CHAPTER 3

THE SPACES OF DISCOURSE AND HISTORY
A THE SPACE OF DISCOURSE

In the last chapter we have seen that for Foucault, discourse is anterior to man's awareness of himself as man, an awareness that founds his finitude. In this chapter through a detailed interpretation of Foucault's theatre we will be able to confront what we have avoided in the last chapter. The locus of the problem is discourse itself. Because it is no more "the classical discourse in which being and representation found their common locus". This combat leads Foucault to complement an archaeological analysis of discursive formations with a genealogical investigation of the historical field in which they operate. What is discourse such that man relates to it in a specific way? What is the nature of reality such that it constantly entails identical comprehension? Because its very emergence is a disproof of the triumph of the identical over the singular? These are some of the questions that can be asked in the wake of the Foucaultian analytic. Foucault writes:

Discourse is not life: its time is not your time; in it, you will not be reconciled to death; you may have killed God beneath the weight of all that you have said; but don't imagine that, with all that you are saying, you will make a man that will live longer than he (AK: 211).

The inference that is to be derived from this is that interospection of any depth oriented or any meaning oriented analysis of man is misleading and retrogressive. Concepts such
as "meaning", "depth" and "ontological man" antedate the analytic of finitude. Moreover since the analytic initiates a break with the past none of the earlier concepts are recoverable. It is not even admissible within the new analytic. Man is not a changeless identity but an algebraic expression that changes content from one temporal-discursive context to another. The only mode in which man is available today is as a signifier among other signifiers. His literality is his "meaning". Foucault's conception of knowledge institutes discursive practice as the producer of utterances and the place from which the subject speaks. This lateral externality authorises the search for precisely those entitlements that in every culture authorise some to speak and others to remain silent. By locating this in the field of knowledge, Foucault opened the way to question the claims of energy operations that seek to counter a subject. Hence his theatre attempts to thematise in the familiar the buried outline of the different. It provides a critique of forms of subjectivity. This translation of the concept of man from the place of "subjectivity" and "interiority" to that of "eternal-externality" necessitates a transvaluation of all existing values and definitions. Blanchot remarks:

In any event, Foucault is a man always on the move, alone, secretive, and who, because of that distrusts the marvels of interiority, refuses the traps of subjectivity, asking where and how there emerges a discourse entirely surface and shimmering, but bereft of mirages (FB : 68).
The impact is particularly acute on "language". What had been considered as a privileged container of meaning is now rendered problematic. It is considered as one among several "interrelated signifiers" whose irreducible exteriority precludes the "inculcation of meaning". When Foucault talks of the knowability of man and compares it with the knowability of the brain or "the Indo-European languages", it is not as mere assertion of the positivity of knowledge. What he is doing is extending the Nietzschean thesis of Will to knowledge to its logical conclusion. According to Foucault, knowledge is a playful celebration of the "superannuation of signifieds" and the mobilisation of "immeasurable displacements". At the same time, these displacements are not conservatively intended to provide displacements. Moreover, they do not have for their objective any kind of absolute correction. The discourses and knowledges that Nietzsche anticipates and Foucault explicitly addresses are indicators of a new spatiality of knowledge. Moreover this spatiality has nothing in common with the hegemonically controlled "monism of representational truth". This space is but another name for the analytic of finitude. This space acknowledges the reality of the rules, the regulations and the constraints that attend the formation of discourses. But while acknowledging this it also points out that these very constitutive rules are themselves alien to it. Hence, they are eminently displaceable, replaceable and even dispensable. This unconventional attitude to rules is very different from the classical attitude that sees rules as "incarnations of an
It is

The historical source of the fundamental division between the true and false is the specific form of the will to knowledge that is Plato's legacy to western thought. We are heirs to an "ideophilia", a love of an ideal intelligibility that can be separated from appearance of a sameness that seeks to institute an identity and multiplicity. Within this philosophical stream, three themes emerge that cooperate with "logophobia" in denying the specific reality of discourse. The theme of a founding subject reduces language and meaning to mere instruments of a subjectivity that animates the presumed emptiness of words within its objectives. The theme of originating experience plays an analogous role. The world speaks meanings that our language merely reflects. The theme of universal mediation offers an omnipresent functioning of meaning. These constraints and this philosophical heritage suppresses the material reality of discourse. Such an understanding of knowledge that there is no knowledge without rules implies that rules are not what knowledge is for. This generates profound consequences. To Molloy whose self is deeply entrenched in "meaning" and identity, this re-definition of the process of knowledge furnishes the practical possibilities for the emergence of the "other". Rules now become what the writer plays with and not what he/she respects for the purpose of his/her own success and salvation. The insight that whatever has been constructed can be constructed leads to a serious but uninhibited attitude towards the past. Now we can say that Molloy's feeling of not being able to go on is in

ulterior and inner meaning or order."
actuality an indication of qualitative change.

The Archaeological approach provides a perspective that subverts accepted hierarchies and sequences. It disturbs the confidence of time-honoured mental categories and rules of cogitation. This is why the subject has been the central element in Foucault's critique. By taking away from the subject his privileges of creation and origin and by denying the subject the status of a unifying consciousness, Archaeology provides an access to a different reality of discourse. It frees discourse from the conventional metaphors. Discourse is no longer seen as a document that hides within its depths other discourses. Discourse in this perspective cannot restore the unique experience of its origin (and taken as an cannot sense to reconstitute a unity). Because all such reconstructions are the projections of a subject that sees subject as a sense of perception. At the same time, this perspective provides an alternative mode of dealing with discourse and with its historical reality. This is the purpose accomplished by genealogy. Foucault writes:

And this is what I would call genealogy, that is, a form of history which can account for the constitution of knowledges, discourses, domains of objects etc., without having to make reference to a subject which is either transcendental in relation to the field of events, or runs in its empty sameness throughout the course of history (PK : 117).

For Foucault the main purpose of a genealogy of knowledge is "to
reveal the heterogenous systems which masked by the self, inhibit the formation of any form of identity" (LCP : 1580). The importance of this changed attitude towards the nature of rules becomes even clearer when we consider the problem of the past. The overthrow of the authority of rules is infact the overthrow of the sanctity of the past. Whenever there is a regulatory use of a rule, it is an illustration of the principle that the present is a form of lonlessness to be punished into meaning. Foucault writes:

As for the philosophy of history, it encloses the event in a cyclical pattern of time. Its error is grammatical; it treats the present as framed by the past and future: the present is a former future where its form was prepared and the past, which will occur in the future, preserves the identity of its content. First, this sense of the present requires a logic of essences (which establishes the present in memory) and of concepts (where the present is established as a knowledge of the future), and then a metaphysics of a crowned and coherent cosmos, of a hierarchical world (LCP: 175-176).

This is a major achievement of Foucault. He has shown that when rules are emptied of "their magisterial thrust" what we get is the subversive knowledge about the nature of the rules themselves. The phase "conditions of production" best describes the contents of this knowledge. Rules now reveal more about their own constitution and their symptomatic relationship to those particular conditions of production. The instances and
orders that make up the essence of rules may now be recognised as admissions of finitude and contingency. According to Foucault, rules are expressive only if they point beyond themselves toward that particular structuration of reality that accounts for their emergence. Rules make the past available to the present for purposes of scrutiny, evaluation, acceptance or outright rejection. Rules are the comments on the limitations of those conditions creates the way for the "demonumentalisation of the past". It leads to an understanding that knowledge is disruptive.

The availability of the part in the form of discourse raises several interesting questions. These questions concern intentionality. According to Foucault, "man" does not exist outside of discourse. Then the question which arises is: how is it tenable for man to intend at all? What does "to intend" mean in the context of the breakdown of the very philosophy?

The interests and the perspectivity that Foucault's theatre "cares" are not to be totalised in the form of a "being" or a "self". Rather they are a network of relay of local strategies. The sensitivity of these regional strategies to reality is actually non-theoretical. Hence they prevent the formation of any ontological basis. Foucault writes:

The change hasn't just been in what people thought about and talked about, but also in philosophical discourse, in theory and critique: indeed, in most of these analyses, people are not told what they ought to be, what they ought
to do, what they ought to believe and think. What they do rather is to bring out how up till now social mechanisms had been able to operate, how the forms of repression and constraint had acted, and then, it seems to me, people were left to make up their own minds, to choose, in the light of all this, their own existence (PPC : 50).

It is not the "intention" of Foucault's theatre to find itself in a trivial situation of opposing pedagogy or representational epistemology theoretically alone. It doesn't have a practical reluctance to oppose those very forms of knowledge in their worldly institutional manifestations. Foucault writes:

The intellectual's role is no longer to place himself "somewhat ahead and to the side" in order to express the stifled truth of collectivity; rather, it is to struggle against the forms of power that transforms him into its object and instrument in the sphere of "knowledge", "truth", "consciousness" and "discourse". In this sense theory does not express, translate or serve to apply practice: it is practice. But it is local and regional, as you said, and not totalising. This is a struggle against power, a struggle aimed at revealing and undermining power where it is most invisible and insidious. It is an activity conducted alongside those who struggle for power and not their illumination from a safe distance. A "theory" is the regional system of this struggle (LCP : 207-208).

These statements are made by Foucault in the context of a sation with Deleuze concerning the nature of the
relationship between intellectuals and power. Foucault said the special duty of the contemporary specific intellectual to be in a form of dissent arising from the mastery of a specific institution and from the knowledge of the intricate manner in which its power operates.

The understanding of the above passage discloses the fact that Foucaultian theatre is reality/practice. This reality is an "ever moving, ever agile relay". When this relationship is not "efficacious", it is fully capable of dismantling itself and yielding its place to a different set of strategies. This capacity of Foucaultian theatre is in contradistinction to the metaphysical self. At best the metaphysical self can bring "continuous reform". Foucaultian strategies on the other hand operate outside such theoretical containment. They are discontinuous and situational. By virtue of their practicality they are also intended as dispensable. Foucaultian theatre is a revolution and not a gesture of reform or revision. And as revolution, it is aware of the acategorical nature of process. It is different because it is non-identical Foucault writes:

What if thought freed itself from commonsense and decided to function only in its extreme singularity? What if it adopted the disreputable bias of the paradox, instead of complacently accepting its citizenship in the doxa?

(LCP : 182).

Foucault's articulation of this disjuncture in the history of western philosophy is particularly rich in its polemic resourcefulness. Because in the very act of describing the
"official enemy" (identity), it generates tactical strength for
the way out (difference). Foucault writes:

Consider the handling of difference. It is generally
assumed to be a difference from or within something; behind
difference, beyond it - but as its support, its site, its
delimitation and consequently as the source of its mastery-
we pose, through the concept, the unity of a group and
its breakdown into species in the operation of difference
(the organic domination of the Aristotelian concept).
Difference is transformed into that which must be specified
within a concept, without overstepping its bounds. And yet
above the species, we encounter the swarming of
individualities. What is this boundless diversity, which
eludes specification and remains outside the concept, if
not the resurgence of repetition? Underneath the ovine
species, we are reduced to counting sheep. This stands as
the first form of subjection: difference as specification
(within the concept) and repetition as the indifference of
individuals (outside the concept). But subjection to what?
To common sense which, turning away from the mad flux and
anarchical difference, invariably recognises the identity
of things (and this is at all times a general capacity).
Common sense extracts the generality of an object while it
simultaneously establishes the universality of the knowing
subject through a fact of good will .... what if it
conceived of difference differentially, instead of
searching out the common elements underlying difference?
Then difference would disappear as a general feature that leads to the generality of the concept and it would become a different thought, the thought, the thought of difference—a pure event (LCP : 181-182).

What Foucault is mapping here is the project to launch "thinking into the previous seas of otherness, difference and sheer becoming without end or telos." To clear the ground for a thinking of difference, Foucault welcomed the appearance of discourse as the object of his analysis. His theatre accepted the reality of the systems that can be shown to operate in discourse. Such receptivity to the appearance of discourse is a greeting of man's disappearance. At the same time this disappearance can only be the source of uneasiness. In attempting to formulate a perspective that allows for the thinking of difference he hits upon a striking image. Thought must be regarded as a theatrical performance. This image captures his project's anti-Platonic bias. Inquiry is exposed to a reality that is not solid and natural but empty and dark. The stage of being is not univocal, arising within it are actions that are multiple "simultaneous, broken into different scenes." Being must be conceived of as the "recurrence of difference" and the duty of thought is to describe and account for the play of these differences. Its aim is to think difference which is accomplished when it does justice to the event. When it grasps its distinctive level, it is freed from a phenomenological subjugation to a sovereign self. The element which observes the event "obstructs the successful formation of thought." Hence
we can say that archaeology's place is tied to the liberation of
the precarious being called event. If the theatre is the image
Foucault employs for thought in this period, it is the fact that
historical study that is privileged in the production of events
that thought needs to consider. Historical study must be guided
by a Nietzschean genealogical interest. It is not a search for
origins but as an assault upon a traditional history rooted in
Platonic viewpoints. Traditional history has teleological
ambitions. Its quest for purposes, patterns and values dissolves
the singular event into an ideal continuity. Its field of
investigation is constituted by periods that are regarded as
noble, ideas that are considered major and personages who are
accorded world historical status. For Foucault, such history
avoids precisely what needs to be captured. Genealogy responds
to this need by situating our existence within a host of
entangled events, foreign to any particular orientation or end.
Genealogical interest commits itself to the historical
description of areas considered to be without history. It is
hostile towards the Platonic passion for identity and memory of
ideal being. The genealogical task includes the histories of
sentiments, love, the body, etc. such an interest is for the sake
of history. Foucault writes:

Effective history, however, deals with events in terms
of their most unique characteristics, their most acute
manifestations. An event, consequently, is not a decision, a
treaty, a reign or a battle, but the reversal of
relationship of forces, the usurpation of power, the
appropriation of a vocabulary turned against those who had once used it, a feeble domination that positions itself as it grows lax, the entry of a masked "other" (LCP: 193).

The multiplicities and differences thrown up by history triumph. This anti-Platonic purpose served by the genealogical analysis shows itself very clearly in its determination to submit the traditional historians' aim (the search for objective truth) to an interrogation of its place in history. Then the question arises: what is the specific configuration of social and intellectual forces within which emerges the will to knowledge that sustains such objective inquiry?

Recourse to an historical-genealogical reflection is for the purpose of theoretical thinking. In staging multiple events in their singularities, the desire of such history is to "isolate the different scenes where they engaged in different roles". The genealogical passion is thus intrinsic to the archaeological project with its aim of thinking difference and confronting the event. This does not mean that archaeology is reducible to genealogy. Thinking itself is an event. Nietzsche's genealogical event occurs in a perspective different from that of Foucault's archaeological event. "Thought must consider the process that forms it and form itself from these considerations." (LCP: 178). Foucault's theatre is a library of many specialities, hence his thought cannot be identified with a specific school. His thought reveals what it means to be a man of the library. That is why discourse is a crucial theme in
Foucault. In the Foucaultian context, discourses are themselves realities. Foucault's thesis about a polymorphic discourse is very significant in this context. A polymorphic discourse fractures the privileges of self, unity and representation. The very expression "practice of discourse" does not, therefore, not exist in Foucault's theatre. Discourse is practice and not a paradigmatic truth applied to existing situations. Since there is no Discourse, but only discourses, there is no privileged model.

In describing the phenomenon of difference, Foucault also raises the question of anteriority. According to him, the exhibiting of difference in philosophy is simply due to the priority of identity over difference. Since in "time", difference succeeds identity, it is constrained to inscribe itself within the pattern already commenced by identity. The context of difference is already figured out as yet another complicated system within the language of identity. It is impossible for difference to break out of this commitment to its antecedent given the assumption that origin and purpose are identical. But if it could be shown that origins are merely so many beginnings without the guarantee of resolutions then the task is also different. The task is to show that behind these origins there are several pre-histories of the present that are to be analysed and critically unpacked. Each beginning is at best the setting in motion of another parallel series that inhabits a certain space singularly. No series is ever intended either to culminate in a grand paradigmatic aggregation or
expected to point to an origin outside of its own material, spatial and temporal point of commencement. This so called "purpose" is but the desire of philosophy to perpetuate and naturalise itself in the presence of the controlled absence to the other. The question then arises is whether the Foucaultian theatre attempts to free itself totally from all references to the past. Foucault writes:

Are all philosophies individual species of the genus "anti-Platonic"? Does each begin with a declaration of this fundamental rejection? Can they be grouped around this desired and detestable centre? Rather, the philosophical nature of a discourse is its Platonic differential, an element absent in Platonism but present in other philosophies. A better formulation would be: it is an element in which the effect of absence is induced in the Platonic series through a new and divergent series (consequently, its function in the Platonic series is that of a signifier that is both excessive and absent); and it is also an element in which the Platonic series produce a free, floating and excessive circulation in that other discourse. Plato, then, is the excessive and deficient father (LCP: 166).

Foucault's treatment of the relevance or irrelevance of Platonism to contemporary articulation has an overall bearing on the kind of relationship between the present and the past. They are not passively inherited. We can say that the technique at work here is the Nietzschean forgetting. But it is a hard-earned
forgetting through the laborious effort of remembering. The objective here is to orient the present in such a way that the past is made to collapse. The past is touched, manipulated and dislocated. The assertion that a philosophy cannot be defined as anti something is a source of great richness. It clearly indicates that critical remembering should result in a forgetting and thus in a decisive rupture. Foucault writes:

It is useless to define a philosophy by its anti-Platonic character (as a plant is distinguished by its reproductive organs); but a philosophy can be distinguished somewhat in the manner in which a phantasm is defined, by the effect of alack when it is distributed into its two constituent series — the "archaic" and the "real"; and you will dream of a general history of philosophy, a Platonic phantasmatology; and not an architecture of systems (LCP : 166).

In this passage we note that the "archaic" opposes the "real". The inference we can draw is that, though reality is contemporaneous, our perception of it is constrained to be historical. Perhaps we think historically but we live ahistorically. The trap is identical repetitions. But this much is obvious. We do have a choice. Foucault writes:

It evokes "Care", it evokes the care one takes of what exists and what might exist; a sharpened sense of reality, but one that is never immobilised before it; a readiness to find what surrounds us strange and odd; a certain determination to throw off familiar ways of thought and to
look at the same things in a different way; a passion for seizing what is happening now and what is disappearing; a lack of respect for the traditional hierarchies of what is important and fundamental (PC: 328).

It is not an easy, univocal choice. Both Nietzsche and Foucault remind us that our favouring in favour of the singular event bears traces of our summary rejection of the past and our determination to occupy and render time differently. According to Nietzsche this is "the unimpaired vitality of the present". But these traces are not "commemorative". They are the features of the counter-memory in the beginning. The "event" is the paradox that terminates the colonisation of content by form. It is a locality by virtue of what transpires there. Moreover, it has no "spatio-temporal co-ordinates" other than its own "paradoxical pulsations". Foucault writes:

The event is that which is invariably lacking in the series of the phantasm - its absence indicates its repetition devoid of any grounding in an original, outside of all forms of imitation and freed from the constraints of similitude. Consequently, it is disguise of repetitions, the always singular mark that conceals nothing, simulacra without dissimulation, incongruous finery covering a non-existent nudity, pure difference (LCP: 177).

There is another paradox implicit in this passage against "difference" that is circumscribed within identity. The emergence of pure difference becomes possible precisely because this difference goes through the motions of identity. At the same
time it has a subversive intention. By playing at identity and at the same time making it very clear that there is no "within" or "original" or "imitation" it plays out identity too. This stepping out is the result of a specific practicing a differential thinking that is rigorous from the "modes of thought axiomatised in the Tradition". A reading of Deleuze by Foucault makes this very assertion rigorously:

Logic of Sense (Logique du Sens) shows us how to develop a thought capable of comprehending the event and the concept, their severed and double affirmation, their affirmation of disjunction. Determining an event on the basis of a concept by denying any importance to repetition, is perhaps what might be called knowing and measuring the phantasm against reality, by going in search of its origin, is judging. Philosophy tried to do both, it dreamed of itself as a science and presented itself as a critique. Thinking, on the other hand, requires the release of a phantasm in the mind that produces it at a single stroke; it makes the event indefinite so that it repeats itself as a singular universal (LCP: 177-178).

Repetition, in the hands of Foucault and Deleuze celebrates the availability of the past in discursive formations and capitalises on this availability by miming these formations. This "purposeless" act clears the way for the break and the unhindered emergence of the event. This playful and irreverent miming heralds the differential triumph of the other over the self. The other goes through the motions of identity and self-hood. In
this act it transgresses and goes beyond the self. In contrast, the performance of its self by the self is binding on the self and restrictive. The performance of identical operations by the other is a pseudo act. Therefore it is not generative of real "identical" consequences. The special advantage of this mime strategy is that it enables the other to demonstrate a formal competence. This competence is equal to the enactment of the self by the self. At the same time it makes it possible for the other to reject the contents of identical operations. As a parody it is of a higher order than that which is parodies. At the same time it is also a compelling critique of the phenomenon under parody. This structural out-stripping of an earlier form makes the rejection more definitive. Moreover it is not vulnerable to any kind of falling back. The paradox liberates itself by mimicking the well-made, representational, theoretical and identical statement. By doing so, it repudiates the very episteme that endows identical propositionality with the essence of truth.

At the same time, a slipping back into the language of identity and theory is a real danger. It can be guarded against through a ceaseless thematisation and problematisation of the past. Through the analysis of the mime as offensive, the strategy of confronting the past in its fullness is a viable strategy. In contrast limited dislocations of past concepts have a tendency to neutralise the radicality of the present. In any given historical conjuncture, radicality has a position outside the ruling hegemony. "Radicality" is the other that has
intentionally disqualified itself of its reality within the existing orthodoxy. The paradox is that the radical is real precisely because it is unreal or non-corporeal. The radical is that convincing projection into the future that will always find existing forms hostile and not relevant. The only way that radicality announces itself is through destruction and a subsequent non-identical construction on a site that is discontinues with the earlier sites. Radicality is the hole within dominant structures that calls into question the so-called "plenitude of the regular" and the socially legitimated. It is the outside that makes a mockery of all ceremonies of closure and containment. Foucaultian theatre does not attempt to inhibit it with conceptual or identical interiority.

In the history of philosophy we can perceive the moments of the hegemonic naturalisation of meaning. Whatever has fallen outside of the orthodox parameters has been designated as the "other". The other is so subtly constituted that as a reformed concept it increases the strength of the dominant orthodoxy. In Foucault's theatre of thought there is an attempt to put an end to this "infamy" of representation by describing the insane, the monstrosities away from the polarities of the self and the other. They are different. At the same time, the attempt is not to attain the purity of "a notional rebellion ". Foucault has recently described the corpus of his work as recounting man's quest for self-knowledge and the price that has to be paid as a consequence of this quest. It has resulted in a number of discourses. Discourse and non-discursive language are elements
of a sort of "spatial model" with which Foucault seems to have worked in the 1960's. The results were surprisingly new configurations. What had been perceived as necessary relationships, inviolable links, important events emerged in Foucault's theatre as contingencies that supported quite different descriptions. The chain of influences, the temporal continuities, the sustaining consciousness, the totalising dialectic are relativised by the narrative he employs. In short, Foucault is an historian but his history is a self-declared history of the present, an objective according to Foucault fully in accord with the spirit of the Enlightenment. He writes:

I have been seeking, on the one hand, to emphasise the extent to which a type of philosophical interrogation - one that simultaneously problematises man's relation to the present, man's historical mode of being, and the constitution of the self as an autonomous subject - is rooted in the Enlightenment. On the other hand, I have been seeking to stress that the thread that may connect us with the Enlightenment is not faithfulness to doctrinal elements, but rather the permanent reactivation of an attitude - that is of a philosophical ethos that could be described as a permanent critique of our historical era. (FR : 42).

We can see this differential impulse in the contrasting understandings of insanity (MC), Medical diagnostic procedure (BC), and explanations in the social sciences (OT). He is violating conventions of established history in turning his attention to relationships that transcend national boundaries,
the bourgeois culture and the socio-political structures he describes. He writes:

It was he [Georges Dumézil] again, who taught me to describe the transformations of a discourse, and its relations to the institution. It is he who taught me to analyse the internal economy of discourse quite differently from the traditional methods of exegesis or those of linguistic formalism. (AK: 235).

These were the works that earned him the label "structuralist" which he emphatically rejected. Saussure was able to cordon off a separate and autonomous realm called "language" (langue) as a distinct from specific "speech acts" (parole) in order to articulate rules of formation and transformation of the language in a scientific manner. By a kind of methodological suspension of concern for the individual practices of speaking, he was freed to seek the "meaning" of signs in their relationship of similarity to and difference from other linguistic signs. But it is the non-subject centered and relational nature of the differential method that appeals to Foucault. He shares Saussure's anti-substantialist view of the subject as well as his interest in meaning as system-relative. But he rejects the structures of the structuralists as axiomatic and formal. Foucault's "structures" whether they called "epistemes" or "diagrams" are not at all transcendental in the kantian sense. They are neither origins nor foundations. They are to be discovered not deduced. He characterises his method as "diagnostic". What he means that it yields a form of knowledge
that defines and determines differences. The example he cites is a physician determining a disease by comparing the symptoms with those of other diseases. Foucault seems to have adopted a general rule. He writes:

In order to overcome the first series of objections, there did not seem to be any need to modify the structure of the clinical gaze itself: was it not enough simply to observe the dead as one observes the living and to apply to corpses the diacritical principle of medical observation: the only pathological fact is a comparative fact? (FC:134) His entire project has been radically anti-Platonic and favourable to those like the sophists and cynics of classical antiquity. At the same time, they have been marginalised by the official history of Western philosophy. Thus his interest in contrast and difference does not imply commitment to an underlying unity. He writes:

The freeing of difference requires thought without contradiction, without dialectics, without negation; thought that accepts divergence; affirmative thought whose instrument is disjunction; thought of the multiple of the nomadic and dispersed multiplicity that is not limited or confined by the constraints of similarity; thought that does not conform to a pedagogical model; but that attacks insoluble problems - that is, a thought that addresses a multiplicity of exceptional points, which are displaced as we distinguish their conditions and which insist and subsist in the play of repetitions .... what is the answer to the
question? The problem. How is the problem resolved? By displacing the question. The problem cannot be approached through the logic of the excluded third, because it is a dispersed multiplicity ... we must think problematically rather than question and answer dialectically.

This emphasis on "problemisation" about sexual thoughts as well as practices became a major moral matter displacing considerations of diet and even civic duty, in that order. It is most explicit in his second and third volumes of the history of sexuality. "Problemisation" expresses the spatialisation of language in Foucault's later thought. The histories he maps are dependent on prior histories against which they articulate themselves in differential manner. The statements in Foucault's histories gain their significance not only from mutual differences but from the ongoing distinction drawn between the set of statements being described and a contrasting set in question. It is not simply that the set of statements constituting the modern discourse of sexuality displays a coherence that makes some statements possible and excludes others. It is the entire discursive formation, the set itself and the rules that govern it, that assumes its meaning as a mechanism of social control. This is in contrast with alternative discourses that allow sex a less decisive cognitive role in constituting social subjects. The alternative "bodies and pleasures" that Foucault speaks of at the close of his first volume on sexuality have the force of resistance to presently
dominant discursive practices by virtue of their very possibility. According to Foucault things can be otherwise. It is not in the sense of imaginative constructions. For Foucault, it is possible in the diagnostic contrast that "heterotopias" establish.

B. THE SPACE OF HISTORY

In a lecture entitled "Of Other Spaces", delivered the year after the Order of Things was published, Foucault undertook a brief "history" of space. According to Foucault, history was the great obsession of 19th century thought. In contrast, our present could be termed as "the epoch of space". He employs his diagnostic method to distinguish "heterotopias" (other sites) from "utopias" (no sites or good sites). Heterotopia, which is a constant of every human group includes such spaces as cemeteries, gardens and museums as well as the "space" of fairs and vacation villages, of libraries and colonies. What makes this curious essay interesting is its use of the method of contrast to underscore the space of contestation that heterotopias inevitably introduce into a society. They have a specific function proper to each society within which they exist. But in general these "other sites" silently question the space in which we live. He writes:

We are at a moment, I believe, when our experience of the world is less that of a long life developing though time than that of a network that connects points and intersects with its own skein. One could perhaps say that certain ideological conflicts animating present-day polemics oppose
the pious descendants of 'time and the determined inhabitants of space. We do not live inside a void that could be colored with diverse shades of light, we live inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely superimposable on one another (COS: 22-23).

"Diagnosis concerning the nature of the present" Foucault says, ...

...does not consist in a simple characterisation of what we are but, instead - by following lines of fragility in the present - in managing to grasp why and how that - which is might no longer be that - which is. In this sense, any description must always be made in accordance with these kinds of virtual fracture which open up the space of freedom understood as a space of concrete freedom, i.e., of possible transformation (PG: 36).

It is this revelation of the radical contingency of discourses that makes Foucault's histories forms of social critique. Foucaultian theatre emphasises the meaning and value of differing locations in social space as its configuration shifts from age to age. He writes:

In the middle ages there was a hierarchic ensemble of places: sacred places and profane places, protected places and open, exposed places, urban places and rural places (COS: 22).

All of these places along, "with the privileges of those given the identity credentials" to operate effectively within them were legitimated. At the same time, this cosmology naturalised the
ordering of places. In this context, Galileo's scientific discovery had an important impact on policy: For the real scandal of Galileo's work lay not so much in his discovery or rediscovery, that the earth revolved around the Sun, but in his constitution of an infinite, and infinitely open space. In such a space the place of the Middle Ages turned out to be dissolved (OOS: 23).

He is tracing the creation of various spaces after the breakup of the medieval cosmology in which new individual differences were created and administratively handled in new types of locations. According to Foucault the modern age is characterised by the production of "heterotopias of deviation". These are rest homes, psychiatric, hospitals, prisons etc. Foucault wonders about the price for containing the possibilities of the self within an administration of space that proliferates such heterotopias. To him, "Ship" as the heterotopia has the "greatest reserve of the imagination" because it moves between and beyond. It is not caught within modes of confinement constituted by modernity's tightly administered "heterotopias of deviations". Shipping is a identity commerce that is being lost. He writes:

In civilisation without boats, dreams dry up, espionage takes the place of adventure and police take the place of pirates (OOS: 23).

In an essay of Blanchot, whose thought he regarded highly, Foucault speaks of "the experience of the outside" (FB). "The experience of the outside" was lodged historically in negative
theology and in the writings of thinkers such as Sade and Holderlin. It reappeared "at the very core of language" of our culture with the works of Nietzsche, Mallarme, Artaud, Bataille, Klossonski and Blanchot. Such experience seeks a language that excludes the subject avoids dialectical attempts to recoup otherness. He writes:

The fictitious is never in things or in people, but in the impossible versimilitude of what lies between them: encounters the proximity of what is most distant, the absolute dissimilation in our very midst. Therefore, fiction consists not in showing the invisible, but in showing the extent to which invisibility of the visible is invisible. Thus, it bears a profound relation to space, understood in this way, space is to fiction what the negative is to reflection (where as diatical negation is tied to the fable of time) (FB : 23-24).

Foucault insists that language is "neither truth nor time nor eternity nor man, but the ever defeated form of outside." It is in "spatialised" language Foucault finds way out. This escape is not only from the nominal control of pure or hermeneutical phenomenology but also from the metaphor depth. His theatre is a geography not a geology.

In discussing the contrast between clinical and automo-clinical medicine that surfaced in the early nineteen-eighties Foucault observes:

What is modified in giving place to anatomo-clinical medicine is not, therefore, the mere surface of contact
between the knowing subject and the known object. It is the more general arrangement of knowledge that determines the reciprocal positions and the connection between the one who must know and that which is to be known. It was the result of a recasting at the level of epistemic knowledge (Savior) itself. It is not a matter of the same game, somewhat improved, but of a quite different game (PG : 137).

What he is pointing out is a profound change in the way of looking at the patient and a corresponding alteration in the body observed. The initial medical query "what is wrong with you" leading to a classificatory response gives way to a "where does it hurt"? He writes:

For Bichat and his successors, the notion of Seat is freed from the causal problematic (and in this respect, they are the heirs of the clinicians); it is directed towards the future of the disease rather than to its past; the Seat is the point from which the pathological organisation radiates.

Not the final cause, but the original site (PG : 140).

This basic shift in seeing and saying is indicative not only of an epistemic revolution in nineteenth century medicine, but also of the nature of Foucaultian theatre when he prefaces his study of clinical medicine, he is characterising his general approach to history as well. He writes:

We must place ourselves and remain once and for all, at the level of the fundamental spatialisation and verbalisation of the pathological, where the loquacious gaze with which the doctor observes the poisonous heart of things
Foucault focuses upon what he calls "practice", both discursive and non-discursive. By practice what he means is a "pre-conceptual, anonymous socially sanctioned body of rules". These rules govern one's manner of perceiving, judging, imaging and acting. A practice forms the intelligible background for actions by its two-fold character. That is on the one hand practices establish and apply norms, controls and exclusions and on the other they render true/false discourse possible. For example, the practice of legal punishment entails the interplay between a code that regulates the ways of acting and how to discipline an inmate and the production of discourse which legitimates these ways of acting.

The power/knowledge relations in Foucault's general scheme merely denotes respectively these dimensions of practice. He writes:

The term discourse can be defined as the group of statements that belong to a single system of formation (AK: 107) and what he calls discursive formation:

Whenever one can describe, between a number of statements, such a system of dispersion, whenever, between objects, types of statement, concepts of thematic choices, one can define a regularity (an order, correlations, positions and functionings, transformation), we will say for the sake of convenience, that we are dealing with a discursive formation (AK: 38).

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Foucault says that the task that *The Order of Things* set itself is one "of no longer treating discourses as groups of signs, (signifying elements referring to contents or representations) but as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (AK: 49). But he is quick to insist that "discursive formation is characterised not by principles of construction but by a dispersion of fact, since for statements it is not a condition of possibility but a law of coexistence" (AK: 116). He has admitted that his use of the term "discourse" in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* is rather ambiguous (AK: 107). The same might be said for "discursive formation" which is a condition of existence but not a condition of possibility (AK: 117). Indeed, this distinction between conditions of existence and of possibility expresses his principle of exteriority enunciated in the inaugural lecture:

> We must conceive discourse as a violence that we do to things or at all events, as a practice we impose upon them; it is in this practice that events of discourse find the principle of their regularity... The fourth principle, that of exteriority, holds that we are not to burrow to the hidden core of discourse, to the heart of the thought or meaning manifested in it; taking the discourse itself, its appearance and its regularity, that we should look for its external conditions of existence, for that which gives rise to the chance series of these events and fixes its limits (AK: 229).
His aim is not to constitute a realm independent of the non-discursive, but to reveal how these formations function at the limit between discursive and non-discursive. At the same time, he is not conceiving them as representing some extralinguistic reality but as establishing a realm of signs and a specific object of investigation. He writes:

What in short, we wish to do is to dispense with things. To depersonify them. To substitute for enigmatic treasure of things anterior to discourse, the regular formation of objects that emerge only in discourse. To define these objects without reference to the ground, the foundation of things, but by relating them to the body of rules that enable them to form as objects of a discourse and thus constitute the conditions of their historical appearance (AK: 47-48).

The point of Foucault's analyses in each of these works is to reveal the contextualisation and radical contingency of our most prized certainties. By examining the "optics of the sources", he is able to reveal unsuspected affiliations that challenge the adequacy of our "neutral" readings of the phenomena in question. In short, his writings show a marked preference for lists, tables, geometrical configurations and illustrations that not only constitute his particular style of exposition but are integral to the argument itself. Setting the archaeological account against the tangled network of influences that constitutes the realm of history of Ideas. He writes:

But if we question classical thought at the level of
what, archaeologically, made it possible, we perceive the
dissociation of the sign and resemblance in the early 17th
century caused these new forms .... And it was this network
that made possible the individuals we term Hobbes, Berkeley,
Hume or Condillac (OT: 83).

Why one network succeeded another is a throw of historical dice.
But why one appeared with the form it possessed is a function of
the spaces left vacant by its predecessor. But if there is any
recensity and intelligibility in these archaeologies they rest on
the fundamental event that introduces "chance" into historical
accounts. He writes:

The forces operating in history are not controlled by
destiny or regulative mechanisms, but respond to haphazard
conflicts. They do not manifest the successive forms of a
primordial intention and their attraction is not that of a
conclusion, for they always appear through the singular
randomness of events (LCP: 154-155).

Reference to battle lifts us to the next level in the spiral of
Foucault's theatre, that of "Genealogy". In its opposition to
any concept of historical origins, its emphasis on the important
role of chance occurrences to "maintain passing events in their
proper dispersion" genealogy resembles archaeology. In
retrospect Foucault insists that he was always dealing with the
issue of power and a glance at the Birth of the Clinic would
support this claim. Genealogy complements Archaeology by
interpreting all social relations in terms of the interplay of
forces of all social relations in terms of the interplay of
forces of domination, resistance and control. Not "meaning-giving" but warfare is the proper model for historical intelligibility and the basic relation is one of strategy and tactics. Foucault defined the task of archaeology in genealogical terms:

The archaeology of the human sciences has to be established through studying the mechanisms of power which have invested human bodies, acts and forms of behaviour. And this investigation enables us to rediscover one of the conditions of the emergence of the human sciences: the great nineteenth-century effort in discipline and normalisation (PK: 61).

It was this condition that The Order of Things subtitled "An Archaeology of the Human Sciences" overlooked. But his subsequent studies examine it. It raises two questions: what in fact does Genealogy have to do with the spatialisation? Does it not signal a return to genetic and to temporal issues? He writes:

People have often reproached me for these spatial obsessions, which have indeed been obsessions for me. But I think through them I did come to what I had basically been looking for: the relations that are possible between power and knowledge. Once knowledge can be analysed in terms of region, domain, implantation, displacement, transposition, one is able to capture the process which knowledge functions as a form of power and disseminates the effects of power.... And the politico-strategic term is an indication of how the military and the administration actually come to inscribe
themselves both on a material soil and within forms of
discourse (PK: 69).

It is in fact this very "spatialised" discourse that enables
Foucault to bring these sites into the power/knowledge relations
in *Discipline and Punish* and in the first volume of the *History
of Sexuality*. "Displacement" is a military term and "field" and
"region" are economico-juridical and administrative notions
respectively. We can now say that his earlier vocabulary carried
an implicit reference to relations of domination and control in
addition to their being common terms for cognition. He writes:

> Anyone envisaging the analysis of discourses solely in
terms of temporal continuity would inevitably be led to
approach and analyse it like the internal transformation of
an individual consciousness... metamorphosing the
transformations of discourse in a vocabulary of time
necessarily leads to the utilisations of the model of
individual consciousness with its intrinsic temporality
(PK: 69-70).

According to Foucault, the use of spatial metaphors avoids the
anthropological bias of modern philosophies of history. It is a
history of "bodies", not just the body politic. It is a history
of physical bodies, tamed, subjected to securities of experts and
normalisers and the spaces they occupy, not mentalities or
ideologies. It is a geography to be mapped. Foucault shares
with Deleuze the belief that "difference can only be liberated
through the invention of an acategorical thought" and that such
thinking alone will free us from the "neurosis of dialectics". (LCP: 184, 186).

Certain passages clearly show that he is aware that his valuation of space has been read as anti-historical:

For all those who confuse history with the old schemas of evolution, living community, organic development, the progress of consciousness, or the project of existence.... They did not understand that to trace the forms of implantation, delimitation and demarcation of objects, the modes of tabulation, the organisation of domains meant the throwing into relief of processes - historical ones, needless to say - of power (PK: 70).

Foucault's best known example of spatialised argumentation that relates power and knowledge is his use of Jeremy Bentham's panopticon. Through the idea of a panopticon, he attempted to characterise the nature of our modern "carceral society", whose "prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals which all resemble prisons" (DP: 228).

The marriage of norm and surveillance that this interplay of architecture and social science exhibits is brilliantly revealed in Foucault's descriptions. According to Foucault, "Genealogy is gray, meticulous and patiently documentary" (LCP: 139).

Committed to inquiry, it seeks endlessly to dissolve the coherent systems of intelligibility. But genealogy does not locate the quest in a particular model of the relation of the self to the order. According to a genealogical perspective all modes of intelligibility are appropriations. Genealogical theory
is thus patient in the sense that its mode of questioning operates within a different ontology. The genealogical question inspired by Nietzsche is not who is man, but which one? Genealogy views every form of life as producing its human identities and systems of value in a struggle with other possible forms of life. Its ontology, in which any self and order is an arbitrary imposition of meaning and value emerges in the very grammar of genealogical writing. Foucault writes:

The body is the inscribed surface of events (traced by language and dissolved by ideas), the locus of a disociated self (adopting the illusion of a substantial unity), and a volume in perpetual disintegration. Genealogy, as an analysis of descent, is thus situated within the articulation of the body and history. Its task is to expose a body totally imprinted by history and the process of history's destruction of the body (LCP : 148).

In this passage the textual practice and the politicising mode of genealogical analysis are inseparable. The argument when applied to the historical constitution of human subjects will expose a body totally imprinted. Foucaultian grammar displaces the subject of consciousness. In his theatre the subject as actor or producer of meaning is replaced by a recipient of social meanings. This Kafkaesque grammar of the subject as object of disciplinary practices is a figuration that changes statistic conceptions into historical process. By representing the body as a "volume in disintegration", Foucault supplies an important
metaphor that dissolves the unity and coherence of the person familiar in administrative, legal and everyday discourses. Foucault presumes that what is to be resisted is what Nietzsche regarded as western metaphysics' model of subjectivity, "a stiff, steadfast single individual". Accordingly it is a style that writes against modes of theorising. This mode of theorising represents the prevailing structure of human identities as natural and is thus exhaustive of the possibilities. Foucault writes not within an imagery designed to overcome an enstrangement between an adequate self and a mystified one. His writings convey the process of self-making. He assumes that there is an indeterminate range of possible selves. Every particular form of self emerges from a restrictive practice.

In keeping with the genealogical commitment to patient inquiry, Foucault resists exhortation and maintains a documentary approach. This analysis of power connected to a genealogical analytic is the radical departure from a rationalistic analytic. In the rational analytic the order is a container for individuals who pursue objectives and have power to the extent that they are able to achieve desired results. In contrast, Foucaultian theatre emphasises the meaning and value of the differing location in social space because its configuration drifts from age to age. As with the Velasquez's paintings one is constantly referred back to the visual evidence, to the plans, the prospects, the models. But now the line of sight is strategic not just descriptive. The contours inscribe relations of control not merely forms of intelligibility. We are requested to view
these practices, institutions and sciences as techniques for mastering both self and others. This theme of self mastery as self-constitution will move us to another level of Foucaultian theatre: "Problemisation". Foucault writes:

Problematisation does not mean representation of a pre-existing object, nor the creation by discourse of an object that does not exist. It is the totality of discursive or non-discursive practices that introduces something into the play of true and false and constitutes it as an object for thought (whether in the form of moral reflection, scientific knowledge, political analysis, etc.) (PCP: 237).

Characteristically, "problemisation" is what links all of his writings since Madness and Civilisation. In this book, it was a question of determining how and why at a particular moment madness was problemised via certain institutional practices and cognitive apparatus. Discipline and Punish also dealt with changes in the problematisation of relations between penal practice and institutions at the end of the 17th century. The question of his last two volumes of the History of Sexuality is "How is sexual activity problemised?". But at each spiral of his research Foucault has read the previous turn very very closely. The relation between truth, self-constitution and problematisation is worked out in Foucault's last two volumes of History of Sexuality. His abiding interest was a history of truth.

The spatialisation of discourse becomes evident in the contrast Foucault paints between dialectical and problemising
thinking. Dialectical thought he argues is essentially temporalising thought. It seeks a unity and a totality in consciousness. In contrast Archaeology is the promise of a thought adequate to a culture that is awakening from belief in its dialectical intelligibility. Foucault tells us that he was first freed from the dialectical universe in which he had been living by the experience of music; by listening to those contemporary French musicians of serial and twelve-tone music. Delauze observes:

One must pursue the different series, travel along the different levels, and cross all thresholds; instead of simply displaying phenomena or statements in their vertical or horizontal dimensions, one must form a transversal or mobile diagonal line along which the arachaeologist must move. A comment by Boulez on the rarefied universe of Webern could easily apply here to Foucault (and his style): he created a new dimension which we might call a diagonal dimension, a sort of distribution of points, group or figures that no longer act simply as an abstract framework but actually exist in space.¹

It is a description that captures both Foucault's experience of being lifted from the harmonies of a dialectical universe and the aim of his archaeology. The reduction of difference to non-being is the fruit of dialectical reasoning. Foucault's philosophy of event is struggling against this. Foucault writes:

It breaks the thread of transcendental teleologies, and where anthropological thought once questioned man's being or
subjectivity, it now bursts upon the other and the outside.
In this sense, the diagnosis does not establish the fact of
our identity by the play of distinctions. It establishes
that we are difference, that our reason is the difference of
discourses, our history, the difference of times, ourselves
the difference of masks (AK: 131).
As with other French thinkers, he experienced the need to
"determine the extent to which our anti-Hegelianism is possibly
one of his tricks directed against us, at the end he stands,
motionless, waiting for us" (AK: 235). Foucault's testimony to
the impact of Hyppolite is not a mere academic formality. The
Hegel, Hyppolite presented was always a Hegel under interrogation
by his philosophical successors. Under this interrogation, Hegel
underwent a transformation. A Hegel questioned by Husserl made
philosophy appear no longer as a search, search for a totality to
be found in the movement of a concept but "as an infinite task,
linked to the history of our rationality" (AK: 237). Battered
by Kierkegaard, Hegelian thought was forced into constant
connection with the singularity of experience and philosophical
generalisation linked to continuing contact with
non-philosophical domains. This ceaseless relating of the
philosophical and the non-philosophical was intensified by
Fichetean, Marxian and Bergsonian interrogations. These were the
hall marks of Hyppolite's approximation of Hegel and of
Foucault's assimilation of Hyppolite's teaching.

Foucault emphasised in a memorial lecture for Hyppolite that
the latter had not identified himself as a historian of
philosophy but rather as a historian of philosophical thought. Hegel's integration of history into philosophy is transformed by Hyppolite into a dependence on history. Through this transformation, philosophy becomes part of the great task of contemporary thought. This proved decisive for Foucault's understanding of his own philosophical activity. He speaks of that enterprise not as a study of thought in general, but rather of that "which contains thought in a culture". In this perspective, there is a sense in which philosophy as a specific form of thought rooted in Plato no longer exists for Foucault. The study of a problem is different from the study of a period in history. The study of a period in history requires a fair chronological distribution of the examination which historians are accustomed to.

But dealing with a problem demands a different set of rules. Firstly, the choice of a material in the functioning of the opening of the problem. Secondly, focusing one's analysis on the elements capable of resolving it, establishing the relations that allow this solution.

For Foucault, the "solution" of a problem is the displacement" of the question. It is the twin terms transformation" and "displacement" that have governed oucault's "methods" in all his histories. Both terms are intended to free our understanding of history from the "general empty category of change", its "uniform model of temporalisation" AK: 200). These terms avoid the traditional reliance on
consciousness and subjectivity as well as its dialectical subsuming of otherness and multiplicity for some overarching purpose.

We have seen above the transformation of medical perceptions in *The Birth of the Clinic*. The transformation here is of the body from being the occasion for the study of classes of disease to the individual body as a site of abnormality. *Discipline and punish* charts a similar transformation of discursive and non-discursive practices of "inquisitional" justice into those of "examinatory" justice. This transformation necessitated "a displacement in the very object of the punitive operation ... since it is no longer the body, it must be the soul" (*DP*: 10). In effect, the offender and the guilty party are displaced by such objects of social science as the deviant and the delinquent. This sort of analysis continues in his "problemisation" of sexual morality in the volumes published just before his death. Foucault cites for example, a transformation in fifth-century Athenian culture from a stylistics of freedom to the Socrato-Platonic erotic. Pleasure and its dynamic are the concern of the former, where as for the latter, desire is directed to its true object, truth, by recognising desire for what "it is in its true being" (*UP*: 236). The former asked a deontological question: what is the fitting and honourable thing to do? The latter, an ontological one: what is love in its very being? This transformation of "ethics" into a metaphysics necessitated a corresponding displacement of the very object of
discourse. The displacement is from the beloved and the honour of the loved one to the loving subject and the life of truth itself. This spatialised discourse of transformation-displacement continues to dominate Foucault's theatre to the very end.

One immediate consequence of this change is the undermining of universal history which like the universal intellectual must give way to a plurality of regional studies. (PK: 120).

Indeed, Foucault has insisted that:

the archaeological description of discourses is deployed in the dimension of a general history; it seeks to discover that whole domain of institutions, economic processes and social relations on which a discursive formation can be articulated, it tries to show how the autonomy of discourse and its specificity nevertheless do not give it the status of pure ideality and total historical independence (AK: 164-65).

Unlike universal history, general history does not attempt to set the "telos" of the human adventure. The interdependence of discursive and non-discursive practices as well as their inscription in a broad general history is even more obvious in his genealogies and problematisations.

Spatialised discourse yields a history of "bodies" and not of "mentalities". The constitution of the moral self, the formation of a class of delinquents, the alternation of our perception of diseased subjects - all refer to the disposition of bodies both in relation to one another and with regard to
themselves. So appeal to strategy and the mode of warfare rather than to meaning and intention are the subtle forms in Foucault's theatre. Working on "surface" of things Foucault displaces metaphysics with a "topology" of social practices. His theatre attempts to chart its limits, exclusions and specific "conditions of existence" of these practices in their actual occurrence. Foucault writes:

The coherence of such a history does not derive from the revelation of a project but from a logic of opposing strategies (PK: 61). Now this is a non-dialectical logic in that it is neither reductive of multiplicity nor totalising. He writes:

As always with relations of power, one is faced with complex phenomena which don't obey the Hegelian form of the dialectic (PK: 56). It is in this context that he speaks of the intellectual's providing us a "topological and geological survey of the battlefield" (PK: 62).

Perhaps the most controversial aspect of the spatialisation of history is its freeing of the discipline from its moorings in philosophical anthropology (AK: 131).

A condition of the existence of this dispersion is spatialised language that dissolves the unity of the self and dissipates projects by chance events. Each of Foucault's histories is a local investigation and an exercise of power against the "lines of fracture" "the veiled lineage", "the
presumed limit". This is the mode of argument of the geographer.

But whether it justifies the problem we have raised in the beginning of this chapter is yet to be seen.

Notes