viewed *as* prayer (*laborare est orare*). Indeed, as Rembert Sorg argues, in supporting the community's Divine Office, work takes on the importance of liturgy itself:

> …monastic labor possesses a distinctive stamp that cannot be duplicated elsewhere. For it is joined to the Divine Office and itself takes the character of prayer. At all events, the ideas of curse and sweating and toil and drudgery are

[18] George Ovitt, Jr., *The Restoration of Perfection: Labor and Technology in Medieval Culture* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1987), pp. 7-12, 88-90. See also Gerhard Dohrn-van Rossum, *History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996), pp. 33-34.
[19] Dohrn-van Rossum, p. 34.

> not uppermost in the monk's mind. He goes to his shop or to this fields, soberly indeed, but with a magnificent song on his lips and Christ's own spirit in his heart.[20]

The powerful identification of work with the ultimate act of prayer puts drudgery and toil out of the mind of the monk who dutifully and joyfully pursues his work. Indeed, as we will see, this same kind of rhetoric will be employed by Protestant moralists in the early modern period to argue for the sacred duty of long and arduous labor for the working class.

However, as Ovitt goes on to suggest, such interpretations of the Benedictine motivation for work actually ignores the unfolding of Benedictine labor practices in the Middle Ages. While the rhetoric continues to ring true as a potential danger in investing our work with too much sacred meaning, in actual historical fact the apportioning of labor in medieval monasteries presents us with an alternative challenge. As he writes, "The existence of organized labor tells us far less about the spirit of monasticism than does the existence of the sustaining structure of the *opus Dei* in monastic practice." The priority given to "the work of God" meant that "manual labor could be justifiably abandoned by the monks" and handed over to the "even more 'rational' capitalistic practice of hiring others to do what one does not wish to do oneself."[21] That is to say that even within Benedictine communities where work was supposed to be a significant aspect of ascetic discipline, the strong tendency over time was to farm out the *opus manuum* to a lower class of religious, the *conversi,* who were not expected to maintain the full course of monastic spiritual disciplines, or (as became the dominate pattern) to hire an entirely secular class of laborers to perform the work on behalf of the monastic

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[20] Rembert Sorg, *Holy Work: Towards a Benedictine Theology of Manual Labor* (St. Louis, MO: Pio Decimo Press, 1953), pp. 93-94.
[21] Ovitt, p. 106.

house in order to free the monks entirely for spiritual pursuits.[22] The religious motivation that supposedly pushed toward the "iron discipline of the rule" as a precursor to factory work discipline actually increasingly drove religious orders to put off physical labor in order to pursue spiritual labor more fully.

Thus, in relating Benedictine practices to the emergence of capitalist production Randall Collins is much closer to the mark when he ties the "religious capitalism" of the Cistercian houses to the creation of a kind of "managerial class" (the monks themselves) and a "laboring class" (either the *conversi* or a wholly secular class of laborers).[23] The *conversi* were subject to ascetic renunciation and discipline, taking the same vows as those with full monastic status while spending the majority of their time in manual pursuits. So at the level of this "half-monk" something like a religiously motivated ascetic labor discipline continued to play a role. However, as Ovitt shows, the stronger trend was to isolate the religious motivations for the contemplative life from the active life of labor. The *conversi*, according to Ovitt, were rather like a half-way step between a full and self-conscious articulation of the three hierarchical and complementary orders within medieval society during the 12th century: the *oratores,* the *bellatores,* and the *laboratores*.[24] Thus, the Cistercian dependence on these lay brothers who focused almost solely on physical work, and then later on secular peasant laborers, should rather be seen within the medieval distinction between "higher" and "lower" vocations, the "counsels of perfection" that held the life of prayer over, above, and in distinction from the active life of work.

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[22] Ibid., pp. 145, 147.
[23] Randall Collins, *Weberian Sociological Theory* (Cambridge: CUP, 1986), p. 53.
[24] Ovitt., pp. 162-63.

In one sense there is a kind of parallel here to my desire to place strong limits on work and create more space outside of work for activities not tied to instrumentality or utility. The monks in fact pursued advances in technology and labor practices in order to create more time for liturgical celebration and contemplative rest. Yet the obvious distinction is that here the time discipline of daily prayer mimics the hierarchical power relations of the wage system, where the relative leisure of one class is bought at the laboring expense of another. The potential to draw upon daily prayer as a resource in the refusal of work's domination over life in today's world must remain attuned to the various ways in which daily prayer itself has been deployed to reinforce this domination.

Argument Summary

In assessing the ethical or political import of any ritual practice, one must admit the inescapable ambiguity and unsettled nature of the interaction between the practice under consideration and the multitude of other social and cultural practices that surround it. Thus, in chapter 1 I begin my argument by asserting that any attempt to draw upon daily prayer as a source for social critique requires that one be explicit about the fragmentary, improvisational, and constructive *use* one intends to make of it. Particularly in light of the challenges noted above, one cannot simply argue that the objective structure of daily prayer automatically shapes persons and communities that would refuse the conditions of waged work. To begin, I summarize insights gleaned from recent interest in the relationship between liturgy and ethics, noting the various facets of liturgical practice that might contribute to ethical reflection and living. Then I take up the recent work of James K.A. Smith in *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and*

Cultural Formation and *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works*[25] that attempts to describe the formational character of worship by drawing upon a range of social theorists. While Smith's work contains many interesting and helpful insights, ultimately I argue that he oversimplifies both the impact of worship practices on moral agents and the relationship between Christian social formation and broader cultural realities. To counter this oversimplification I draw upon Kathryn Tanner's work in *Theories of Culture: A New Agenda For Theology*[26] to argue for what she calls a "relational constitution" of Christian identity that possesses the fragmentary, improvisational, and constructive character noted above.

I then proceed in chapter 2 to analyze what I am calling the pathologies of work in our wage-based society. The purpose of this chapter is to gain some clarity about the particular social distortions that arise when earning wages is the dominant means of participating in social life and securing a living. I first summarize the rise of employment as the chief basis of economic involvement, noting how workers were able to wrestle some gains for themselves during the "golden era" of employment in the United States in the post-war period. However, the compromises that were struck between labor, capital, and the state in this era were still predicated on assumptions about management, efficiency, mass consumption and corporate profits which ensured that these gains would be short lived. Thus I proceed to demonstrate how average workers have seen the conditions and rewards of work steadily erode in the last few decades, indicating how this

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[25] James K.A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009) and *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013).

[26] Kathryn Tanner, *Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1997).

erosion derives from the base presumption that the purpose of paid work is to increase financial gains for corporate ownership and investors as much as possible.

This will set the stage for a kind of genealogical assessment of the ways in which time itself is constructed in order to enforce inequality. Thus, in chapter 3 I address transformations in the social construction of time and its ultimate commodification in modernity. I note, on the one hand, how the commodification of time is predicated on what Charles Taylor describes as the scientific flattening of time in the modern world. This flattened vision of time expels any eternal referent as the ground or goal of temporality and is thus viewed over and against the ebb and flow of sacred and profane time in ancient and medieval society. However, while recognizing the importance of this key difference, I argue that in fact the medieval and modern constructions of time equally domesticate God's transcendence in an effort to reinforce hierarchical power structures in society. In light of this I proceed to show how modern moral visions of diligent and efficient time use function together with the presumptions of formal equality and a supposed direct access to private and social goods in order to mystify inequality. These transformations tie the ultimate moral good of time and its proper use to financial gain. By thoroughly subjecting time to monetary calculation, this shift paves the way for transformations in technology and labor practices meant entirely to accelerate the return on capital investment. Thus I close the chapter by drawing upon David Harvey's work in *The Condition of Post Modernity* noting how many of the pathologies of work described in chapter two are tied to the "compression" or acceleration of time in its commodified form.[27]

[27] David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1990).

In chapter 4 I offer an interpretation of daily prayer as a repeated interruption of divine address in the midst of commodified time. I interpret the ritual features of the practice from its earliest strata in Christian history in light of Karl Barth's and Alexander Schmemann's distinct yet related discussions of the relationship between Sabbath, the Lord's day, and prayer. Here I argue that in light of daily prayer, all time takes its structure and meaning from God's Sabbath commandment as eschatologically illumined through Christ's resurrection. As Barth argues, in setting creation on its course at the very outset with this command, God grounds human life first and foremost in the freedom, joy, celebration and rest of the Sabbath day. It is prayer that extends the defining character of this weekly interruption into repeated interruptions in the midst of the week, calling each person as a unique and equal subject of God's covenanting love. While this certainly suggests that prayer offers an opportunity for transformations within work, I argue that it first points us toward a refusal of work's all-encompassing demands in the modern world.

With this argument in place, my concluding chapter reexamines the relationship between vocation and work, suggesting some practical political transformations such an examination requires. I will argue that the strategic use of daily prayer to offer a refusal of work requires the following: 1) placing stricter limits on the amount of time paid work takes up in people's lives, 2) decoupling one's ability to survive from waged work, and 3) creating work environments that foster individuals' capabilities and give those performing work more power over work processes and the use of company revenues.

With this argument I seek to expose the wage-based society as a *theological* aberration in the construction and representation of time. This commodification of time

and of persons within it is a particular temporal strategy for reinforcing social inequality that fails to recognize the image of God uniquely expressed in every human life. In light of this, I invite further theological analyses of work to begin with a refusal of waged work as the dominant means of distribution and social participation, in order to continually expand the space and time for gratuitous self-giving and creative engagement with the world outside its constricting parameters.

Chapter 1:
Liturgical *Ordo* and the Christian Life

Introduction

Since at least the late 1970s many liturgical theologians have purposefully sought to expand the conceptual logic behind the aphorism *lex orandi, lex credendi*, which expresses the intrinsic link between prayer and belief, to take in the relationship between prayer and Christian ethics as well.[28] Here various thinkers have argued that the *lex orandi* is the basis for a *lex vivendi, lex bene operandi,* or *lex faciendi*. In all of these various forms of expression different liturgical theologians have asserted that Christian ethics is not an isolated realm of Christian thinking but maintains an intrinsic connection to the life of prayer. The task of this chapter will be to propose a way of thinking about the relationship between prayer and action that will orient my discussion of the critical relationship I believe exists between the disciplines and outcomes within the modern world of work on the one hand, and the discipline of Christian daily prayer on the other.

At stake in these discussions is a claim about the nature of ritual practices. Rather than asking what liturgies *mean* by way of reference and content, this conversation has focused on what rituals of worship *do.* How does this ritual performance act upon individual bodies, comporting them in the world in particular ways? What happens to individual persons as they take part in the ritual form? What kind of social space is enacted within the ritual space? What kind of community is assumed and reinforced by a given ritual performance? In order to begin addressing the relationship between liturgical practice and Christian ethics, I will first take up these questions to schematize some key

[28] This theme was the topic of a plenary session at the annual meeting of the Society of Christian Ethics in 1979 with Paul Ramsey and Don Saliers presenting and Margaret Farely providing the response. The exchange was published in the *Journal of Religious Ethics* 7, no. 2 (Fall 1979).

ways in which contemporary thinkers have sought to understand the relationship between liturgy and ethics.

I will then turn to examine in more detail the recent work by James K.A. Smith in the first two of a promised three part series on "Cultural Liturgies" in which he attempts to demonstrate *how* it is that liturgies shape moral agents and communities in some of the ways discussed above. His first two volumes, *Desiring the Kingdom* and *Imagining the Kingdom* draw upon an interesting range of sources from sociologists, philosophers, critical theorists, as well as movies, music and literature in order to cast a vision for the formative power of liturgy.[29] There is much to commend in these volumes and indeed they have provided the present author with much fodder for reflection. The chief point around which Smith orients virtually all of his work here is that human action is not primarily a matter of rational deliberation upon facts and information, but is primarily motivated by desire, habit, preconscious dispositions and acquired embodied skills. I will argue that it is precisely in making this primary point and drawing upon various thinkers to demonstrate it that I believe Smith's work is most valuable.

However, Smith significantly overreaches in his claims by 1) overemphasizing habituation and socialization to the detriment of individual agency and the strategic use of cultural materials in idiosyncratic circumstances, 2) assuming an all-encompassing micro-formative power to Christian ritual *on its own* that it simply cannot possibly possess, and in so doing he 3) oversimplifies the relationship between Christian ritual formation and the (de)forming power of worldly or "secular" rituals. Pointing to what I find helpful in Smith's work, as well as what I find problematic about it, will help to situate my own work in the broader conversation on the relationship between liturgy and

[29] See note 25.

ethics, and will demonstrate some of the methodological as well as theological assumptions behind to the present work.

I will close by offering a counterpoint to Smith's vision by drawing upon the work of Kathryn Tanner in *Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology*.[30] On the one hand (and in many ways in concert with Smith), I will want to argue that daily prayer and other liturgical practices can be contrastive with respect to practices in a broader cultural milieu. However (and in contrast to Smith), I will draw on Tanner to argue that the way this contrast is achieved is not through the opposing of two wholly self-contained patterns of formation but through a process of encounter and transformation carried out by persons and communities that find themselves inhabiting complex cultural space and overlapping patterns of practice and formation. Arguing from the standpoint of what Tanner calls the relational constitution of Christian identity will allow me to describe the relationship between liturgical moral formation and broader cultural patterns in more nuanced terms than Smith is able to achieve.

Contemporary Themes in Liturgy and the Christian Life

In what follows I will briefly cover several sources that exemplify one or more ways of describing the relationship between liturgy and ethics. It should be obvious that this very short survey is not meant to be exhaustive. Rather the goal here is to illumine some of the broad contours of the contemporary discussion in order to provide a few basic reference points for the work that follows.

Liturgy as Source for Ethical Warrants

In the first manner of construing the relationship between liturgy and ethics, liturgy is viewed as a *source* for thinking about ethical norms. The relationship here is

[30] See note 26.

parallel to the relationship between primary theology and second order doctrinal reflection. M. Therese Lysaught notes the manner in which liturgy is treated as a "*locus theologicus* from which warrants for ethical justification can be drawn."[31] She continues, "Here the texts and rites themselves are simply another component of tradition, along with Scripture and theological writings, upon which academic ethicists can draw when constructing or seeking to justify Christian positions on various topics or issues."[32]

L. Edward Phillips also discusses this strategy for linking liturgy in ethics, placing it under the rubric "liturgy as a source for ethics." Phillips points to the work of Geoffrey Wainwright and Theodore Jennings describing the way in which liturgical texts and performed rites can be utilized as "supporting evidence" in secondary reflection on ethical issues.[33] This way of linking liturgy and ethics is perhaps the most straightforward of all of those I will discuss here. The link here is a derivative one supplied by the connections discerned in rational deliberation rather than an intrinsic function of liturgical performance itself. Both Lysaught and Phillips treat of this paradigmatic way of thinking ethically about liturgy first, before moving on to reflecting on the ways liturgy produces certain ethical effects in individual practitioners and communities of practice. That is not to say that they are dismissive of those who treat liturgy in this way, but rather it is to suggest that treating liturgy as a source of ethical warrants is really only the tip of the iceberg when considering "liturgical ethics."

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[31] M. Therese Lysaught, "Inritualed Bodies: Ritual Studies and Liturgical Ethics" (paper presented at the annual meeting for the Society of Christian Ethics, Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA, January 9, 1998), p. 1.
[32] Ibidem.
[33] L. Edward Phillips, "Liturgy and Ethics," in *Liturgy in Dialogue: Essays in Memory of Ronald Jasper,* eds. Paul Bradshaw and Bryan Spinks (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1993), p. 92.

Liturgy as Embodied Skill

Indeed, it is Lysaught's chief goal in the above referenced paper to analyze the way liturgies work at the level of the body in distinction from the more rational or cognitive model described above. She draws upon ritual theorists, Catherine Bell in particular, to argue that a primary function of liturgy is the "production" of particular kinds of "ritualized bodies."[34] Here rites do not primarily *express* internal states, thoughts, or beliefs so much as *create* concrete situations in which bodies are trained to respond to their social surroundings and to the presence of other bodies in unique ways appropriate to the ritual context. The body becomes imbued with a habituated, almost reflexive sense of how it is to make its way in the world. Reflecting upon this, Lysaught argues that "one desired outcome of Christian formation is the production of bodies that simply 'react,' that is respond naturally in given situations, that 'know' without articulating the proper thing to do."[35]

Nathan Mitchell touches upon this theme of the embodied character of ritual formation in his book, *Liturgy and the Social Sciences*. In this text he draws upon the work of Talad Asad and Michel Foucault to describe Christian ritual under the rubric of "technologies of the self." Within such a rubric ritual is viewed not primarily as a set of symbols or concepts with discrete meanings but rather as a way of disposing oneself in the world toward a particular "acquired aptitude or embodied skill."[36] Religious practices, then, are disciplines aimed at a certain personal achievement or outcome. Citing Foucault, Mitchell writes:

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[34] Ibid., p. 14.
[35] Ibid., p. 16.
[36] Mitchell, Nathan. *Liturgy and the Social Sciences,* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), p. 64.

> Technologies of the self 'permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality.'[37]

Mitchell goes on to describe how Talal Asad utilizes this description of ritual as *technology* to describe monastic life under the Rule of St. Benedict. Rite within the Rule "is a technological means of acquiring a new self – one defined by solidarity with all others as 'beings of equal dignity' and by participation in a life that 'in its entirety finally appears as one, vast, spontaneous and Holy Rite.'"[38] It is in and through the movements of the body, according to Mitchell, that such "technologies" are capable of bringing about the new self. As he writes, "The ritually inscribed body is the place where truth is brought to light and the self's true identity is restored."[39] Thus, liturgical performance situates the Christian ethically by comporting the body in particular ways, by "producing" certain kinds of bodies and relationships among bodies.

Liturgy and the Shape of the Affections

If liturgy can work by supplying one with content for cognitive reflection and by producing particular kinds of bodies, it can also work by shaping one at a more emotional register. For instance, Saliers argues that ritual prayer shapes the life of the individual by orienting ones affections and dispositions toward love of God and neighbor. Worship according to Saliers has two fundamental aspects, the glorification of God and the sanctification of human beings.[40] In ritually setting ones affections towards the glorification of God through prayer the self is sanctified as one becomes increasingly

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[37] Ibid., p. 65.
[38] Ibid., pp. 74-75.
[39] Ibid., p. 77.
[40] Don Saliers, "Liturgy and Ethics: Some New Beginnings," in *Liturgy and the Moral Self: Humanity at Full Stretch Before God*, eds. E. Byron Anderson and Bruce T. Morrill (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998), p. 28.

characterized by the set of intentions, actions, and dispositions embodied in the act of prayer.

Saliers describes some of the chief modes of prayer in Christian worship and the kinds of affections or attitudes cultivated by such forms. He highlights in particular praise and thanksgiving, confession, and intercession. These liturgical forms express the affections of the Christian community and stand as the ideal model of these affections, but they also create a people who are characterized by these affections in their day-to-day lives. There is always a gap between the ideal affections carried in liturgical patterns and the actual affections of individual worshipers. Yet as persons attend to these patterns of prayer over and over again, they ought to become increasingly characterized by the attitudes of thankfulness, humility, and compassion to which they point.[41]

The link between worship or prayer and the moral life of the Christian is thus an intrinsic link rather than a secondary or derivative one. At the level of the affections the ethics of liturgical prayer do not derive from a secondary reflection on the content of worship that yields ethical or moral principles, but rather it is in and through the act of prayer itself that the moral self comes to take a particular shape. "The Christian moral life," writes Saliers, "is the embodiment of those affections and virtues which are intentional orientation of existence in Jesus Christ."[42] Such embodiment begins with prayer and worship through which "an actual reorientation of sensibility and intentional acts is involved, as well as a new self-understanding and a 'world-picture.'"[43]

[41] Ibid., pp. 20-22.
[42] Ibid., p. 22.
[43] Ibid., p. 23.

Liturgy as Embodied Narrative and Social Enactment

These themes of liturgy as an embodied "technology" or source of the self and as a crucible for the shaping of one's affections cannot be separated from liturgy's roots within communal life. While I have focused attention in Saliers and Mitchell on the role of ritual in shaping the individual self, both understand this process as necessarily and irretrievably social. As Mitchell writes, "Technologies of the self include both the 'rites' practiced by individuals and the 'ritual construction' of the whole social order."[44] Additionally, for Saliers the self becomes the Christian moral self by the continual "re-entry" and "re-embedding" of the individual in the communally shared narratives and symbols of faith.[45]

Liturgy as a communal performance constitutes a particular form of social existence and dramatically enacts of a set of communally shared narratives. Phillips also lays significant stress on this theme in the essay cited above. He highlights the work of John Howard Yoder and Stanley Hauerwas to describe liturgical performance *as* ethics. That is to say, such performance does not simply describe or symbolize the values of a community but is actually constitutive of that community's existence.

Yoder, for instance, describes the Eucharist as the social embodiment of a new kind of economic orientation. He writes:

> What the New Testament is talking about in 'breaking bread' is believers actually sharing with one another their ordinary day-to-day material substance. It is not the case, as far as understanding the New Testament accounts is concerned, that, in an act of 'institution' or symbol-making, God or the church would have said 'let bread stand for daily sustenance'….It is that bread *is* daily sustenance. Bread eaten together *is* economic sharing. Not merely symbolically, but in actual fact it

[44] Mitchell, p. 65.
[45] Saliers, p. 23.

> extends to a wider circle the economic solidarity that normally obtained in the family.[46]

In the ritual act of Eucharist for Yoder the church enacts a new social reality. Phillips summarizes the relationship between liturgy and ethics thus described when he writes, "Thus, according to Yoder, in the New Testament Church the Eucharist did not inform or motivate Christian ethics; rather it *was* Christian ethics. In its Eucharistic liturgy the New Testament Church was merely doing what the Church always does – share food as a family of brothers and sisters."[47]

According to Phillips, Hauerwas draws upon this insight from Yoder and focuses attention specifically on the narrative components of liturgy that shape a particular mode of communal life. Drawing upon Hauerwas, Phillips writes "…liturgy, and especially the sacraments, 'enact the story of Jesus and, thus, form a community in his image.' Christians become a part of that story by their participation in liturgy and sacraments, and so carry out the ongoing work of Christ."[48] Saliers also picks up this theme in Hauerwas to describe the "storied" shape of the Christian moral self and the importance of liturgy for the "deliberate rehearsal" of these stories that make us who we are as Christian agents.[49] Liturgy, then, is the means by which the textual or oral contents of the faith become written on the gathered body of the faithful as they bring the reality of the Gospel to bear on their concrete social existence. Liturgical performance is the continued embodiment of the community's biblical and Christologically centered narrative.

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[46] John Howard Yoder, "Sacrament as Social Process: Christ the Transformer of Culture," in *Theology Today* 48, no. 1 (April 1991), p. 37. Quoted from Phillips, p. 97.
[47] Phillips, p. 97.
[48] Ibid., pp. 97-98.
[49] Saliers, p. 23.

James K.A. Smith on *Habitus* and 'How Worship Works'

While the above reflections describe some of the ways theologians have thought about the relationship between liturgy and ethics, these considerations raise the question of *how* it is that rituals shape persons and communities in these ways. What are some of the mechanisms through which liturgy performs this work? Additionally, such considerations ought to prompt us to ask concretely how intentional ritual formation in the Christian context relates to Christian action in the world more broadly. It is precisely these questions that Smith has attempted to address in his recent work.

Smith begins this work by developing what he calls a "liturgical anthropology." Human beings, according to Smith, are fundamentally worshipping creatures. We are defined primarily by what we love and the manner in which this love "aims" our desires and intentions toward particular ends. Smith summarizes the contrast between his proposal and the anthropological definitions of various thinkers (and, indeed, whole bodies of thought) by claiming that humans,

> …are not primarily *homo rationale* or *homo faber* or *homo economicus*; we are not even generically *homo religiosus.* We are more concretely *homo liturgicus*; moreover, humans are religious animals not because we are primarily believing animals but because we are liturgical animals – embodied, practicing creatures whose love/desire is aimed at something ultimate.[50]

For Smith our reasoning, making, exchanging and believing take their impetus from our ultimate desires or loves which are shaped by rituals of worship.

Thus, Smith rejects a Cartesian view of the human person in which human identity and action are grounded first in thinking. He rejects also what he views as a particular Christian modification of this position that understands Christian faith primarily in terms of propositional beliefs and/or a "worldview" governed by principles.

[50] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, p. 40.

Each of these fallacies err by viewing the human person with an exaggerated cognitivity, as if identity and right action are merely a matter of possessing the proper ideas, concepts or information.[51] The emphases gleaned from such models miss two key components of human life, namely desire and embodiment.

Indeed, these two components are intricately intertwined for Smith, as it is in and through the body with its movements, history and social relations that desire is formed and elicited. Humans encounter the world first at the levels of body and desire rather than through theories or information. Our orientation toward the world and our dispositions toward particular kinds of action are fundamentally located at a preconscious, pretheoretical and intuitive level. This "gut" level response to the world is shaped by stories, habits and embodied practices that constitute what Smith calls "pedagogies of desire."[52] Such pedagogies aim our loves toward one ultimate *telos* or another. It is the task of Christian ritual practice, then, to shape actors whose love is aimed toward God and God's Kingdom, over and against the "mis-formation of our desire" inherent in "secular" rituals and liturgies.[53] Smith summarizes the contrast between his approach and a cognitivist or "Christian worldview" approach writing:

> Discipleship and formation are less about erecting an edifice of Christian knowledge than they are a matter of developing a Christian know-how that intuitively "understands" the world in the light of the fullness of the gospel. And insofar as an understanding is implicit in practice, the practices of Christian worship are crucial – the sine qua non – for developing a distinctly Christian understanding of the world.[54]

[51] Ibid., pp. 42 and 45.
[52] Ibid.,p 65.
[53] Ibid., p. 88.
[54] Ibid., p. 68.

This is the chief insight Smith attempts to draw out in this work, describing precisely how it is that Christian ritual practices form the habits, affections, dispositions and intentions of Christian actors.

While drawing upon a wide range of thinkers throughout his proposal, there are three chief theorists and corresponding conceptual frameworks that provide the core of Smith's argument. In the first volume the chief figure is Charles Taylor and his notion of the "social imaginary," while the second volume is built around Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *praktognosia* and Pierre Bourdieu's *habitus*. Smith draws upon Taylor to demonstrate how we imaginatively construe social space through images, symbols and narratives. He turns to Merleau-Ponty and Bourdieu in the second volume to show how such imaginative construal of the world begins with the body as it learns to navigate physical space in the context of its relationships with other embodied actors.

The concepts of social imaginary, *praktognosia,* and *habitus* each highlight distinct facets of Smith's main point. Yet Smith's work builds like a kind of spiraling repetition such that by the end of volume two he can evoke any one of these concepts as a stand-in for his more general argument, which locates the basis of human identity and action in an intuitive, affective, pre-theoretical, and habitual attunement to the world. Additionally, Smith draws upon Bourdieu to bridge the bodily and the social in such a way that his work functions in Smith's argument as a kind of link between the broader social vision articulated by Taylor and the very tactile, micro-level focus of Merleau-Ponty. In light of these features of his work, it would be redundant to describe his use of each of these thinkers in detail. Instead, for my purposes here, it will suffice to focus

primarily on Bourdieu and the way Smith deploys the concept of *habitus* to elucidate the formative power of Christian worship.

Smith begins his description of *habitus* by noting how Bourdieu develops this concept against the backdrop of two poles he sees plaguing social science. Bourdieu describes these poles as 'objectivism' and 'subjectivism.'[55] With respect to the 'objectivist' fallacy in social science, Smith highlights how Bourdieu rejects the manner in which linguistic philosophers and anthropologists working with structuralist biases describe the primary function of language and other symbolic practices at the level of meaning, signification, and reference. Such a move abstracts a given semiotic system from the social relationships in which it is utilized. Smith rightly points out that Bourdieu views this approach as problematically "intellectualist."[56] That is to say that it seeks to "decode" individual instances of speech or ritual performance on the basis of supposedly objective and universal structures of language. Thus, it assumes a theoretical mode (language as a ruled medium to exchange meaningful ideas) where Bourdieu argues a practical mode (language as the means to achieve particular social ends) is really at play.

This aspect of Bourdieu's critique of 'objectivism' fits nicely within Smith's overall account of human action. Language, and the unique use of language in liturgical practice, is not primarily a source for communicating ideas, but is rather a practical means for situating persons in particular ways in relationship to one another and the world. However, the 'intellectualist' critique is but one sub-point in Bourdieu's broader critique of 'objectivism.' Bourdieu's larger point is that structuralists like Saussure

[55] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom,* p. 77. These poles are described and rejected by Bourdieu in *The Logic of Practice* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), chs. 2 and 3.
[56] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom,* p. 77; Bourdieu, p. 33.

confuse regularity of occurrence in patterns of speech, for universal and determinate laws of linguistic structure.[57] Having thus posited a universal structure, the meaning of each individual use of a semiotic code is determined on the basis of this theoretical abstraction as opposed to the unique circumstances and relations surrounding a specific exchange. In such a vision the individual is overwhelmed by the universal, the creative and contextual use of speech by historical agents is overlooked in favor of supposedly determinate laws. Bourdieu argues that such an approach "reduces historical agents to the role of 'supporters' of the structure and reduces their actions to mere epiphenomenal manifestations of the structure's own power to develop itself and to determine and overdetermine other structures."[58] By playing up the 'intellectualist' angle and downplaying the way Bourdieu critiques 'objectivism' for overdetermining individual actions by reference to independent structures, Smith's account of *habitus* is skewed in particular ways that I will address below.

Moving on to the second pole, Bourdieu also critiques 'subjectivists' such as Sartre or rational choice theorists who see individual subjects as unconditioned nodes of discrete moments of decision. Smith's discussion of this aspect of Bourdieu's analysis is more complete than his analysis of objectivism, inasmuch as he places 'subjectivism' under the alternate heading of 'voluntarism.'[59] Here the transcendent ego enters each new moment of decision as "consciousness without inertia," or alternatively "as a pure, free-floating subject."[60] Agency is therefore radically underdetermined, as the linguistic,

[57] Bourdieu, p. 30.
[58] Ibid., p. 41.
[59] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, p. 77.
[60] Bourdieu, p. 46; Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom,* p. 79.

contextual, and relational constraints upon agents are either viewed as problems to be overcome as in Sartre, or are utterly overlooked as in rational choice theory.

Against this radically underdetermined account of human action, Bourdieu develops the concept of *habitus.* According to Bourdieu a *habitus* is an internalized set of past experiences that exercise a kind of inertia on one's perceptions and actions. As he writes, the *habitus* is an "embodied history" that is "internalized as a second nature and so forgotten as history – [it] is the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product."[61] All agents, argues Bourdieu, are socially embedded and are thus shaped by a *habitus* common to those with whom they share their life. As Smith notes the *habitus* is acquired through communal life, it is "inscribed in me" as I inhabit the institutions, practices, and language that constitute the social world in which I live and move.

One acquires a *habitus* according to Bourdieu through an embodied belief or practical faith in the presuppositions of the 'game' in which one finds oneself. He calls this 'belief' of the body its *doxa*.[62] Such a belief is written on one's body as one is incorporated into a given social configuration through a commonly accepted set of practices. "Belief" for Bourdieu is not a state of mind but is rather carried in the movements of the body as the regularity of particular bodily comportments within a given social setting shape the practitioner at a level that precedes conscious thought. By focusing on something as basic and tactile as the body's "motor schemes" the social formation of *habitus* "manages to extort what is essential while seeming to demand the insignificant…."[63] One does not choose how such seemingly insignificant bodily comportments shape one in a *habitus.* Rather one is born into a given *habitus* or is

[61] Bourdieu, p. 56.
[62] Ibid., p. 66.
[63] Ibid., p. 69.

secondarily co-opted into one through a long process of formation that he refers to as second birth.[64] Thus a common set of practices both inculcates a 'feel for the game' in each person and constitutes the ongoing playground in which such a feel for the game is enacted.

Importantly, *habitus* is not a kind of rational knowledge. Rather, Bourdieu describes *habitus* in terms of "practical sense." By this he means a set of relatively "durable dispositions" that give one an intuitive grasp of one's social situation and the range of appropriate movements or actions such a situation is eliciting. I do not rationally deliberate on my *habitus* in a given situation but rather proceed on the basis of the 'feel for the game' such a *habitus* makes possible.

For Bourdieu, *habitus* creates a kind of strategic orientation to the world. It sets certain conditions to what one views as appropriate and possible in a given situation,[65] yet also supplies one with a range of possible moves one can utilize in unique circumstances in order to secure desired goods for oneself, one's family, or one's social group.[66] For Bourdieu the social cohesion and arena of action created by *habitus* includes both the durability of shared structures and habit (contra "subjectivism") *and* the unique agency of individuals in strategic improvisations (contra "objectivism"). While noting that *habitus* both conditions our perception of the world *and* creates space for spontaneity and improvisation,[67] Smith leans much more strongly on the side of habituation and conditioning. Actions, according to Smith, are "prompted from me in response to a situation…because practical sense has unconsciously surveyed a situation

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[64] Ibid., p. 68.
[65] Ibid., pp. 60-61.
[66] See for instance Bourdieu's account of the "ambiguities and indeterminacies" of behaviors and situations produced within traditional gift-exchange economies on pp. 105-07.
[67] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, p. 84.

and my *habitus* has already inclined me toward certain ends."[68] Or again, and perhaps more strongly:

> You now make sense of your world *with* others, but in a way you no longer notice because it's become "natural" for you. You also act accordingly: since you are now primed to automatically perceive the world in habituated ways, you're also inclined to act in certain ways because your perception of the world enables you to perceive what's at stake, what's required of you, what you're called to – not because you're thinking about relevant rules but because, as a "native," you now can't imagine seeing the world otherwise.

For Smith, there is a kind of self-evident quality to the perceptions and actions that spring forth out of one's *habitus.* Once one is inscribed in a particular *habitus* one's responses to the world take place *automatically.* I simply can't help but see the world and act in it in particular ways which are governed by *habitus.*

This has obvious implications for Smith with respect to "how worship works." For Smith, the bodily and storied practices of Christian worship conscript one into a *habitus* that is uniquely Christian. Practices of prayer and worship do not create a Christian *habitus* by convincing the intellect with compelling ideas, but by shaping our preconscious habits and bodily dispositions. By attending to the micro-practices of Christian ritual, we are habituated to perceive and respond to the world Christianly, our desires, bodies, and imaginations being attuned to the *telos* of God's kingdom.

It is not only Christian action and perception that is shaped this way, however. All human perceptions and actions draw upon the same bodily, imaginal, and habitual orientations inherent in basic human capacities. Thus, for Smith, we must also attend to the "deformations" of *habitus* in "disordered secular liturgies." These secular liturgies

[68] Ibid., p. 86.

aim one's ultimate loves toward a *telos* that is contradictory to the Kingdom.[69] Given that such "rival tellings" of the true end of human life are carried in rituals and practices that impact us at a micro-level, there are seemingly endless possibilities for "the world" to mal-form one's dispositions. As he writes, "Through a vast repertoire of secular liturgies we are quietly assimilated to the earthly city of disordered loves, governed by self-love and the pursuit of domination."[70] The over-and-against nature of the Gospel and its practices to "the world," "the earthly city," or "the secular" and its practices is pervasive throughout Smith's work. Smith points to such secular liturgies or mal-forming micro-practices as shopping in a mall, engaging in patriotic rituals at a football game, using a smartphone, or attending to social media.[71] Additionally, Smith notes now the rival *telē* of the mall, the coffee shop, or the rock concert are encroaching on the true *telos* of Christian worship.[72]

In light of this rivalry between a Christian *habitus* and a secular one, it is the mission of the Church to embody an alternative cultural space. The Church has what Smith calls a "cultural mandate;"[73] a mandate to produce cultural forms that point to God's kingdom and to abstain from cultural forms that do not. Importantly, this is not a mandate to transform culture, or to change the sinful structures of the world. Instead, for Smith, "the ecclesial community, as witnesses and martyrs, is called to show the world that it is the world by living out an alternative embodiment of human community in

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[69] Ibid., p. 140; See also his characterization of "secular liturgies" in chapter 3 of *Desiring the Kingdom*.
[70] Ibid., p. 141.
[71] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom,* pp. 93 and 105; and *Imagining the Kingdom,* pp. 142-43.
[72] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom,* p. 168.
[73] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom,* p. 209.

concrete expressions of a kingdom economics, politics, and so forth."[74] Christians are not interested in transforming culture more broadly, but in shaping an alternative community of people who live and act out of a Christian *habitus* in explicit contrast to the *habitus* inculcated by the world.

Critique of Smith

There is much to commend in Smith's work in these volumes. In particular I find his general theory of human action – his liturgical anthropology – to be helpful and convincing. Smith puts in accessible form what is increasingly accepted across a wide range of disciplines. Humans are not primarily nodes of rational activity that act on the basis of principled logic and deliberation. Rather, human action is contextually shaped, oriented by habits and conventions, and motivated by desire and love. Each of these factors is significantly impacted by the rituals of everyday life. Secondly, we owe a debt to Smith for the way he introduces his readers to a variety of key theorists. These points notwithstanding, there are some significant ways in which Smith shapes the material upon which he is drawing that I find rather problematic.

First, on my view Smith significantly over-emphasizes habituation or socialization, and vastly underplays the unique nature of individual deployments of cultural materials. Thus while he is right to argue against a strong form of rational choice theory, that all action is the result of rational deliberation without social or cultural inertia at play, he is wrong to assume then that *habitus* (or whichever theoretical construct his is deploying at a given moment) simply takes over and functions automatically apart from individual intention. There is a kind of intentional use of body/language/cultural material that is not merely habituated response to stimuli but that is also not about rational

[74] Ibid., p. 210.

processing of data. As Bourdieu notes, one acts out of a *habitus* in ways that are socially strategic.

For Bourdieu radical freedom is impossible, as Smith rightly points out. I do not choose my *habitus*, and I can't extricate myself from my social environment in making various moves within it. However, I am never merely an automatic product of the social environment. I act out of that environment in singular ways related to distinct social and personal goals. As noted above, this is a key component in Bourdieu's description of the problem of "objectivism." For instance, Bourdieu argues that structuralists like Saussure abstract regularly occurring patterns in speech and action, positing from them objective and universal laws. These laws are then 'reified' and assumed to have a social efficacy all their own, such that they function "independent of individual consciousnesses and wills…."[75] Such 'objectivists' substitute a structure for historical agents, a *model* of relations and actions for concrete realities themselves.[76]

For Bourdieu there are structures at play but these structures are not free-standing. Rather they are internalized by individual actors who do not exemplify universal laws but rather put such patterns into use in unique ways. Individual persons adopt strategies relevant to the unique circumstances at hand and the repertoire of practices available to them.[77] Such strategies are not merely the product of "obedience to a norm explicitly positioned and obeyed or of regulation exerted by an unconscious 'model….'"[78] I

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[75] Bourdieu, p. 26.
[76] Ibid., p. 37.
[77] Note that Bourdieu's use of 'strategy' here does not correspond to Michel de Certeau's use of 'strategies' in *The Practice of Every Day Life* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984). Rather, Bourdieu's use of 'strategy' is rather like Certeau's description of a 'tactic:' a move within a broader social structure intended to achieve certain immediate aims for the benefit of the practitioner.
[78] Ibid., p. 15.

respond to my social environment out of *habitus* to be sure, but I do so with certain social goals in mind, even if these are not calculated in terms of propositional content. Thus, while the inertia of *habitus* significantly conditions one's perceptions and actions it also opens up real possibilities (perhaps infinite possibilities) for improvisation as each new circumstance calls forth a unique and often unpredictable performance of *habitus.*[79]

For Smith, while *habitus*, is socially constructed and inscribed in us from our environment, its effect on an individual is similar to the structuralists' view of language so thoroughly critiqued by Bourdieu as problematically "objectivist." Smith's argument assumes that there is a more or less given universal structure to Christian practice that when properly attended *automatically* shapes certain kinds of agents. Individual Christians come to instantiate the universal laws of a Christian *habitus* (or imaginary or *praktognosia*). The presupposed shape of Christian practice (a shape which Smith rather simplistically universalizes) seems to exercise a kind of social efficacy of its own. By sidestepping this key aspect of Bourdieu's "objectivist" critique Smith misses how he borders on falling into this trap himself.

This critique of Smith is important for orienting the present argument. For instance, I do not intend to argue here that if everyone simply said daily prayer the problems of unjust work discipline would resolve themselves, or that there is a self-evident imaginary or *habitus* that is inculcated in daily prayer that obviously and automatically counters commodified time. Indeed, as many have pointed out, the discipline of daily prayer can easily be put to use in ways that run counter to my

[79] Ibid., p. 32.

argument here.[80] Thus, daily prayer does not and cannot do this work by automatic habituation. I am arguing, rather, for a particular deployment or use of these materials that cannot perform the kind of critical function I hope they will without a kind of intentional use, that is, without a specific strategic effort to imagine and construct time in contrast to some of the ways time is constructed in work discipline and the economy. This is why I have chosen the language of *interruption* to convey how I see daily prayer working. As an interruption, it always performs in a fragmentary manner, calling for further critical discernment and strategic use of the practice, as well as transformation of the broader "worldly" environments that stunt the perceptive and agential capacities of Christians and non-Christians alike. It does not, in a straightforward way, inculcate a total whole of "sacred" time that stands easily apart from the whole of "secular" time.

This leads to the second major problem in Smith's work. Smith thinks too easily in terms of an either/or relationship between the kingdom of God and the liturgical formation that habituates us toward it, and "the world" with its secular kind of liturgical (de)formation. Here Smith creates an easy contrast between "Christian" formation and everything else, giving little space to the complex and overlapping formations that make up the background, unconscious perceptions of the world that constitute each individual person. Smith's own attention to the micro-formation of a person's *habitus*, even down to the most basic motor functionality or the ways in which our neural maps are

[80] See especially chapter six of E.P. Thompson's *Customs in Common* (New York: The New Press, 1991) entitled "Time, Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism."

configured,[81] ought to have alerted him to the dubious nature of such a hard and fast distinction.

It is simply not so easy to put everything into the categories of 'Christian' or 'secular' that his work presupposes. We know, for instance, that the sheer number of words an infant hears in its first years will have a drastic effect on that person's ability to interact with and perceive the world at the level of the pre-conscious skills and assumptions described so regularly by Smith.[82] Yet is talking to an infant in its early life a Christian thing or a secular thing? Similarly, part of my *habitus* or *praktognosia* will include the way I navigate the physical environment that I inhabit, including for instance roadways and walkways. Yet, are the habits of merging onto a freeway or navigating a sidewalk Christian habits or secular ones? To be sure, there may be a more or less Christian way to do these things. One could, for instance, merge onto a freeway recklessly while cursing other drivers, or merge cautiously out of concern for the safety of one's neighbor. The point is that the difference here is not one of a wholesale separation between two isolated expressions of *habitus*, but of a distinct way of inhabiting a shared social environment.

Finally, to use an example cited often by Smith, Bourdieu claims that, "a whole cosmology" can be instilled "through injunctions as insignificant as 'sit up straight' or 'don't hold your knife in your left hand.'"[83] Smith's hard and fast distinction between a "Christian" *habitus* and a "secular" mal-formed *habitus* would require us to ask, for instance, whether sitting up straight or holding a knife in one's right hand are Christian

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[81] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom,* pp. 53-54, 183.
[82] See for instance Betty Hart and Todd R. Risley, "The Early Catastrophe: The 30 Million Word Gap by Age 3," in *American Educator* (Spring 2003).
[83] Bourdieu, p. 69.

things to do or secular things to do. Are there not some kinds of formation that constitute the raw material of our given circumstances (not that they are simply neutral) upon which, and with which Christian materials interact and perform certain (albeit fragmentary and improvisational) modifications and/or critiques? These are very small examples of the way in which Christian ritual formation always takes place in the midst of a vast array of other relational, cultural, and physical environments yet they highlight how one cannot simply tease out the "Christian" bits and the "secular" bits in the overly simplistic fashion that Smith employs.

Another area in which Smith's either/or disposition oversimplifies complex processes is in the area of liturgical development and enculturation. Here the porous boundaries of culture and tradition are evident in a way that Smith seems not to allow for. Smith argues quite strongly that liturgical "form" carries with it the whole cosmology of the faith so that other cultural forms must have an altogether separate *telos*.[84] Smith himself has already decided what aspects of form seem to matter, isolating the broad contours of the Eucharistic liturgies of several mainline denominations for instance, and selects easy targets as "forms" with contrasting cosmologies, such as the coffee shop or mall.[85]

Yet the issues involved with the form of worship and its cultural resonance are far more intricate and include many more considerations than the broad contours of current ecumenical convergence in liturgical practice (itself a rather recent product of a centuries long process of interaction between the Church and its host cultures). For instance, does the musical form of contemporary folk music habituate one to a Christian way of being

[84] Smith, *Imagining The Kingdom,* p. 168-69.
[85] Ibid., p. 168.

more or less than Gregorian chant? Is a cathedral setting a more Christian location for worship than the outdoors? What about the use of various forms of art, architecture and other local craft goods? These invariably impact the medium or form of worship, displaying an interaction and encounter between Gospel and culture that necessitates some porous borders and suggests that the "meaning" of worship and the shape of its form cannot find articulation apart from this interaction. The aesthetic register of ritual performance, which is so crucial in forming one's imagination or *habitus* for Smith, varies so greatly between, say, a Greek Orthodox Eucharistic liturgy and a Methodist worship service, that one cannot simply equate the kinds of *habitus* these forms inculcate. Additionally, one can account for the differences in these forms on the basis of distinct cultural materials that come to bear upon them, materials that cannot be neatly categorized as "Christian" or "secular."

Once one acknowledges this fact the apparent trouble of accounting for which elements are essential and which malleable presents itself, opening liturgical and cultural formation to a messier process of discernment and contestation. This is not to say that everything is up for grabs, but simply to suggest that so much of what Smith takes as given and obvious is anything but. I should note here, that I share many of Smith's concerns relating to problematic features of modern life. I recognize the problems of consumerism, of patriotism bordering on idolatry, of the potential for technology and social media to distort human relationships. I simply believe that insulating Christian practice and identity from these problems while referring them to a wholly self-contained 'secular' realm is not a meaningful or helpful mode of analysis.

This leads to my final line of critique, which relates to the manner in which Smith identifies Christian liturgies and secular liturgies. In Smith's argument "secular" formation and liturgies have a kind of generic quality to them. They can be anything that is not explicitly Christian in form. The contrast between this general notion of secular formation and the relatively specific character of Christian formation (via canon, Eucharist, daily prayer, preaching, etc.) is incredibly imprecise. In this situation "secular" unfortunately becomes a stand in for "anything I don't like," such as smart phones and social media. Again, it is not that these things don't have certain problems that go along with their use, it is just that the imprecise way in which Smith contrasts these realities with "Christian formation" obscures their relationship to Christian identity in today's world, rather than illuminating it.

Tanner and the Relational Constitution of Christian Identity as Alternative

Good liturgy does insert practitioners into a story and provide images and symbols that fund the imagination. It does shape communities around this shared set of materials and ideally it can work upon the habits and dispositions of individual practitioners. However, liturgy does not and cannot do this work in isolation from the many other formative experiences in our individual and social lives. The worshiper is simply not a *tabula rasa* upon which the liturgy writes a definitive and clearly demarcated "imaginary," "*habitus*," or pattern of "*praktognosia*" in isolation from the "secular" or non-sacred experiences that shape her. Each of these categories, which are relatively interchangeable in Smith's work, take fundamental aspects of a person's physical and social environment into account in such a way that they cannot be exclusively referred to patterns of sacred ritual alone. Thus, it is necessary to understand

the "meaning" or social outcomes of a liturgical performance in the context of a wide array of interacting cultural, political, linguistic, and psychological forces. That is to say, how Christian worship and the materials of the Christian faith shape moral agents in the world depends upon a relation and interaction between these materials and a host of other cultural materials that constitute the world in which we live. This is precisely what Tanner refers to as the relational constitution of Christian identity when she argues that the "Christian way of life, then, is essentially parasitic: it has to establish relations with other ways of life, it has to take from them, in order to be one itself."[86]

As Tanner notes, this relational constitution of Christian identity, this porous boundary that exists between cultures and shared cultural materials, requires that we eschew notions of incommensurability between cultural wholes. Drawing upon a range of postmodern theorists, and at significant points Bourdieu himself, Tanner argues that cultures do not have the kind of internal coherence, stability, or sharply demarcated boundaries that many cultural theorists and anthropologists of the modern era had assumed. First, Tanner argues that treating cultures as internally consistent wholes obscures the way individual actors actually make use of cultural materials. Any attempt to make sense out of a particular action or piece of cultural production by pointing to the abstraction of a cultural whole whose pieces fit together like those of a biological system or machine must assume that every piece of this systemic whole is available to the actor at every moment. Yet, no one agent acts out of this kind of total vision. Rather, Tanner writes, "In contrast to the tight connections found in a machine or a deductive system, cultural elements in the form in which they are mobilized in practice have the partly

[86] Tanner, *Theories of Culture,* p. 113.

integrated, partly discontinuous character of an octopus…."[87] In actual practice, individuals and sub-groups within a culture make use of cultural materials in fragmentary ways that do not primarily refer individual actions to an overarching system of coherence.

Second, Tanner notes that shared cultural materials are as much the ground of contestation and conflict as they are of consensus and social stability. Anthropologists and theorists assuming that cultural materials provide the basis of consensus manufacture such a consensus in describing a cultural unit as much as discover it. In so doing, they might point to shared materials or beliefs but significantly downplay the multivalent and even conflictual way in which persons deploy these shared materials in ever changing circumstances.[88] This critique is consistent with Bourdieu's critique of "objectivism," and indeed Tanner draws upon Bourdieu heavily in this section of her text. This relationship to Bourdieu is quite apparent when Tanner summarizes her argument stating:

> What makes the modern notion of culture wrong is not the bare claim that culture is an ordering principle. What is wrong is the *way* culture is talked about as an ordering principle: the idea that culture is an already constituted force for social order simply waiting to be imposed upon or transmitted externally to human beings who passively internalize or mechanically reproduce it. Culture becomes a force for social order by isolating culture from the ongoing social processes that produce it and by rendering thereby the human agents involved in such processes mere passive receptors.[89]

Overplaying stability and consensus to the detriment of contestation and potential conflict papers over the unpredictable nature of an individual's strategic use of cultural materials. If the first critique suggests that such use is at least partially fragmentary, this second critique highlights the improvisational character of individual practice within a cultural field.

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[87] Ibid., p. 44.
[88] Ibid., p. 46.
[89] Ibid., p. 50.

Third, Tanner writes, "Because change, conflict and contradiction are now admitted *within* a culture, the anthropologist has no reason to insist on a culture's sharp boundaries."[90] Discrete cultural forms do not constitute a closed system that is the exclusive possession of a particular social group. Cultural forms are always situated relationally within a variety of competing and overlapping forms and social groupings. Cultures and distinct social groups have a significant impact on one another, thus it is a mistake to make wholesale "qualitative contrasts" between them.[91]

What is true of culture more broadly is true of theology and Christian identity as well. Thus, Tanner applies these critiques to theological methods that too readily assume a "self-contained and self-originating character of Christian identity."[92] She is particularly critical of "postliberal" theologians who argue strongly for the internal coherence of Christian theology, marking the "grammar" of the faith in terms of a cultural boundary. However, she also notes the ways in which correlationist theologians and classical Protestant liberal theologians seek to make meaning out of the contents of the Christian faith on the basis of the self-constituted cultural wholes of Christianity and wider systems of thought.[93] All of these methods assume as given what is open to constant historical negotiation, as self-contained what is always carved out through interaction, and as internally coherent what is often fragmentary and contested.

But where does this leave us with respect to the concept of culture and how we are to understand the social quality of identity formation? Are we simply left with an incoherent cacophony of competing cultural forms? Are there no boundaries to mark

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[90] Ibid., p. 53.
[91] Ibid., p. 56.
[92] Ibid., p. 105.
[93] Ibid., pp. 106-07.

unique communities or ways of life off from one another? According to Tanner a postmodern account of culture and identity formation need not leave us utterly bereft of boundaries, distinctions between ways of life, or tools for critical discernment. Instead, we must simply take account of such things with a view to the messy, provisional, and multivalent ways cultural materials are produced and utilized. For instance, one might attempt to describe a cultural whole for the sake of analysis, but one will need to account for the ways in which these analytical constructs contain their own contradictions and "internal fissures."[94] Similarly, one can continue to speak of distinct cultural identities but no longer in terms of "boundaries separating self-contained" entities. Rather, as Tanner argues:

> The distinctiveness of cultural identity is therefore not a product of isolation; it is not a matter of a culture's being simply self-generated, pure and unmixed; it is not a matter of "us" vs. "them." Cultural identity becomes, instead, a hybrid, relational affair, something that lives between cultures as much as within cultures. What is important for cultural identity is the novel way cultural elements from elsewhere are now put to work, by means of such complex and ad hoc relational processes as resistance, appropriation, subversion and compromise.[95]

Christian distinctiveness works in the same manner. Christian formation is to be characterized by a distinct use of shared cultural materials, not a cordoning off of "Christian culture" from "secular culture." Christian social practices are worked out in the context of a vast array of alternative ways of life. Even in resisting or subverting social practices in a wider host culture the meaning of Christian social practice is determined by the manner in which this contrast is articulated, by the way in which one accounts for the specific case at hand.

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[94] Ibid., p. 57.
[95] Ibid., pp. 57-58.

"Christian practices are always the practices of others made odd," writes Tanner. [96] She goes on, "Christianity is a hybrid formation through and through….Christian distinctiveness is something that emerges in the very cultural processes occurring at the boundary, processes that construct a distinctive identity for Christian social practice through the distinctive use of cultural materials shared with others."[97] The shaping of this distinctive identity is an ongoing process, it is something that can't simply be set into motion and then left to run on its own internal logic. This process cannot be settled from the outset with reference to an easily isolated Christian totality. We must set for ourselves a more modest goal; to proceed on an ad hoc basis "guided by the case-by-case judgement of particulars."[98] We must recognize that each discernment represents a contested claim that is piecemeal in nature and ought to remain open to continued engagement and further improvisational modifications.

Thus, to refer this back to my critique of Smith above, a *habitus*, like a cultural milieu in general, is not an easily recognizable whole that inevitably produces a certain kind of action or outcome, or easily discernible rules about what is in and what is out. Thus, every action or move played within a social field is at least potentially a contested claim about what the specific interaction of *habitus* and shared cultural materials allow for or demand in a particular circumstance. We can never get away from the provisional nature of cultural formation, nor the necessary improvisation that each person must undertake in their lives and actions, and thus the always contested nature of the use to which cultural materials are placed. That is not to say that any of these cultural materials should simply be taken for granted, or stand beyond critique. Rather, this is to

[96] Ibid., p. 113.
[97] Ibid., pp. 114-15
[98] Ibid., p. 119.

suggest that *all* materials, including Christian social practices that may be taken for granted in one epoch or another, need to be open to continued scrutiny and testing. Saliers puts this in theological terms when he argues that even regular forms of Christian practice (and perhaps especially these) need to be open to their own prophetic self-critique.[99] Smith seems unaware of this need for prophetic self-critique, a critique that is often inspired by the kind of cultural borrowing and appropriation described by Tanner. In taking far too much for granted, Smith assumes a clearly demarcated stable whole of Christian practice that has clear and inevitable consequences for shaping Christian identity over and against the malformation of identity in the secular world. This mistake limits the usefulness of his work in these volumes.

Conclusion

At stake in my preference for Tanner over Smith is not simply a point of methodological distinction. It is rather the situating of the very nature of this project itself. By finding Tanner's proposal more convincing I have adopted two perspectives that will shape the whole of this project, one formal the other material. First, by eschewing the notion that there is a single and isolatable Christian social imaginary and that practices of the Christian faith, such as daily prayer, inevitably shape practitioners' habits in comprehensive and easily demarcated ways over and against the ways of "the world," I have significantly narrowed the scope of this proposal. I am not, for instance, seeking to argue that daily prayer necessarily shapes persons in patterns of habit and disposition that would necessarily lead to their rejection of the commodified form of labor and its attendant problems. Were I to make this argument I would need to put

[99] Saliers, "Liturgy and Ethics," p. 34.

together both a convincing historical genealogy linking the loss of widespread daily prayer practice to the rise of the modern pathologies of work I am analyzing, as well as provide empirical data demonstrating that some form of fixed hour daily prayer does in fact have the impact on the imagination of its practitioners that I am claiming.

However, this is not the kind of claim I intend to make here. By recognizing the provisional, fragmented, and porous ways in which the cultural materials of the Christian faith are put together by practitioners in order to direct their daily Christian lives, I readily grant that disciplines of daily prayer can be put to widely different uses and can in fact be used to undergird rather than undercut the kinds of disciplines I seek to critique. There is simply no guaranteed outcome that will result if and when persons engage in this particular practice and bring it to bear on the other materials of their daily life.[100] Rather than claiming an inherent contrast between the pedagogy of daily prayer and the pedagogy of commodified secular time that must hold everywhere "sacred time" is properly embodied, I see myself as engaging here in a primary act of cultural production as one who has experienced the practice of daily prayer as well as the often times alienating aspects of both white collar and blue collar labor.

Here I am claiming the privileged position of the religious practitioner attempting to make sense out of every day lived realities by piecing together various materials from the Christian tradition as well as cultural materials from outside the Church. As Tanner notes, that I am a specially trained practitioner engaging in an academic enterprise does not mean that my work here is of a fundamentally different order than attempts by the everyday lay person to draw upon the Christian faith to make sense of her daily

[100] By not adopting the former route, I also avoid the trap of idealizing medieval Christendom over and against the evils of the modern liberal or secular world that took its place.

life.[101] As a professionally trained theologian I simply have a wider range of sources and perspectives from within the Christian tradition at my disposal. Yet the key point here is that I am engaged in a *contest* over the meaning of the sacred value of time and the creative activities we undertake within it, and this meaning is not simply settled at the outset by pointing to the inherent logic of a traditional practice, as Smith's work would seem to suggest. I do not see myself as excavating a logic that is simply already there and would direct Christian action in necessary and specific ways if people simply attended to it more carefully. Rather I argue that while I believe my argument in these pages is both plausible and appropriate in addressing a particular ethical and theological problem facing the world today, the force of this argument will only be felt to the extent that it is found to be convincing and fitting by those who engage it.

To put this in terms drawn from my analysis of Bourdieu, I am arguing that Christians have an opportunity to USE a ritual practice in a particular way to combat the domination of life by waged work in today's world. I am not suggesting that the critique I marshal here arises simply from the STRUCTURE of the practice itself, apart from the relevant juxtapositions and borrowing of other materials I develop in this project. Thus, the proposal offered here ought to be taken on its own terms as a primary work of theological and cultural creativity, NOT as an attempt to describe simply how daily prayer does or would work in every situation of dehumanizing labor discipline. That is to say, I am proposing one possible deployment of one aspect of the Christian tradition that can produce certain affective and imaginary dispositions in the world, but only insofar as it is discerned to appropriately respond to the lives and problems faced by people in their daily circumstances now. Unlike Smith's work, this is no empirical claim about "how

[101] Tanner, pp. 82-86.

worship works." It is rather a proposal for a particular constructive use of daily prayer to respond to a specific set of problems and call for their transformation.

Second, on the material end, opting for Tanner pushes my project in a particular theological direction with respect to nature of time and of our engagement with God in it. Rather than arguing for an overarching whole of "sacred time" over and against another overarching whole called "secular" or "commodified time" I argue that daily prayer relativizes and orients our experience of time through its episodic and interruptive force. I will develop this line of thought further in what follows. For now, however, I will simply note that thinking of sacred time in terms of an interruptive divine encounter will open us to the fragmentary, provisional, and overlapping nature of cultural formations and give us theological ground to situate the formative end of Christian ritual within a much more satisfying and robust account of all of the layers of experience that inform individual action and broader socially and politically defined goods.

On this view, the materials that make up the "Christian" milieu, including daily prayer, create a context for divine encounter, an encounter that always comes to us in the midst of our other surrounding cultures and contexts, and thus the "meaning" of Christian formation will always in part be determined by the complex interactions that make up this encounter. Thus each new move inspired by this interruptive divine encounter is a new proposal for the "meaning" of the Christian faith in the unique circumstances in which it is made. Each new move is a construction, an extension of tradition into the novel, rather than simply a repetition of a set imaginary, *praktognosia*, or *habitus*.

Finally, and to bring this chapter full circle, in developing this argument as a dynamic and constructive use of Christian materials I intend to freely utilize each of the

various means of articulating the relationship between liturgy and ethics discussed above. At times I will appeal to traditional components of Christian daily prayer as warrants for specific ethical claims. At times I will focus on the way in which fixed hour daily prayer works on bodies, ideally arresting their movement and production for a time (setting limits to the utilitarian definition of human life). I will point to daily prayer as at least potentially shaping one's affections, instilling one with a sense of hope, vocation, and concern for the common good. Lastly I will point to the narrative and imaginative force behind this interruption, and the kind of communal life that these imply. Ultimately, however, each of these tactics will only be useful insofar as they serve my theological ends; to describe how daily prayer creates space for a divine encounter in which practitioners seek to discern the call of God in the midst of their everyday lives.

Chapter 2:
Pathologies of Work in a Wage Based Society

Setting the Stage: Rise of the Wage Society

Since the rise of capitalism as a dominant mode of economic exchange and organization the presuppositions surrounding work and conditions under which work is performed have undergone several significant transformations. Most important for our purposes is the process by which labor power itself came to be seen as the principle commodity to be bought and sold in order for the average person to gain access to the market. While day laborers and wageworkers have been around since time immemorial, as Harry Braverman notes, "a substantial class of wage-workers did not begin to form in Europe until the fourteenth century, and did not become numerically significant until the rise of industrial capitalism in the eighteenth century."[102] At the time early capitalism was finding its classical articulation in Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* nearly four-fifths of the labor force in the United States was classified as "self-employed" working primarily on small farms or in a family workshops or trades.[103] Regular and long-term exchange of one's labor for wages was seen as an aberration at this stage. At this time production of many of the family's basic needs would take place within the home, exchange of farmed and craft goods took place within local markets, and there was no clear distinction between work and home life, as everyone in the family was involved in

[102] Harry Baverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974), p. 36.
[103] Ibidem. See also Robert B. Reich, *The Future of Success: Living and Working in the New Economy* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000), p. 89.

contributing to the provisioning of home life in one way or another. Robert Reich refers to this as the "pre-employment era."[104]

With the advancement of industrial capitalism, however, the pattern of work transformed rapidly. Documenting this shift from self-employment in a trade to the conversion of virtually all work to hired labor Braverman notes the dwindling numbers of self-employed workers. He writes, "By 1870 (the proportion of self-employed workers) had declined to about one third and by 1940 to no more than one-fifth; by 1970 only about one-tenth of the population was self-employed."[105] Those numbers have remained relatively stable with the Bureau of Labor Statistics reporting a 10.9 percent self-employment rate in 2009.[106] Reich also notes another interesting statistic on this point showing that while the U.S. population doubled between 1870 and 1910 "the number of wage workers in industrial labor more than quadrupled, from 3.5 million to 14.2 million."[107] By the middle part of the twentieth century virtually all persons in the United States were dependent upon selling their labor to someone else in order to procure the means to sustain their lives and those of their family members.

This shift brought with it many degrading aspects to the work life experienced by the average person, including the replacement of skilled labor by machine processes, alienation of the workers from input into the organization and performance of work, and the suppression of wages. I will discuss some of these trends later in the chapter. For the moment, however, allow me to play the optimist and note that, in recognizing the plight of workers now at the mercy of large industrial capitalist enterprises the progressive era

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[104] Reich, p. 105.
[105] Braverman, p. 36.
[106] Steven F. Hipple, "Self-employment in the United States," *Monthly Labor Review* (September 2010), p. 17.
[107] Reich, p. 91.

in American politics ushered in the first widespread protections for workers. These included limits to working hours, compensation for injury suffered on the job, minimum wages, and requirements for safety and sanitation in the work place.[108] With increasing union membership, rights for collective bargaining, creation and expansion of social insurance programs, and the steady employment offered by large scale production enterprises, the reform capitalism of the post-war era ushered in what Reich describes as a kind of golden age of paid employment. Reich argues that the rise in the relative bargaining power of labor, combined with the particular modes of large scale production and company organization that characterized this era, created an environment of steady work with regular pay increases, limits to the amount of time and effort devoted to work, and a growing equality of income distribution across families.[109] In many ways the amelioration of the poor working conditions and drastic inequalities ushered in with the widespread dependence on waged work in industrial capitalism appeared to be on good footing.

Yet this so called "golden age" of employment in the United States remained woefully inadequate, as Reich himself admits.[110] The stable work with decent pay and benefits that characterized the post-war era was reserved almost exclusively for white men, while the freedom for men to pursue such work depended in large part on the unpaid domestic labor of women who remained economically dependent upon the male breadwinner. While women were increasingly entering the paid workforce in the decades after WWII, the kinds of work available to women during this period were typically to be found in low-paying clerical or service fields with little to no chance of career or pay

[108] Ibid., p. 91.
[109] Ibid., pp. 93-97.
[110] Ibid., p. 97.

advancement. Similarly, racial minorities and immigrant populations were (and still are) disproportionately subject to low-paying labor and service work with much higher rates of poverty and unemployment among their ranks. Thus, the ameliorating trends cited above were at least in part built upon an artificial limiting of labor supply though racial and gender discrimination, leaving many without the means to gain a significant degree of economic security. The story of work in the United States and across the globe would be utterly skewed without recognition of the economic impact of such discrimination. We will discuss institutionalized inequality in the rewards of work in more depth later in this chapter.

In addition to these problems, however, even the limited ameliorating trends of this "golden era" were very short lived and have largely been undone in what Reich refers to as the "post-employment" era of our own time. Having grown increasingly dependent on our ability to secure paid employment in order to sustain our livelihoods through the purchase of goods and services, we have entered into an era characterized by increasing employment insecurity. This era of global outsourcing, sub-contracting, decreasing union membership, increasing numbers of part-time and temporary workers, a dizzying pace of technological and market change, and regular and prolonged periods of heightened unemployment has left many workers in a precarious state from the top to the bottom of the labor market. These shifts have decreased the bargaining power of workers and have coincided with the emergence of what I am calling the pathologies of work in the contemporary era. We are now in an era distinct both from the stages of pre-employment mercantile capitalism and from the large-scale industrial and organizational employment that characterized work life from the early 20th century into the 1970s.

While the post-industrial, post-employment era is unique in its organization of the workforce, many of the pathologies that plague this era parallel the pathologies of early industrial employment even as they have taken new form. In what follows I will address the unique form these pathologies have take in this "post-employment" era.

While I will focus more attention on the manifestation of such pathologies in the United States, it is crucial to take account of the global economic realities that fuel these trends. I will give a fuller treatment of such global realities at the end of this chapter, yet it is important to set any discussion of problems in the labor practices within the United States against the backdrop of the global dismantling of regulatory "barriers" to trade and financial investment. The steady removal of environmental and labor protections, coupled with the global deregulation of the financial industry, has created a massive pool of surplus labor of which multi-national firms can avail themselves. These firms are now more able than ever to exploit temporary "spatial fixes"[111] in order to secure the cheapest possible production costs. This reality has diminished the overall bargaining power of workers the world over, including here in the United States. The increased prevalence of "offshoring" or "outsourcing" a wide range of activities from textile and electronics production to customer service call-centers and IT engineering has left workers in the more developed economies anxious about their employment prospects and more willing to make concessions in order to keep jobs at home.[112] Within developing countries the

[111] I will take up this concept in more detail in the following chapter. As I will show, David Harvey argues that geographical expansion and restructuring are key means by which neo-liberalism wards off threats of capital stagnation by providing new investment conditions increasingly amenable to turning a profit.

[112] Michael Goldfield provides an excellent analysis of the increased prevalence of offshoring in the US across various manufacturing sectors (from the low-wage/labor-intensive industries such as textile work to the high-paying/capital intensive industries such as steel production, ship building, and auto manufacturing) and in IT, communications, and other so-called white collar

need to attract and keep these outsourced jobs often results in what has been dubbed "the race to the bottom" with respect to wages and labor standards. Multinational firms have shown that they are not reticent to use "coercive comparisons" and the threat of relocation to discipline the workforce in a particular location.[113]

The relative free flows of capital when compared to restrictions on movements within the labor force allows the owners of capital to take advantage of such national differences in policy and population. While the International Labor Organization was established in 1919 for the purpose of creating some minimum basis for global labor standards among its member nations, it has no effective means to make member states sign onto its conventions and no enforcement mechanism by which to ensure that those who do agree to its conventions actually adhere to them.[114] In the absence of strong international labor standards that level the playing field for the workers of the world, fierce competition between states to attract capital investment continues to result in depressed wages, decreasing protections and workplace standards, and large tax incentives in "free trade zones" or "export processing zones" that unfairly privilege multinational corporations.[115] The threat of capital and job flight gives large corporate entities undue bargaining power and control over the conditions and remuneration of

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sectors in "The Impact of Globalization and Neoliberalism on the Decline of Organized Labour in the United States", in *Labour, Globalization and the State: Workers, women and migrants confront neoliberalism,* eds. Debdas Banerjee and Michael Goldfield (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), pp. 121-159.

[113] For a development of the concept "coercive comparisons" and its use in analyzing the auto industry in Europe see Frank Mueller and John Purcell, "The Europeanization of manufacturing and the decentralization of bargaining: multinational management strategies in the European automobile industry," *International Journal of Human Resource Management* 3, Iss. 1 (1992), pp. 15-34.

[114] Steve Williams, Harriet Bradley, Ranji Devadason, and Mark Erickson, *Globalization and Work* (Cambridge and Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2013), pp. 86-88.

[115] Ibid., p. 65.

work on a global scale. Thus, the discussion that follows concerning wealth and income inequality in the United States, the deskilling of labor processes, and employment insecurity should be read in light of this global advantage of corporate and capital interests over and against the labor force.

Income and Wealth Disparity and Disappearing Benefits

At present the United States has reached levels of income and wealth inequality that have not been seen in this country since the early part of the twentieth century. This trend has been steadily getting worse since the 1980s, with growth in incomes skyrocketing for the top one percent of earners in the last decade. In his recent work *The Price of Inequality* Joseph Stieglitz documents this rise in disparity with a dizzying array of statistics. In the years between 2002 and 2007, after the tech bubble burst and in the run-up to the latest economic crisis, the top one percent of earners grabbed 65% of the total growth in national income.[116] By 2007 these earners in the top one percentile were making in one week forty percent more than those in the lowest twenty percent would make in a full year in *after tax income*, with total annual earnings averaging $1.3 million compared to the $17,800 of the bottom twenty percent.[117] While the lowest earners have been getting worse off, both in terms of income and in terms of quality of life (owing, e.g., to shrinking social insurance programs), middle income earners have seen wages largely stagnate over the last thirty years. In sum, Stieglitz notes, "…over the last three decades those with low wages (in the bottom 90 percent) have seen a growth of only around 15 percent in their wages, while those in the top 1 percent have seen in increase of

[116] Joseph Stieglitz, *The Price of Inequality* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2012), p. 2
[117] Ibid., p. 4.

almost 150 percent and the top 0.1 percent of more than 300 percent."[118] These trends were only further exacerbated with the latest economic crisis with the top one percent grabbing 93% of additional income created in the "recovery" in 2010.[119]

Much of this inequality has been fueled by sharp increases in CEO pay and a privileging of capital gains income in the tax code. Stieglitz notes that in 2010 the average CEO pay in the United States was 243 times that of the average worker[120] while some estimates have placed the ratio as high as 373:1 for 2014.[121] One factor contributing to these increases in pay is the increase in stock options offered to CEOs, which has itself been fueled by a steady decrease in capital gains tax, which reached its lowest point ever at 15% under President George W. Bush. While contributing to increasing CEO pay this trend, has also contributed to overall increases in the wealth gap, with most Americans lacking the excess capital necessary to take advantage of capital gains. While middle class Americans held most of their wealth in their homes, much of which was decimated by the sub-prime lending crisis, wealthy Americans saw their losses in wealth bounce back rapidly, with the stock market recovering at a much faster rate than the housing market. Thus, on top of the growing income gap the overall wealth gap has increased, with the top one percent owning 225 times the wealth of the typical American, virtually twice the wealth gap in 1962 and even 1983.[122]

The privileging of capital gains income in the US tax code has perversely incentivized corporate practices detrimental to the average worker. This particular policy

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[118] Ibid., p. 8.
[119] Ibid., p. 3.
[120] Ibid.
[121] See for instance the AFL-CIO sponsored webpage www.paywatch.org, accessed February 8, 2016.
[122] Stieglitz, p. 8.

decision has contributed to an economy in which the rewards of our collective economic effort increasingly accrue to those who possess *wealth* rather than those who *work* for pay. The practice of increasingly tying CEO pay to stock options has ensured the joining of economic interests among CEOs and the shareholders who possess such wealth. In such a scenario the rewards for work and the overall quality of life provided by work take a back seat to an uptick in stock values.

In *White Collar Sweatshop* Jill Adresky Fraser documents a shift in corporate culture from the 1980s through the 1990s as business models increasingly upped CEO pay and emphasized gains (often short term and illusory gains at that) in a company's stock prices.[123] As more and more companies became publicly traded entities and as capital gains taxes were lowered, increasing emphasis was placed on returns in capital investment and an uptick in a company's stock prices. This resulted in a corporate culture obsessed with mergers, organizational "reengineering", and cost cutting, even as companies' profits were increasing. With the largest overall cost of company operation being its payroll costs, it is not surprising that employee compensation and benefit packages would be the largest targets of such cost cutting measures. Andresky Fraser documents a trend of squeezing more and more out of fewer and fewer employees in the midst of stagnating wages, regular lay-offs, increases in the contingent (viz., without benefits) labor force, and shrinking vacation, health care, and retirement benefits for remaining full-time employees.[124] Often simply the announcement of plans to undertake such cost saving measures can result in sharp, short-term gains in a company's stock

[123] Jill Andresky Fraser, *White Collar Sweatshop: The Deterioration of Work and Its Rewards in Corporate America* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2001).
[124] See especially pp. 41-42, 49-50, and Chapter 3 on shrinking benefit packages.

prices, thus highly incentivizing such practices for CEOs, whose pay is increasingly tied to stock options.

While the very top income brackets are doing exceedingly well and middle income earners are seeing wages stagnate and other quality of life benefits and programs shrinking, lower income earners and the unemployed find themselves in increasingly worsening conditions. Wages for the lowest twenty percent of earners have gone backwards relative to inflation in recent years as the outsourcing of manufacturing jobs and the influx of large amounts of American workers into low paid service sector jobs has put significant downward pressure on wages.[125] At last count the official poverty rate in the United States had reached 14.8% with 21.1% of the nation's children living in poverty. A total of 46.7 million persons were living below the official poverty line at the time the U.S. Census Bureau tabulated the statistics for 2014.[126] This number, however, almost certainly downplays the full number of persons living with significant economic insecurity and unable to meet basic needs. As feminist economists Drucilla K. Barker and Susan F. Feiner have noted, the official poverty rate is calculated using an outdated formula devised in the 1960s when a family's food and housing budget each made up one-third of their overall spending in order to meet very basic needs.[127] These numbers are misleading, both because sufficient housing now takes up about half of a family's monthly budget, and because they do not adjust for regional differences in the cost of living.

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[125] Stieglitz, pp. 54, 63.
[126] See the statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau here: https://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/incpovhlth/2014/highlights.html, accessed February 8, 2016.
[127] Drucilla K. Barker and Susan F. Feiner, *Liberating Economics: Feminist Perspectives on Family Work and Globalization* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2004), p. 82.

The Economic Policy Institute has attempted to devise a more adequate way to measure the number of economically insecure households in the U.S. by measuring household income against what they have called the "basic family budget." This budget calculates costs of housing, childcare, healthcare, food, transportation and taxes, while factoring in adjustments for government benefits received such as food stamps.[128] The latest report devised by the Economic Policy Institute based on the basic family budget approach took place in 2008, several years before the latest uptick in official poverty numbers. This report found that on average meeting a basic standard of living in the U.S. required a family of four to possess a household income of $48,778 and that nearly one-third of households lived below that mark at the time of the study.[129] Since 2007 the median household income has dropped eight percent to $50,054 in 2012, putting the average American household on the edge of slipping below this basic standard of living.[130]

While the overall numbers regarding income and wealth inequality are bad in themselves, the situation is exacerbated when one isolates inequality across gender and racial lines. For instance, according to the Federal Reserve Board's latest published *Survey of Consumer Finances* the median household income of non-white families in 2013 was a mere 60% the median income of white families.[131] Data from the 2012 census reveals that African Americans and Hispanics are far more likely to be living in

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[128] Ibid., p.84.
[129] Jared Bernstein and James Lin, "What We Need to Get By," *Economic Policy Institute,* October 29, 2008, accessed on March 27, 2013, http://www.epi.org/publication/bp224/.
[130] Barbara Tavernise, "U.S. Income Gap Rose, Sign of Uneven Recovery," *The New York Times,* September 12, 2012, accessed on March 27, 2013, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/13/us/us-incomes-dropped-last-year-census-bureau-says.html.
[131] The results of this survey with respect to race are summarized at http://inequality.org/racial-inequality/, accessed March 9, 2016. This survey is conducted every three years. The results of the 2016 survey have yet to be published.

poverty than their white counterparts. While 9.7% of non-Hispanic whites lived below the official poverty line in 2012, over a quarter of Hispanics and 27.2% of African Americans lived below this mark.[132] Lastly, in the wake of the financial collapse of 2007 the Pew Research Council published a study documenting the historic wealth gap between white, African American, and Hispanic families. At the time the study was published in 2009 the median net worth of white families was twenty times that of African American families and nearly eighteen times that of Hispanic families.[133]

The gender gap in income in the United States has also been well documented. Recent studies have shown that women working full-time currently earn 77 cents for every dollar earned by men,[134] while the overall gap in median earnings including both part-time and full-time workers currently stands between 81-84 cents to the dollar.[135] While this gap has narrowed from the 64 cents on the dollar women earned in 1980, this closing of the pay gap has resulted as much from the stagnation in the earnings of low and middle earning males discussed above as it has from significant gains made by women in the workplace. Additionally, the narrowing of the pay gap reached its apex in 2002 and has remained steady over the last decade or so.

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[132] A brief summary of these findings was published by the National Center for Law and Economic Justice and can be found here http://www.nclej.org/poverty-in-the-us.php, accessed May 30, 2014.

[133] Rakesh Kochhar, Richard Fry, and Paul Taylor, "Wealth Gaps Rise to Record Highs between Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics," *Pew Research Center: Social and Demographic Trends,* July 26, 2011, accessed May 30, 2014, http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2011/07/26/wealth-gaps-rise-to-record-highs-between-whites-blacks-hispanics/.

[134] See "The Simple Truth About the Gender Pay Gap: 2014 Edition", annual report published March 10, 2014 by the American Association of University Women, accessed June 4, 2014, http://www.aauw.org/research/the-simple-truth-about-the-gender-pay-gap.

[135] See for instance the difference in the numbers reported in October of 2012 by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics and those reported in December by the Pew Research Center discussed here, Kochhar, Rakesh, "How Pew Research Measured the Gender Pay Gap," *Pew Research Center: Fact Tank,* December 11, 2013, accessed June 4, 2014, http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/12/11/how-pew-research-measured-the-gender-pay-gap/.

The pay gap between genders is driven by several factors, and how one understands these factors plays a big role in how one evaluates the reality of lower earnings for female workers. The first factor is the relative segregation of occupations that continues to exist in the US labor force. As the American Association of University Women (AAUW) notes in its recent study entitled "The Simple Truth About the Gender Pay Gap: 2014 Edition":

> Nearly 40 percent of working women were employed in in traditionally female occupations such as social work, nursing, and teaching. In contrast, fewer than 5 percent of men worked in these jobs. Forty-five percent of working men were in traditionally male occupations, such as computer programming, aerospace engineering and firefighting, compared with just under 6 percent of women in those jobs.[136]

Some have been tempted to explain away the gender wage gap by citing these simple differences in career choices between men and women. However, the rationale behind this line of argument fails to address the social and cultural reasons behind these gendered differences in career paths or why it is that those fields dominated by women tend to pull a lesser wage. In addition the gender wage gap affects pay *within* distinct employment sectors as well as across sectors. In fields predominately occupied by women, in fields predominately occupied by men, as well as in gender-neutral fields, women continue to make less than their male counterparts occupying the same jobs.[137]

The second major factor driving inequality of pay between genders is the uneven impact of family life on the earning potential of women. Studies have consistently shown that persons who take advantage of paid leave in whatever form, even within the approved bounds of company policies, are less likely to be promoted, receive poorer remarks on job evaluations and receive lower pay increases than those who do not take

[136] "The Simple Truth," p. 17.
[137] Ibid., p. 18.

sick, vacation, or family leave.[138] As women are far more likely to take leave upon the birth of a child or to tend to a sick child than men, they are disproportionately affected by this trend penalizing leave takers. Various international studies have documented the wage penalty suffered by women after taking maternity leave. In the US women experience a 5%-7% decrease in future earning potential per child while an Australian study found an average wage penalty of 12% three years after returning to work.[139]

Additionally, women are far more likely than men to leave the workforce altogether or to drop down to part-time employment after becoming a parent. As the AAUW notes in the above-mentioned study, ten years after graduating college 23 percent of mothers left the workforce while 17 percent dropped to part-time. By comparison only 1 percent of fathers left the workforce with only 2 percent dropping to part-time work.[140] Finally, as mothers attempt to re-enter the full time workforce they often face what sociologists Shelley J. Correll and Stephen Bernard have termed a "motherhood penalty." Their study entitled "Getting a job: Is there a motherhood penalty?", notes that mothers are less likely to receive a job offer than women without children, and when offered a job receive lower pay than their counterparts without children. Fathers, on the other hand, faced no measurable discrepancy in comparison with childless men.[141] Again, one cannot simply explain away the gender pay gap by pointing to a woman's decision to have children. Such an assertion simply begs the question why it is that women's work outside

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[138] Reich, pp. 262-63.
[139] Michelle J. Budig and Paula England, "The Wage Penalty for Motherhood," *American Sociological Review* 66, No. 2 (April 2001), pp. 204-225; David Baker, "Maternity Leave and Reduced Future Earning Capacity," *Family Matters* 89 (2001), pp. 82-89.
[140] "The Simple Truth," p. 11.
[141] Shelley J. Correll and Stephen Bendard, "Getting a job: Is there a motherhood penalty?" *American Journal of Sociology* 112 No. 5 (March 2007), pp. 1297-1338.

the home is disproportionately affected by the presence of children when compared to the work of men.

As I have attempted to show here, one cannot account for the inequalities in the material rewards of work by simple appeal to the natural forces of the market. The market simply does not function as a neutral site for one's immediate access to work and wages as traditional arguments regarding the "fair market value" of labor suppose. The world of work and its rewards (or lack thereof) is shaped by a host of social and political factors for which human actors can and must take responsibility. The picture painted by these numbers and trends demonstrates an economy in which the wealth and capital accumulation of the privileged few is more highly valued than the contributions of regular workers. As workers are threatened by layoffs, by the prospect of replacement by cheaper labor abroad and at home in the form of younger and contingent labor, they are pressured to work harder and longer for less. Such economic conditions have increased the number of workers struggling to make a livable wage. As the cost cutting craze that hit U.S. business in the 1980s and 1990s has reached increasingly into our politics under the guise of governmental austerity, the average U.S. worker has been hit by the double whammy of stagnating or decreasing wages and decreasing benefits from work coupled with decreases in the social safety net and public services. These trends have allowed the nation's highest earners to extract a higher percentage of profits on the business side, while paying less in taxes on the public side. These conditions threaten to ossify existing economic inequalities with social mobility for those at the lowest levels of wealth and income virtually non-existent.[142]

[142] Stiglitz, pp. 18-19.

The Deskilled Workplace and the Unequal Spread of the Benefits of Technology

Worry about the effects of deskilled work on the work force goes back to the earliest reflections on capitalism. Even while extolling the virtues of the division of labor Adam Smith found himself admitting that the repetition of a simple task that would come to characterize the work of those in the emerging assembly lines and factories would have stupefying effects on the worker. As Smith famously remarked in *Wealth of Nations*:

> The man whose whole life is spent in performing a few simple operations, of which the effects are perhaps always the same, or very nearly the same, has no occasion to exert his understanding or to exercise his invention in finding out expedients for removing difficulties which never occur. He naturally loses, therefore, the habit of such exertion, and generally becomes as stupid and ignorant as it is possible for a human creature to become.[143]

While Smith saw the effects of deskilling on the workforce as a potential moral hazard (albeit a necessary one), such effects would soon come to be viewed as one of the many virtues of the new mode of production. As Braverman demonstrated in his now classic work *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, by the mid-nineteenth century economic theorists praised the deskilling process for its effects in driving down the costs of production, meaning, of course, the wages offered to laborers.[144] When Frederick Winslow Taylor pioneered the field of scientific management, he made the routinization and deskilling of tasks completed by the average worker the chief end of the management techniques he espoused. The cluster of management dogmas that sprung from Taylor's work has often been dubbed "Taylorism." His *Principles of Scientific Management* argued that predictability, efficiency, and cost saving in the work place requires the concentration of knowledge in labor processes and technologies in the hands of only a few managers. As he argues, "The managers assume…the burden of gathering together all of the traditional

[143] Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations,* Book 5, Ch. 1, Part III.
[144] Braverman, p. 55.

knowledge which in the past has been possessed by the workmen and then of classifying, tabulating, and reducing this knowledge to rules, laws, and formulae."[145] Elsewhere he states this goal with perhaps even less elegance noting, "All possible brain work should be removed from the shop and centered in the planning or laying-out department."[146] Thus the traditional skills, knowledge and thought processes associated with craft production are to be stripped from the worker on the shop floor who now becomes subject to the "rules, laws, and formulae" of an engineered work "process" of which she knows very little, and in which she has no input. By stratifying the "brainwork" in the hands of only a few managers, these techniques undercut the perceived value of the input coming from the majority of workers, thus justifying their poor wages.

According to Taylor one can only be said to complete a fair day's work once one has given the physiologically maximal output that can be repeated day in and day out over the life of the worker.[147] Anything less than maximum output meant that the worker was either being irresponsible to his employer or management was not properly utilizing his potential output. These designs on extracting the physiological maximum from workers on the shop floor led Taylor to engage in intricate study of the time it took each worker to complete a single step in the production process. By breaking the production process down into its component parts and attempting to discover the minimum amount of time each component could take, Taylor hoped to achieve the highest degree of efficient control over the labor process. However, as technologies improved and as the

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[145] Frederick Winslow Taylor, *Principles of Scientific Management* (New York and London: Harper Brothers, 1915), p. 36. Quoted from Matthew B. Crawford, *Shop Class as Soulcraft: An Inquiry into the Value of Work* (New York: Penguin Books, 2009), p. 39.
[146] Frederick Winslow Taylor, *Shop Management* (New York and London: Harper Brothers, 1912), pp. 98-99. Quoted from Crawford, p. 39.
[147] Braverman, p. 67.

field of scientific management continued to develop, Taylor's relatively gross mechanism for measuring time in terms of a single event in the production process gave way to the more precise field of motion and time studies.[148] In motion and time study every single movement of the body is analyzed to discover if there might be the slightest amount of "wasted" time, and thus wasted profit, in the operations performed by the worker. Standing, grasping, bending, walking and every imaginable movement of the body comes to be understood in machine-like terms, reducing the worker herself to simply another instrument in the production process. The goal of this process of study is to assign to each movement an average time for completion that becomes the new "objective" and "scientific" standard enforced upon individual workers.[149] This attempt to manage and engineer work processes down to the millisecond seeks to squeeze out as much thought, agency, and variation among individual workers as possible. While born in the factory, motion and time studies were eventually applied to white-collar office work as well, with standards being set for instance for the amount of time it should take to swivel one's chair, close a desk drawer, or hit a single key on the keyboard.[150]

Braverman argues that in separating purposeful action from the labor process and removing control of the labor process from the hands of those performing the work, these management practices ultimately dehumanized work and increased the alienation of the worker from her task. Additionally, and importantly for our purposes, Braverman argues that the increases in productivity that resulted from the use of technology in the labor process, as well as the increase in knowledge that accompanied technological advancement, were not shared equally across those who participated in work processes.

[148] Ibid., p. 121.
[149] Ibid., p. 123.
[150] Ibid., pp. 221-24.

Instead, knowledge and income became increasingly stratified. Instead of decreasing the amount of time spent at work by the average worker, increases in production led to the displacement of workers into other sectors creating a surplus of laborers for such low skilled work that kept wages down. Under more equitable conditions of production, Braverman argues, all those involved in the labor process could be trained to understand the process and technology involved, would have a say in the organization of the process and would benefit from the increases in productivity through decreases in the length of the work day and/or increases in pay. In other words, the deskilling of labor that often attends increases in technology is not a natural product of the use of technology in work, but rather the result of a particular way of imagining the purpose of work as fundamentally oriented toward the maximizing of profits for those who control the labor process itself.[151]

With the growth of large-scale production industries came the increase in large technical and office staffing needed to fill the engineering and business needs of such companies. As these fields grew, this expanding "white-collar" employment base also became subject to the rationalization of scientific management. Even in what had been a high-skill field such as engineering, this process of rationalization reduced the engineering process to its components parts, creating a new subclass of engineers known as "technicians" who performed rote engineering operations in support of a larger whole overseen by a managing engineer. This, of course, had the effect of driving down the salaries of those involved in the engineering process.[152] Braverman documents this same tendency in the growing classes of clerical and retail workers largely made up of women,

[151] Ibid., p. 159.
[152] Ibid.,p. 168-69.

who began entering the workforce with increasing rapidity at mid-century. Operations that had once been performed by a clerk or bookkeeper are also broken down with the stenographer, copyist, and customer service correspondent increasingly subject to the reproduction of canned and pre-formulated responses.[153] The clerical worker becomes the in-office equivalent of the detail worker in the assembly line, as the knowledge work of the bookkeeper is transformed into the mechanical operations of the paper pusher.

Writing in 1974 Braverman was only able to glimpse the full impact that computers would have on white-collar work. Even at this early stage, however, he could detect the elimination of large segments of "brain work" now "mechanized" in emerging data systems and computer operations, with each level of computer interaction increasing the stratification of skilled and low-skilled office work. Describing this process, Braverman writes:

> Each aspect of computer operations was graded to the different level of pay frozen into a hierarchy: systems managers, systems analysts, programmers, computer console operators, key punch operators, tape librarians, stock room attendants, etc….And the concentration of knowledge and control in a very small portion of the hierarchy became the key here, as with automatic machines in the factory, to control over the process.[154]

At the time of his writing Braverman could not foresee the explosion in the use of computer technology that would take place over the next few decades, or the increased potential for surveillance and control over work processes that would result from this explosion.

In reading Braverman's accounts of scientific management, motion and time studies and the ultimate removal of thought and skill from work, one almost feels as if one is reading a kind of mid-century dystopian science fiction rather than a realistic look

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[153] Ibid., p. 217.
[154] Ibid., p. 227.

at present and future trends in the organization of work. Yet a host of examples from the contemporary world of work demonstrates how the rationalizing, industrializing, and ultimate deskilling of human work has only increased in the present time and threatens to overtake work once requiring high degrees of skill and individual decision making. Authors such as Jill Andresky Fraser, Mathew Crawford, and Simon Head have documented the "technology based re-engineering" of white-collar work, with its cognitive stratification and removal of decision-making from the hands of the average office worker.[155] Andresky Fraser notes in particular the customer service representatives for American Airlines whose recorded conversations have been broken down into a pre-scripted "set of interchangeable conversation modules for each segment" of a given class of customer requests.[156]

In his work entitled *The New Ruthless Economy: Work and Power in the Digital Age* Head documents how this kind of "digital assembly line work" has sprung out of software engineering specifically intended to subject potentially endless fields of work to the kind of routinization and acceleration of work processes first imagined over a century ago by Taylor. Where Taylor sought to separate the head from the hand by imposing strict physical routines on shop workers, computer software is now capable of replacing human thought in a vast number of fields by utilizing complex "decision-making algorithms" to direct workers to a prescribed set of outcomes or customer interactions. Head gives particular attention to the ways in which something as intricate and intimate as the delivery of healthcare has become subject to this digital industrialization. While noting key technological innovations that have helped to improve the delivery of

[155] Andresky Fraser, p. 84. See also Crawford, p. 47.
[156] Ibid.

healthcare, Head laments that "medical reengineers have also developed technologies that circumscribe the physicians expertise and subject him or her to industrial discipline."[157] Detailing these technologies Head writes:

> Databases incorporating decision-making algorithms 'decide' on the proper length of a patient's hospital stay, set out the appropriate length of time for a physician to spend with his or her patient, and rule on the treatments that patients should or should not receive. There are also software systems that set targets for each physician's 'clinical productivity' and then monitor whether physicians are meeting their goals.[158]

To the long list of problems plaguing the current for-profit model of health care delivery, we can now add the incremental removal of the doctor's human input into the personalized care of individual patients.

As the above example notes, increases in technology have also advanced the cause of managerial surveillance and worker discipline. Now that virtually every worker is attached to machines and computers, a vast amount of data can be collected regarding each worker's movements and output, thus further enhancing the disciplinary aims first set out in motion and time studies. In a more recent work Head documents the massive investment that took place at the turn of the century in computer business systems software. Intended to monitor work processes, pointing out inefficiencies and doling out corrective measures, this kind of software accounted for 75% of US corporate IT investment in 2001.[159] Computer business systems software has been utilized to particularly ruthless effect by retail giant Amazon.com whose labor practices extend

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[157] Simon Head, *The New Ruthless Economy: Work and Power in the Digital Age* (Oxford: OUP, 2003), p. 9.
[158] Ibidem.
[159] Simon Head, *Mindless: Why Smarter Machines are Making Dumber Humans* (New York: Basic Books, 2014), p. 4.

scientific management to its logical extreme and embody many of the worst characteristics of today's world of work.

Amazon prides itself on being able to deliver products to consumers at deep discounts and at lighting speed. This mission, often couched in the language of care and concern for the customer, requires a minimizing of overhead costs associated with labor and a maximizing of worker output inside Amazon's massive fulfillment centers. Amazon achieves the former in part by employing large numbers of temporary, non-benefit pulling employees and by maintaining high turnover rates that keep workers from climbing the wage ladder.[160] The high turnover rates are also a function of Amazon's brutal program of worker surveillance and work process discipline intended to maximize efficiency. Upon entering the warehouse employees are tagged with a personal "sat-nav" device that tracks every move the worker makes. The device not only monitors one's movements but also directs the worker on his or her route through the warehouse and tells the worker how long it should take to travel this route. If one varies from the route or takes too much time the device notifies a manager of this underperformance who might send a text message to the worker instructing her to pick up the pace. Head notes one worker in particular who "received a warning message from her manager, saying that she had been found unproductive during several *minutes* of her shift, and she was eventually fired."[161]

This employee tagging system also allows Amazon to track with complete precision the number of units each employee moves or packs. Workers at every stage in

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[160] Lisa Mahapatra, "Amazon.com Has Second Highest Employee Turnover of All Fortune 500 Companies," *International Business Times*, July 26, 2013, accessed June 11, 2014, www.ibtimes.com/amazoncom-has-second-highest-employee-turnover-all-fortune-500-companies-1361257.

[161] Head, *Mindless,* p. 40.

the distribution process from receiving and unpacking to picking, packing, and shipping are given hourly output targets they are expected to meet. Employees who fall behind the pace are reprimanded and regularly fired. While Amazon does not make the precise quotas they enforce public, employees and undercover researchers have documented quotas that are well above industry standard and often physically impossible to maintain. One researcher working on the floor at an Amazon fulfillment center in California reported to *International Business Times* that he and his co-workers were expected to pack 240 boxes per hour while one manager conceded that the industry standard is around 150.[162] Other employees document how Amazon will begin a worker or group of workers with lower quotas that steadily increase the longer they work in the warehouse, often doubling within six months time. Head notes in particular the experiences of several employees who worked at an Amazon center in Allentown, PA. One group of workers on the receiving line were initially required to move 250 units per hour. This number unexpectedly doubled at the six-month mark to 500. While the interviewee noted that he was able to make the pace, many of the older employees on his line were not and were fired as a result. Another employee working as a "picker" noted the same trend. Describing his experience Head writes:

> He would walk thirteen to fifteen miles daily. He was told he had to pick 1,200 items in a ten-hour shift, or 1 item every thirty seconds. He had to get down on his hands and knees 250 to 300 times a day to do this. He got written up for not working fast enough, and when he was fired only three of the one hundred temporary workers hired with him had survived.[163]

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[162] Angelo Young, "Amazon.com's Workers Are Low-Paid, Overworked and Unhappy; Is This the New Employee Model for the Internet Age?," *International Business Times,* December 19, 2013, accessed June 17, 2014, www.ibtimes.com/amazoncoms-workers-are-low-paid-overworked-unhappy-new-employee-model-internet-age-1514780.

[163] Head, *Mindless,* p. 42.

The dizzying and often inhumane pace at which Amazon expects its employees to work was highlighted most astonishingly when calls from the Allentown fulfillment center "to the local ambulance service became so frequent that for five hot days in June and July, ambulances and paramedics were stationed all day at the depot" in order to treat employees stricken with heat exhaustion.[164] The precision with which Amazon monitors and enforces its carefully engineered receiving and distribution processes demonstrates that Taylor's program of scientific management with its routinizing, acceleration, and surveillance of work is not only alive and well but is taking on new extremes with each new technological advance.

On top of those jobs whose operations have been rendered rote and have become subject to technological surveillance, Andresky Fraser also notes those forms of skilled work that have been rendered obsolete by technological advancement. As she writes, "Accountants, financial planners, and financial consultants are increasingly getting replaced by sophisticated software packages; stockbrokers are losing customers to electronic trading programs; and robots have even begun to plug in for pharmacists."[165] Indeed, the potential for advances in computer and robotic technology to increase the obsolescence of human work is extending into virtually every field from university professors with the expansion in offerings of online courses with pre-recorded lectures to industrial manufacturing with the recent development of the highly capable, highly customizable, and relatively inexpensive robot known as Baxter.[166]

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[164] Ibid., p. 44.
[165] Andresky Fraser, p. 86.
[166] For a description of Baxter see Devin Coldewey, "Baxter: An Industrial Robot That Anyone Can Use," *NBC News,* accessed March 29, 2013, http://www.nbcnews.com/technology/futureoftech/baxter-industrial-robot-anyone-can-use-1B6016162.

While it has long been argued that advances in technology and increases in overall productivity would bring with them a reduction in working hours and overall rise in the need for skilled workers to attend to the new technologies,[167] the current social organization of labor has mitigated against these promises. By viewing work almost entirely in terms of one cost among others in the production of profit, our particular form of economic life has favored increasing levels of concentration in skilled work in order to reduce the number of more expensive employees, and the maximizing of individual output through surveillance and discipline in order to reduce the total number of persons employed. Thus, the social benefits of technological advance increasingly accrue to those who control the profits that result from the labor process, while the average worker finds herself subject to degrading working conditions. With the implementation of new technologies and work process, re-engineering the productive output of the individual worker has never been higher. Yet despite steady increases in individual output, wages have remained largely stagnant over the last thirty to forty years, driving what has been termed the "compensation-productivity gap."[168] Here there is a strong connection between the technological re-engineering of work and the growth in income and wealth inequality discussed above. In its 2012/13 wage report the International Labor Organization summarizes this trend as follows:

> In the United States, real hourly labour productivity in the non-farm business sector increased by about 85 per cent since 1980, while real hourly compensation increased by only around 35 per cent. In Germany, labour

[167] Regarding the former see for instance the rather utopian reflections of John Meynard Keynes in his tract from 1930 entitled "Economic Possibilities for our Grandchildren" in which he predicted that technology driven increases in productivity would result in a three-hour work day for the average worker. Regarding the later see Peter Drucker, *Post-Capitalist Society* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993).

[168] Susan Fleck, John Glaser, and Shown Sprague, "The Compensation-Productivity Gap: A Visual Essay," *Monthly Labor Review,* January 2011, pp. 57-69.

> productivity surged by almost a quarter over the past two decades while real monthly wages remained flat….Even in China, a country where wages roughly tripled over the last decade, GDP increased at a faster rate than the total wage bill-and hence the labour share went down.[169]

In addition to stagnating wages and the removal of creative agency and skill development in one's work, the current organization of today's labor force has created the twin dynamic of overwork at one end of the spectrum and prolonged periods of underemployment or unemployment at the other. To this twin dynamic we now turn.

The Overworked and the Underemployed

Modern management techniques have sought to separate the head from the hand, thinking from doing, in an effort to increase efficiency and control over the labor process. This has resulted in the widespread suppression of skill development among workers in both blue-collar and white-collar professions. The mandates of efficiency and profit maximization that drive this management strategy have also created another set of extremes in the modern workforce, as work in the U.S. in particular is increasingly characterized by overwork on one end and underemployment on the other.

On the top end Reich notes that at the turn of the century the average adult worker in the U.S. was working 2,000 hours per year, roughly two full work weeks longer than the average in 1980. The number of hours worked for pay by the average American household went up to 3,918 hours or seven working weeks more than the average in households in 1980, an increase fueled largely by the flood of women into the paid workforce in the intervening decades.[170] Andresky Fraser notes that 12 percent of the workforce reported spending 49 to 59 hours a week at the office while another 8.5

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[169] ILO, *Global Wage Report 2012/13: Wages and Equitable Growth*, (Geneva: December 7, 2012), pp.vi-vii.
[170] Reich, pp. 111-12.

percent recorded spending over 60 hours a week in the office.[171] These officially surveyed numbers likely underestimate the degree to which work is coming to dominate the lives of workers as advances in technology increasingly break down the barrier between the office and home life, with more and more workers recording working on evenings, during commutes, weekends, and even vacations.[172]

This trend is fueled by several tendencies in the contemporary world of work. First, stagnating wages have necessitated that workers make up for losses in the relative purchasing power of their paychecks by logging more hours. Women especially have had to increase their paid work in order to prop up family incomes stunted by stagnating and often decreasing pay drawn by middle class and blue-collar men.[173] Second, the merger and corporate restructuring craze of the 1980s and 1990s that focused on cost-control and brought about regular layoffs left remaining employees to pick up the work of dismissed co-workers. The fear of job loss has also incentivized overwork, as employees seek to prove their indispensability to the company in order to ensure job security.[174] Finally, as a 1999 study has shown, in the new economy of fast paced innovation and changing markets those who mark out more time for family life and take advantage of paid time off are less likely to receive promotions and more responsibility at work while becoming more likely to receive a negative performance review, even when the time taken away from work falls within the officially recognized bounds of company policies.[175]

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[171] Andresky Fraser, p. 20.
[172] For a summary on the extent of such "job spill see" Ibid., pp. 76-81. See also Reich, p. 117.
[173] Reich., p. 120.
[174] Andresky Fraser, pp. 32 and 35.
[175] Reich, p. 262 (see end note 25).

While many see their work commitments taking over more and more of their lives others in today's world of work suffer from long periods of unemployment and underemployment. The above-mentioned corporate layoffs of the 1980s and 1990s created a significant class of downwardly mobile unemployed workers. From 1984 to 2000 Department of Labor Surveys found that only about half of these displaced workers were able to find full time work promptly after being laid off. These surveys also found that earnings among such displaced workers declined by an average of 9.5 percent when they were able to find work.[176] The latest recession has confirmed that unemployment tends to reinforce itself with the long term unemployed finding it far more difficult to secure work. The unfortunate luck of experiencing a period of unemployment has more than just short-term effects but impacts the long term earning potential of those affected.[177] Additionally, those entering the work force for the first time during a period of elevated unemployment will find their lifelong career potential stunted by macroeconomic forces entirely out of their control.[178] The boom and bust cycles of the global economy throughout the 20th and into the 21st century have impacted the working lives of countless individuals, many of whom never fully recover from periods of prolonged unemployment.

These trends, as with trends regarding the wage and wealth gap, have had a much more severe impact on racial minorities when compared to the general population. For instance, the lagging recovery of the labor market in 2010 left the African American

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[176] Andresky Fraser, pp. 54-55.
[177] See for instance Matthew O'Brien, "Forget the Good Jobs Report, Long-Term Unemployment is Still Terrifying," *The Atlantic,* March 8, 2013, accessed March 29, 2013, http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2013/03/forget-the-good-jobs-report-long-term-unemployment-is-still-terrifying/273859/.
[178] Stiglitz, p. 12.

workforce with nearly twice the rate of unemployment when compared to their white counterparts.[179] Black men and women saw an average unemployment rate of 18.4 percent and 13.8 percent respectively compared to 9.6 percent average for white men and 7.7 percent for white women. Hispanic men and women also saw higher rates of unemployment, coming in at 12.7 percent and 12.3 percent respectively. This trend has been stable for the past fifty years, with black Americans experiencing an average rate of unemployment at 11.6 percent between 1963 and 2012 and their white counterparts averaging 5.1 percent. In fact, the average unemployment rate for the United States during periods of economic recession over these years was 6.7 percent, meaning that black Americans have essentially been locked in an everyday employment scenario that is *worse* than a permanent state of recession.[180]

While data related to cycles of unemployment in general and regularly high levels of unemployment among minority populations are troubling on their face, the poor performance of the economy in terms of providing stable and rewarding employment is likely far worse than official unemployment numbers will suggest. For instance, these numbers fail to take account of those who have simply stopped looking for work or have returned to school due to lack of work (no doubt incurring significant student debt), those currently working part time who are seeking full time work, as well as those in temporary or otherwise insecure employment. Stiglitz also notes that the high level of incarceration in the United States, which once again disproportionately impacts racial minorities, also

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[179] For a summary of this data see the Bureau of Labor Statistics report "Unemployment rates by race and ethnicity, 2010," October 5, 2011, accessed June 18, 2014, http://ww.bls.gov.opub/ted/2011/ted_20111005.htm.

[180] Algernon Austin, "50 years of recessionary-level unemployment in black America," *Economic Policy Institute*, June 19, 2013, accessed June 18, 2014, http://www.epi.org/publication/50-years-recessionary-level-unemployment/.

hides the full impact of unemployment in the official numbers.[181] If all of these factors were taken into account the staggering underperformance of the economy in producing anything near full employment would be brought into fuller relief.

Globalization and the Race to the Bottom

In this chapter I have chosen to focus on trends mostly within the US economy. This choice has placed limits on the scope of my inquiry that may seem inadequate to some. However, this decision is intended to serve several strategic and rhetorical goals. First (and on a most practical level), the limited space available in this work for an analysis of empirical economic realities requires some such narrowing to a contextually specific set of data. Second, the descriptions included here are not meant to be exhaustive in scope but rather illustrative of the constellation of problems that arise when work is treated primarily in terms of contract and commodity exchange and when waged work is the only real means by which people can gain access to life's necessities. Third, if the pathologies of work discussed in this chapter persist within the world's largest and most prosperous economy, one can reasonably expect that these problems will only be worse for populations in poorer countries. The desperate situation of many of the world's poor in weak economies across the globe diminishes their bargaining power for fairer wages and working conditions, rendering them even more vulnerable to exploitation than workers in the United States. Finally, the sheer power of the United States and of multinational firms based in the United States to influence the global economy makes the policy preferences and economic trends within the United States itself relevant to the global population at large.

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[181] Stiglitz., p. 15.

However, this chapter would remain incomplete without at least some discussion of the effects of globalization on work in the contemporary world. While the reality of globalization is far too complex an issue to be adequately covered in detail here it is nevertheless important to note how the above trends in the US are both impacted by and are impacting the conditions of work on a global scale. Before jumping into the discussion, however, one needs to recognize that globalization is not just one thing. There are many facets to the ways in which the populations of the globe are growing more interconnected through trade and the exchange of ideas and technologies. The organization of large NGOs focused on relief and development, the use of new life saving medical and agricultural innovations in the far reaches of the globe, the rapid spread of information regarding global events, as well as the ability of Apple, Inc. to exploit sweatshop conditions in China to produce its products are all components of what it means to live in a globalized world. One should not only recognize both the beneficial and troubling aspects inherent in globalization, but one should recognize that there is more than one way to imagine the possible shape of global trade and interconnectedness.

Yet while it is perhaps possible to imagine various configurations of globalization that could benefit much of the world's working population, those controlling the shape of global commerce and finance have persistently maintained an ideological single-mindedness bent on the rapid deregulation of markets in both goods and capital. Adopting a cocktail of policy prescriptions dubbed by many as the "Washington Consensus," global institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization have vigorously pursued this neo-liberal vision of

globalization.[182] Characterized by the privatizing of state run enterprises, fiscal austerity and the dismantling of social safety nets, the rapid exposure of local markets to global competition through trade liberalization, and the removal of controls over capital movement and financial products, this consensus has had disastrous effects for both developed and developing economies.

While many have begun to call this neo-liberal consensus into question, the latest financial crisis demonstrates the stranglehold this way of imagining economic life has established over many political and economic institutions. The liberalizing of financial markets, as we have already seen, has done much to enhance the interests of the super-wealthy while exposing the majority of the global working class to increasing insecurity. Since the 1980s the trend to liberalize financial markets has resulted in financial collapse after financial collapse with little impetus for tightening controls on financial products and transactions. Some have described the depth and breadth of the so-called "Great Recession" as a major crisis for the neo-liberal paradigm. Yet the irony of seeing the latest financial collapse as a crisis of neo-liberal globalization is that in its wake there has been a *ramping up* of policies associated with neo-liberalism in many places across the globe. The austerity regimes imposed on many governments facing staggering unemployment and escalating debts resulting from the dismantling of their tax bases demonstrate how captive the global economic imagination still is to a neo-liberal paradigm of economic organization. In order to secure international aid and become "competitive" sites for foreign investment, governments across Europe had a program of deep spending cuts, privatization of public services, slashing wages and benefits, and

[182] For a helpful summary of the shape and historical origins of the "Washington Consensus" see Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2002), especially pp. 11-18.

weakening financial and employment regulations imposed upon them.[183] These policies have entrenched recession and unemployment in many economies across Europe and have decreased the likelihood that these economies will see a return of good jobs with decent career prospects anytime in the near future.[184] The persistent astronomical rate of youth unemployment threatens to undermine the social fabric in many of these beleaguered countries.

While weak regulatory oversight for financial products has repeatedly exposed workers across the globe to recession and heightened unemployment, the rapid liberalizing of trade in developing countries has eroded worker protections and destroyed many nascent local industries in the name of free market competition. Stiglitz has documented how the rapid removal of "trade barriers" and the creation of "labor market flexibility" in developing countries have repeatedly served the financial and commercial interests of powerful firms in the global north, while undermining the development of decent work in the global south. The euphemistic terms "trade barriers" and "labor market flexibility" carry within them the biases of these policy prescriptions. With respect to the first, Stiglitz argues, by rapidly removing any protective policies and strong state support for local agricultural or industrial development, blanket trade liberalizing opened the local markets of developing countries to cheap (and often heavily subsidized) imports from developed economies before their own industries could even get off the ground.[185] This has had the effect of destroying jobs in the locally controlled agricultural and industrial sector, pushing many into unemployment. The austerity programs imposed

[183] Williams, et al., pp. 14 and 90.
[184] See for instance the International Labor Organization's annual report *The World of Work* for the years 2011 and 2012.
[185] Stiglitz, *Globalization,* pp. 17 and 60.

on these countries by the IMF as a condition of receiving needed development funds have meant that those losing their livelihoods have often done so without the presence of any significant social safety net.

With respect to the latter euphemism, Stiglitz notes the regular prescriptions by global economic institutions such as the IMF for countries to dismantle worker protections in order to produce a labor force attractive to foreign investment.[186] For many countries the only real "comparative advantage" they might have in the global economy is their cheap labor supply. The destruction of locally initiated enterprises mentioned above only increases the supply of cheap labor and renders more of the population dependent upon foreign investment for the paid employment they now require in order to survive. The removal of "barriers" to this foreign investment (such as environmental regulations, wage protections, workplace standards, and long term commitments to any given enterprise) is intended to allow developing countries to utilize this "advantage."

One way in which large corporations are able to take advantage of the "flexible" global labor force is through the arrangement of complex global production networks. Stitched together through various layers of contracting and subcontracting such production networks are intended to minimize overhead costs and maximize the ability of companies to adjust to the often rapid shifts in consumer demand. Large production plants and factories are typically no longer owned by the organizations that design and sell products but are rather owned and operated by third parties who take orders from a

[186] Ibid., pp. 84-85.

whole host of companies and complete a range of production tasks within a given sector (i.e. textiles or electronics).[187]

The temporary and competitive nature of securing individual orders for producing a product often highly incentivizes unsafe cost-cutting measures and inhumane treatment of workers on the part of contractors. The most egregious offenders in recent days have been in the textile industry, where a score of fires and one major building collapse in Bangladesh have left more than 1,100 dead and several thousand others injured.[188] However, the electronics industry is not so far behind in its inhumane treatment of workers with a 2010 report by the National Labor Committee documenting the "prison-like discipline," low pay, and long hours experienced by workers in a Taiwanese-owned factory operating in China.[189] The same year a rash of suicides and attempted suicides at a Foxconn plant (another Taiwanese-owned factory operating in China) responsible for assembling products for Apple shed further light on inhumane conditions in these global factories. When abuses like these occur the complex web of contracts and subcontracts serves to obscure who exactly is responsible for the oversight of the production process.

There is perhaps some reason for hope found in another aspect of globalization: the increasing interconnectedness of the world's information systems is capable of bringing to light deplorable conditions once entirely hidden from view. For instance, when the Rana Plaza garment factory in Bangladesh collapsed killing 1,129 people and injuring over 2,500, news of the event spread rapidly around the world and the names of companies who contracted with this plant were made known almost immediately. The

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[187] Ibid., p. 61.
[188] See for instance Jason Burke, "Bangladesh factory fires: fashion industry's latest crisis," *The Guardian*, December 8, 2013, accessed June 25, 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/08/bangladesh-factory-fires-fashion-latest-crisis.
[189] Williams, et al., p. 126.

public outcry over the tragedy led 70 of Europe's leading corporations in the clothing industry to adopt a legally binding resolution entitled Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh. The accord obligates signatories to publically list all factories utilized, conduct regular inspections of these factories, educate workers on requisite conditions for safety in the workplace, provide funds to improve conditions when sites fail inspections, and continue to pay workers at contracted factories while improvements are being made. The active involvement of the workforce in organizing and monitoring a safe working environment in this accord is particularly important to note, as is the input of a representative from the Bangladesh Council of Trade Unions in the overall crafting of the accord.[190]

Thus the increase in information *can* help to improve global labor conditions by steering concerned consumers away from companies and products that depend upon sweat shop labor. However, the seduction of cheap goods and the acclimation of populations in the global north to particular consumer habits are likely to continue to incentivize lax standards and a disavowal of responsibility on the part of many corporations. This calculus is clearly displayed in the refusal of many US companies to sign the accord adopted by European clothing companies. The separate pact signed by companies such as Wal-Mart, Target, Gap, and Macy's is not legally binding, commits limited funds to factory improvement, and takes the onus of responsibility away from retailers and places it once again on the shoulders of factory owners.[191] Even the best-

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[190] Stephen Greenhouse, "Clothiers Act to Inspect Bangladeshi Factories," *The New York Times,* July 7, 2013, accessed June 25, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/08/business/global/clothiers-in-deal-for-inspecting-bangladeshi-factories.html?pagewanted=1.

[191] Stephen Greenhouse and Stephanie Clifford, "U.S. Retailers Offer Plan for Safety at Factories," in *The New York Times,* July 10, 2013, accessed June 25, 2014,

informed consumer base is unlikely to solve this problem through simple changes in market behavior alone. The voluntary nature of independent codes of conduct such as the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh and the less stringent US version, fails to provide a majority of the world's workforce with binding and enforceable protections against inhumane labor practices.

The power of those with access to capital needs to be curbed by global rules for fair play that protect the world's most desperate and vulnerable populations from exploitation. The neo-liberal prescriptions of blanket privatizing, liberalizing, and governmental austerity have not delivered on their promises of shared global prosperity. Indeed global economic inequality has never been higher, with one percent of the world's richest people owning $110 trillion dollars, sixty-five times the amount owned by the globe's poorest fifty percent.[192]

Conclusion

In light of these trends we must ask how it is that such an ineffectual system of distribution, ripe with imbalances of power and opportunities for exploitation, has come to be viewed as the inevitable end of supposedly immutable economic laws. How, indeed, has our utter dependence upon waged work with all of these evident social distortions come to be seen as a natural and unquestioned phenomenon? In answering this question, a significant piece of the puzzle must be an analysis of transformations in the social construction of time. The political power and moral values tied to the measurement, control, and cultural meaning of time shed a great deal of insight on the social relations in

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http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/11/business/global/us-retailers-offer-safety-plan-for-bangladeshi-factories.html?_r=1&.

[192] OXFAM, "Working for the Few: Political Capture and Economic Inequality," OXFAM briefing paper 178, January 20, 2014, p. 5.

any given epoch. In what follows I will show how the above pathologies of work are both derived from and continually justified through the equation of time with currency. In order to take up this examination we now turn to an historical genealogy and critical social analysis of that seemingly innocuous and self-evident phrase of modern practical wisdom: Time is money.

Chapter 3:
The Commodification of Time and the Temporal Structure of Inequality

Introduction

In this chapter I will argue that the material practices that have led to particular forms of deteriorating labor conditions are tied to transformations in the representation and social ordering of time. Capitalism and the transformations within capitalism arise alongside transformations in the social construction of time and the means by which time is assigned value. On the one the one hand, the flattening of time and the dominance of a "chronometric" or scientific understanding of time, along with the calculation of time in terms of monetary interest, are part and parcel of the emergence of capitalism in its first instance and in some ways remains consistent throughout. On the other hand, however, the organization of labor processes, the relationship between time and space, and the changing experience of this "flat" vision of time with changing technologies all undergo radical transformations as capitalism itself changes.

It is important to note the multifaceted and ever changing character of capitalism. Capitalism, as Marx noted, is a revolutionary force within society that is constantly taking over old forms and remaking them. Thus, for both champions and critics of capitalism, it is important not to overgeneralize and to pay particular attention to the dynamics of capital in particular epochs. That Adam Smith is either saint or devil in contemporary political discourse of the virtues or ills of capitalism, that capitalism in the abstract can be seen as the greatest force for alleviating poverty the world has ever seen or one of the greatest forces for exploitation and human suffering the world has ever seen, creates an imprecise discourse incapable of fully appreciating the dynamic relationships between culture, market, moral order and political power. Even in his staunch critique of

capitalism Marx was able to appreciate its benefits, namely in increasing the productive capacity of society and providing the context for a new self-awareness and organization for the working class. Additionally, I think it is safe to say that even in championing capitalism Adam Smith would be appalled by the excesses of consumer society, the unchecked greed and lack of fellow-feeling among modern day financiers, and the utter decoupling of capital investment from socially productive enterprises. While many of the catch phrases of contemporary neo-liberals are drawn from Smith's work (the social utility of self-interest, the rational balance of free-markets, etc.) they have become abstracted from a moral universe where self-interest is checked by sympathy, where ill-gotten gain is to be redressed through redistribution, and where the "marketplace" in which the vaunted baker and butcher pursue their rational self-interest remains largely a local marketplace where face-to-face interactions between market actors creates and reproduces a kind of social fabric utterly unknown to us in the contemporary marketplace.

This is of course not to let Adam Smith off the hook, as we shall see as we begin to narrate some of the key transformations in time consciousness and the socio-political order that have led us to where we are today. One cannot, for instance, insulate Smith's *Wealth of Nations* from the mercantile state and its drive to dominate space and natural resources through colonialism and slavery. Nor can we ignore, as I will argue below, how the logic of Smith's "invisible hand" serves to mystify the inequalities taken over from the medieval period, giving them moral rather than a metaphysical cover. The larger point, however, is simply to note that the problems we are facing today, while drawing upon moral and social transformations of the past, are relatively unique to the current situation. Additionally, it is to say that every epoch had its own struggles, its own

patterns of injustice and exploitation and that attempts to narrate transitions in world history as a straightforward narrative of decline or one of untrammeled progress should be viewed with great suspicion.

Thus, the question I will seek to address here is specifically related to transformations in the social, moral, and spiritual constructions of time, particular modes of assigning value to time, and the ways in which these transformations in time point toward what I have called the contemporary pathologies of work. The following summary of historical shifts in time, labor organization, and economy is intended to elucidate these current problems and is decidedly not intended to hold up a pristine past to which I hope to return. The measurement of time and control of the instruments that mark its passage are key factors in social organization and control. The mechanism by which particular visions of time are enforced and reproduced have long been a site of contestation, and those who control these mechanisms have wielded a significant amount of power over the daily experience of individuals and communities. While time itself has undergone many shifts, the use of time as a means to enforce hierarchical social relations has remained a constant. A major thesis of this chapter is that the hierarchical structure of society in the Middle Ages is carried over into modernity and reproduced in the various stages of capitalism. These inequalities are simply obscured by the rhetoric of individual moral discipline and the (supposedly) unmediated access of individuals to state and market within "the West," while also undergoing spatial displacement in the relationship of domination the white western world articulated between itself and the global south.

The chapter will trace two distinct yet related issues in the transformation of time and its valuation. First, I will discuss changes in the social and moral representation of time. I will outline how the social order is transformed from one permeated by a lived experience of higher times and lower times, of ordinary time punctuated by moments of sacred time, to a chronometric, homogenous, and scientific understanding of time. This shift has its beginnings within the Middle Ages and sets the stage for the calculation of interest, projection of profits, and rational ordering of production and trade that characterize capitalism. One of the upshots of this shift, along with new possibilities for scientific discovery and economic organization, is that time comes to be seen as a mere natural and objective fact. The clock is simply a means to measure the fact of time's passage in a standardized and objective fashion. While the theories of relativity and quantum physics have called such a stable and objective picture of time into question at a theoretical level, it is still the one that dominates our experience and representation of time today. I will argue that the new moral stance toward time that issues from this transformation views time in instrumental terms, as an empty and value neutral aspect of nature to be utilized by individual agents to good or ill effect. This "moralizing of time" plays a key role in justifying and reproducing economic inequality and other forms of social domination such as the subservient relationship of labor to management and corporate interests.

Second, I will trace transformations in time-space organization through key moments in the history of capitalism. Here I will describe the phenomenon David Harvey terms "time-space compression" and show its relationship to processes of production and consumption through initial industrialization, the Fordist-Keynesian

period in the early to mid-20th century, and the current period of post-industrial, flexible models of economic life. In each of these periods production, delivery, and consumption undergo distinct phases of acceleration in response to technological advances and to crises of over-accumulation. This acceleration in economic life contributes to broader trends of "social acceleration," as some sociologists such as Hartmut Rosa have described.[193] While the advancing pace of life has broad implications, the task of this chapter will be to point toward the relationship between temporal orders and labor conditions, with particular emphasis on contemporary experience. I will highlight the key moments of transformation that have led us to the current predicament, in which the capital ownership of time both demands and degrades the arduous productive effort of workers.

Time's Immanent Reference and the Naturalizing/Moralizing of Inequality

To summarize the most profound shift in time consciousness that paves the way for the modern rationalizing and commodification of labor one can point to the shift from a storied and enchanted sense of time in the ancient and medieval world to the flat, scientific understanding of time in the modern era. Here moments are measured and calculated with increasing exactitude, and each moment can be equally exchanged for another. The commensurability of every moment is consummated in the commodification of time where the exchange of one moment with the next is expressed in terms of abstract monetary value. Yet, as I will argue below, it would be a mistake to allow this general contrastive thesis to mask some underlying structural similarities in the use of time, labor, and technology that produced significant positive benefits in each era

[193] Hartmut Rosa, *Social Acceleration and Alienation* (Malmö, Sweden: NSU Press, 2010).

while simultaneously reinforcing hierarchical class structures and injustices in each era as well.

Charles Taylor discusses the contrastive aspect of this shift in *Modern Social Imaginaries* and in his seminal work *A Secular Age.* According to Taylor the growth of a secular understanding of society and the commercial culture that goes along with it was brought about, in part, by a drastic shift in the understanding of how human community inhabits time. In pre-secular societies, Taylor argues, social bonds were grounded in the remembrance of certain founding acts commemorated in the ebb and flow of "lower" and "higher" times. Society with its authorities, institutions and classes was viewed as receiving its form from eternity or from some sacred history that took place in "time out of mind." Such founding events or connection between ordinary (secular) time and eternity were marked by the observance of higher times that "gathered, assembled, reordered, and punctuated profane, ordinary time."[194] In the experience of higher times temporality is re-structured such that "events which were far apart in profane time could nevertheless be closely linked."[195] A memorial observance of sacred time can link, for instance, the sacrifice of Isaac, the Crucifixion and present experience into a single moment held together in God's eternity.

The distinction between higher and lower times was reflected in the social order of the ancient and medieval world. These were societies explicitly built around notions of "mediated access" and "hierarchical complementarity."[196] The eternal order tied to a Platonic Great Chain of Being, or established in key moments of sacred history where

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[194] Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), p. 54.
[195] Ibid., p. 55.
[196] Ibid., pp. 45 and 163; and Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), p. 158.

time and eternity meet in some decisive way, is reflected and mediated by key institutions and persons within society. One's place within the political and social order was determined by one's relationship to these key persons and institutions, whose privileged place within society was viewed as a temporal reflection of cosmic hierarchies.[197] The celebration of higher times marked the "action-transcendent" or "ontic" basis of the social order which becomes concentrated in the personage of kings and priests, around whom the celebration of higher times revolved. In contrast, writes Taylor:

> Modern secularization can be viewed from one angle as the rejection of higher times and the positing of time as purely profane. Events now exist only in this one dimension, in which they stand at greater and lesser temporal distance and in relations of causality with other events of the same kind.[198]

Time is seen here simply as duration. This flattened understanding of time corresponds to a new understanding of the basis of social order. It allows us to "imagine society horizontally, unrelated to any 'high-points,' where the ordinary sequence of events touches higher time, and therefore without recognizing any privileged persons or agencies, such as kings or priests, who stand and mediate at such alleged points."[199] Taylor continues, "This radical horizontality is precisely what is implied in the direct-access society, where each member is 'immediate to the whole.'"[200] The individual citizen, being endowed with reason and industry (Locke) or reason and sociability (Grotius) carries in himself (literally himself) the basis of social order and thus relates to his fellow citizens on the basis of this homogenous equality rather than the heterogeneous hierarchy of the earlier period. The flattening of time corresponds to a leveling of human

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[197] Taylor, *A Secular Age,* p. 163.
[198] Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries*, p. 98.
[199] Ibid., p. 157.
[200] Ibidem.

relations such that the homogeneity of time is reflected in the expressed homogenous political station of individual citizens.

I will have more to say about the impact of this "direct-access" society below, but a key point here is that the "ontic" basis of human society undergoes a radical shift according to Taylor, moving from the "action-transcendent" or eternal frame to an immanent one, namely "natural law" or the moral and rational capacities inherent in human nature. For instance, Taylor notes that the goals that mark the theories of Grotius and Locke, namely security (state) and prosperity (private property, economy), give society an instrumental form that is historically constructed out of the raw materials of nature rather than an inherent form that is derived from eternal structures.[201] Yet it would be a mistake to suppose that this means that there is now no "ontic" basis for social order in emerging modernity. "There is an important difference," he writes, "but it lies in the fact that this component (the ontic) is now a feature about us humans, rather than one touching God or the cosmos, and not in the supposed absence altogether of an ontic dimension."[202]

Touching further upon the implications of this shift for the experience of time Taylor draws upon Walter Benjamin's description of "homogeneous, empty time," arguing that this radically purged time-consciousness approaches the flow of time as one set of mutually interchangeable moments after another. Time is another of the raw materials of nature out of which human society is constructed and managed. "On this

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[201] Ibid., p. 16; Smith expands on this point later in the argument writing, "…the new Providential social order is meant to be established by human action. It offers a blueprint for constructive action, rather than a matrix of purposive forces already in nature. The new context puts a premium on constructive action, on an instrumental stance towards the world, which the new disciplines have already inculcated (p. 541).

[202] Ibid., p. 164.

view," he writes, "time like space has become a container, indifferent to what fills it."[203] Haunted by a sense that the past is simply lost to the onward march of a horizontal time without a deep sense of its vertical grounding, the passage of time takes on new and unprecedented importance to the modern mind. Describing this trend Taylor writes:

> ...the disciplines of our modern civilized order have led us to measure and organize time as never before in human history. Time has become a precious resource, not to be "wasted." The result has been the creation of a tight, ordered time environment. This has enveloped us, until it comes to seem like nature. We have constructed an environment in which we live a uniform, univocal secular time, which we try to measure and control in order to get things done. This "time frame" deserves, perhaps more than any other facet of modernity, Weber's famous description of a "stahlhartes Gehäuse" (iron cage).[204]

As we will see, this impetus to make the most of time, to measure and control the use of such a precious and fleeting resource will have a significant impact on the organization of the labor force and the morality of work tied to these new disciplines.

Taylor's depiction of this contrast is instructive for understanding the increased rational understanding and organizing of time in modernity, including its increased association with monetary value. Yet it is easy to overstate this contrast and fall victim to a simplistic narrative of decline where history moves us from a symbolically and theologically rich understanding of time with a strong communitarian bent to an inadequate vision of abstract and readily quantifiable time ripe for the market based exploitation of individual laborers.

In the first place, it is important to follow Taylor's lead from other aspects of his larger argument to describe the role of religious motivations and innovations in paving the way for what becomes a secularized and purged time consciousness. For instance, Taylor narrates the way theological and spiritual reform movements with their interest in

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[203] Taylor, *A Secular Age,* p. 58.
[204] Ibid., p. 59.

an interior spirituality and reappraisals of the value of every day life, as well as a theistically motivated interest in nature for its own sake, each play a role in the rise of the secular age or what Taylor calls the "conditions of unbelief."[205] While it was not inevitable that these theological innovations should have lead to the position of "exclusive humanism" as a legitimate and widespread intellectual option in modern society, Taylor's careful work here demonstrates that the rise of modern secularity has a more troubled and complicated relationship to Christian theology and practice than some contemporary critical theological appraisals of modernity might let on.

If Taylor is careful in describing shifts in these areas, he is less so when it comes to narrating shifts in time consciousness and discipline, often simply asserting the distinction between a flat and purely horizontal vision of time with a vision driven by an ebb and flow between higher and lower time. However, just as modern intellectual innovations were often driven by theological or spiritual motivations, so too did the rationalizing of time that would give rise to modern time consciousness and discipline emerge in part out of the monastic and clerical desire to find a more accurate means to calculate the "higher" times of the canonical hours of prayer. Technological innovations allowing for more exact time keeping often emerged under the auspices of bishops and abbots in need of a means to calculate the hours over night, or when vision of the sun was obscured during the day.[206] The bell signals of churches and monasteries were key reference points in the ordered time environments of city and countryside. They were for a long time in the Middle Ages the chief temporal reference points for key activities such

[205] A good summary description of this argument can be found in Ibid., pp. 90-95.
[206] See for instance the important role of monasteries for the development and spread of clocks in Gerhard Dohrn-van Rossum, *History of the Hour: Clocks and Modern Temporal Orders* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996), particularly chapters 3 and 4.

as work and market times.[207] Thus, the more exacting the measurement of these hours became with advancements in *horologia* the more "tightly ordered" the time environment of the surrounding population would become.

Certainly it was the merchants of the high-Middle Ages and the growing urban bourgeois that would complete the rational ordering of time, dominating the building and control of mechanical clocks in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[208] These same groups, in turn, began calculating the monetary costs of time in increasingly exacting fashion, in the first real step toward an abstract and flat understanding of time. As Jacques LeGoff notes, this issues in an incipient form of Taylorism, which as we have seen steadily intensifies throughout the modern period.[209] However, the key point to help us avoid a simplistic narrative of decline is that at least one stream of causality in this increasing rational ordering of time can be tied back to the monastic and clerical push to make the daily experience of time more perfectly reflect the sacred order of the canonical hours.[210]

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[207] Jacques LeGoff, *Medieval Civilization* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), p. 181.
[208] Ibid., p. 183; Jacques LeGoff, *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1980), pp. 36-37, 48.
[209] LeGoff, *Time, Work and Culture in the Middle Ages*, pp. 36 and 45.
[210] As I noted in the introduction Weber and Mumford, probably go too far in drawing a straight line between the "iron discipline of the rule" and the time-work discipline of industrial capitalism. In addition to the historical dynamics noted in the introduction, these arguments abstract the regimented time-tables of monastic life from the whole round of work, prayer/study and sleep which ideally balanced each activity with the others, giving roughly 7-8 hours to each activity depending on the time of the year (Dorhn-van Rossum, p. 36). They also go too far in assigning the standardization of the hours to the monasteries using machine-like metaphors to describe monastic life itself, while in fact monastic life remained tied to the natural rhythms of sunrise and sunset until well after the division of the day into 24 equal hours had taken root in European cities. In fact, the standardization of the hours would not become a widespread phenomenon until the industrial revolution, when the synchronizing of production and transport by rail necessitated a reference point for time measurement that could be shared more exactly across the whole continent (Dorhn-van Rossum, pp. 117, 323).

The second point I wish to make on this score is important for framing and interpreting the first. The sacral order of time from which the West emerged through Renaissance, Reformation and Enlightenment cannot simply be said to represent an ideal complex ordering of time and social space with a *transcendent* referent over and against a pernicious "modern" social ordering dominated by the individual's direct relationship to state and market which serve wholly *immanent* ends. To be sure, the transformation is significant: there are things we can learn from the "enchanted" view of time in the Middle Ages, and indeed unique problems arise with what Taylor calls the emergence of a "direct access society," as I will mention below. Yet one cannot discuss the metaphysics of the enchanted world of the Middle Ages without also noting its hierarchical notions of sovereignty, duty, and vocation that enforced manifest injustices, imposing the drudgery of peasant life on masses of the population.

In fact, the medieval sacralizing of the temporal order in some respects shares the immanentizing trends of a wholly secularized order, both of which suffer from a domestication of God's transcendence. This is highlighted with striking prose by LeGoff, who, echoing Taylor's invocation of Weber's "iron cage," argues that medieval time-space configuration suffocates the temporal by collapsing the distance between heaven and earth. Earthly society with its hierarchies and subordinations was viewed in continuity with the distinct orders of heavenly society. "This paralyzing train of thought," writes LeGoff, "which prevented men from laying hands on the edifice of earthly society without at the same time unsettling heavenly society, which imprisoned mortals in the

meshes of the angelic network, put an extra weight on men's (sic) shoulders."[211] He goes on to argue:

> Not only did they have the burden of their earthly masters, but they were also laden with the heavy angelic hierarchy….Men in the Middle Ages struggled between demons' talons and being entangled in those millions of wings which beat on earth as in heaven and made life into a nightmare of beating pinions. For the reality was not that the heavenly world was as real as the earthly world, it was that they only formed one world, in an inextricable mixture which caught men in the toils of a living supernatural.[212]

In such a configuration the "action transcendent" basis of human society forms such a unity with the immanent frame that the sacral repetition of higher times and the institutions and persons privileged by these celebrations become self-validating. The transcendent referent, rather than serving to relativize the temporal order and imbue it with a sense of provisionality, absolutized immanent temporal authority. In effect the higher times constituted their own self-enclosed form of temporality and became the only times with any real consequence.

The social function of the doctrine of purgatory, which achieved its fully developed form around the turn of the thirteenth century, is instructive on this point. The doctrine played a key function in managing anxieties about eternal life in a society of hierarchical complementarity. The distinction between the "higher" callings of those who would be perfect, namely clerics and monastics (*oratores*), and the lower callings of the imperfect laymen (further specified by the 12th century hierarchically between the warrior/nobles or *bellatores* and those who toiled in the cities and fields or *laboratores*) placed the eternal fate of those marginal Christians in secular professions on shaky

[211] LeGoff, *Medieval Civilization,* pp. 164.
[212] Ibid., pp. 164-65.

footing.[213] The crystalizing of the doctrine of purgatory sought to bring the "lower callings," in particular the *laboratores,* more fully into the Christian fold and offered new hope of salvation to the imperfect, whose social function and secular pursuits placed their eternal status in question. The elaboration of this doctrine provided a new source of Christian piety, temporal imagination, and fraternal solidarity among peasants and craftsman.[214]

On the one hand, this had the function of freeing advancements in secular pursuits as never before. In particular, the advanced doctrine of purgatory correlates with a new self-conscious articulation of the class of laborers, craftsmen and merchants, cementing the positive function of the *laboratores* in the tripartite schema of late medieval society.[215] Secular vocations wholly contained within the "lower times" of ordinary life could now be pursued with new energy as new patterns of devotion to "higher times" in deathbed contrition, charitable contributions, and intercessory solidarity on the part of one's family and compatriots could make up for one's imperfections and usher one into final salvation. LeGoff notes how the doctrine of purgatory removed significant ideological barriers to the emergence of capitalism itself by creating a way around the Church's proscription of the sin of usury.[216]

On the other hand, however, rather than creating a space that relativized the authority of temporal institutions, the doctrine simply transposed the subordination of the imperfect vocations to the clerical order into the eternal order. The correspondence of

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[213] Jacques LeGoff, *Your Money or Your Life: Economy and Religion in the Middle Ages* (New York: Zone Books, 1988), p. 66.
[214]On these related points see Jacques Rossiaud, "The City-Dweller and Life in Cities and Towns," in *Medieval Callings* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1990), ed. by Jacques LeGoff, p. 168; c.f. Taylor, *A Secular Age,* pp. 69-70.
[215] LeGoff, *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages*, pp. 56-57.
[216] LeGoff, *Your Money or Your Life,* p. 93.

temporal hierarchies and levels of subordination with the eternal orders of heaven, hell, and purgatory subordinates the "lower times" of secular existence to the "higher time" of salvation, which is now fully concentrated in the institutional structure and arbitration of the Church with its penances and indulgences. Thus, a collapse between divine authority over eternity and the temporal authority of the church issues in a bizarre form of the commodification of time, an absurd kind of futures market: the buying and selling of eternity itself. It is a sad irony that the Church that would begin the Middle Ages with strong proscriptions against the buying and selling of time in the form of usury, would end the period collecting interest on the eternal state of a person's soul.

This is but one example of the ways in which the higher times of medieval society with their ostensible transcendent reference functioned to provide self-validating rationale for immanent institutional authority. In short, the marking of higher times could so dominate the experience of ordinary time that the former would absorb economic and political functions in ways that mirror the self-referential immanent frame of a time which is viewed as wholly profane. Again, LeGoff highlights the social control exerted by those who measure and mark time, including clerical higher times, writing:

> In daily life, medieval men used chronological points of reference borrowed from different sociotemporal frameworks, which were imposed on them by various economic and social systems. In fact, nothing better conveys the way in which medieval society worked than its systems of measuring and the conflicts which hardened around them. Measures of time and space were an exceptionally important instrument of social domination. Whoever was master of them enjoyed peculiar power over society….Like writing, the measurement of time remained for much of the Middle Ages the monopoly of the powerful, an element of their power. The masses did not own their own time and were incapable of measuring it. They obeyed the time imposed on them by bells, trumpets and horns.[217]

[217] LeGoff, *Medieval Civilization*, p. 177.

The clerical domination of time and its measurement through much of the Middle Ages provided key economic reference points for the work day through the signaling of the hours of prayer, as well as for the whole work year through liturgical celebrations that were tied to the seigneurial times in which peasant dues were owed to their lords.[218] The "laicization" of time, first through the expansion of types of bell signals and their control and second through the growth and development of mechanical clocks, begins to change the dynamics of the struggle over time discipline in the immanent frame.[219] However, the use of higher times by the Church to "immanentize" and enforce a transcendent hierarchical order means that this shift should be seen as much as a change in the immanent justifications for ordering and controlling time as a radical break in epochs.

Clocks and the Morality of Labor Discipline in Scarce Time

While a full account of the development and dissemination of clocks and other time pieces is beyond the scope of this chapter, there is no doubt that the scientific measure of time's passage and the abstract reckoning of the divisions of the day have a strong relationship to a social imaginary dominated by a flat and homogeneous concept of time. The clock materially represents the new objectified and quantified stance toward time that transforms social practices of commerce and production along with the moral assessment of these activities. As LeGoff notes, it is the merchant of the late Middle Ages who pioneers and begins to perfect a more exacting measurement of time above and beyond the ecclesial marking of the hours of prayer. The ecclesial marking of time, while involved in the technological push for time keeping devices, was too rough and imprecise for the merchant who needed, "a more adequate measure of time" in order to

[218] Ibid., pp. 180-81.
[219] Ibid., p. 183.

foster "the orderly conduct of business."[220] The clock with a new standardized division of the day into twenty-four equal parts provided a much-needed answer to crises of labor organization and increasing monetary circulation and calculation in the fourteenth century.[221]

Thus, more exacting time measurement by means of the clock and monetary calculation emerge together as the regular experience of time, particularly in Europe's urban centers, becomes "laicized" and unhinged from the ecclesial marking and control of its daily "higher times." For the merchant time was money and the clock provided the means by which he could more efficiently ensure the profitability of his enterprises. Drawing upon LeGoff, David Harvey summarizes this trend writing:

> The mediaeval merchants, for example, in constructing better measure of time 'for the orderly conduct of business' promoted a 'fundamental change in the measurement of time which was indeed a change in time itself.' Symbolized by clocks and bells which called workers to labour and merchants to market, separated from the 'natural' rhythms of agrarian life, and divorced from religious significations, merchants and masters created a new 'chronological net' in which daily life was caught.[222]

Over time this new chronological net transforms the way in which time is inhabited by increasing numbers of people. One's stance toward time, like one's stance toward nature or human society more generally, is increasingly instrumentalized. Time no longer receives its shape from eternity, as Taylor has argued, but rather the significance of time is in what one makes of it; how one organizes, calculates, disciplines, and uses time to one's advantage. It is as we have already noted "empty", awaiting the moral, spiritual, and industrious input of individual persons to give it significance and value.

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[220] LeGoff, *Time, Work and Culture,* p. 35.
[221] Ibid., p. 49.
[222] Harvey, p. 228.

It would be some time before the transformations begun in the fourteenth century would become internalized by masses of the population and provide the basis for a new way of reckoning the value of labor in terms of wages by the hour. As Dohrn-van Rossum notes, the standardization of the hour as the basic wage unit begins in Middle Ages but is limited to calculation of overtime and penalties for work time missed for tardiness. The day wage remained the norm in payment to wage earners until the end of the eighteenth century.[223] The long trajectory that leads to the dominance of a more exacting time discipline in work and the reckoning of labor value by the hour and fraction of the hour takes a major leap forward with the increasing accuracy and reliability of clocks in the seventeenth century. This is furthered by the increasing dissemination of personal timepieces, first among the elite classes in the seventeenth century and eventually to the middle and lower classes by the end of the eighteenth.[224]

E.P. Thompson has shown that the permeation of a new kind of time consciousness across all levels of society created by the increasing accuracy and dissemination of clocks and other time-pieces goes hand in hand with the rising moralism tied to "time-thrift" and the standardizing of the hour as the relevant unit of measurement for wages. Thompson notes how the external disciplinary pressures imposed by new time keeping and time managing technologies was matched by an intensifying spiritual and moral discourse around time.[225] A key feature of Thompson's depiction is the changed relationship between time and eternity that the clock and the imagery of clockwork inspired in Christian moralists from the seventeenth century onward. If the Middle Ages

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[223] Dohrn-van Rossum, pp. 313, 315; See also E.P. Thompson's discussion of the development of time sheets and their increasing exactitude through the 18th century in *Customs in Common* (New York: The New Press, 1991), pp. 383-390.
[224] Ibid., p. 316; Thompson, pp. 366-68.
[225] Thompson, pp. 390-91.

was often characterized by a suffocating of a genuine secular temporality by eternally sanctioned hierarchies as I have argued above, the Protestant moralisms described by Thompson (whether of Puritan, Wesleyan, or Evangelical provenance) tended to place eternity at such a remove that its impact on the present was viewed chiefly in terms of one's moral preparation for the afterlife.

The "brevity of the mortal span," that is the limited time allotted for one's preparation for eternity, encouraged a new emphasis on universal "time-thrift."[226] One can "spend" one's time wisely and industriously, "redeeming" time and thus gaining heaven, or one could squander time and pay the eternal consequences. Time is here a precious resource not to be wasted, and temporal existence in this world is understood in terms of scarcity. This is acutely expressed by Oliver Heywood in his *Meetness for Heaven* (1690):

> Time lasts not, but floats away apace; but what is everlasting depends upon it. In this world we either win or lose eternal felicity. The great weight of eternity hangs on the small and brittle thread of life…This is our working day, our market time…O sirs, sleep now, and awake in hell, whence there is no redemption.[227]

The parallels between work, market and salvation expressed here is often repeated as the disciplined use of time in this moral vision builds upon the metaphors of clockwork and currency. Thompson notes, for instance, Richard Baxter's insistence that the Christian life be ordered like a well functioning clock. He also points to Hannah More's direct comparison between the reckoning of wages for laborers at the end of the week and that final reckoning when we will all give an account of how we did or did not put our time to good use.[228] Time is in a very literal sense the currency of heaven, the possession of

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[226] Ibid., p. 391.
[227] Quoted from Ibidem.
[228] Ibid., pp. 391 and 393.

which could be ensured by a life that embodies the regularity and precision of a well functioning clock.

In fact, for Baxter as well as others there was a kind of sacramental relationship between this currency of heaven and the possession of actual currency. As Max Weber has famously shown, there is in Baxter's Puritan ethic a direct relationship between divine election, the wise use of one's time in the pursuit of a calling, and private profitableness.[229] Weber also demonstrates how a desire for the *certitudo salutis* among various evangelical and pietist groups increasingly looked to success in temporal affairs as a sure testament of one's being in a state of grace. Thus, one's access to actual currency becomes an "outward and visible sign" of one's inward spiritual state. Either as an outworking of one's eternal election in the temporal sphere, or as a sure sign that one was sincerely "working out one's own salvation," worldly success and the moral discipline it required could stand as a testament to one's faithfulness to the grace one had received.[230] The regularity of labor becomes the site where one's willingness to "redeem the time" was tested, particularly for the poor whose lack of access to financial resources could be seen as a testament to their spiritual and moral sickness. The moral and spiritual rhetoric of time discipline was turned on the working poor, and irregular patterns of work derived from old, pre-industrial and agrarian habits of leisure, feast observance and idleness were attacked and replaced with the ideal of constant and steady employment.

Thompson notes, for instance, the constant worry among the leisure classes that the poor not be left with significant free time, as they lack the requisite moral cultivation to spend this time well. One particular moralist was shocked to find that large numbers

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[229] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (London and New York: Routledge Classics, 2001; Originally published by Allen and Unwin, 1930), pp. 104-05, 108.
[230] Tanner points to this correspondence between money and grace in *Economy of Grace*, p. 7.

of working poor were left with "several hours in the day to be spent nearly as they please."[231] These could often be found simply wasting this time by sitting on a bench, lying on the hillside, or worse gathering together to pass the time in levity. Similar worries are noted by the Rev. John Clayton in his *Friendly Advice to the Poor* (1755). Clayton complains of those poor who waste time at funeral and wedding observances, annual feasts, and idling about the market place. A worker wasting time in this fashion "spends his Time in sauntering, impairs his Constitution by Laziness, and dulls his Spirit by Indolence" and as a result deserves the poverty that befalls him.[232] For this class of working poor, incapable of employing leisure time properly, a twelve to fifteen hour workday was to be the remedy for their moral and spiritual sickness. Their children would also be taught the good "habits of industry" by being employed in workhouses or introduced to severe time discipline in schools for orphans and the poor.[233] Furthermore, we have here an incipient version of the argument for the social utility of suppressing wages. The motivation for regular and constant employment could be undercut if the working class could earn a living wage by working only several days a week or shorter periods during the day. Since they would likely deploy leisure time in morally dubious ways, wage incentives should be utilized in such a way to keep their hands constantly at work.[234]

This vision of moral and spiritual discipline has a unique relationship to the marking of sacred time and to daily prayer. If the marking of sacred time including the hours of prayer could have the effect of suffocating the temporal realm with crystallized

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[231] Thompson, p. 395.
[232] Ibid., p. 386.
[233] Ibid., p. 387-88.
[234] Ibid., p. 38; Weber, p. 120.

eternal hierarchies in the Middle Ages, here daily prayer and other forms of marking sacred time such as Sabbath observance could be fully incorporated into the "this-worldy" moral rhetoric of the disciplined husbandry of time. The irregularity of work caused by regular feast observances throughout the year is slowly done away with in favor of the dominance of weekly Sabbath observance as a more orderly and proper delimitation of rest.[235] Similarly, daily devotion including morning and evening prayer took their place alongside constant labor and served to reinforce the ideology of time-thrift. For instance, the routine of an agricultural day laborer is described by one seventeenth century moralists where rising "before four of the clock in the morning" the worker first gives "thanks to God for his rest, and a prayer for the success of his labors."[236] Then, after a grueling schedule of work, which lasts well into the evening, the worker gives "God thanks for the benefits received that day" before retiring. Here, as I referenced in the introduction, daily prayer is tied directly to a moral ideology of labor discipline and serves to reinforce the spiritual necessity of constant work.

To return to the point at hand, the spreading mechanical representation of time corresponded with a new kind of mechanistic vision for the disciplined life of work. The moralism of time discipline displayed in seventeenth century Puritanism only intensified and grew more crass throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as work processes themselves were increasingly mechanized. Thompson ultimately argues that this spiritual and moralized time discipline, combined with emerging industrial capitalism, "was the agent which converted people to new valuations of time; which taught children

[235] Ibid., p. 378.
[236] Ibid., p. 379.

even in their infancy to improve each shining moment; and which saturated peoples' minds with the equation, time is money."[237]

However, this intense moral discipline around time, pegged as it was to the delimitation of the relevant timespan to the scarcity of time in this mortal life and the equation of this-worldly success with divine favor, could "slough off" its theological underpinnings and operate with a similar logic within what Taylor calls a wholly "immanent frame." In this sense, the inner-worldly character of this moral rhetoric regarding time, work, and private profit represents part of the shift to the modern concept of a self-sufficient natural order which views economy as an objective and law-like feature of human society. Taylor traces this shift through a Grotian-Lockean understanding of Natural Law, which locates God's providential design for creation in the formal moral capacities of human agents, to Providential Deism, which advances the view of the natural and social order functioning semi-autonomously with law-like regularity. Regarding the later, Taylor includes Adam Smith's concept of the "invisible hand" of the market, which providentially ensures that the separate and uncoordinated actions of individuals pursuing their own self-interest will work toward the mutual benefit and continued flourishing of society.[238] While initially this blueprint for the flourishing of creation and society "is identified with the plan of Providence, what God asks us to realize," ultimately "it is in the nature of a self-sufficient immanent order that in can be envisaged without reference to God; and very soon the proper blueprint is attributed to Nature" on its own.[239]

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[237] Ibid., pp. 400-01.
[238] Taylor, *A Secular Age,* p. 177.
[239] Ibid., p. 543.

Thus, Smith's invisible hand goes a long way in providing a secularized model for the kind of time-work discipline initially tied to election and faithfulness in a calling as a sign of one's being in a state of grace. Now the "salvific end" is tied to the flourishing of society in general and the harmony of interests among market actors. Similarly, Benjamin Franklin's strong equation of time with money and financial success with the moral desert of the industrious represents for Weber the utilitarian and secularized version of the capitalist ethic, shorn of its initial religious impetus.[240] In this shift toward immanent reference and justifications, one can continue to attribute key factors to divine design and affirm an eternal end for human life, or one can reject all of this. In either case, however, the key point is that the immanent order is viewed as containing within itself the features and principles that allow one to discern whether and how one has disciplined one's use of scarce time to maximum personal benefit.

"Direct Access" and the New Hierarchy of Possession

At this point, a key function of the rhetoric of the "direct access society" described by Taylor comes into view. This vision of moral discipline, with its instrumental stance toward the scarce time of a flattened profane temporal order (whether viewed as preparation for an aloof and distant eternity or solely in terms of immanent moral deserts), its equation of time with money, and objectifying stance toward economic order had the result of masking profound inequalities in economic status and power. As Taylor argues, by viewing profane time as self-enclosed the emerging cultural order was able to imagine a "direct access" society no longer dependent on the hierarchical mediations of clergy and royalty. The myth of such "direct access" was essential in expanding the commodification of labor by imagining that a) all time is homogeneous

[240] Weber, pp. 14-16; See also Thompson, pp. 393-94.

and can be abstractly quantified, b) all persons are on an equal footing in the market, so that c) equal actors in the market can enter into mutually binding contractual relations, including of course the sale of one's labor for wages.[241] In the direct access society the successful and self-made entrepreneur is the ideal citizen. As Taylor notes, the "self-congratulation" that accompanied this sense of independence and direct access created a "blindness toward the failures, the ones who didn't make it to riches, and even more toward the new forms of oppressive dependency arising in the growing factories, which employed largely marginal people…."[242]

This notion of independence and direct access through the flattening of time creates a new context for the exploitation of labor through time discipline. While the newly imagined relationship between oneself and the marketplace was and continues to be seen as direct, in fact such access is entirely mediated through one's access to capital resources. The emerging logic of individual possession, however, served precisely to mask this mediating role of capital and the attendant power differentials created by its possession or lack thereof. John Locke's treatment of private property stands at the beginning of this modern period and serves as a good example of the problem I am attempting to describe here. According to Locke, private property ownership (of which money is simply an abstract representation) is the rightful claim of one who mixes their labor with nature.[243] The God-given resources of nature are bestowed as a common stock for all humans to utilize for their continued survival and flourishing. Yet this common property would be useless if not appropriated by individuals through labor. Once one has

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[241] Ibid., p. 160.
[242] Ibid., p. 152.
[243] For Locke's theory of private property and money as its representation see his *Second Treatise of Government,* Chapter 5.

added one's labor to the resources of nature one has in a sense added one's own person to these resources thus making them one's own. In the state of nature all persons are on an equal footing with respect to common property. Each person can appropriate as much property from the common stock as they can, with the twin proviso that one does not infringe on the ability of others to acquire the resources they need to survive and that one appropriates only what one can use without waste.

While these provisos might have the potential to mitigate exploitation that arises from vast inequalities in the appropriation and control of resources, in practice neither proviso delivers on this potential. First, as Kathryn Tanner has noted, the first proviso rooted in the conviction that all of nature is given in trust from God for the "subsistence and well-being of all," functions simply as a "negative limit" that can in fact be squared with any number of actual distributions of property and resources.[244] So long as each person has a reasonable chance to secure some basic degree of raiment, shelter, and sustenance this negative limit will have been satisfied. Second, as Locke himself argues, the advent and use of money provides a significant work-around for the second proviso. According to Locke, one can legitimately appropriate much more than one can actually use in any given moment so long as one allows others to use what one has appropriated in exchange for some durable and mutually agreeable container of value, namely money.[245] Money here functions as a means to store surplus property indefinitely without it spoiling. The legitimacy of money and the "disproportionate and unequal possession of the earth" that arises from its use, are derived from the plain agreement of social actors who give

[244] Kathryn Tanner, *Economy of Grace* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), p. 43.
[245] Locke, Ch. 5, pa. 50.

"tacit and voluntary consent" to the value of precious stones and metals.[246] The value invested in money amounts to a tacit contract on the part of fully equal actors in the "state of nature."

This leads to the more overarching problem with Locke in his description of the "state of nature" and the assumption of a common access to land and resources it entails. Locke's account suggests that all individual persons begin from the same, homogenous political and economic station. This is precisely what Taylor refers to as a radical horizontal vision of social relations in the "direct access society." The problem with such a starting point, as Tanner has rightly noted, is that it suggests that inequalities in political and economic power that result from activity in the world are simply the natural outgrowth of differentials in the amount of individual effort applied in appropriating resources from among the common stock of nature. To quote Tanner at length here:

> One has a right, then, to take from the earth what one needs to survive and live well, but that right is completely emasculated in practice; unless one earns the right to do so through one's own work, none of those resources is properly put to actual use for one's own good. People may not be enjoying their common right to subsistence and well-being but there is nothing necessarily wrong with that. Differences in private possession can always be chalked up to differences in the effort people have put in; some people just work harder than others….The result of all of this is Locke's recommendations concerning poor laws: the state's disciplining of poor children to promote a work ethic and the forcing of able-bodied poor to work….Common right suggests, contrary to appearances, that everyone starts out on an equal footing and therefore that the inequalities surfacing now are legitimate: the people who come out on the bottom had the same chance as everyone else; they just didn't use it well.[247]

In short, the assumption of formal equality and individual direct access to a common stock of property hides the *de facto* inequality of access that marks the varied starting points of socially and economically embedded individuals.

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[246] Ibidem.
[247] Tanner, *Economy of Grace,* pp. 44-45.

One final point needs to be noted regarding the relationship of Locke's vision of private property to colonialism, for here the modern displacing of medieval relations of heterogeneous hierarchy and domination is most acute. For Locke the person who through reason and industry cultivates natural resources, improving the land and increasing its capacity to furnish the things necessary for survival and human flourishing, lays proper claim to those lands and resources that lay uncultivated prior to his intervention. This one participates in the natural design of God who commands humankind to subdue the earth, and thus has a divine right to appropriate the land he has put to use through his reason and industry.

Thus, the one who cultivates the land and "encloses" it as his own does all of humankind a service. As he writes:

> And therefore he that encloses land, and has a greater plenty of the conveniences of life from ten acres, than he could have from an hundred left to nature, may truly be said to give ninety acres to mankind: for his labour now supplies him with provisions out of ten acres, which were but the product of an hundred lying in common.[248]

The implications for the rise of colonialism and the relationship between Europeans and various native populations is clear. The colonist who by nature possesses the appropriate rational and moral capacities to make industrious use of the common stock of nature has the burden of subduing native people's who lack the requisite capacities for reason and industry, and who thus cannot make proper use of natural resources as God intended. As Harvey notes Enlightenment constructions of space as private property and its parceling along a grid of fixed coordinates were essential in applying the new vision of homogeneous and chronometric vision of time across empires. Space was to be dominated by the projection and control of the future toward technological and economic

[248] Locke, *Second Treatise on Government,* Ch. 5, pa. 37.

progress.[249] This desire to master space through the time of technological and economic advance fuels the mythos of the modern imperial state, leading to such infamous articulations of this impetus in ideologies of "manifest destiny" and the "white man's burden." Locke himself stands as a harbinger of this logic, noting the waste of rich resources in the Americas by native tribes who fail to make full use of them through the cultivation of labor.[250]

Conclusion

If on the one hand the Middle Ages were frequently characterized by a kind of over-identification of transcendent and immanent authority, a thorough meshing of time and eternity, on the other hand an emerging modern sense of secular time increasingly pushed the transcendent reference to the margins. Yet the social effect in each of these tendencies is similar. The temporal realm with its particular ordering of time and authority ends up providing its own justifications, whether by a kind of metaphysical confusion or by a moralizing and utilitarian logic. On this view the process of secularization should be seen as a shift in the means of justifying structural inequality and reproducing hierarchical social relations, not entirely as a radical break with the preceding era.

Thus, in the social imaginary of the "direct access society" with its flattened, naturalized, and homogeneous portrayal of time, the justifications for relationships of domination have shifted. A hierarchy based on one's privileged position vis-à-vis the eternal order is replaced by a hierarchy of possession. A set of mediations based upon one's relationship to key persons and institutions is exchanged for a new kind of

[249] Harvey, pp. 252, 258.
[250] Ibid., Ch. 5, pas. 41 and 43.

mediated access through the possession of capital resources. This new hierarchy and system of mediated social relations, however, fails to recognize itself as such. Moving away from the imposition of eternal hierarchies on the temporal sphere mediated through the observance of "higher times," the "ontic" grounding of difference and domination at the rise of modernity has become naturalized and moralized. First, on the mistaken assumption of a primal equality of access to property and market, vast inequalities among relevant political persons (namely European men) can be rationalized as a simple failure of individual appropriation. Second, inequalities and relationships of domination can be chalked up to the weaker natures of the subordinated, namely women and the colonized and enslaved populations of the global south. Thus, the power dynamics that issue in the continuation of a severely hierarchical and indeed mediated social order are masked by the rhetoric of direct access and the supposed just desert of those who have not cultivated the proper disciplined work ethic or who lack the requisite moral capacities by nature.

Time-Space Compression and Social Acceleration

Some key problems noted in the previous chapter, particularly around income inequality come into view when placed along side this moral order. In addition to the mystifying of inequality however, this new approach to time, along with technological advances, issues in the radical reorganizing of the labor force in order to secure the more efficient turnover of capital. This issues in various moments of what Harvey calls "time-space compression." According to Harvey, such compression is driven by the need to ward off crises of over-accumulation, where a surplus of capital lies alongside a surplus of labor with no way to bring them together in economically productive fashion. To meet the challenge of these crises, new models of production and consumption need to be

created in order to maintain the dynamics of capital circulation and profit extraction. The key means by which the problem of over-accumulation has been addressed, according to Harvey, is by finding spatial and temporal means of displacing excess supply. Since a major barrier to the re-investment of capital supply is in the time lag involved in production, transportation, and consumption, a key factor in warding of crises of over-accumulation is in the acceleration of social processes. Harvey notes three major phases of time-space compression that have shaped modern economic life: nineteenth century industrialization, the Fordist-Keynesian period of the early to mid-twentieth century, and the current post-Fordist period of flexible accumulation. While Harvey distinguishes between crises of time-space economic organization in mid-nineteenth century industrialization and early to mid-twentieth century Fordism, I will treat these two together in light of their strong similarities over and against the current period of flexible accumulation. Harvey's description of these moments will shed a great deal of light on the "pathologies of work" I have identified in the previous chapter.

Industrial Time-Space Organization and the Fordist-Keynesian Compromise

Industrialization, according to Harvey, was a particular response to Enlightenment notions of space-time organization. The rationalizing of space and time that characterized new forms of coordinated management of the state and its resources also comes to characterize the organization of production and distribution. Competition between states for economic prowess "created pressure to rationalize and co-ordinate the space and time of economic activity."[251] This begins to lead toward what Harvey calls the annihilation of space through time. Space is a challenge to be overcome in the efficient administration of the state and expansion of mercantile activities. The "friction"

[251] Harvey, p. 259.

imposed by space, whether for communication, military movements, production or trade needed to be managed to increase the competitive advantage of political and economic units. To achieve this end space is first constructed as absolute space, fixed on a grid and parceled out on the basis of its specific function as spaces of administration, production, private property, public commons, and national transport networks. This totalizing construction allows for new kinds of temporal representation of space such as assigning fixed times of specific activity in certain places, the simultaneous coordination of movements and events in different places, and calculating and attempting to accelerate movements across space. In other words, fixing spaces on a rational grid allows political and economic entities to organize and accelerate social processes with increasing precision.

This objectifying stance toward space and time that sought competitive advantage through increasing efficiency and acceleration had wide ranging implications for the organization of the labor force. The first of these can be seen in the detailed division of labor that attended the rise of industrial capitalism. While the *social division of labor* is a phenomenon which characterizes all forms of human society, the detailed division of labor processes into discrete and repeatable single operations is a historical novelty that arises first in the disciplined time environments of industrial capitalism.[252] Adam Smith gives us the classical rationale for this breaking down of labor processes noting in particular the time saved from focusing each worker on the repetition of a single task. Like the mapping of the state for purposes of coordination and efficient administration, the spaces of production are similarly fragmented and ordered according to distinct operations. The centralized control of the labor process by inserting individual workers

[252] Braverman, p. 50.

into fixed spatial coordinates associated with specific tasks facilitates an acceleration of the production process and minimizes the spatial friction involved in moving from one task to the next. Thus the time and space involved in the labor process contract for each worker, or to use Harvey's language they become compressed.

This process leads to the widespread deskilling of the labor force and the separation of thinking from doing in one's work I have already examined. Here, however, I would like to simply note how these kinds of management techniques relate to the particular representation of time I have described above. Yet I need to add one more piece to the analysis before I can do so. It is important to note that until the end of the eighteenth century the new forms of labor discipline tied to more precise time measurement remained circumscribed within the regulatory policies of the mercantile state. Taking over a semblance of the guild system from the Middle Ages, "The mercantilist was concerned with the development of the resources of the country, including full employment, through trade and commerce."[253] As Karl Polanyi has pointed out, the idea that labor power could be subject to market forces as a commodity in its own right was a novelty of the nineteenth century. For the first time on a wide scale labor power was viewed objectively as simply one more element to be bought and sold on the market and thus subject to the calculations of supply and demand.[254]

Thus, the time discipline of industrial labor, with its imperative for acceleration, becomes firmly tied to the monetary calculation of private investors who controlled labor processes. In 1832 Charles Babbage extends the Smithian logic for the detailed division of labor beyond mere efficiency of production to include the driving down of wages

[253] Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (New York: Rinehart and Company Inc., 1944), p. 71.
[254] Ibid., pp. 70-72.

through intentional deskilling. In a chapter of his *On the Economy of Machinery and Manufactures* entitled "On the Division of Labor," Babbage writes:

> That the master manufacturer, by dividing the work to be executed into different processes, each requiring different degrees of skill or of force, can purchase exactly that precise quantity of both which is necessary for each process; whereas, if the whole work were executed by one workman, that person must possess sufficient skill to perform the most difficult, and sufficient strength to execute the most laborious, of the operations into which the art is divided.[255]

The full scale commodification of labor power and labor time reduces the degree to which its use is "organized according to the needs and desires of those who sell it" and renders it increasingly subject to the interests of employers whose "special and permanent interest" it is to "cheapen this commodity."[256] Acceleration in labor processes and new technologies to facilitate such acceleration are now bound to a vision of time wholly subordinated to monetary calculation. Increasing surpluses in production and decreasing the turnover time of capital investment become *the* key factors in organizing labor.

Of course, workers also discovered the utility of clock time and the density of laborers in industrial spaces as sources of their own struggle against such labor disciplines. They could do so, however, only by conceding to the commodified form of labor and working within its rules. Thompson captures this poignantly when he writes:

> The first generation of factory workers were taught by their masters the importance of time; the second generation formed their short-time committees in the ten-hour movement; the third generation struck for overtime or time-and-a-half. They had accepted the categories of their employers and learned to fight back within them. They had learned their lesson, that time is money, only too well.[257]

In the United States, for instance, the political struggles of the Progressive Era and the eventual adopting of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 demonstrate the new found

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[255] Quoted from Braverman, p. 55.
[256] Ibid., p. 57.
[257] Thompson, p. 390.

clout of organized labor that was partly enabled by the industrial organization of the workforce. Yet these changes, which finally issued in the forty-hour work week, minimum wage standards, child labor laws and over-time pay, were in part a pyrrhic victory, as they were pegged to another form of commodified time, namely the economic utility of mass consumption.

As Harvey notes, well before the Fair Labor Standards Act made decent wages and the forty-hour work week a matter of law, Henry Ford had already discovered the importance of good pay and sufficient leisure time as drivers of economic growth. Ford's vision for instituting his five-dollar, eight-hour work day as early as 1914 was the creation of a class of workers with enough time and money to consume the mass-produced products of large corporate entities, including his own of course. Ford achieved the excess productive capacity to offer these benefits in pay and leisure time, however, by perfecting the centralized and rational control of industrial labor through assembly line production. This production model required large-scale and long-term investments in fixed capital resources. Such resources included machinery intended to produce mass quantities of relatively stable product lines. By flowing the work to the worker via conveyor belt Ford further rationalized the space of labor and achieved large gains in the acceleration of production. Thus, a new round of time-space compression and de-skilling in work discipline changed the playing field once again. Here trade unions cooperated with management in enforcing the new labor discipline, conceding the increased routinization and acceleration of work processes in exchange for monetary gains and extra leisure time for the workforce.[258]

[258] Harvey, p. 134.

This kind of production model did not take root everywhere right off the bat, but was expanded into an all out international effort in the post-war period. Yet Ford's corporate vision for mass production and consumption couldn't achieve its aims on its own, as the Great Depression would prove. This would require the cooperation of corporate entities with an intervening state to prop up and maintain effective demand. First in the New Deal era, and then in the post-war economic boom, large-scale Fordist style production was matched by a Keynesian role for the state. Given the long-term and fixed investment in productive capacity required by Fordism, the state was needed to ensure relatively stable and long-term consumer demand in order to ward off crises of over-accumulation. While Harvey notes a wide variety in strategies across the emerging global economy, key roles for the Keynesian state were: 1) to maintain the public infrastructure needed to facilitate mass consumption; 2) by heavily investing in these to help ensure near full employment; 3) to ensure flourishing middle class demand through redistributive policies focused on social security, healthcare, education, and housing; and 4) to focus monetary policy in ways that would encourage the availability of new kinds of consumer and business credit.[259]

As I noted in the preceding chapter, the post-war period issued in a kind of compromise, a cooperative equilibrium between corporations, the state, and labor. The economic boom that ensued was driven by large bureaucratic corporate entities that required significant numbers of blue-collar and white-collar employees to manage the production and marketing of mass-produced commodities. These entities were built on long-range investments in fixed capital resources and the rational planning of every facet of a commodity's life cycle (including marketing, pricing, and planned obsolescence).

[259] Ibid., pp. 134-36.

Thus, on the business side, this compromise enabled large stable organizations to create a context for the upwardly mobile "company man." The state assisted in creating this context by mediating and enforcing wage agreements and maintaining certain labor standards. The bureaucratic management of economic life on the business side was also matched on the state side with investments and monetary policies intended to sustain consumer demand.

This latter role for the state depended upon calculations of economic growth and continued technological acceleration of production. As Harvey notes, the capacity of the Keynesian state to provide public goods and sustain demand depended upon a certain kind of temporal strategy.[260] A key feature of this temporal strategy was the pulling of future economic growth into present investments through debt-financed interventions. A similar strategy is at play in the expansion of consumer debt. Future earnings and future expansion in productive capacity in terms of GDP are calculated and rendered present through finance. This is yet another distinct form of the compression of time on the basis of monetary calculation, one which depends upon an ideal of ceaseless economic growth and technological advance.[261] Nevertheless, according to Harvey the debt crisis and crippling inflation of the 1970s revealed the incapacity of this Keynesian temporal strategy to contain the inherent contradictions of capitalism.[262] Here it should also be reiterated that the "golden era of employment" during this period was also built upon the following: unique post-war economic conditions such as a tight labor market resulting

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[260] Ibid., p. 139.
[261] This compression of the future into the present, however, remained heavily regulated and tied to long range planning. Thus, the degree of compression involved here pales in comparison to the finance driven compression of time that would ensue with the deregulation of the financial industry from the 1980's and into today.
[262] Ibid., p. 142.

from wartime deaths and high demand created by wartime destruction; a permanent underclass of workers who were largely excluded from the benefits of unionized labor contracts, namely immigrant populations, women, and minorities in the U.S.; the further rationalizing, de-skilling and managerial control of work; and the beginnings of the global domination of U.S. economic interests in the Third World.[263]

It is not that this new economic model did not issue in significant gains for many workers, the ameliorating of social ills (such as the exploitation of children) in the United States, and the explosion of the American middle-class. It is rather that these trends remained chiefly tied to monetary calculation, such that once their sheer economic utility is no longer apparent, there is little in the moral imagination surrounding economy and work to mitigate the wholesale reversal of these efforts. This is precisely what we have seen since the debt crisis and inflation of the 1970s brought the Fordist-Keynesian economic and employment boom to an end.

The Regime of Flexible Accumulation and Social Acceleration

While a whole host of factors contributed to the economic crises of the 1970s, in the end many pointed to the rigidities inherent in the large-scale, long-term nature of economic planning inherent in the Fordist-Keynesian compromise. These economies of scale were predicated on geographically fixed and monolithically calibrated sites for production, a stable national base for consumer markets, large government spending commitments to be funded out of growth, strong labor contracts, and massive integrated bureaucratic corporate management structures. Attempts to recalibrate the global economy in the wake of the fiscal and inflationary crisis of the 1970s have attempted to

[263] Harvey, pp. 138-39.

dismantle these components to create more flexible models for economic growth and, indeed, a shorter time horizon for the turn around on capital investment.

In spite of the technological acceleration in production, transport and communication achieved during the Fordist regime, and in spite of innovations in finance that allowed future gains to be spent in the present, the long range planning inherent in an economy built around mass-produced durable goods was too rigid to respond to market saturation and stagnating growth. The remedies applied to this perceived rigidity have led us to the post-Fordist, globalized and financialized economy that we now inhabit. This period of "flexible accumulation," as Harvey calls it, is characterized by a radical round of time-space compression, where global spaces and cycles of production and consumption are calibrated to maximize the movement and rapid turnover of capital investment. This new economy features a distinct disciplining of time and space that shifts from long-range planning tied to mass-produced commodities to carefully timed and marketed niche commodities, from stable national bases for production and consumption to free flows of capital and trade across the globe, and from a highly regulated financial industry to one characterized by an explosion in the creation of "paper capital." The unprecedented degree of time-space compression that has attended these latest shifts in economic life poses novel challenges for any practical response.

The shrinking time horizons of economic calculation are mirrored in social life more broadly in what some sociologists refer to as "social acceleration." This impacts the experience of time in more and more areas of every day life, particularly as more and more areas of life are becoming subject to the rationale of commodity markets.[264] The

[264] Robert Reich for instance argues that the new economy turns the whole self into a marketable commodity. He also notes the way relationships are being commodified as features of friendship

speed of modern life has implications for our relationship to our work, our families, broader communities, and the goods that we produce and purchase. In its extreme form this issues in an obsession with the present, an atrophy of memory and capacities to project a coherent future. This is what some have referred to as the schizoid character of capitalism.[265] In its less exaggerated but often equally devastating form, the acceleration of social life issues in other "temporal disorders" such as anxiety, depression, addiction, insomnia, and attention deficit disorder to name a few.[266] While each stage in the transformation of capitalism has issued in periods of time-space compression with its attendant disorders, the technological advancements of the last few decades have accelerated moments of experience and annihilated spatial boundaries like never before. From finance to Facebook, food to fashion, factories to film the time horizon of a given transaction, decision or activity have drastically contracted in contemporary life.

This contraction is a major driver of capitalism in an age of "flexible accumulation." When time is money, the contraction of time increases the possibilities for money to reproduce itself. Consumption is built around the rapid obsolescence of commodities, whether of technologies or fashions. The ultimate commodity on this view is experience itself, as the experience becomes "obsolete" as soon as it passes. Thus there is an increase in the commercializing of experience in the service sector and in the production of spectacles such as film, sporting events, and musical productions.[267]

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and family are increasingly being farmed out to the growing service sector (See *The Future of Success,* particularly chapters 7-10); See also Michael J. Sandel, *What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2013).

[265] See for instance Gilles Deleuze, et al., *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis, MN: The University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

[266] Rosa, p. 35; Elissa Marder, *Dead Time: Temporal Disorders in the Wake of Modernity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), p. 134.

[267] Harvey, p. 285; See also Rosa, pp. 91-92.

This new round of acceleration, tied to an extreme identification of time with money, has exacerbated old problems in the organization of labor even as it has created new ones. These problems continue to reinforce social hierarchies built around the moral evaluation of time, labor, and possession I developed in the first part of this chapter. The "post-Fordist" economic configuration adds to these issues a new and radically flexible organization of production and the labor force that has lead to the large degree of employment insecurity across the globe that I have already examined. It requires new spaces amenable to fast and cheap production, as well as those capable of mass consumption. This need for "spatial fixes" to the problem of over-accumulation has provided a key rationale for the removal of environmental and labor protections around the globe (euphemistically labeled "barriers" to trade or capital investment), and in the creation of sub-contracted global production networks often operated under sweatshop conditions.

Additionally, the new economy results in a widespread increase in the creation of "paper" or fictitious capital in futures, bonds, and debt-backed securities that allow for a more radical buying and selling of projected future value in the present moment. As Tanner has noted, this deregulation of finance has created a new self-enclosed system where investment and return can take place completely independent from the real economy.[268] The speed of these transactions in computer-based trading has accelerated to the point that billions of dollars can be created and wiped out in milliseconds, highlighting the unprecedented volatility of contemporary economic life. As some have remarked, this new trading on the future happens at such a pace that it can't rightly be said to happen within a human time horizon at all. Capital formation (and destruction)

[268] Tanner, *Economy of Grace,* p. 123.

has in a sense floated free of time altogether.[269] The march of economic progress moves ever on, discounting the past even as it collapses the future into the present in ever shrinking moments of speculation regarding its monetary value. As we have seen, the privileging of finance over earned income has driven many of the pathologies of work that we now face, creating volatile economic cycles, regular periods of heightened unemployment, and incredible wealth disparities across the globe.

Conclusion

Time is not simply a natural phenomenon within which humankind lives and moves. It is rather a socially constructed, historically shifting, and politically contestable factor within human experience and the organization of human relationships. As such it is frequently a site for the exercise of power and discipline and as I have argued for the structuring of inequality. The shift from the social domination of the Middle Ages with its collapse of eternal authority into the temporal authority of kings and clerics, to the modern period with its moralizing and naturalizing of inequality included major shifts in the understanding of time. As we have seen, Christian daily prayer could be drawn into such ideological uses of time to reinforce clerical power or to justify the moral disciplining of the poor through constant work. How then might daily prayer be interpreted and strategically drawn upon to counter these uses? How might its ritual features and indeed the divine-human interaction they embody call into question the modern commodification of time in particular and the dominance of waged work over human life that comes along with it? It is to these considerations that we now turn.

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[269] John Urry, "Speeding Up and Slowing Down," in *High-Speed Society: Social Acceleration, Power, and Modernity,* eds. Hartmut Rosa and William E. Scheuerman (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009), p. 189.

Chapter 4:
Covenant, Memory and Hope: The Interruptive Force of Christian Daily Prayer

Introduction

Time, like everything in the created order, is good. The goodness particular to time consists in its setting the context for divine-human encounter and the neighborly love that springs from it. Daily time becomes the site of free activity, exchange, and mutual enjoyment only when it is freed from the burden of carrying in its own immanent structures the full weight of our ultimate good. As I have attempted to show in the previous chapter, this disposition towards time runs counter both to the "homogeneous, empty time" of modernity, as well as the over-identification of eternity (viz., the Kingdom of God) with temporal ecclesial structures in the high Middle Ages. The latter point was emphasized in order to distinguish the current project from a theological anti-modernity that seems to pine for the days of a dominant Christian past.

The particular problem we are facing now, however, is not the over-identification of eternity with sacred temporality, but rather an extreme form of forgetfulness with respect to eternity. Along with this forgetfulness of a transcendent frame comes a forgetfulness of history itself. As Walter Brueggemann has argued, contemporary constructs of time in consumer society are characterized by the dual problem of *amnesia* and *despair*. By banishing *memory* of an ultimate beginning of time in creation and *hope* in the end or consummation of time in God, modern temporality collapses all of time into an ever-diminishing if not entirely "absolutized" present.[270] Incapable of deep social memory or hope for a radically different future, our hope rests now in forgetting the past

[270] Walter Brueggeman, *Texts Under Negotiation: The Bible and Postmodern Imagination* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), pp. 28 and 49.

and driving for new innovations in time: discipline, technology, and productivity that can save us only by producing increasing quantities of the same. In such a context human work becomes unhinged from its divine origin, *telos,* and limit. Losing its proper limit and orientation in these peculiar ways, work takes on the pathological patterns discussed in Chapter 2.[271]

This chapter takes up the argument that daily prayer is a form of ritual activity that calls to mind the memory of God's acts in creation and redemption and turns the rising and setting of the sun into a symbol of eschatological hope. The movements of the sun are not simply a natural phenomenon within which our daily activities are circumscribed. Rather the passage of the day tells a story of God's in-breaking love, of God's unmerited gifts in creation and redemption, and ultimately of God's desire to renew the world through Christ's death, resurrection, and coming again. As I will show the impetus that stood behind the articulation of this ritual practice, whether in liturgical or domestic devotional form, was a desire to carry the narrative of redemption through the day in one's own bodily movements and in the focused attention of one's mind and affections. This infuses the day with interruptions of memory and hope, pauses that put daily time and our activities in it in their place. I will argue that the narrative justifications tied to inherited fixed times for prayer, the comportments of the body enjoined, the textual themes, and prayers offered throughout the course of daily prayer create intentional spaces of *anamnetic* and *eschatological interruption* that have the

[271] Again, it is not my goal to argue that there was once a time when work was treated perfectly within the right divine limits of memory and hope and that modernity has somehow destroyed this proper orientation. It is rather that problems in today's world of work take on a peculiar shape in relation to modern temporal constructs.

potential to disrupt the patterns of acceleration and commodification of human effort described in the previous chapters.[272]

And so it is that I have chosen in this chapter to examine the deep structures of Christian daily prayer that lie in the ancient memory of the Christian faith. My decision to draw upon an eclectic range of ancient sources in examining the interruptive potential of this practice does not lie in some naïve hope to return to a pristine past. In fact much of the impetus for my own work here has been drawn from contemporary re-writing of daily prayer practices in the liturgies of Iona, Northumbria, and Taizé, as well as renewed forms of breviary for individual daily prayer like those produced by Phyllis Tickle and Maxwell Johnson.[273] I draw upon the ancient traditions here because of their potential to challenge our contemporary assumptions, to make strange our experience of time, and thus to enliven the ongoing remaking of Christian practice in the present already begun by the liturgies and prayer books just mentioned.

As I will show, the imaginative warrants offered for distinct fixed hours of prayer, the postures of the body offered by various prayer manuals, and the textual themes fixed for different times of day in these early centuries speak the memory of Christ and the saints into everyday life and point to the renewal of all life in resurrection hope. At its

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[272] The category of "eschatological interruption" as I will use it throughout this chapter has been inspired in part by the work of Johann Baptist Metz, particularly in his *Faith in History and Society,* trans. J. Matthew Ashley (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Co., 2011), first published as *Glaube in Geschichte und Gesellschaft: Studien zu einer praktischen Fundamentaltheologie* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald Verlag, 1977). In what follows I have opted to draw more heavily on Karl Barth's understanding of the Sabbath and its relation to prayer because Barth also uses the language of interruption, because of the explicit relation between Sabbath and work, and because the character of his theology in general bears a strong relation to my development of the concept as well. However, I would be remiss were I not to acknowledge the influence Metz has had on my thought on these points, even if here his work stands mostly in the background.

[273] Phyllis Tickle, *The Divine Hours* (New York: Double Day, published in three volumes in 2000, 2000, and 2001 respectively); Maxwell E. Johnson, *Benedictine Daily Prayer: A Short Breviary* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2005).

best the Christian faith draws upon time as a symbolic resource to articulate something that transcends time. It thus uses time sacramentally. The passage of the year, week, and even the day is made to mediate an encounter with the risen Christ. This is captured nicely in Schmemman's recovery of the ancient depiction of the Lord's day as the *eighth day* (we will have occasion to reflect further on this piece of Schmemman's work below). This day stands symbolically outside the regular course of the seven-day week, even as it uses the course of the week to articulate its reality. While I draw upon the language of sacramentality here, I should note that I have little sympathy with a kind of generic sacramentalism. The sacramental potential of the created material order is of a secondary and derivative character, as I have argued elsewhere.[274] Christ is the sacrament of God's encounter with the world upon which all other sacramental uses of creation depend. The primary sacrament of Christ's body is made alive in the here and now by the Spirit in the assembly of the Church through baptism and Eucharist. It is in light of these central sites of sacramental encounter grounded in the incarnation – assembly, bath, and meal – that the Christian faith learns to extend a sacramental logic to other forms of embodied symbolic practice. It is in this sense that I call the practice of daily prayer a sacramental use of time, a sacramentalizing of the movements of the sun.[275] That is, it extends the encounter of the resurrected Christ in the meal of the assembly on the "eighth day" into the experience of everyday life.

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[274] Kyle R. Tau, "The Worshipping Self: Receptivity and Agency in Christian Worship," *Doxology* 28 (2011), pp. 20-21.

[275] I draw this language from Robert Taft in *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West: The Origins of the Divine Office and its Meaning for Today* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1993), p. 348 and Gregory W. Woolfenden, *Daily Liturgical Prayer: Origins and Theology* (Burlington, VT: 2004), pp. 1-2, 292-93.

This, in particular, is why I have chosen to give extended focus to practices of daily prayer, rather than eschatological features of Christian time in general. The potential to leave the workweek untouched by eschatological interruption is too great if we focus solely on the weekly or yearly pattern. Again, while daily prayer derives its symbolic force from the Lord's day (as the Lord's day derives its force from the Paschal feast), it draws upon the symbolism of the rising and setting sun to speak the resurrection hope into each new day. Thus, there is no time of action, of production, of work, of economic growth, development and exchange that can stand aloof from this eschatological limit.

This is precisely what Barth intends when he argues that Sabbath is *the* defining feature of human life, not simply an exception to a long workweek untouched by the Sabbath orientation. Sabbath is not intended to "recharge our batteries" so we can throw ourselves back into our work with even more reckless abandon during the week. Rather, Sabbath rest and enjoyment of God's gifts and of one another in God is the point, the purpose of all work and it is towards this purpose that work is to be driven. Daily prayer, as I will argue here, is a ritual form that carries the potential to remind us that work and economic life are not goods in and of themselves. Rather, they ought to serve the ends of Sabbath enjoyment and thus point us back to a hope in God's renewal of creation. Separated from this limit, work takes the alienated forms that characterize much economic life today. As we have seen, this alienation is funded by an absolutzing moral logic that justifies the managerial disciplining of the poor and the working class and reinforces vast inequalities.

In what follows I will demonstrate how daily prayer can function as a site of anamnetic and eschatological interruption by extending the gracious and covenanting logic of the Sabbath, refocused through the "eighth day" of Christ's resurrection, into moments of divine encounter throughout the week. I will do so by first drawing upon Barth's discussion of the Sabbath as the origin and goal of all human activity, and then by drawing Barth more squarely into the realm of liturgical theology by placing his account into conversation with the work of Alexander Schmemann. With this interpretive theological lens in place, I will then proceed to an analysis of Christian daily prayer as the practice took shape in the early centuries of the church.

Sabbath as Interruptive Force

Karl Barth takes up the question of the deep structures of time and history in volume three of the *Church Dogmatics* under the doctrine of creation. For Barth creation takes on a genuinely historical character only in recognition of the source and limits to its own temporality. God wills to create in time and in so doing reveals the "temporal" or "historical" character of God's own life. It is not that God is subject to the conditions of time or history, but rather that God contains within God's own Word and work the very basis of creaturely temporality. As Barth argues, God is not:

> non-historical because as the Triune He [*sic*] is in His inner life the basic type and ground of all history. And He is not non-temporal because His eternity is not merely the negation of time, but an inner readiness to create time, because it is supreme and absolute time, and therefore the source of our time, relative time.[276]

[276] *CD* III.1, p. 68. All citations for the *Church Dogmatics* will be drawn from the recent study edition published in London and New York by T&T Clark in 2010. Page numbers, however, will refer to the original 14 volume set which are also noted in margins of the study edition. For a full treatment of these themes in Barth's work see Adrian Langdon, *God the Eternal Contemporary: Trinity, Eternity, and Time in Karl Barth* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2012).

God's act in creation reveals God's desire to be with and for another being alongside God and "time begins as the form of existence of this other."[277] The "time of creation" or the "history of creation" refers to this gracious act of God to bestow on this other "alongside and outside" God's self this particular temporal form of existence *and* in so doing to accept this arena of time and history as the site of God's partnership and dealings with the creature. In carrying out God's purposes for creation God has to do with humankind in its temporality and thus history is necessary as one of the presuppositions or "external bases" of God's covenant with humankind.[278]

Time thus receives its limit and goal in the gracious act of God to "lend" temporal existence to creaturely reality. However, the "time of creation", which was intended to issue directly in the history of the covenant, instead issues in fallen time or "the time of man as isolated from God."[279] In the sinful rejection of genuine creaturely existence before God, time takes on the character of an aimless movement with no center. It is time without meaning, appearing both finite as each moment passes away into the next, yet also infinite possessing no beginning or end. Describing this distorted sense of time Barth writes:

> This is how time appears and must appear when it is no longer an order established by God and to be appropriated and acknowledged by man, but a human work and institution. This is the form it must take in the imagination and for the existence of the man who is not content to enjoy and treat it as something loaned to him, but tries to possess and use it as his very own, as the predicate of

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[277] Ibidem.

[278] See in particular *CD* III.1, p. 72. Barth writes, "In the divine plan and purpose actually executed, in the history of the covenant and salvation as it has actually taken place and does take place, we have to do with man as he exists in time. Time is undoubtedly the sphere of this history. Since this is the case, and since the covenant and its history are the ratification and renewal of creation on the one hand, and creation is the presupposition of the covenant on the other, it follows from this that the temporality of creation and its history is a necessity." Thus, I would argue that it is particularly with respect to time and history that Barth will proceed with his argument under the heading "Creation as the External Basis of the Covenant" in §41.2.

[279] Ibid., p. 72

> his thinking, willing and existence. As the time of lost man it can only be lost time.[280]

Loosed from its limit and goal, time becomes the arena in which humankind restlessly seeks to secure its existence through its own work, by becoming the master and possessor of its own time.

In contrast to this distorted time is time characterized by the covenant of grace. In the aftermath of human turning away from God, the history of the covenant unfolds alongside the lost time of human rebellion. Yet the renewal of time in the covenant of grace established and completed in Jesus Christ is the counterpart to the history of creation and stands in continuity with it. The time of grace "is the perfect counterpart of the time of creation. Like it, and in contrast to 'our' empty time, it is fulfilled time."[281] The key feature in Barth's thought here that establishes the meaning and purpose of true creaturely temporality and of the continuity between the time of creation and the time of grace is his treatment of the Sabbath commandment.[282]

For Barth it is of upmost significance that the Sabbath commandment is given immediately after humankind is created. In the first creation narrative the creation of the cosmos is styled after "the building of a temple, the arrangement and construction of

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[280] Ibid., p. 72.
[281] Ibid., p. 75.
[282] In general there is a lacuna in the scholarship regarding Barth's depiction of the Sabbath commandment. For a very general summary account see James Brown, "Karl Barth's Doctrine of the Sabbath", *Scottish Journal of Theology* 19 (1966), pp. 409-25 and "The Doctrine of the Sabbath in Karl Barth's *Church Dogmatics", Scottish Journal of Theology* 20 (1967), pp. 1-24. Matthew Meyer Boulton makes use of Barth's doctrine of the Sabbath in *God Against Religion: Rethinking Christian Theology Through Worship* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), pp. 184-94 but here he focuses primarily on implications of a final eschatological Sabbath rest for the *end* of liturgy and prayer as opposed to the implications of Sabbath for current ethical practice. Finally, A.J. Cocksworth discusses Barth's understanding of the Sabbath as a means to create space within Barth's theology for contemplative prayer practices, of which Barth is typically critical, in "Attending to the Sabbath: An Alternative Direction in Karl Barth's Theology of Prayer", in *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 13:3 (July 2011), pp. 251-271.

which is determined both in detail and as a whole by the liturgy it is to serve."[283] That liturgy is the freedom, joy, and celebration that are to characterize humankind's covenant relationship to the creator, and it is ultimately established in God's invitation for humankind to share in God's rest and delight on the seventh day. While the sixth day sees the completion of creation with the arrival of humankind, God's own image as a kind of summit of God's creative act, it is in fact the seventh day that is the crowning point of all creation. God's rest, God's "joyful satisfaction with that which has taken place and has been completed as creation," is the goal toward which creation was established, the liturgy for which it was fashioned.[284]

As the end of the creative act the Sabbath is also the starting point and basis for all subsequent history. Thus, before humankind is to take up any task, it is first summoned, invited, indeed commanded to participate in "God's Sabbath freedom, Sabbath rest, and Sabbath joy" in delighting over a created world that is very good.[285] The upshot of this command following directly upon the creation of humankind, writes Barth, is that "It is not man entering upon the work appointed at his creation who is to be the hero of the seventh and last day of creation….It is not man who brings the history of creation to an end, nor is it he who ushers in the subsequent history." Rather, it is "God's rest which is the conclusion of the one and the beginning of the other."[286] History is not an achievement or discovery of human work but a task set upon by humankind only after prior recognition that it is God who establishes, shepherds, and brings to fulfillment this history. Before humankind is sent into the unfolding of the history of the covenant,

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[283] Ibid., p. 98.
[284] Ibid., p. 98.
[285] Ibidem.
[286] Ibidem.

before humankind sets about carrying out the other commands of God through an active life of neighbor love, it is called first to marvel at the grace of God which invites it to rest and live in freedom and joy. It is this relationship, this mutual rest and delight, which establishes the positive limit and boundary to human history and human achievement within it. It is a recognition that our lives are established and secured by a sovereign creator who loves creation and seeks a responsive covenant love from humankind. Thus, in the creation narratives this act of recognition is the first command given by God, the first act to be performed by humankind – which is in fact not an act *per se* but a receiving of the freedom, joy, and celebration offered by God. Importantly, this is not a rest from some prior work, a needed refreshment after the completion of some arduous task. It is simply a rest that is to define and characterize human life, which is established and justified solely on the basis of God's loving intentions for it. Creation has thus, according to Barth, always had its beginning in the gospel, which is proclaimed first before any law.[287]

Thus, for Barth the fundamental determination of human life is derived from the joy, freedom and celebration of Sabbath observance. Not that every single day is to be spent in Sabbath rest, for humankind is commanded also to work in living out its covenant relation to God in history. But this command to work is relativized by the prior command for humanity to first rest in enjoyment of God's grace; to recognize that its very existence and justification is dependent upon the prior action of God and can never be grounded in any achievement of human working, willing, or self-positing. The work of humankind and the temporal span of the week have their beginning and end, their

[287] Ibid., p. 219. John Webster highlights the role Sabbath rest plays in Barth's theology in establishing the "relationship between prevenient grace and human activity," in *Barth's Ethics of Reconciliation* (Cambridge: CUP, 1995), p. 79.

fundamental orientation and limit from the freedom, joy and celebration of Sabbath rest. These working days are to be permeated by this orientation such that the freely offered love of God, which has its temporal sign in the particular celebration of Sabbath rest, extends outward in love of neighbor and thus characterizes our daily activities.[288]

In fact, at several places Barth explicitly links Sabbath, divine service and prayer with love of God, while tying human activity and service in the world to love of neighbor. For Barth these two are not to be merely dissolved into one another, as the peculiar force and significance of each is lost if one is seen to carry the whole content of the other.[289] Yet neither can the two be separated without love of God becoming religious flight from the world, or love of neighbor one more attempt at human self-justification. Instead, the communal character of joy, celebration and freedom that characterizes the "renouncing faith" of Sabbath observance, that draws all human activity and inactivity into a mutual recognition of the *non-instrumental* grounding of creation in God's love and delight in the creature, sets a limit, a boundary, a "solemn interruption" for the work and service which is to be carried out during the week.[290] The recognition that all persons are subjects of God's love and delight, that all persons fundamentally have their end in the

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[288] Ibid., p. 214, *CD* III.4, p. 72.

[289] See for instance *CD* III.4, pp. 48-49 where Barth seeks to counter Albert Ritschl's claim that "Love to God has no sphere of operation apart from love to brethren" (*Unterricht in d. chr. Rel.,* 1875, §6) by writing, "Though a man cannot for a moment withdraw from his obligation to his neighbor by fleeing to a special religious sphere, and though there exist neither general human undertakings nor particular pious practices by which he could and should gain, augment, or preserve the divine good-pleasure, yet only on the basis of a very strained exegesis of Mk. 12:29f and its parallels could we say that the commandment to love our neighbor in some sense absorbs that to love God and takes away its independent quality. The truth is rather that the double command to love points us to two spheres of activity which are relatively – no more, but very clearly so – distinct. Alongside work there is also prayer; alongside practical love for one's neighbor there is also divine service in the narrower sense; alongside activity in state and community there is also that in the congregation; alongside the other sciences there is also theology."

[290] *CD* III.4, pp. 50-51.

joy, freedom, and celebration of Sabbath rest, allows our activity in the midst of the week to take on the character of genuine and freely offered love. As I will argue below, such a view must see the person first from a non-instrumental point of view and thus subordinate the ends of work to the good and flourishing of concrete human persons. It is precisely this non-instrumental stance toward one's neighbor that is obliterated where waged work dominates human social relations and the distribution of life's necessities.

Sabbath is the "continually recurring interruption" of the fullness of God's time within the relative time of creaturely life. It is a recognition that all time is given on loan from God. Barth is clear that the Sabbath day gains its general or universal force as a sign of the fulfillment of time, only by being celebrated as a particular temporal interruption during the week.[291] Thus, the Sabbath as a celebration on one specific day has a unique character distinct from the other days. Yet, through its peculiar celebration on a fixed day, the Sabbath defines all other days. As he writes:

> The holy day is certainly a special day. But we have seen how in its very particularity it is a sign of that which is the meaning of all days. By it they are all bounded and therefore defined just as the history of salvation and the end is in its particular time the secret, limit and determination of all the history of all times.[292]

With this last point Barth augments the interruptive force of Sabbath observance by tying it to God's interruption of human history in Christ's resurrection. Sabbath, as a particular weekly observance, is a sign that "corresponds to the great interruption of the everyday of world history by Easter Day."[293] Seen from this specifically Christological perspective, Sabbath derives its unique characteristics of freedom, joy and celebration through the

[291] Ibid., p. 64.
[292] Ibid., p. 71.
[293] Ibid., p. 65.

memory of Jesus' resurrection and the eschatological hope in the consummation of God's work, which sets an end and limit to our time.[294]

Through its particular eschatological content, the Sabbath contains within itself the secret meaning of every day. It does so, however, not by instituting a new *continuity* between our time and work with God's time and work (not even as a continuity between the sacred time and work of the Church), but by maintaining its recurring *interruptive* force. Here our time is constantly renewed and reoriented through divine encounter with the time of salvation history. In recognizing the relationship between the Sabbath and "the particularity of God's omnipotent grace," Barth writes:

> …we shall understand at once, and not without a certain awe, the radical importance, the almost monstrous range of the Sabbath commandment. By the distinction of this day, by the summons to celebrate it according to its meaning, this command sets man and the human race in terribly concrete confrontation with the Creator and Lord, with his particular will and Word and work, and with the goal, determined and set by Him, of the being of all creatures, which means also the inexorable end of the form of their present existence. This command is total. It discovers and claims man in his depths and from his utmost bounds.[295]

Sabbath observance thus gives temporal shape to human-divine encounter, which requires that all human willing and working, all human "self-understanding in every conceivable form be radically transcended, limited and relativized" by faith in the God who alone establishes the good end of creaturely existence.[296]

If the Sabbath sets a universal limit and definition to each day only by its particular observance on a fixed day, so too is its interruptive force extended into the everyday week only through a particular activity, prayer. This, of course, brings us to the point: the connection between Sabbath rest and prayer that Barth draws at this stage in

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[294] Ibid., pp. 56-57, and 68.
[295] Ibid., p. 57.
[296] Ibidem.

the *Church Dogmatics* is fundamental for my work here. According to Barth, it is through the act of prayer that we are reminded of the Sabbath, and thus eschatological orientation of all temporality in the midst of the working week. "Prayer," writes Barth, "as a particular act…repeats and represents the holy day in the midst of the week."[297] Prayer, like Sabbath is not merely a general orientation toward all activity (viz., maintaining a prayerful attitude through the course of the day). It is this, too, but it gains this general influence only in being observed through particular acts of prayer. The Apostle Paul's admonition to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17) therefore should not be taken as an excuse to retreat from practicing prayer in particular instances. In this saying, as well as in his exhortation that Christians be continually devoted to prayer (Rom. 12:12), Paul "was not merely pointing to a perennial attitude of prayer, but also to the fact that the concrete activity of the community and of each individual Christian in observance of the holy day, may and must have its continuation and concrete correspondence on the work-day."[298] If Sabbath observance is the "continually recurring interruption" of the workweek by God's eschatological vision of freedom, celebration, and rest exhibited and established in Christ's resurrection, so prayer is this "continually recurring interruption" during the workday itself.

Barth expands upon these brief reflections in his *Evangelical Theology: An Introduction.*[299] Here he takes up the relationship between prayer and work. Prayer for Barth must be the first step in learning the proper nature and limits of work. While this has particular implications for the work of theology, Barth will, as we have seen, readily

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[297] Ibid., p. 84 (89).
[298] Ibidem.
[299] Karl Barth, *Evangelical Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979). Originally published as *Einführung in die evangelische Theologie* (Zürich: EVZ-Verlag, 1963).

apply this principle to work more generally.[300] The Benedictine mantra *ora et labor* that features in the title of this dissertation, provides fodder for Barth's reflection here. Prayer is, of course, primary and in it "the hands are most fittingly not moved but folded."[301] Yet, as an active task of turning oneself toward the divine address and offering a responsive gesture, Barth allows that prayer is also, if somewhat paradoxically, a kind of work. Likewise, one's work is not something that is to commence after prayer and leave prayer behind; rather, "Work must be that sort of act that has the manner and meaning of a prayer in all its dimension, relationships and movements."[302]

The proper relationship between prayer and work is once again understood on a parallel with Sabbath. Sabbath creates the possibility for the self-referential and closed-off character of work to be opened up from above and interrupted by divine address. It puts work aside, not to entirely deny its practical necessity "but rather to obtain for (it) precisely the light from above which (it) lack(s)."[303] By providing space for turning away from one's work and turning towards God, the act of prayer is defined in terms that parallel the Sabbath. As Barth argues:

> But what else is such a turning to God than the turning of prayer? For in prayer a man [*sic*] temporarily turns away from his own efforts. This move is necessary precisely for the sake of the duration and continuation of his own work. Every prayer has its beginning when a man puts himself (together with his best and most accomplished work) out of the picture. He leaves himself and his work behind in order once again to recollect that he stands before God….Other activities must retreat behind this one for a while (just as the activities of the week retreat behind the activity of the Sabbath). They do this just in order to be proper activities in their own right. They are disclosed and set in the proper light by prayer.[304]

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[300] For a helpful discussion of the relationship between prayer and theology in Barth see Don E. Saliers, *Worship as Theology: Foretaste of Glory Divine* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994), Ch. 4.
[301] *ET,* p. 160.
[302] Ibidem.
[303] Ibid., p. 162.
[304] Ibid., pp. 162-63.

Here, as in the *Church Dogmatics,* prayer is styled as an extension of the Sabbath into the working day, a relativizing of work through interruptions of divine address and human response. Thus in our work we always start "anew at the beginning," in each week and indeed in each moment of "concrete confrontation with the Creator and Lord, with his particular will and Word and work" in the act of prayer. In prayer we are always making ourselves open to the divine word, encounter, and calling anew. In this way our action in time is lived before God as something always unfolding, and not something settled by one temporal form or another, or captured once and for all in one epoch or another.

Yet it is precisely this relationship between prayer, Sabbath rest and human activity offered as a free response to God's love and reciprocal loving engagement with one's neighbors that is marred in the coercive character of the wage contract. If work takes its limit, orientation and final end from the freedom and delight of Sabbath rest and prayer, then it follows that the activity of humankind in history itself ought to take the character of mutual enjoyment in service to one's neighbors and creation, having been freed from the anxiety of securing and justifying its own continued existence through work. The character of this activity is particularly skewed where anxiety regarding one's survival and one's moral acceptability to one's fellows renders persons subject to the coercive power of enforced work discipline. If the "monstrous range of the Sabbath" extends its character into the very activities persons undertake in their day-to-day lives, we ought to expand the arena during the week in which human activities are not driven by necessity and contractual obligation. Thus, we ought to create more space for activities that are pursued with the spirit of joy, celebration and freely offered love that defines human life distinctively as human *vis-à-vis* the Sabbath commandment.

It is important to note here, as should be evident from the above discussion, that Barth sometimes falls victim to the same problems I have noted in many contemporary theologies of work. At times he applies a very broad meaning to the word "work" equating it generally with "practical love for one's neighbor" or "service in the world." As I argued earlier this kind of analysis threatens to leave the wage system unchallenged as the natural arena in which this "practical love" and "service" are pursued. However, more than any author assessed in the introduction, here Barth radically relativizes the importance of human work and sets significant limits to its true character. By defining its very meaning and end as a human good in and through the freedom, joy and celebration of Sabbath and prayer, Barth challenges the centrality of the intrinsic good of work for work's sake while grounding the ontological determination of human life in the non-instrumental enjoyment of God, neighbor, and world. In so doing he offers some important first steps toward a refusal of work as it is carried out under the auspices of waged employment. While this type of argument is only implied in these paragraphs, as we will see in the following chapter Barth in fact does begin to push his argument more explicitly in this direction latter in *CD* III.4 where he takes up "The Active Life" in §55.3 and "Vocation" in §56.2.[305]

[305] A key and often overlooked feature of §55.3 where Barth eventually takes up a positive assessment of the role of work is that he does so only after marginalizing its importance in the broader active life. While concrete service to one's neighbor and active response to God's calling is required of humankind, work itself is but a secondary piece of this puzzle which is located at the "circumference" of human action (*CD* III.4, p. 517). Again, while Barth continues to oscillate between a general and more specific referent for work, he identifies work technically as that arena of service to neighbor that attends to the "this-worldly" character and needs of human existence. The more critical pieces of Barth's assessment of work that tend more strongly in the direction of a refusal of work are precisely where he is writing within a stricter limitation of his considerations to one's paid profession, a similar kind of limitation to the one I offered at the outset of this project.

Prayer and the Logic of the Eighth Day

Barth gives some clues as to the nature of prayer, ultimately describing the basic form of prayer as petition. This basic form is summed up for Barth in the cry "*Veni, Creator Spiritus!"*[306] Furthermore, it is exemplified in the Lord's Prayer, which consists almost exclusively of petitions.[307] However, on the whole Barth is short on details regarding particular practices of prayer. This liturgical lacuna invites a response in order to more fully examine how it is that prayer can carry the imaginative force of a Sabbath/eschatological interruption into our workaday lives. While, there is a range of possible contemplative or prayer practices that one could analyze for such an end, I have selected here a specific practice of fixed hour daily prayer that crystallized over time into what we commonly refer to as the divine hours or daily office. While not wishing to discount the potential for a wide range of prayer practices to serve this end, there are good historical and theological reasons to focus attention here on patterns of fixed hour daily prayer. By upsetting the current ceaseless flow of commodified time and acceleration of social processes described in the previous chapter, the daily cycle of prayer, displays the peculiar logic of a fixed day of rest, joy and celebration as an interruption that not only begins and ends the week, but also permeate the character of each and every day.

Alexander Schmemann offers us good clues on the historical and theological relationship between the weekly cycle of Sunday observance and the daily cycle of prayer. Additionally, Schmemann more thoroughly works out the relationship between the Jewish Sabbath and the Christian Lord's Day, a shift Barth largely takes for granted

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[306] *ET,* p. 169.
[307] *CD* III.4, p. 97.

and takes up explicitly only briefly.[308] With respect to the latter, Schmemann argues that the Jewish Sabbath contains its own eschatological character. It is an active participation in God's delight over the goodness of creation that nevertheless looks toward the coming of the Messiah and the "great day of the Lord" to redeem the world from its sin and rebellion against God.[309] Out of this eschatological expectation tied to the seventh day of Sabbath observance, later Jewish apocalyptic writings developed the concept of the "Eighth Day" as the final day of Messianic fulfillment. Describing this concept Schmemann writes that the eighth day "overcome(s) the week and lead(s) outside of its boundaries," it is "the day beyond the limits of the cycle outlined by the week and punctuated by the Sabbath – this is the first day of the New Aeon, the figure of the time of the Messiah."[310] This day is the *eighth* day because it stands outside the finitude and limitedness of time, but it is also the *first* day because it marks the new eternal time of a creation that has been redeemed.

It is no surprise then that in Christ's resurrection on the first day after the Sabbath, the first day of the week, the early Christians saw the dawning of this Messianic eighth and first day.[311] The shift of the *statu die* (fixed day) for religious celebration and rest from the seventh day of the week to the first is born out of the eschatological expectation nurtured in the observance of the seventh day. The shift derives its initial force from Jewish apocalyptic hope, and out of that hope the freedom, joy, and rest of the Sabbath becomes associated with the confession and remembrance of Christ's resurrection on the

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[308] *CD* III.4, p. 52-53.
[309] Alexander Schmemann, *For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy* (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1963), p. 50; and *Introduction to Liturgical Theology* (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1966), pp. 70-71, 76-77.
[310] *Introduction, p. 77.* c.f. *Life of the World,* p. 51.
[311] *Introduction, p. 78.* c.f. *Life of the World,* p. 51.

first day of the week, which now speaks of our "participation in a time that is by nature totally different."[312] It is not that the Sunday observance is simply substituted for the Saturday observance as a new Christian Sabbath; on the contrary, the logic of the eighth day gains its particular meaning in its juxtaposition with the Sabbath. Yet the meaning of the Sunday observance depends upon the Messianic hope carried in the Sabbath observance even as it recasts this hope in light of Christ's resurrection, which radically alters our relationship to time.

Schmemann, however, is clear that while the association of Christ's resurrection with the "eighth day" that "overcomes" time and stands "above" and "outside" time marks the new eschatological hope of the Church, this hope does not renounce time and leave it to its own devices. Rather, Christian hope becomes focused around fixed points in time that are parasitic on the paschal mystery of Easter for their peculiar temporal logic. Christ's resurrection is manifested in time on the first Easter day, is continually "actualized" in time on the fixed days of the yearly Paschal feast and weekly Lord's day, and is also extended into the rhythm of every day through fixed times for prayer. In light of Christ's resurrection, all of time is rendered "eschatologically transparent" and "transformed into times of *remembrance* and *expectation*."[313] The "liturgy of time" which includes the yearly, weekly and daily cycle of liturgical observances is crucial for extending this eschatological significance into everyday life. The emphasis on fixed times draws its significance from Christ himself, who enters time, and whose resurrection is manifested *in* time even as it makes time point *beyond* itself to its eventual completion for its true significance. Thus, in marking the year, the week, and the day by

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[312] Ibid., p. 80.
[313] *Life of the World,* p. 52; c.f. *Introduction,* p. 71.

remembrance of Christ's resurrection and *expectation* for the completion of Christ's mission in the *eschaton*, the liturgy of time affirms the goodness of creaturely temporality while setting it within its proper context and limits. The daily marking of fixed hours of prayer is crucial to this endeavor. Without it we are left with nothing but empty "'intervals' between celebrations of the Eucharist."[314]

While Schmemann helps the present argument by demonstrating the relationship between Sabbath observance and the Christian Lord's day, and by situating daily prayer within a "liturgy of time" tied to the weekly and yearly cycle, his work tends toward a sacralizing of time in ecclesial practice that at times threatens to overwhelm the "already, not yet" character of Christian eschatology. At his best Schmemann will maintain some critical distance between the coming Kingdom of God and the time of the Church in its liturgical celebrations. In such instances the liturgy of time takes place always "between the two comings of Christ," always points to eternal life as the "secret meaning and goal" of time, and always marks the end of the "self-sufficiency" of this inner-worldly time.[315] Yet at the same time Schmemann's work is also marked by tinges of ecclesial triumphalism born out of an over-realized eschatology.[316] Time is in a sense not only pregnant with eschatological significance, it is in fact "fulfilled" and "completed" as the Kingdom of God is "actualized" or "manifested" in "Christian time" understood over and

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[314] *Introduction,* p. 75.
[315] *Life of the World,* pp. 64-65.
[316] See for instance Bruce T. Morrill's critique of Schmemann in *Anamnesis as Dangerous Memory: Political and Liturgical Theology in Dialogue* (Minneapolis, MN: Pueblo, 2000), pp. 122-38. Here Morrill argues that aspects of Schmemann's understanding of eschatological ascent in liturgical celebration and the manifestation of God's Kingdom in the Church's liturgy obscures the nature of the Church's mission in the world and solidarity with the poor. According to Morrill, it is also a key source of Schmemann's reactionary politics and deep suspicion of political theology.

against the time of "the world."[317] Thus Schmemann provides a valuable corrective to Barth in more clearly articulating the relationship between the Christian Lord's Day and the Jewish Sabbath and in offering specific liturgical grounds for extending its eschatological dimensions into each weekday through daily prayer. Yet Schmemann himself needs to be corrected by Barth's sense that each moment of eschatological divine-human encounter possesses an interruptive character and that in such encounters we are always "beginning anew at the beginning."[318] In what follows I will build upon the strengths of each of these theologians through a theological analysis of fixed hour daily prayer as it emerged in the early church. Rituals of daily prayer are an extension into daily time of the eschatological Sabbath orientation of the Church's weekly liturgy (following Schmemann), and they provide an ongoing context for divine-human encounter that is always unsettling and renewing the ways in which we inhabit time (following Barth).

The Interruptive Force of Fixed Hour Daily Prayer

As I noted in my opening chapter, in analyzing this practice we will need to look at various factors. What theological and moral vision do the particular texts that articulate this practice and provide its core content assume? What sorts of dispositions, affections, habits and virtues might be shaped in one who attends this practice? What kinds of bodily comportments are involved in such a practice, and what is the character of the "ritually inscribed bodies" that arise from such movements? What kind of social space is enacted and/or assumed by such a practice? In what follows I will take up these

[317] See for instance *Introduction,* pp. 72-73; *Life of the World,* p. 64.
[318] For a brief description of the parallels between Barth and Schmemann on time see Hans van Loon, "Karl Barth and the Early Church on Time: Liturgy and Time According to Alexander Schmemann", in *Zeitschrift für Dialektische Theologie* 4 (2010), pp. 209-222.

kinds of questions, which seek to approach the relation between religious practice and ethics in particular ways. We must keep in mind also, however, that any such attempt to articulate the relationship between a practice and a particular ethical problem is always a constructive task, always a matter of the *use* to which individuals and communities might put certain practices. I will interpret what I believe are some intrinsic qualities to the early development of fixed hour prayer in the Christian tradition, but I do so already with my peculiar constructive end in mind. Thus, I seek to put this practice to work in a specific way, and the truthfulness of my characterization cannot simply be referred back to the objective shape of a historical practice, as though the latter must inevitably produce certain ethical and social results. Rather, my proposal here must be assessed on the degree to which it illumines possibilities for faithful Christian living in the present socio-historical moment.

Suffice it to say that a full treatment of the history and development of the liturgy of the hours is both beyond my particular expertise and beyond the scope of my current work. While I will draw upon such full treatments from historians such as Paul Bradshaw, Robert Taft, and Gregory W. Woolfenden, my chief goal will be to demonstrate the kind of embodied theological imagination that was inspired by inherited patterns of fixed hour prayer in the early Christian tradition and that drove key features of its ongoing development. While prayer at fixed times during the day was certainly not unique to the Christian faith (in fact, the Christian pattern was itself likely received from several strands of Jewish daily prayer), the peculiar identity-forming character of Christian daily prayer was tied to the juxtaposition of inherited patterns with new texts

and new patterns of theological interpretation.[319] Thus the unique interruptive force of Christian daily prayer centered around the peculiar *memories* and *hopes* the Christian community brought to bear on this practice. Daily prayer in its gestures, texts, and fixed temporal interruptions possessed an *anamnetic* and *eschatological* character tied to God's redemption in Christ and the establishing of a new covenantal community on the basis of his resurrection.

In what follows I will demonstrate how these features of daily prayer are articulated in a selection of key texts from the second and third centuries, chiefly in treatises from Clement, Origen, Tertullian and Cyprian, as well as the so called *Apostolic Tradition.* With the exception of the *Didache,* which simply enjoins a threefold daily recitation of the Lord's Prayer without further justification or explication, these texts represent the earliest explicit evidence for fixed hour prayer in the Christian tradition and the first attempts to grasp the theological import of the practice. While I will also draw on Woolfenden's summary of further developments to show a connection between these themes and what follows in the fourth century and beyond, a more narrow focus on the earliest strata of development is sufficient for my constructive purposes. Namely, I wish to show how tying prayer in word and gesture to fixed times associated with the movement of the sun establishes a concrete temporal practice that extends the interruptive force of the Lord's day and with it the freedom, rest, and celebration of God's covenanting love in the Sabbath commandment into the experience of everyday life.

The Structure and Theological Warrants for Daily Prayer

[319] Reidar Hvalvik, "Nonverbal Aspects of Early Christian Prayer and the Question of Identity," in *Early Christian Prayer and Identity Formation,* eds. Reidar Hvalvik and Karl Olav Sandnes (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), p. 65.

Before taking up the question of theological interpretation, however, we need to establish just what these patters of fixed hour prayer were and offer some clues as to their origin. In one of the early attempts to sort out the ancient pattern for Christian daily prayer, C.W. Dugmore attempted to demonstrate a link between a twice-daily synagogue service and the pristine pattern of Christian daily prayer that would have followed this pattern. It was his contention that in the first century there were already regular and formalized daily public synagogue services that corresponded to the morning and evening sacrifices in the temple and he draws a direct link to these services and what would become the 'cathedral' hours of morning and evening prayer in the fourth century. On his theory, the 'little hours' or day hours prayed at the third, sixth, and ninth hours were a secondary development appended to the more ancient pattern of twice daily public prayer.[320]

This theory, however, has been widely repudiated. For instance, while Taft agrees that there may have been some emphasis on a twofold daily prayer in early Judaism connected with the sacrifices in the temple, there is simply no early evidence suggesting that there were widespread and formalized synagogue services at this date.[321] He, along with others, argues that Dugmore's thesis is based upon a reading of later sources back into the early material, taking the dominance of communal morning and evening prayer in the fourth century as evidence of the antiquity of the pattern, and

[320] C.W. Dugmore, *The Influence of the Synagogue Upon the Divine Office* (Oxford: OUP, 1944).
[321] Taft, p. 7.

relying on later Mishnaic and Talmudic sources to describe its presumed synagogue antecedent.[322]

Furthermore, the evidence we do have from this period is much more pluriform and fluid in nature, suggesting rather a confluence of daily prayer patterns in early Judaism with no one particularly dominant at this early stage. Both Bradshaw and Taft argue that on top of a twofold pattern of daily prayer seen both in public prayer services in the Temple surrounding the sacrifices and in the tradition of reciting the *Shema* twice a day in private, there were also traditions of a threefold pattern of daily prayer that likely exercised significant influence on the early Christian tradition.[323] Each argues that there was likely a form of Rabbinical private or domestic prayer which recited an early form of the *tefillah* three times a day. While the evidence is difficult to sort out regarding daily prayer in the Qumran community, Bradshaw also argues that in this community there was a threefold pattern of daily prayer connected with the rising and setting of the sun, at morning, noon, and evening, along with prayer in the middle of the night.[324]

Thus the streams of potential influence on early Christian patterns of daily prayer would have been much more diverse than Dugmore assumed and indeed when the curtain opens on the earliest clear Christian references to a pattern of daily prayer it is a threefold, not a twofold pattern that takes center stage. Furthermore, the sources we have from this early period (1st – 3rd century) all reflect patterns of private or domestic prayer, as opposed to the regular communal and public services that emerged in the fourth century,

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[322] Ibid., pp. 9-11; c.f. Paul F. Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship: Sources and Methods for the Study of Early Liturgy, Second Edition* (New York and Oxford: OUP, 2002), p. 172.
[323] Taft, p. 6; Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer in the Early Church: A Study of the Origin and Early Development of the Divine Office* (New York and Oxford: OUP, 1982), pp. 1-2.
[324] Ibid., pp. 4-7.

and that Dugmore assumed could be found at a much earlier date. As I have already mentioned, the earliest source for a threefold pattern of daytime prayer in early Christianity is the *Didache.* Written anywhere from the late first-century to early second-century the *Didache* exhorts its readers to pray three times a day by reciting the Matthean version of the Lord's Prayer.[325] The evidence in the *Didache* is sparse giving us no warrants or rationale for these hours and giving no indication as to when these prayers are to be recited. The key thing we glean from this source is simply that here in the earliest direct reference to a pattern of daily prayer, contrary to Dugmore's thesis, we find a threefold not a twofold pattern of prayer.

Things become slightly clearer, though still somewhat ambiguous, in the *Stromata* of Clement of Alexandria. In Book 7 of this work, Clement refers to those who believe it is beneficial to pray at fixed times during the day. While the "gnostic" or truly spiritual Christian prays always, Clement notes that some find it fit to pray at the third, sixth, and ninth hours of the day.[326] Clement claims that those who pray in this pattern view it as a reflection of the Trinity. However, Clement also mentions many other times of prayer in the context of the gnostic's praying at all times. The truly pious Christian, argues Clement, is to pray upon rising, before and during mealtimes (this specifically with hymns and psalms), upon retiring, and in the middle of the night. It is not altogether clear whether this is meant as a separate pattern from the threefold prayer at the third, sixth, and ninth hours, whether this is meant to be appended to that pattern, or whether this is a generic description of what it would look like for one to "pray without ceasing." The

[325] Taft, p. 13.
[326] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata,* 7.7.40.3.

ambiguities in this text give rise to various interpretations of this evidence, as we will see below.

The next relevant source, also from Alexandria, is Origen's treatise *On Prayer*. Origen's text is clear on the one hand with respect to the general pattern described, but once again ambiguous with respect to precisely when the hours of prayer are meant to be kept. He argues that all Christian's should pray no fewer than three times during the day and cites the example of Daniel's threefold daily prayer in the Old Testament.[327] Origen gives the general admonition to pray at morning, midday, evening and again in the middle of the night. He suggests that midday prayer is to be said at the sixth hour and cites the episode from the Book of Acts in which Peter retires to the roof to pray at the sixth hour and receives a vision from God. He does not give a specific time for the morning and evening hours of prayer but does associate the evening hour of prayer with the 'evening sacrifice' mentioned in Psalm 141 (140 LXX). He draws upon Acts again to ground prayer in the middle of the night by reference to Paul and Silas singing while in prison. In sum, Origen describes a threefold pattern of prayer during the day again augmented by prayer in the middle of the night, although the evidence regarding precisely when these hours were offered remains open to interpretation.

As we move westward into other parts of North Africa the sources become clearer with respect to the precise pattern of prayer envisioned but they also raise other questions. To begin with, Tertullian's treatise on prayer retains an emphasis on the antiquity of a threefold pattern of prayer, while arguing that the full round of Christian daily prayer includes five distinct hours of prayer.[328] He also mentions prayer in the middle of the

[327] Origen, *On Prayer,* 12.2.
[328] Tertullian, *On Prayer,* 25.

night in another source.[329] Like Origen, Tertullian connects a threefold pattern to the example of Daniel. Unlike Origen, however, he explicitly connects these three hours of prayer to the third, sixth, and ninth hours and asserts that they are of apostolic origin. He also, like Clement, believes that prayer at these three hours is warranted after the pattern of the Triune life of God which is reflected in the Christian's daily round of prayer. With Origen he associates the sixth hour of prayer with Peter's ascent to the rooftop to pray in Acts. However, he includes other rationales from Acts, noting the descent of the Holy Spirit at the third hour, and Peter and John going to the temple at the ninth hour to pray. He also asserts that it is proper to pray at these times because they reflect the regular divisions of the day. There is some debate as to whether the ringing of these hours was a universal practice in the Roman world at this time, but Taft argues it is nevertheless convincing to think of these hours as marking regular intervals during the day given the ancient pattern of time keeping which broke the daylight hours into twelve even intervals.[330]

While Tertullian believes he needs to make a case for these three hours of prayer, he asserts that there are other hours of prayer which the Christian is obliged to keep that should require no further admonition. These hours are prayer in the morning and in the evening as distinct hours from the threefold pattern of prayer mentioned above. This yields five distinct hours of prayer during the day: morning, the third, sixth, and ninth hours, and again in the evening. Again, as in other sources Tertullian also mentions rising in the night to pray.

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[329] Tertullian, *To His Wife,* 2.5.2.
[330] Taft, p. 19.

This is the same basic pattern of prayer mentioned slightly later by Cyprian in *On the Lord's Prayer*. He suggests that prayer at the fixed day hours are a part of the 'old sacraments' and attaches these hours of prayer to the example of David, just as Tertullian before him did. He connects the third and sixth hours with the same episodes in Acts also mentioned by Tertullian, while connecting the ninth hour to Christ's crucifixion.[331] Additionally we have another reference of these hours of prayer embodying a 'type' of the Trinity. While asserting the antiquity of these hours, Cyprian also admonishes his readers to prayer at sunrise, sunset, and in the middle of the night.[332] He connects the hour of prayer at sunrise with the resurrection of Christ and the prayer at sunset with looking in hope to Christ's second coming (themes that would predominate morning and evening prayer in the later tradition as described in depth by Woolfenden). The pattern here is the same fivefold pattern of daytime prayer as that found in Tertullian, including prayer in the middle of the night as well. These sources are clear enough with respect to the pattern of prayer they are describing. However, they raise the question of how and when the round of daily prayer was expanded to include five distinct hours of prayer. In line with other patterns, they additionally hold together strong appeal to a core of threefold daily prayer patterned after the Trinity and the example of Daniel, while seemingly appending separate hours of morning and evening prayer to this pattern. How are we to account for these peculiarities?

In his earlier work Bradshaw attempted to account for the growth of the daily round of prayer by positing an early general pattern of prayer that included prayer in the morning, midday, and again in the evening with the noted addition of nighttime prayers.

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[331] Cyprian, *On the Lord's Prayer*, 34.
[332] Ibid., 35-6.

He believed that this pattern of prayer likely had Jewish antecedents and that it was principally from here that Christian prayer takes its influence. Bradshaw argued, for instance, that there may be an Essene influence on this pattern reflected in the prayer times mentioned in a document found in the Dead Sea scrolls. While the document may suggest six total hours of prayer, Bradshaw argued plausibly that the text contains a duplication of hours around the rising and setting of the sun.[333] This yields the familiar pattern of morning, midday, and evening prayer together with prayer at night. He argued that this text offers the only Jewish antecedent to prayer at midnight, suggesting a plausible influence on early Christian patterns that also include this hour of prayer. On top of this possible antecedent, Bradshaw also highlighted the pattern found in Daniel, as well as a reference in 2 Enoch to prayer at morning, noon and evening.

It is in light of this possible background to Christian daily prayer that Bradshaw interpreted the evidence given in the above sources. Beginning with Clement, Bradshaw argued that Clement seems to offer the pattern of prayer at the third, sixth, and ninth hours as an innovation that is not widely practiced.[334] He further argued that Clement's reference to prayers with hymns and psalms at daily meal times would yield the general morning, midday, and evening pattern. He believed this interpretation is further supported by Origen, who writing at a latter date still seems to take a general pattern of prayer at morning, midday and evening, as normative and does not have a full reference to the other fixed hours of prayer. He also suggested that Origen's linking of the evening prayer with the evening sacrifice of Psalm 141 suggests a time for this hour later than the ninth hour. Thus, he argued that prayer at the third and ninth hours were added on to this

[333] Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer,* pp. 4-7.
[334] Ibid., p. 49.

earlier pattern further west in Tertullian and Cyprian in connection with a commemoration of the passion on the weekly station or fasting days of Wednesday and Friday.[335] Indeed, Tertullian is one of our earliest and most thorough sources for these station days (see his *On Fasting*), and both Cyprian and Tertullian connect the ninth hour with Christ's crucifixion.

This theory has been challenged by L. Edward Phillips, who sees not one, but two distinct patterns of threefold daily prayer coming together to create the fivefold daily pattern.[336] While accepting the plausibility of a threefold pattern connected to the rising and setting of the sun, he argues for the equal antiquity of a threefold pattern connected specifically to the third, sixth, and ninth hours. Indeed, Bradshaw has granted that this theory makes better sense of the evidence in various of his later works.[337]

With respect to the above mentioned evidence, Phillips argues that the pattern found in Alexandria was not the pattern suggested by Bradshaw, but rather the more specific pattern connected with the third, sixth and ninth hours. He places Clement's mention of prayer upon rising, at meal times, and before going to bed within the context of his admonition to the especially pious Christian to pray without ceasing.[338] Thus, he argues that heavier emphasis should be placed on Clement's recognition of prayer at the third, sixth and ninth hours as the only fixed pattern of prayer that he is aware of. Additionally, he argues that this is likely the pattern implied by Origen as well. First,

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[335] Ibid., pp. 66-67.
[336] This thesis was originally developed in "Daily Prayer in the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus", *Journal of Theological Studies* 40 (1989), pp. 389-400. Phillips subsequently expanded on this argument in "Prayer in the First Four Centuries A.D.", in *A History of Prayer: The First to the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Roy Hammerling (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008), pp. 31-58.
[337] See for instance Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins,* p. 176.
[338] Phillips, "Daily Prayer", p. 38.

Origen offers Daniel as the proper pattern for threefold daily prayer, and in contemporaneous sources this warrant is tied specifically to the fixed day hours. Second, he does specifically mention prayer at midday taking place at the sixth hour. Finally, while this alone may not lead one to believe that he intends to describe the whole pattern of prayer at the third, sixth, and ninth hours, Phillips argues that Origen's reference to the 'evening sacrifice' for the evening hour of prayer likely suggests a time of prayer at the ninth hour, not later as Bradshaw argued. He bases this argument on a reference in Josephus to the evening sacrifice being offered at the ninth hour, together with a recognition of Origen's well-documented familiarity with Josephus.[339]

The final and crucial piece of evidence in favor of the antiquity and plausible Jewish origin of prayer at the third, sixth and ninth hours is to be found in the so-called *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus. The text in question is not without difficulties and seems to include some later additions, but the full round of daily prayer offered in this text includes the following hours: cockcrow, upon rising, third, sixth, and ninth hours, bedtime and midnight. In Bradshaw's early work he again takes the original text to not include prayer at the third and ninth hours, noting their plausible addition at a later time.[340] Taft believes Bradshaw to be mistaken here and prefers, in his general trend, to take the text at face value as reflecting the genuine local practice of the community that produced this text.[341] In a commentary on this text developed in concert with Phillips and Maxwell E. Johnson, Bradshaw reverses his original position, though not in the direction of Taft's theory, adopting rather the position advocated in the already cited article by

[339] Ibid., p. 396; "Prayer in the First Four Centuries", p. 42.
[340] Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer,* pp. 55, 61.
[341] Taft, p. 25.

Phillips.[342] Here Phillips argues that the later additions to the text are likely the time of prayer offered at cockcrow and bedtime suggesting that these were added by Egyptian monastic communities who made use of this document. Furthermore he argues on the basis of the textual evidence that the actual core of the *horarium* displayed in the *Apostolic Tradition* is built around the Markan passion narrative tying the third, sixth and ninth hours together as one unit. Here the third hour is associated with Christ being nailed to the cross, the sixth with Christ's being raised up and the day growing dark, and the ninth with the piercing of Christ's side. He argues that this stratum of the text likely also included the midnight hour of prayer, which takes on a unique eschatological flavor, with the text grounding this hour of prayer in the moment when all of creation, including the angels, stop for a moment to praise God.

Here at its core Phillips argues the threefold prayer at the third, sixth, and ninth hours is likely a reflection of an early rabbinic pattern of prayer that connected the morning and evening hours of prayer to the morning and evening sacrifices in the temple. Drawing upon several *Mishnaic* and *Talmudic* sources, together with the reference in Josephus to the evening sacrifice being offered at the ninth hour, Phillips argues that at an early date the temple sacrifices and thus the rabbinic hours of prayer attached to them would have taken place at the third and ninth hours, making the sixth hour the natural completion of the threefold pattern referenced in these sources. He argues that the *Apostolic Tradition* reflects this pattern in several ways. First, it builds the third and ninth hours of prayer around sacrificial themes making Christ's being nailed to the cross at the third hour a 'type' of the sacrificial lamb and associating the ninth hour with the

[342] Paul F. Bradshaw, Maxwell E. Johnson, and L. Edward Phillips, *The Apostolic Tradition: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), pp. 213-15.

piercing of Christ's side. Second, unique to these hours of prayer the text refers to prayer specifically in the form of 'blessing' precisely at the point one might expect the rabbinical pattern of blessings in an early form of the *teffilah* to be recited in connection with the temple sacrifice. Finally, the text does not offer a distinct 'evening' hour of prayer separate from that of the ninth hour. Indeed the ninth hour is marked with references to 'evening,' 'light' and 'rest' suggesting that the text takes this hour precisely as its evening hour of prayer.[343] Thus, in a sense, Bradshaw's early position was right in arguing that the early pattern included morning, midday and evening, but was wrong in assuming that this could not have referred to prayer at the third, sixth and ninth hours.

Thus, Phillips argues that the daytime or 'little hours' are not a later addition to an earlier pattern, either a threefold insertion into a twofold pattern as in Dugmore, or an expansion of an earlier threefold pattern to include the third and ninth hours as in Bradshaw's early work. Rather, Phillips argues that prayer at these hours reflects one unique strand of the early threefold form of prayer potentially derived from an early rabbinical pattern tied to the temple sacrifices. This pattern was justified with reference to Daniel (as in Origen, Tertullian, and Cyprian) and was eventually built around the Markan passion account as in the *Apostolic Tradition.* On top of this pattern, Phillips grants the likelihood of another pattern potentially grounded in Essene practice that tied the hours of prayer not to the sacrifices in the temple but to the movement of the sun at sunrise, noon, and sunset.[344] He argues that these two distinct patterns of threefold daily prayer merge together, rendering the fivefold pattern of sunrise, third, sixth and ninth hours, and sunset that we encounter in Tertullian and Cyprian. This thesis is best capable

[343] These arguments are summarized in Phillips, "Daily Prayer", pp. 393-96 and are referenced again in "Prayer in the First Four Centuries", pp. 43-44.
[344] Phillips, "Prayer in the First Four Centuries", p. 45.

of dealing with the disparate accounts of the early pattern of daily prayer that we posses. First, it takes account of the pluriform nature of the possible Jewish antecedents to Christian daily prayer suggesting several lines of influence. Second, it takes account of the regular assumption of a threefold pattern demonstrated in our earliest source, the *Didache,* and which stands behind each of the other accounts, even those that offer five hours of daily prayer. Finally, it is better able to account for the assumption in many of the sources that the third, sixth, and ninth hours are taken as a coherent unit.[345]

In sum, it is likely that Christian daily prayer grew out of two distinct patterns of threefold daily prayer, together with prayer in the middle of the night. One pattern centered around the third, sixth and ninth hours of the day was justified largely on the basis of narrative anamnetic warrants tied to the example of Daniel, the Acts of the Apostles, and the passion narrative. Here, as I will argue further below, daily prayer traditions use the passage of time as an opportunity for the Christian to remember and receive the historical saving acts of God which mark the Christian as a member of God's covenantal community. These hours also possessed a convenient fit between this peculiar marking of time and God's eternal triune identity. The other pattern centered around sunrise, midday, and sunset, drew heavily upon the imagery of light and darkness, death and resurrection as it turned the movements of the sun and the regular course of the day into a symbolic opportunity to look forward in hope to God's eschatological

[345] Indeed there is some convergence in the contemporary scholarship regarding the multiple streams of influence on Christian daily prayer. For instance, Alistair Stewart-Sykes offers a similar argument to Phillips's discussed above in "Prayer Five Times in the Day and at Midnight: Two Apostolic Customs," *Studia Liturgica* 33 no. 1 (2003), pp. 1-19. While offering a distinct take on the origins of prayer at the third, sixth, and ninth hours, Stewart-Sykes agrees with Phillips with respect to the antiquity of this pattern, as well as its likely Jewish origin, and suggests that the fuller round of Christian daily prayer was influenced by at least two separate patterns.

consummation of salvation history. The conflation of these patterns to yield a five-fold pattern of daily prayer, together with prayer in the middle of the night, brings together various streams of theological interpretation that view our daily embodiment of time as equal parts *covenantal memory* and *eschatological hope.* Having looked at the historical origins of Christian daily prayer, and having surveyed some of the key textual data, let us know look more deeply at these patterns of theological interpretation and to other significant ritual features of this practice.

Imagining the Hours as Anamnetic Interruption

Upon completing his comprehensive historical survey of the origins and development of the liturgy of the hours, Taft turns to a theological interpretation of this practice in his final two chapters. It is in this context that Taft highlights the *anamnetic* basis of all Christian ritual celebration, including daily prayer, noting how this shared basis ties baptism, Eucharist, and daily prayer together. To quote him at length:

> This is the core of biblical prayer: remembrance, praise, and thanksgiving – and these can then flow into petition for the continuance of this saving care in our present time of need. Remembrance, anamnesis, is also at the heart of all ritual celebration, for celebrations are celebrations *of* something: through symbol and gesture and text we render present – proclaim – once again the reality we feast. In the early liturgical tradition this reality is one unique event, the paschal mystery in its totality, the mystery of Christ and of our salvation in him. This is the meaning of baptism; it is the meaning of Eucharist; it is the meaning of the Office as well. The anamnesis of the Christ-event is the wellspring of all Christian prayer.[346]

While Taft's interpretation here looks to the longer development of daily prayer across a wide range of geographically and linguistically distinct traditions, this core anamnetic feature of daily prayer is evident in its earliest manifestations.

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[346] Taft, pp. 357-58.

As we have seen, in the convergence of early daily prayer traditions various methods for theologically interpreting and justifying the emerging practices were developed. These methods included the application of what I am calling *anamnetic warrants* to specific hours of prayer. Such justifications, drawn from the biblical text, include both general biblical warrants and specifically Christological ones. For instance, the use of Daniel to justify the three hours of daytime prayer is a clear favorite among third-century Patristic figures. Tertullian and Cyprian both assume that Daniel prayed at the third, sixth, and ninth hours, and Origen also sites Daniel as the basis of his threefold pattern of daytime prayer. By praying three times throughout the day, the Christian continues the legacy of Daniel, "who, when great danger threatened, prayed three times daily."[347] In tying threefold daily prayer to the biblical memory of Daniel these figures evoke not only the specific memory of God's saving acts on Daniel's behalf, but also the general theme of God's covenantal faithfulness to God's people. The memory of this covenantal faithfulness marks the continuity between the God of Jesus Christ and the God of the Old Testament and extends this covenantal identity to the Christian practitioner.

This general covenantal memory tied to the overall threefold pattern of daily prayer receives more particular focus as the keeping of individual hours of prayer throughout the day became associated with events in the life of the New Testament Church described in Acts. Here the specific hours themselves are styled as interruptions of covenantal and ecclesial memory. The third hour is most commonly associated with

[347] Origen, *On Prayer,* 12.2. Translation cited here and elsewhere taken from Alistair Stewart-Sykes, *Tertullian, Cyprian and Origen On the Lord's Prayer* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2004), p. 138.

the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost,[348] while the sixth hour embodies the example of Peter, whose prayer at the sixth hour was accompanied by a vision through which he was "instructed both by God's sign and word advising him to admit all to the grace of salvation since previously he had doubts about baptizing the Gentiles."[349] Tertullian alone associates the ninth hour of prayer with John's healing of the paralytic in the temple in Acts 3:1ff,[350] while Origen describes prayer in the middle of the night as reflecting the pattern set by Paul and Silas in prison in Phillipi.[351] Tertullian uses this episode from Acts 16 along with the example of Paul praying on a ship in Acts 27:35 to argue that a Christian should stop to pray throughout the day wherever he or she happens to be.[352] In the imagination of these patristic figures, by marking the day with these hours of prayer Christians embody the memory of the Apostles and enact the foundational stories of the Church's coming to existence in the book of Acts.

In addition to linking hours of prayer to covenantal and ecclesial memory, we have seen that various texts strongly emphasize Christological warrants for understanding daily prayer. While this is most true of the *Apostolic Tradition*, Cyprian also utilizes anamnetic warrants tied to Christ's saving work, citing morning prayer as a commemoration of the resurrection, the ninth hour as a remembrance of Christ's passion, and prayer at sunset as a looking forward to Christ's second coming.[353] The *Apostolic Tradition* represents a higher degree of Christocentrism in its description of daily prayer, utilizing the chronology of the Markan passion account to ground the third, sixth, and

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[348] Acts 2:1, Tertullian, *On Prayer,* 25 and Cyprian, *On the Lord's Prayer,* 34.
[349] Acts 10:9, Cyprian, *On the Lord's Prayer,* 34. See also Tertullian, *On Prayer*, 25.
[350] Ibidem.
[351] Acts 16:25, Origen, *On Prayer*, 12.2.
[352] Tertullian, *On Prayer*, 24.
[353] Cyprian, *On the Lord's Prayer*, 34 and 35.

ninth hours of prayer.[354] In chapter 41 of the *Apostolic Tradition*, the third hour of prayer is to be kept in remembrance of Christ's being nailed to the cross. At the sixth hour the Christian is to pray because it was then that Christ was hung on the cross, and the day became dark. The text goes on to say, "So at that hour let a powerful prayer be prayed, so that you will resemble the voice of the one who prayed and made the whole creation dark for unbelievers."[355] Finally, at the ninth hour one is to pray in remembrance of when Christ was pierced at his side.

As the church adopted various traditions of marking the hours of day with prayer, the theologians and texts described above sought descriptive warrants for maintaining the inherited traditions tied to memories of God's covenantal faithfulness in the Hebrew scriptures, the New Testament church, and ultimately Christ's saving work. As these warrants were applied to specific hours of prayer, a kind of narrative logic to the practice emerged which structured the day around interruptions of Christian memory. Thus while typically praying alone at this stage in the development of daily pray, in light of these imaginative warrants each praying Christian participated in the ecclesial ritual task of "rendering present" God's saving work in the here and now. Through the commemoration and celebration embodied in daily prayer each Christian creates space for interruptive divine encounter in the midst of the unique and unrepeatable events, contexts, and relationships that make up his or her daily life. There was certainly no blanket uniformity with respect to the warrants cited by each author. Nevertheless, the prevalence of warrants centered around Daniel, the book of Acts and Christ creates a

[354] Bradshaw, et al, p. 215.
[355] Ibid., p. 196. (quoted from the Arabic text)

picture of daily prayer as a "deliberate rehearsal"[356] of the Church's core memories, particularly those surrounding God's covenanting love, the work of the savior in the passion and resurrection and the establishment of the ecclesial body through the leadership of the apostles.

Divine Encounter and the Postures of the Body

In all of this early material the act of prayer is understood not only as a mental act but also as what Nathan Mitchell has called an "embodied skill."[357] In each of these texts the interruptions of fixed hour daily prayer are physically manifested through the ritual production of bodies whose movements are temporarily arrested and redirected towards acts of petition, thanksgiving, and intercession. The sheer fact of a physical pause and re-orientation has clear implications for how we might understand the relationship between daily prayer and the rest, joy and freedom Barth associates with the Sabbath interruption. And yet the specific nature of the postures and use of the body suggested in these texts take us a step beyond this general observation, as important as it is. The injunctions offered by these texts demonstrate an insoluble connection between the ritually inscribed body and the re-orientation of the self in its sensibilities, intentions and standing before God. In the ritual use of the body in prayer bodily movements are linked with appropriate attitudes and virtues associated with prayer, but equally important they physically mark the embodied person as a subject of the covenant and recipient of God's grace.

The posture most commonly associated with prayer in the contemporary mind, that of kneeling, is elaborated upon in both Tertullian and Origin. This, however, was

[356] See opening chapter, p. 29.
[357] See again opening chapter p. 25.

only one of the main postures of prayer during these early centuries, another of course being standing with arms outstretched.[358] During this period there was not uniformity with respect to when one should kneel and when one should stand. Tertullian attests to some who choose not to kneel during prayer on the Sabbath and commands that according to Christian tradition kneeling should be avoided only on the joyous occasions of the Christian calendar such as the Lord's Day and the entire season of Pentecost.[359] According to Tertullian one should kneel every day for the morning prayer on ordinary days, beginning each day with an admission of our need for God's grace. Furthermore, one ought to kneel for every hour of prayer on stational days or fast days as these days are particular occasions for repentance. Origen gives witness to a practice that may or may not reflect a different tradition. He mentions kneeling only in specific reference to "confessing before God one's own sins, when requesting healing and forgiveness,"[360] without connecting this to a particular hour of prayer or with respect to certain days. However, for both the act of kneeling is specifically tied to humility before God in supplication and confession. As Origen writes, "A person should kneel when confessing before God one's own sins…this is the attitude proper to those who humble themselves and who submit themselves."[361]

And yet this "submission" of the body before God is to be limited to specific circumstances and only in anticipation of the new life, freedom and exultation embodied in the most common posture in Christian prayer, the *orans* posture of standing upright

[358] Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer*, p. 64.
[359] Tertullian, *On Prayer*, 23.
[360] Origin, *On Prayer,* 31.
[361] Ibid. See also Tertullian, *On Prayer*, 23.

with hands raised. Such a posture is most likely of Jewish origin.[362] As we have already seen the posture of standing was associated with joy and celebration for Tertullian. Origen combines to this posture the action of lifting the eyes. To quote Origen at length on the proper disposition of prayer and its association with bodily posture:

> Accordingly it seems to me that anyone who intends to embark on prayer should lay a foundation for himself by preparing himself…He will put aside all alien thoughts, so coming to prayer, extending his soul, as it were, before extending his hands, his mind intent on God before his eyes and, before standing, raising his intellect from the earth and setting it before the Lord of all…Nor can there by any doubt that, of the numerous dispositions of the body, standing with hands extended and eyes upraised is much to be preferred, in that *one thereby wears on the body the image of the characteristics which are becoming to the soul in prayer*.[363]

Here according to Origen one's upright posture and uplifted hands and eyes correspond to the soul prepared to encounter the transcendent God. This posture is also explicitly enjoined by Clement of Alexandria, who associates it with an attitude of praise and acclamation.[364] Cyprian also assumes that this is the standard posture in prayer and notes that the erect posture is appropriate to the "exalted stature" of humankind, which has been singled out from among creation as unique subjects of divine communion.[365]

To these basic postures of prayer is added the near ubiquitous injunction to pray in an easterly direction. While only Cyprian and the *Apostolic Tradition* among the texts we have surveyed offer explicit warrants relating morning prayer to Christ's resurrection, Tertullian, Clement, and Origen all attest to the practice of praying toward the east, in the direction of the rising sun as a sign of the risen Christ and in hope of his coming again. The importance of the easterly direction for Christian practice is attested in other third-

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[362] Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer,* p. 65.
[363] Origen, *On Prayer,* 31.2. (Italics mine)
[364] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, 7.7.40.
[365] Cyprian, *Ad Demetrianum,* 16.306-317. C.f. Lactantius, *Divinae institutiones,* 2.2.

century texts, such as the *Didascalia Apostolorum*, with respect to communal worship.[366] Bradshaw argues that such a practice may have had a connection with the Essenes.[367] In both Christian practice and Essene practice the easterly direction of prayer was associated with the eschatological hope of the community. Thus, for Origen, the turning of the body to the East, the direction of the rising sun, reflects the orientation of the soul toward the rising of the true light.[368] Origen's depiction here has clear Christological overtones. Additionally, Bradshaw notes that it became a custom among some Christians to mark their East wall with the cross as an eschatological symbol as "the appearance of the glorious cross was to precede the *parousia*."[369] So strong, in fact, was the symbolic link between facing the rising sun, Christ's resurrection, and the *parousia* that some appear to have accused the early Christians of worshipping the sun itself.[370]

Various of our authors explicitly mention making the sign of the cross as an important bodily gesture of prayer. For Tertullian this sign is a conspicuous marker of one's identity and a bodily confession of one's faith in Christ. While he mentions this in the context of describing the problems likely to be faced by a Christian who is wed to an unbelieving spouse, the confessional implications of the act are clear.[371] Origen simply notes without elaboration, "This sign all the faithful make before beginning tasks, especially prayers or holy readings."[372] The *Apostolic Tradition* contains a peculiar injunction to moisten one's hand with the breath so that in making the sign of the cross

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[366] *Didascalia Apostolorum,* 12.
[367] Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer,* p. 58.
[368] Origen, *On Prayer,* 32.
[369] Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer,* p. 59.
[370] Tertullian, *Ad Nationes,* 1.13.1.
[371] *Ad uxorem,*
[372] Origen, *Selecta in Ezechielem*, 13.801. Quote from Phillips, *"*Prayer in the First Four Centuries A.D.", p. 51.

one recalls the gifts of the sanctifying water and the Spirit bestowed in one's baptism.[373] As Phillips points out, this odd practice was proscribed in the mid-fourth century *Rule of Pachomius* yet the strong identification between the sign of the cross and one's baptism remains in the text as it reads, "At the beginning of our prayers let us sign ourselves with the seal of baptism. Let us make the sign of the Cross on our foreheads, as on the day of our baptism."[374]

This final point leads to one last summative observation. In light of later liturgical developments it is appropriate to suggest that the bodily postures and gestures offered for daily prayer (standing, facing east, the sign of the cross) together with the recitation of the Lord's Prayer as *the* prayer text *par excellence* constitute a ritual rehearsal of one's covenantal identity established in the gift of baptism. As Stewart-Sykes notes, the treatises by Tertullian and Cyprian on prayer are developed in the context of "instruction on the Lord's Prayer given to catechumens before baptism, in order that they might make that prayer on coming out of the water."[375] We have just noted the association of the sign of the cross with the seal of baptism, but it also became commonplace in the baptismal liturgies of the fourth century for the baptizand to stand facing west to renounce the evil forces of Satan and symbolically turn to face the east in order to confess Christ and receive baptism. Commenting on the relationship between this practice and daily prayer Reidar Hvalvik writes, "It is reasonable to think that Christians who were incorporated into the community of believers according to such a liturgy, were reminded of their conversion ("turning to Christ") and baptism when they

[373] *Apostolic Tradition,* 41.14.
[374] Quoted from Phillips, *"*Prayer in the First Four Centuries A.D.", p. 52.
[375] Stewart-Sykes, *Tertullian, Cyprian and Origen,"* p. 27.

faced east during prayer."[376] Thus, while taken individually these various uses of the body are associated with unique dispositions of prayer, taken together they amount to the production of a ritually inscribed body that periodically interrupts one's daily activities in order to re-enact and receive anew the good news that God has named one a subject of God's covenanting love and to rest in the delight and freedom of God's grace. To anticipate the direction I will take these insights later in this work, allow me to note the importance of such "embodied skills" in prayer to inaugurate a pause, a temporary cessation and deceleration of work, a re-prioritizing of God's action over human work. These postures use the body to reorient our sensibilities and actions away from utilitarian concerns, away from instrumental or economic reason, and toward the hearing, receiving and responding to the divine Word.

Time and Eternity in Daily Prayer

The narrative features of marking the hours of daily prayer repeatedly enact the past, writing the Christological and ecclesial narrative into the structure of each day, while the postures and gestures of the body reorient the practitioner toward encounter with the transcendent God and continually reenact one's baptismal identity. On the one hand, these elements serve the anamnetic function of the practice of daily prayer, rendering past events in salvation history as well as in one's own conversion present through interruptive commemoration. In addition to drawing the past into the present, the hours of daily prayer orient the day toward an eternal and eschatological horizon as well. For Tertullian and Cyprian the three hours of daily prayer were seen not only as embodying particular aspects of the sacred past but also as reflecting the origin of all time in the eternal life of the Trinity. Cyprian, for instance, describes these hours as a

[376] Hvalvik, p. 68.

"sacrament of the trinity which is to be revealed in the last times."[377] He goes on to describe these hours of prayer writing:

> The first hour as it progresses to the third hour shows the perfect number of the Trinity; the fourth hour progressing to the sixth hour declares another Trinity; and when the ninth hour is completed from the seventh the perfect Trinity is enumerated every three hours.[378]

In remembering the past, and marking the passage of time as a "sacrament of the trinity" the practice of daily prayer also points to the eschatological future. As I have already noted, this eschatological dimension is mapped onto all of the hours by the injunction to face east at each interval of prayer. With respect to specific hours of prayer in these late second- and third-century texts, the eschatological dimension of prayer is associated more specifically with evening prayer, prayer at midnight, sunrise and (for the *Apostolic Tradition*) prayer at cockcrow.[379] Cyprian describes prayer for the coming of Christ as the true sun upon sunset and connects prayer in the middle of the night with the eternal light of Christ writing, "In the kingdom there will be only light without night; so may we keep vigil during the night as if it were during the day."[380] Clement cites Luke 12:35-37 and its theme of eschatological preparation as the warrant for prayer in the middle of the night, and in a similar vein the *Apostolic Tradition* cites the parable of the virgins in Matt. 25:1-13.[381] The *Apostolic Tradition* adds to this picture of midnight prayer a vision of all of earthly creation, as well as the angels and souls of the righteous in heaven pausing at

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[377] Cyprian, *On the Lord's Prayer*, ch. 34.
[378] Ibidem. See also Tertullian, *On Prayer*, XXV.
[379] Given the uniqueness of this hour of prayer in *AT* Badshaw, et al have suggested that it may be a later interpolation into the earliest version of the text, possibly reflecting a practice among Egyptian monastics in the fourth century. See Bradshaw, et al, p. 213.
[380] Cyprian, *On the Lord's Prayer,* chs. 35 and 36.
[381] Clement, *Paidagogos*, II.ix.79 and *Apostolic Tradition,* 41.16.

this hour to praise God.[382] According to the *Apostolic Tradition* the one keeping vigil in the night participates in this eternal hymning of God. Finally, the *Apostolic Tradition* picks up the theme of eternal light noted in Cyprian and adds this to the hope of the resurrection of the dead to which one looks upon prayer at cockcrow.[383]

In his *Daily Liturgical Prayer: Origins and Theology* Gregory W. Woolfenden offers an expanded depiction of these themes, describing the historical development of the full-blown liturgy of the hours as an attempt by the church to 'sacramentalize' the rising and setting of the sun. Contrary to the now classical argument offered by Dom Gregory Dix in *The Shape of the Liturgy* that the fourth century saw a muting of the eschatological content of daily prayer, Woolfenden demonstrates how this orientation is in actual fact intensified through the fourth and fifth centuries, cementing the themes of eschatological preparation in evening prayer, the watching of midnight prayer (to become vigils), and the association of morning prayer with praise and thanksgiving directed to the resurrected Christ.[384]

While a detailed description of this development is beyond the scope of this project, Woolfenden's depiction of common eschatological themes across the various traditions of daily prayer that emerge in the fourth century and beyond point to a great deal of thematic continuity with the texts and figures discussed above. Through a piling up of a vast amount of liturgical evidence, Woolfenden argues that in daily liturgical prayer each setting and rising of the sun speaks the mystery of death and resurrection, and this mystery is reflected in the unique elements of prayer assigned to distinct hours. In

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[382] *Apostolic Tradition,* 41.15.
[383] Ibid., 41.16.
[384] Dom Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (London: MPG, 1945), pp. 323-332. C.f. Taft's equally strong rejection of Dix's thesis in the penultimate chapter of his *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West.*

spite of the vast diversity across the various geographical liturgical traditions, Woolfenden demonstrates a common thematic movement in the hours built around the ubiquitous life/light, death/dark parallelism that he finds in a host of patristic and early medieval writings. In light of these common associations he notes a regular pattern of prayers for repentance and protection in the evening. While such themes are elaborated in hymns and distinct prayer texts, they are also present in virtually all evening prayer rites through the near ubiquitous inclusion of Psalm 141 (140 LXX) at Vespers. Such evening themes were often combined with a ritual *lucernarium* or lamp lighting (or perhaps vestiges of a lamp lighting in the case of some western liturgies) as a sign of eschatological hope in the midst of darkness.[385] Similarly the night and vigil hours of prayer are marked by themes of watching in eschatological hope and move progressively from darkness into light, erupting into the characteristic praise and thanksgiving for the presence of the risen Christ in morning prayer.[386] This movement from darkness into light is captured in a typical shift from the penitential tone of Psalm 51 (50 LXX), often used as a hinge between vigils and morning prayer, to the exultation of biblical canticles and again the near ubiquitous use of some combination of the *Laudate* Psalms (Pss. 148-150). While the Eastern rites tend to utilize the full course of Lukan canticles in the morning, the Western rites single out the *Benedictus* of Zachariah as the quintessential morning canticle – and for good reason, since Zachariah exclaims, "By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace" (Luke 1:78-79, NRSV)

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[385] Woolfenden, pp. 280-81.
[386] Ibid., p. 285. Woolfenden summarizes all of these findings in the final chapter of this work.

Conclusion

The combination of these warrants, gestures and theological themes presents a daily prayer practice that ritually enacts the interruption of the present through memories of the sacred past and looking forward in hope to the eschatological future, while grounding all time in the triune life of God. The past is not violently usurped by the present nor is the passing of the present into the future reduced to the mundane march of historical progress. Rather the marking of the daily hours of prayer in these ways interrupts daily time through the ritual repetition of anamnesis and eschatological watching. Ultimately, patristic injunctions to pray at specific times during the day were an attempt to express the fundamental orientation of the Christian's life and the life of the church as one of ceaseless prayer. Clement, Tertullian, Cyprian and Origen all attempt to relate their descriptions of daily prayer practice to this Pauline concept. This stands in direct continuity with Barth's understanding of this Pauline injunction, tying the general orientation of prayer in all things to concrete acts of prayer as response to divine address. Through the act of interrupting the day with prayer, every Christian act is marked by the liturgical character of service and offering in love of God and neighbor. As Origen argues:

> Since doing what is enjoined by virtue or the commandments is also a part of prayer, those who combine right actions with prayer and prayer with becoming actions "pray unceasingly." Only if we consider the whole life of a holy person as one great continuous prayer can we understand the admonition "Pray without ceasing" as something we can accomplish.[387]

The patristic theology of daily prayer described here puts some liturgical meat on the bones of Barth's description of prayer as a Sabbath interruption in the midst of the week. These authors bring together the ritual comportment of the body to direct the self toward

[387] Origen, *On Prayer*, XII.

particular “acquired aptitudes or embodied skills,” the daily enactment of central features of Christianity’s communally shared narratives, and the interruption of time through memory and eschatological expectation. These elements of daily prayer offer a vision of the Christian life as a continually unfolding response to God’s loving address that comes to each person anew in every moment.

In so doing, this practice points to the fundamental Sabbath orientation of all time, an orientation that places important limits on work. As we have seen, Sabbath and prayer, understood as an extension of Sabbath into the week, are not exceptions to the rule of work. They are not balancing or therapeutic mechanisms that allow us to throw ourselves into work with even more reckless abandon. Sabbath and prayer are rather the defining features of creation, which point us toward delight, joy, feasting and rest. Work takes its proper place insofar as it sustains life for the purpose of witnessing to this prior celebration. As such Sabbath impinges on the character of every day. It does not come and go, carefully partitioned off as one "holy" day in midst of an abundance of profane days. We should not allow Sabbath to be so domesticated, to leave the workaday existence of the week untouched by its character. Only by understanding work in light of its limitation by Sabbath and prayer, as a possibility opened up by God’s prior covenanting love, can it be understood aright. This is why I have chosen daily prayer as that particular aspect of the Christian articulation of time against which to judge our current patterns of work and economic life. Daily prayer carries the interruptive force of Sabbath rest into distinct moments of daily life. It carries the eschatological force of the eighth day into every day. Like the Lord's Day, it uses time to articulate that which always stands outside of time, that which judges our temporal structures and speaks a

word of hope into them from beyond the secular age. This is fundamentally what sacred time is: not another self-contained temporal ordering, but intentional patterns of attentive expectation for God's speaking to us in the here and now. This relativizing of secular time by inbreaking eternity sets our limited temporal existence in a new light, redefines its purpose, and frees it from carrying the full weight of existence.

Here we must continually remind ourselves that our productivity can't save us, growth in GDP can't save us, profits and markets cannot save us. These each serve an end that cannot claim ultimate significance. Only when subordinated to the non-utilitarian ends of Sabbath joy, rest, delight and communion can we break free from the clutches of a structured time environment that attempts to wring more and more production, consumption, and profits out of human effort. Here the defining features of proper human existence are distorted, twisted to serve strictly economic ends, so that human life itself becomes one continuous commodity chain. In light of such trends we must start at the beginning with a prayerful refusal of work before work can be reconstituted aright.

Daily prayer is, I have argued, a Sabbath intrusion into the ceaseless flow of market time, productive time. It is a reminder that time belongs to the crucified and risen Lord, an unwelcome reminder that human society so often uses time to discipline, exploit and ultimately bury the oppressed in the past. The halt in productivity, the pause of bodily movement that comes with attending to fixed hours of prayer, speaks a prophetic word against the managerial ownership of time and against the dizzying acceleration of time in work processes and financial transactions which buy, sell, and hedge against the future with massive amounts of capital in milliseconds. If we can discern the connections

between daily prayer, the vision of Sabbath I have described here, and the eschatological fulfillment of creation in God's future, we may learn again how to read time "forward and backward" as Don Saliers has it.[388] Perhaps we may see anew that economic life in work, production and exchange is merely a proximate good intended to serve the good of humankind, rather than masses of humankind being reduced to so many cogs in the wheel of economic life. We may hold the memory of creation and covenant, sin and redemption, Christ's incarnation, death and resurrection, together with the hope that God's promises for creation will be fulfilled. We may see that in this memory and hope God's advent is also a present reality, animating our prayer and setting limits to our work, calling to account our greed, oppression and patterns of alienation.

[388] Saliers, *Worship as Theology,* p. 217.

Chapter 5
The Relationship Between Vocation and Work Reexamined in Light of Daily Prayer

Introduction: Vocation Aiding and Abetting the Alienation of Labor

In this dissertation I have attempted to show the ways in which current constructions of work exhibit a range of pathologies tied to the commodification of time and the exploitation of waged labor. I have shown the ways time has been structured as a means to reinforce social inequality, paying particular attention to the modern disciplining of the poor through the moral rhetoric of time thrift and monetary compensation as the just reward for one's industrious attention to constant work. I have further shown that powerful economic forces have steadily eroded the benefits of work. Even as this erosion takes place the supposed intrinsic virtues and material rewards of work are continually trumpeted by politicians, arm chair moralists, and many theologians alike.

In anticipation of these dynamics, I argued in the introduction to this project that too many theological analyses of work fail to adequately mark a distinction between work that is carried out under the conditions of obligation and necessity and purposeful activity more generally. In so doing they fail to radically challenge the fact that the former has become entirely dominated by the waged form of work, without which most people simply can't survive. Leaving this fact unchallenged ignores the possible variety of freely offered forms of soladaristic activity that are crowded out by paid work, and reinforces a form of the work ethic tied to alienated labor.

Thus, I sought to intervene by arguing for an initial *refusal of work* on the basis of Christian daily prayer. Here I argued that daily prayer continually interrupts the day with

a ritual rehearsal of one's covenantal identity as constituted by the ever-present address offered by God through the resurrected Christ. It is this address, and this address alone, which justifies the continued livelihood of each person. Furthermore, this address defines such a livelihood as a life that shares in God's Sabbath joy, celebration, freedom and rest. From such a vantage point I argued that human life is fundamentally defined in non-utilitarian terms, and that obligatory and necessary waged work ought to be limited as much as possible so as to increase the time and space available for the spontaneous and free delight in God, creation and neighbor. That is to say work ought to be put in its place to enlarge the arena in which the dual love of God and neighbor may be exercised outside the coercive confines of waged labor.

In light of this, I would like to close this project with a brief reappraisal of the relationship between vocation and work. A full exploration of the history and theological contours of vocation is clearly beyond the scope of my work here. Yet by now it is a truism that the Christian concept of vocation has had a checkered and troubling past. The concept of vocation has been a powerful feature in creating subjects willing to accept the prevailing terms of labor in a series of epochs: from its use in the Middle Ages to reinforce the social privilege of religious callings, to the Protestant sacralizing of work and identification of providence with one's social class and economic success, to secular moralisms tied to the industrious and professional careerist. The impetus to pursue work with a reckless abandon, "as if it were an absolute end in itself," as Weber has it, has been reinforced by theological and secularized notions of vocation that place exaggerated eternal and moral importance on a life lived in service to one's work.

Yet I do not believe that the problematic past of the concept means that it should be jettisoned from considerations of work altogether, as some have proposed.[389] Thus, I would like to conclude this project by suggesting three ways in which daily prayer provides a practical and liturgical basis for reframing our understanding of vocation and its relationship to work. I argue that the covenantal identity and eschatological hope rehearsed in the regular interruptions of daily prayer point us toward a notion of vocation which is *beyond* work and *against* work. Only after we have explored these will we ask about the role of vocation *within* work and the conditions necessary to honor persons engaged in work as bearers of divine vocation.

Vocation Beyond Work: Divine Address and the Priority of Personhood

As I have argued, in theologically assessing work, it is vital to separate out general accounts of human action in response to God's covenanting love from specific accounts of work as the completion of socially necessary tasks carried out today entirely under auspices of paid employment and the gendered division of labor that supports it. Failure to do so leaves one stuck with paid work as the major presupposition of one's analysis.

Thus, one way of breaking the stranglehold this presupposition has on our theological and political imaginations is to recover a more dynamic and holistic understanding of the concept of vocation. One's vocation needs to be seen in an

[389] In light of the historical and technical problems surrounding the theological use of 'vocation' Volf, for instance, argues that its continued use is not helpful. He argues instead for a "charismatic" understanding of work that he believes is capable of overcoming the logic of duty and obedience inherent in vocation (*Work in the Spirit*, p. 125) and better able to account for the diachronic and synchronic plurality of work in today's economy (pp. 116-117). In spite of the fact that Volf's work points in many interesting directions and seeks to "humanize" work as much as possible, I do wonder whether he hasn't simply created a theological superstructure for post-Fordist job insecurity.

expansive and continually unfolding sense that is not rigidly tied to one's occupation or social role. The ritual enactment of daily prayer provides a context in which the totality of one's life from waking to sleeping is viewed as an opportunity to hear and respond to the call of God anew. As Barth demonstrated, this call comes to us in the grace of the Sabbath interruption that finds its ongoing interruptive force extended in and through the act of prayer.

It is this constantly unfolding and comprehensive notion of calling that drives Barth's own account of vocation in *Church Dogmatics* III/4. For Barth vocation and calling are distinguished. They are distinguished in order to emphasize both the divine origin of calling that always comes to us anew and the human contexts or spheres of activity in which this calling comes to us. The technical sense of calling as it has been developed in classical Protestant thought has done disservice to the concept of vocation by locating it solely within the realm of work or one's job. What of the unemployed? What of the child or aging adult? Additionally this view raises work to a level of religious significance in and of itself that drives the workaholism of western culture.[390] Work, according to Barth, is but one small arena in which the divine calling meets us. In fact, in turning toward the this-worldly necessities of material life, work is viewed as a self-evident means to an end, something that lies at the periphery of most people's vocation "so that the essential thing to which they are truly called is to be found elsewhere than in its discharge."[391] To make room for what is essential in one's calling, work must give way to one's freely offered personal involvement with God and others.

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[390] Barth, *CD* III/4, p. 599.
[391] Ibid., p. 599.

This is, in fact, how Barth presents the relationship of work to Jesus, the disciples, and Paul. Born into the carpenter's trade, Jesus leaves this work behind in order to take up his messianic vocation and he calls his disciples to leave their work behind as well. Likewise, Paul, who takes up the work of tent-making as a means of supporting himself, did not do so because it was inherently dignified, or because it expressed some core feature of his vocation. Rather, "this work is done on the margin of his apostolic existence" and his exhortations that Christians follow his example lie "on the fringe of his apostolic instruction."[392]

Vocation beyond work, for Barth, is found in the manner in which one pursues the Christian life of love toward God and neighbor in the midst of the broader limitations and particularizing aspects of human life. God's call comes to us in our specific stages in life (age), stages in world history (socio-historical context), within the inner physio-psychic limitations of our person (aptitudes), and our limited sphere of activity. Importantly, Barth emphasizes that our personhood, our distinct individuality, is not constituted by these factors in themselves but rather by the fact that the divine address reaches us in the midst of these limiting contexts. I am called as this specific one in this specific set of circumstances at this very time to say yes to the joy and freedom God has offered to live in love before God and others. This call comes to one in every sphere of one's life, and indeed calls one out of sheer necessity and into the freedom, joy, and celebration that are to define human life. Thus, the essential features of one's vocation are often located far beyond the confines of paid employment. I am no less living my Christian vocation when I rest, make love, play with my child, or converse with my neighbor than I am when I show up to a job. In fact, as I have argued, paid work that is pursued out of

[392] Ibid., p. 472.

necessity often distracts one from the active vocation to which one is being called. In light of this, an active and holistic response to the call of God, a call which is made ritually concrete in the daily rehearsal of one's covenantal identity in daily prayer, demands a limitation of the time allotted to work in order to free up space for other pursuits.

In the face of the domination of life by paid work in the contemporary world, I argue that it is necessary to pursue political means in order to free people from its temporal demands. At present in the United States there are no federally mandated minimums for vacation time and no mandated paid family leave. On top of that, the forty-hour workweek that has defined full-time employment since the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 does not protect most salaried employees from unreasonable demands on their time. It also does not protect the increasing number of temporary and part-time employees who must work multiple jobs in order to get by, because their employers have purposefully excluded them from better paying full-time status.

The technological advances that have exponentially increased the productivity of the average worker have the potential free people from long hours of work. Yet, as I explored in chapter two, the capitalist social organization of work mitigates against this promise, with the gains from increased productivity accruing almost entirely to company ownership and investors. I will briefly explore the monetary aspect of this dynamic below, but here I want to suggest that it is time to institute new norms for a shorter workweek and much better leave policies. While the forty-hour workweek is treated as if it is a naturally occurring phenomenon, it is not. It was and is a social convention that needs to be rethought in light of current economic realities. In 1930 John Maynard

Keynes predicted that in the future advances in technology to produce and satisfy society's needs would issue in drastically lower working hours. He suggested that the new norm might be somewhere around fifteen hours per week.

While I am not suggesting anything quite as radical as this, it is quite clear that a reduction in working hours for full-time work would be a just response to present conditions. Weeks has argued that the best political strategy for reducing work hours is to push for a thirty-hour workweek without reductions in pay.[393] This reduction in working time would be a strong step in the direction of a more equitable sharing of necessary tasks. It begins to spread the benefits of new working technologies to the working class and opens up more space and time for the free pursuit of productive, creative, social activity outside waged work. There is not necessarily any need to stop at reducing waged working hours to thirty hours a week, and, as I have suggested, this needs to be coupled with stronger vacation and family leave policies as well. Yet a movement for shorter hours is one piece of an initial strategy to reduce the domination of paid work in people's lives. This strategy is consistent with the claims I have made above that the ongoing and interruptive calling of God, recognized and embodied through daily prayer, points us in the direction of a vocation that goes far beyond the material necessity of work. With more time away from work there will be more space for the spontaneous delight in creation that corresponds more closely to God's own creative activity. What this looks like in individual people's lives is necessarily open ended, and that is precisely the point.[394] Freeing people's time from the demands of work offers a potentially

[393] See *The Problem With Work,* Ch. 4.
[394] On this point see Weeks, pp. 145, 171 and Posadas, p. 29.

unlimited number of possibilities for discovering new ways of living into covenant love toward God and neighbor.

Vocation Against Work: Grace as the Basic Presupposition of Life

Another important strategy to recognize the non-instrumental telos of human life is to decouple people's basic survival needs from their ability to find and perform paid work. If people are to develop their creative, productive, and social capacities freely and fully, they need to be freed from the coercive presupposition of the wage contract. Under current conditions there is little freedom to explore what a vocation might look outside the sheer necessity to secure paid employment and thus become "a productive member of society." This severe limitation stymies the possibilities for a vocation lived in creative engagement with the world, making God's call for persons to act in history on behalf of God's covenanting love captive to the interests of capital and the corporate management of labor.

In order to achieve this, people will need the freedom and capacity to determine what kind of work they do, how much of it they do and under what conditions. It is obvious to anyone who is paying attention that the position of workers in today's economy to participate in these decisions is incredibly weak. This is in large part due to the steady erosion of labor standards as local labor markets are exposed to competition from de-regulated markets elsewhere in the world. The total dependence on paid work for survival leaves the world's workers with little power to resist this erosion in any meaningful way. The commodification of time and the illusion of a society of direct access mystify the vast differentials in bargaining power between workers and employers. As I explored in chapter three, the power dynamics in this situation are masked by the

modern rhetoric of formal equality in natural rights and moral, productive and rational capacities. Here time is money, and every person has equal access to the market and equal opportunity to use one's time and industrious capacities diligently in order to secure enough cash to survive. It is a rather short step from here to the moral blame game that justifies the work-based disciplining of the poor. As Tanner notes, "Differences in private possession can always be chalked up to differences in the effort people have put in; some people just work harder than others."[395]

Yet in theological perspective it will not do to derive the equality of human beings by turning to a definition of human nature in itself and the instrumental ways in which it can be put to work through a rational and industrious use of time. Rather, human equality can only be discovered when we turn away from our work and toward God's gracious intention to create, sustain and redeem each individual person. Daily prayer is one practical embodiment, reminder, and source of this claim. In daily prayer the closed off temporal frame of human history is disrupted by the eschatological drawing of God whose calling constitutes each person as an equal subject of God's covenanting love. The unity and equality of humanity is based on the fact that we are all so addressed by God in Christ.[396] By interrupting the flow of time with a responsive address to God in word and gesture, the practice of daily prayer witnesses to the grounding of human existence in God's grace which is offered irrespective of one's work.

Every person, thus, has an inviolable right to dignity and the means of survival, not on the basis of one's disciplined use of formally equal capacities, but simply on the basis of God's grace. As Tanner has argued, if grace is the basic presupposition of the

[395] Tanner, *Economy of Grace,* p. 44.
[396] This way of grounding equality of human personhood is derived from Ian McFarland's work in *Difference and Identity: A Theological Anthropology* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2001).

creation and redemption of creaturely life, then human economic relationship ought to be characterized by unconditional and universal giving.[397] As a response to God's giving, the distribution of the goods necessary for life ought to be given to all solely on the basis of need and not on the basis of any perception about whether or not the recipient is "deserving."

In light of this claim it is apparent that dominant forms of means-tested and in-kind welfare programs are wholly inadequate and degrading of human persons. This is particularly true given the widespread shift away from basic social insurance and toward the "workfare" policies adopted in places like the US, UK, Canada and Australia. Such programs assume that those in need must first demonstrate that they are deserving recipients of aid, often placing severe demands on their time and effort to receive it. The absurdly complicated, expensive, and inefficient bureaucratic structures required to sustain the surveillance and disciplining of the poor is a testament to lengths we are willing to go as a society to enforce the work ethic.

Against this trend, Tanner argues that "the theological principle of unconditional giving would intervene here to suggest welfare provision as a universal entitlement, sensitive only to need." She goes on to say that "welfare provision should be considered a right of the needy…."[398] While I agree with the principle of welfare as a universal entitlement, that such provision is allowed only for the "needy" continues to require some bureaucratic structure and means testing that can prove the genuineness of one's need. This also continues to presume the typical norm of paid employment to distinguish between those who are in need and those who are not. Thus, the best way to distribute

[397] Tanner, *Economy of Grace,* pp. 63-75.
[398] Ibid., p. 101.

access to vital goods that is universal and unconditional, and that is not tied to the norm of waged work as the key feature distinguishing recipients from non-recipients, is to institute some form of a universal basic income (or guaranteed minimum income). A universal basic income is a guaranteed payment to every single person irrespective of his or her station in life, without any means testing or work requirement. Many models include smaller payments for each child and larger payments for retirees.[399] The universal basic income recognizes that all people have certain survival needs and that such needs should be secured for everyone and at all times. The delivery of the benefit does not wait until one becomes unemployed or otherwise slips below the poverty line. It is imply there for every person as a minimum floor below which they are guaranteed never to fall. As Weeks notes it is imperative that a universal basic income be set slightly above subsistence level so that it does not effectively function as a supplement to low wage employers and gives workers the genuine opportunity to refuse the conditions of waged work without risking utter destitution.[400]

The practical benefits of moving away from inefficient and degrading welfare programs to a universal basic income are many. Additionally, the flood of advanced automation technologies that will be transforming the market in the coming decades will make something like a universal basic income a practical necessity to achieve a sufficient level of income distribution. When human input becomes obsolete for so many productive and creative tasks commonly undertaken as paid work, we will be forced to

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[399] See for instance the report recently published by the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce in the UK entitled *Creative Citizen, Creative State: The Principled and Pragmatic Case for a Universal Basic Income* (December 2015), available online here: https://www.thersa.org/discover/publications-and-articles/reports/basic-income/, accessed February 4, 2016.

[400] Weeks, p. 138.

imagine some scheme of distribution that decouples one's right to survive from the necessity of securing paid employment.[401] The political feasibility of implementing a universal basic income certainly seems incredibly unlikely in the US, but the idea is gaining interest across the globe with pilot tests already completed in India and Brazil and other major experiments to be undertaken in Finland, the Netherlands, and Ontario, Canada. Switzerland will also be taking up a referendum vote on instituting a universal basic income later this year (2016). Yet these practical political and economic considerations are another conversation for another time.

Here I simply note that the idea of a universal basic income, like the idea for a reduction in working hours, offers what Weeks calls a significant "provocation" that challenges the assumptions of the work society.[402] This provocation, as I have argued, sits well with the theological grounding of human life and equality in the freely offered grace of God. It recognizes that persons *qua* persons are subjects of God's creating, sustaining and redeeming grace and that their ability to maintain their creaturely existence ought not to depend upon their usefulness to the interests of capital. It also recognizes the many ways in which the necessity of waged work distorts human relationships. As a strategy for rethinking the relationship between vocation and work, endorsing a universal basic income as an economic corollary to God's indiscriminate grace, allows us to resist the enforced necessity of paid work. In this sense Christian vocation stands *against* work as the chief means of participating in society and gaining access to the means of survival.

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[401] The universal basic income was a major topic of discussion at the World Summit on Technological Unemployment in September of 2015.
[402] Weeks, p. 145.

A guarantee that one's basic survival needs will be met doesn't mean that we will no longer work at all. But it does mean that when we do work it will more closely take the form of freely offered participation and service rather than a socially coerced necessity. That is, it might itself take on the aspects of freedom, joy and celebration associated with the Sabbath commandment. The incentives for work shift and the freedom to explore more options for engagement within paid employment as well as outside it offers an opportunity for one's daily activities to more closely come in line with a sense of personal mission and vocation. It is true that socially necessary tasks will remain to be done, but in providing for everyone's basic needs we can once again ensure a more equitable sharing of such tasks. We will no longer depend upon the desperation of the poor and the anxiety of the middle class to motivate the undertaking of paid work under steadily degrading conditions. While seeking to provide a guaranteed subsistence living for all won't achieve the kind of radical equality implied by God's equal giving to all persons (there will still be vast differentials in wealth and power), it at least significantly levels the playing field and offers each person an equal opportunity to sustain a livelihood.

The Possibility of Vocation Within Work

All of this would significantly decrease people's dependence upon paid work to survive and thus increase the bargaining power of workers over and against corporate interests. As I have just mentioned this also increases the possibility that work itself might become part of a real expression of divine vocation (that is an expression of our personhood as subjects of receiving and offering love) rather than a cursed imposition. I argue that we get here only by first refusing work. In saying no we relearn what it might

mean to say yes to work with renewed imagination. Those that wish to work may join their efforts to those of companies and organizations seeking to engage in productive activity for the advancement of various economic, social, or cultural ends. They may do so with a desire to increase their access to goods and resources in life or because they find the tasks at hand and mission of their cooperative effort intrinsically valuable. However, they do not do so because work is the *only* means by which they can survive, or because they cannot imagine meaningful ways to live a good life, to pursue a vocation outside work and the terms set for it in today's economy.

Here, finally, we see the role prayer might play in informing work itself. Only when people are freed from the domination of work over their time, relationships and very own survival can one really begin to take up this question. This of course has been the chief argument of this project. Yet in closing I would like to gesture toward two important ways in which daily prayer informs what "good work" might entail. These have to do with 1) the human relationship involved in work and 2) the relation of work to time. As I have argued, the act of prayer points away from the sheer instrumentality of human effort and toward the ultimate grounding of unique and irreplaceable individual persons in God's calling, as well as the ultimate basis of human community in covenant love and celebration. What might it mean for the completion of instrumental and socially necessary tasks to be undertaken with this realization and spirit? What kinds of conditions must prevail in order for human cooperation in meeting the material needs of the world to reflect "the manner and meaning of a prayer in all its dimension, relationships and movements?"[403]

[403] Barth, *Evangelical Theology,* p. 160.

First, the commodified form of work, that is seeing labor primarily as one cost among others in the efficient generation of financial gain, distorts the human relationships involved in social cooperation. At the end of the day individual persons become a means to an end. This remains the case in the massively popular "work-life balance" movement and various pro-corporate spiritualties, the primary goals of which are to increase worker retention, keep people more productive for a longer span of time, and give workers a sense of meaning, purpose, and individual integrity in their service to an organization.[404]

Thus, in answering this problem one must go beyond simply creating a more humane work place still geared toward the maximum and preferably rapid extraction of profit for investors. This requires expanding the shared ownership of enterprises both in the organization of work processes and the distribution of company revenues. With respect to the former, every person ought to be seen not as a cog in the wheel of production but as a person with capacities for creative input into their own work and the work they share with others. Thus, to push back against the removal of decision making from the "shop floor" as it were, representative bodies chosen from among the workforce ought to be included in day-to-day operations and decision-making. Doing so will allow laborers to have a voice in managing their own work in ways that maximize their knowledge, skills, and capacities in relation to it. This day-to-day involvement in running the affairs of the workplace goes beyond typical American union representation focused on negotiating contracts (which itself is in bad shape, as we have already seen)

[404] Regarding the latter see R. Paul Stevens, *Doing God's Business: Meaning and Motivation for the Marketplace* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006) and David W. Miller, *God at Work: The History and Promise of the Faith at Work Movement* (Oxford: OUP, 2006).

and looks more like the "work councils" in Germany, provision for which was first made in the Works Constitution Act of 1952.

With respect to the latter, the skyrocketing ratio of CEO pay to median employee compensation and an overemphasis on the good of shareholders at the expense of employee pay and benefits excludes most workers from reaping the full benefits of their labor. While I am all for the push for a higher minimum wage that becomes pegged to inflation, a sole focus on wages puts too much emphasis on the wrong end of the spectrum. The problem is not fundamentally at the bottom level of individual pay, but at the top level in how we understand the meaning, purpose and ownership of profits. Thus in recognizing the essential contributions of every employee in the production of goods and services it is important that every employee be given a stake in a company's profits either through stock options or profit sharing schemes. It also requires that we set limits to the ratio of CEO pay to employee compensation, ideally pegging it to the lowest paid worker in an organization.

Second, we need to rethink the relationship between work, and economic processes more generally, to time. In our context in which processes, interactions and tasks are constantly accelerating the bodily pause necessitated by daily prayer and its postures stands as a protest against temporal strategies geared toward a continual decrease in the turn over time of capital investment. This requires not only that we place checks on the speed with which we expect work to be completed, but also that we encourage a slow down in habits of consumption and expectations for economic growth. The rapidity of work, consumption, and economic expansion demanded by the commodification of time is not sustainable. This is clear in the boom and bust cycles of

the economy as well as the psychological and environmental toll wrought by an ideology of unending acceleration and growth in consumption and production. Against such an ideology the steady interruption of daily prayer offers a potential strategy for what Rosa calls intentional oppositional deceleration.[405] It is key that the strategy be seen as "oppositional" as opposed to "functional." Functional deceleration is ultimately a coping mechanism that allows one to pause before rushing headlong back into the rapidity of modern life. Daily prayer as oppositional deceleration, on the contrary, opens up a space that fundamentally calls the rapid compression of time into question.

By marking the day with moments of memory, hope and divine encounter daily prayer points out the limits and simultaneously the ultimate good of temporality. In so doing it sets creaturely time free to be genuinely creaturely. Time is revealed as a feature of creaturely existence that is at once *essential* in that it creates a context for divine-human encounter and neighborly love, and yet finally *penultimate*, as it is relativized by its eternal and eschatological end. In equating time with money and making the generation of more money an end in itself, modern economic life reduces time to an ideological mechanism that transform human life itself into a commodity. This transformation serves to mask suffering, exploitation and injustice. In turning us to face God in word and gesture, in drawing upon the passage of time to remember the origin and goal of human life in God, daily prayer calls this ideological use of time into question. Through daily prayer we respond to the call of God to know ourselves and our neighbors as personal subjects of God's covenanting love. By halting time in its tracks in order to witness to this fact, daily prayer becomes a ritual embodiment of that shortest definition of religion: interruption.

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[405] Rosa, *Alienation and Acceleration,* pp. 36-37.

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