

ASCESIS

- 1 For each form of living, there is a lived-experience which is, or lived experiences which are, necessary to render it livable.
- 1.1 Lived-experience is lived through living.
- 2 A form of living can be considered ascetic to the extent that it is lived *in order to* live the lived-experience(s) necessary to render a formerly unlivable form of living livable.¹
- 2.1 In this way, ascesis has for its occasion an unlivable form of living.

¹ Here, “ascesis” is described by means of “*living*” in order to unbind it from the (religious, spiritual, moral, athletic, etc.) *teloi* which often restrict it, thereby making possible the conception of novel forms of ascesis – forms of ascesis which are necessary to render novel (yet-unlived) forms of living livable.

The ascetes of frugality [*ἐντελεία*] advocated by the Cynics and Clement, the self-mortifying ascetes of the Stylites, Jains, and Flagellants, the intercommunalist ascesis of the Black Panther Party, the xerophagic [*ξηροφαγία*] ascesis promoted by Tertullian, the drifting [*dérive*] ascesis of the Situationists, the ascetes of impoverishment [*paupere vita*] lived – in various ways – by Francis, Diogenes, and Crates, the *omni-vivant* ascesis of the Carpocratians, the entheogenic ascesis of Mazatec *curanderas* and *curanderos*, the hypomnematic ascetes of Aurelius and Ignatius, the itinerant ascetes of the Buddha and Segarelli, the insurrectionary ascesis proposed by Stirner, the hesychastic ascesis of the Desert Fathers, the anti-state ascetes of the Akha, Hmong, Karen, Lahu, Mien, and Wa peoples, the ascesis of withdrawal and solitude lived by anchorites, the communal ascetes of the Pachomians, as well as the near infinitude of nameless, *ordinary* ascetes (including those lived by every athlete, friend, lover, craftsman, scholar, musician, artist, and anyone who works to acquire a skill, technique, or knowledge) equally qualify as “ascetes” from the vantage of this description. [It should also be noted that this list is intended to be suggestive rather than exhaustive.]

- 2.2 In ascesis, the lived-experience which is necessary to render the occasioning form of living livable is lived through the living of already-livable forms of living.
- 2.3 Each form of living *can* be lived as ascesis (1.1).
- 2.4 Ascesis does not entail the renunciation of life *as such*, only the renunciation of forms of living which are incompatible with the occasioning form of living.²
- 3 The form of living which occasions ascesis (2.1) can be adopted as either *a* form of living (amongst others), or as *the* form of living (according to which all other forms of living are to be lived).
- 3.1 *The* form of living is livable only insofar as *all* (other) livable forms of living accord with *the* form of living.³
- 3.1.1 Thus, while *a* form of living serves as a *mere* occasion for ascesis, *the* form of living serves as both occasion for ascesis and *telos* for living.

² Two forms of living can be said to be incompatible to the extent that lived (experience) which is necessary to render one form of living livable entails the unlivability of the other.

³ Insofar as it is adopted as *the* form of living, it no longer lived as a mere form of living amongst others, but instead as *the form of* forms of living.

3.2 Ascesis, insofar as it adopts its occasion as *a* form of living, is simply lived in order to live the lived-experience(s) necessary to render the occasioning form of living livable.

Ascesis, insofar as it adopts its occasion as *the* form of living, is lived in order to live the lived-experience(s) necessary to render all livable forms of living accordant with *the* occasioning form of living (3.1).

3.2.1 The former adopts its occasion as a means for (enlivening) living (a form *for* living), whereas the latter adopts its occasion as *the telos* of living (living *for the* form).