FOUCAULDIAN "POWER/KNOWLEDGE": A PHILOSOPHICAL EXPLORATION

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Certified that the Thesis entitled, **Foucauldian "Power/Knowledge": A Philosophical Exploration**, submitted by me towards the partial fulfillment of the Degree of Master of Philosophy (Arts) in Philosophy of Jadavpur University, is based upon my own original work and there is no plagiarism. This is also to certify that the work has not been submitted by me for the award of any other degree/diploma of the same Institution where the work is carried out, or to any other Institution. A paper out of this dissertation has also been presented by me at a seminar/conference at Jadavpur University, thereby fulfilling the criteria for submission, as per the M.Phil Regulation (2017) of Jadavpur University.

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Contents

Introduction

It can be arduous to think of Michel Foucault (1926–1984) as a philosopher but almost all of his research works, writings can be constructively considered as philosophical in either or both of the two ways; as pursuing philosophy's traditional critical project in a novel historical manner and as a critical engagement with the conviction of traditional philosophers. In this dissertation Foucault will be presented as a philosopher considered from both the above mentioned dimensional approaches. Foucault changed his mind many times about the significance played by philosophy and the philosophers/intellectuals. One thing that was constantly felt by him was that philosophy should be firmly rooted in a historical context. Foucault has several times emphasized that philosophy should deal with the question of what is happening in present scenario. He also defines the task of philosophy as being not a way of reflecting on what is true or what is false, but instead as a way of reflecting on our relations to truth and how we should conduct ourselves.

- **Why Michel Foucault?**

Now the question may arise that why I have chosen Michel Foucault for the topic of my dissertation. Michel Foucault continues to be one of the most important philosophers in critical theory of the Continental Philosophical tradition. His theories have been concerned largely with the concepts of power, knowledge, discourse, sexuality and so on. His influence is clearly visible in a great deal of post-structuralist, post-modernist, feminist, post-marxist and post-colonial thought and theorizing. The impression of his work has also been felt across a wide range of disciplinary fields, from history, sociology and anthropology to literary studies. His thought has influenced a widespread range of scholars simply because he attempts to theorize without using the notions of the subject and the economy, both of

which have been dominant and foundational for psychoanalytical theory of Freud, Marxist theory and materialist theory.

- **Why the Foucauldian Concept of "Power/Knowledge"?**

It is almost impossible for us to deal with the subject of power without relating to Michel Foucault. Foucault does not present an ordered doctrine of power. He himself seems to be at peace with the contradictions and the dialectics created by his approach. My initial interest in analyzing his approach, led me face innumerable difficulties. Two immediate problems with any such attempt are Foucault's style and language. They are not simply difficult, they are deliberately so. Foucault's very literary and ornamental style reflects in part his views on language and knowledge. He occurs to be consciously attempting to articulate a new discourse, one that subverts traditional concepts and categories. But the solution we have found is drawn from Foucault himself as he claimed that anyone who wants to make use of the knowledge may quote aggressively, and make use of what s/he requires without committing herself to the entire theory. In this regard, we would like to make use only of the principal points of Foucault's thought on the subject of power and the research of power which comprehend the study of "power/knowledge". Since he does not have a sense of some profound and final truth of anything, his writing is full of contradictions. Foucault adopted Nietzsche's ideas about the connection between knowledge and power. The former assumes a "power/knowledge" connection which cannot be separated, even semantically. A review of Foucault's writings, rather than a reading of a particular book or essay, reveals this nature of his theory of power, and especially the ways in which the "power/knowledge" connection is created. In his book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1979) he focuses on the historical events happening between 1757 and 1830, when the practice of torturing prisoners was replaced by close surveillance of them by changing of the prison rules. Foucault interprets this change not as a humanizing of punishment (as is

commonly thought) but as a more appropriate economy of power. Such economy of power introduced the development and implementation of a new technology, which he named disciplinary power. By means of this mechanism, the product of "power/knowledge" becomes knowledge that is derived by means of the scientific examination and judgment. This is further applied to several domains - in order to impose standards of normality in all realms of life, and to grant the society (by means of its various institutions and its regime) the permission to legislate laws, to reinforce the standards, to supervise all the citizens and take necessary measures in order to prevent any deviation from these laws. "Power/knowledge" is the critical coupling that Foucault warns us about. The research of power is a scientific activity which must be carried out cautiously so as to avoid entrapment in the power relations and have a satisfactory understand of their meaning.

- **Methodology of this Research:**

If our knowledge is about the world and ourselves then it cannot be based on any underlying structure or essence; instead the knowledge should arise as the result of discursive action, as indicated by Foucault's understandings of concepts like knowledge, power and subjectivity. It is needless to say that a method of investigation (which can expose the discursive production of these realities) is necessary. As our constructs of reality are situated in the specific context of their production, the method which will be used, must identify the discourses, included and excluded, which makes up the environment at the time of the production of the construct. Since the emergence of a construct is the result of discursive action, it is necessarily situated in the past. Therefore, the methods required for such research must be historical in their approach, aiming to identify these discourses from an ancient moment in time. The methodology is entirely guided by a set of conceptual analyses, which are the following:

(a) Analysis is to address without presupposing the centralized and legitimate forms of power and knowledge and the like. We shall focus on the analysis of techniques which have become embodied in local, regional and material institutions.

(b) Analysis is concerned itself with the practices, various available senses and effects of the concepts like power, knowledge and so on.

(c) Instead of concentrating the attention on the motivation or interests of groups, classes or individuals in the context of domination, attempts will be made in this dissertation to analyze various complex processes through which these concepts are constituted as effects of objectifying powers.

(d) Finally in course of this dissertation our analyses of power and knowledge show that these concepts are rooted in history which precedes the micro institutional level. Hence we have sought to trace the diffusion and permeation of such power and knowledge throughout the social order.

The implication is clear: in order to develop an understanding of "power/knowledge" attention must be given to the mechanisms, techniques and procedures of these notions. By the method of conceptual analysis this dissertation has taken its final shape. It is only at the end of this analysis that we are able to see how at a precise conjectural moment particular mechanism of the notions like power, knowledge became philosophically significant.

The first chapter, entitled as '**Non-Foucauldian Account and Foucauldian Account of Power: A Philosophical Endeavor'** is an attempt to explore some traditional theories of power and Foucauldian notion of power in a succinct manner. There are two sections in this chapter. First one is concerned about some non-Foucauldian conceptions of power in which there are three sub topics are analyzed. These are 'A Succinct Philosophical Revisit to Theories of Power', 'Power: Several

Dimensional Approaches' and 'Mechanisms of Power'. In the second section there are three sub topics which include 'Salient Features of Foucauldian Analysis of Power', 'Foucault's Power Thesis: A Threefold Discussion', 'Foucauldian Notion of Power: Various Senses'. Through this chapter one can easily find out the novelty of Foucault's own treatment of power from his predecessors' approaches towards power.

The second chapter, entitled **'Traditional View of Knowledge and Foucauldian View of Knowledge'**, has also presented two main sections like the previous one. The first section contains the traditional views of knowledge from Socrates to Immanuel Kant with the brief deliberations and the second section considers the Foucauldian notion of knowledge from many philosophical stances. In the first section four sub-topics are there and these are 'Knowledge and its Tripartite Analysis', 'Gettier's Problem', 'On the Origin of Knowledge: Two Traditions', and 'Kantian View of Knowledge: A Brief Deliberation'. The second section is designed through five sub-sections. These are 'Foucauldian Knowledge: A Philosophical Analysis', '"Historical a priori": Foucauldian Invention in the Context of Knowledge', 'On Discourse: Non-Foucauldian and Foucauldian Approaches', 'Discourse and Knowledge' and 'On Discourse: Habermas and Foucault'. Through this chapter one can easily find out the novelty of Foucault's own deliberation of knowledge from his predecessors' approaches towards knowledge.

This dissertation is an attempt to investigate how Foucault reconciles the two notions "power" and "knowledge" and this is specifically dealt with in the third chapter, entitled **'"Power/knowledge": A Foucauldian Invention'**. In this chapter, first we focus on a speculative yet succinct understanding about how Foucault analyzes the very notion of "power/knowledge" in his own works and secondly, we consider some secondary texts where the concept of "power/knowledge" is discussed. Accordingly in the third section, we gather some arguments given by

Foucault, and philosophically analyze the arguments and some sayings in favor of the concept, “power/knowledge”.

In the fourth or final chapter some impacts and critical analyses are associated and discussed from many philosophical perspectives like postmodernism, feminist philosophical thoughts and social philosophical stances.

Non Foucauldian Account
and
Foucauldian Account of Power:
A Philosophical Endeavor

What is Power?

In general 'power' has multiple meanings in various discourses. As a noun 'power' means the ability and capacity to act in a particular way, or to regulate and control the behavior of others. For instance, a person's ability to control other people and events in the world or the physical strength and force exerted by her/him on other person's/things/events is a form of power. In another sense, power is energy that is produced by mechanical, electrical or other means, and used to operate a device or machine. If we take the term 'power' as verb then it means either to supply a device with mechanical energy and electrical energy or to move or travel with great speed and force. Inspite of there being so many different senses of power, our present focus is on power in a special philosophical sense that is in the light of the views of Michel Foucault. But before we enter into Foucault's viewpoint, let us briefly take into consideration some important philosophical theories of power.

Section-I

I. A Succinct Philosophical Revisit to Theories of Power:

This section begins with a historical survey of thought surrounding power in the social sciences, relating only to the most distinguished modern theories. As we are concentrating on the modern theories of power, the modern thinking about power begins in the writings of Niccolò

Machiavelli [1] and Thomas Hobbes [2]. *The Prince* of Machiavelli and *Leviathan* of Hobbes are considered classics of political writing, and the contrast between them represents the two main routes along which theorizing on power has continued to this present date. Machiavelli represents the strategic and decentralized thinking about power and organization. He sees power as a means, not a resource, and seeks strategic advantages, such as military ones, between the prince and others. Hobbes propounds the causal thinking about power as hegemony. In the Hobbesian approach power is centralized and focused on sovereignty. In the mid-twentieth century Hobbes' view founded as triumphant. His language and images, composed more than a century after the publication of *The Prince*, were more appropriate to the modern scientific approach than Machiavelli's military images. One of the central traditions of research in the social sciences sought precision and logic and asks how one can observe and measure power. Power was portrayed as a position of will, as a supreme factor to which the wills of others are subject. In the period of seventies, Machiavelli's strategic and contingent approach received much appreciation in France, with the crystallization of approaches that reinvented the unpredictable feature of the power game and its immeasurable dependence on context.

In the time of Post World War II, the social sciences started taking special interest in consideration of power. The work of Max Weber[3] (1947) served as a point of departure for thought about power because it continued the rational Hobbesian track and developed organizational thinking. Weber's

[1] Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527) was an Italian politician, historian, philosopher who has often been called the father of modern political science. His best known work is *The Prince.* He is famous for his classical realism also.

[2] Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), an English philosopher who has considered as one of the founders of modern political philosophy. His well known work is *Leviathan* which expounded an influential formulation of social contract theory. He was famous for his diverse array of other fields, including history, jurisprudence, theology and ethics.

[3] Max Weber (1864-1920) was a German sociologist philosopher and political economist. His idea profoundly influenced social research. Weber was one of the proponents of methodological anti-positivism.

approach to power connected with his interest in clericalism (bureaucracy), and linked power with concepts of authority, mastery, domination and rule. He defined power as the probability that an actor within a social relationship would be in a position to carry out his will despite resistance to it. The activation of power is dependent on a person's will, even in opposition to someone else's. One of the very basic intentions of the approach given by Weber was that power as a factor of domination, based on economic or authoritarian interests. He historically rediscovered the origins and sources of the formal authority that activates legitimate power, and identified three sources of legitimation for the activation of power. They are the charismatic, the traditional, and the rational-legal.

Robert Dahl[4] (1961) supports Weber's approach, both in the definition of power and in the attribution of it to a concrete human factor. Whereas Weber discussed power in the context of the organization and its structures, Dahl located power within the boundaries of an actual community. However, the major importance of Dahl is in the development of the interest in understanding ruling élites, which came to the fore after the World War II. Power is exercised in order to cause those who are subject to it to follow the private preferences of those who possess the power. Power is the production of obedience to the preferences of others, including an expansion of the preferences of those subject to it, so as to include those preferences. To this day, most writers dealing with organizational behavior adhere to Dahl's definition of power—power as the ability to make somebody do something that otherwise he or she would not have done.

Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz[5] (1962) developed a model as a response to Dahl 'the two faces of power'. This model is also a critique of

[4] Robert Dahl (1915-2014) was a political theorist. He established the pluralist theory of democracy. Dahl's research includes the nature of decision making in actual institutions.

[5] Peter Bachrach's and Morton Baratz's work continues to have a significant impact on political theory and political science. Their landmark article is 'Two Faces of Power'. This article briefly explains how sociologists and political scientists view power in different ways.

Dahl's fundamental premises. Dahl assumed a pluralistic society, in which all the community interests are represented by means of open processes. Bachrach and Baratz also have a doubt as to whether the decision-making process is really democratic and open as Dahl assumed. They dealt mainly with the connection between the overt face of power (the way decisions are made) and the other, covert face of power (which is the ability to prevent decision making). They pointed to the strategy of mobilizing bias to prevent discussion on certain issues and thus to determine what is important and unimportant.

In the seventies, Steven Lukes[6] (1974) developed Bachrach and Baratz's approach further. It was he who shifted the focus of the discussion from community power to power as such, by introducing a three-dimensional model into the discussion of the subject. The third dimension that Lukes added to the discussion of power, besides the theoretically recognized overt and the covert dimensions was the latent dimension of power. While the overt dimension of power deals with declared political preferences, as they reveal themselves in open political play, and the covert dimension deals with political preferences that reveal themselves through complaints about political non-issues, the third dimension deals with the relations between political preferences and real interests. Power, according to Lukes, is measured also by the ability to implant in people's minds interests that are contrary to their own good. The latent dimension is the most difficult of all to identify, because it is hard for people who are themselves influenced by this dimension to discover its existence.

The writings of Michel Foucault extended the discussion of the concept of power from sociology to all the fields of the social sciences and the humanities. Through Foucault's influence, the empirical study of identifying those who possess power and of locating power loses its

[6] Steven Lukes is a living British political theorist and sociologist. His major works include *Essays in Social Theory, Power: A Radical View.*

significance. His approach systematically rejects the belief in the existence of an ordered and regulating rational agency. In Foucault's world, there is no single source from which an actions stems, rather it arises from an infinite series of practices. Decentralization of the position of power is one of the great innovations (originality or newness) of his thinking, which will be discussed more extensively later on.

II. Power: Several Dimensional Approaches

Let us now analyze at least three dimensional approaches in special references to the context which has been mentioned above.

1. **The One Dimensional Approach to Power**:

In the overt arena of power relations, A's power over B is manifested to the extent that A can make B do something which B would not have done had it not been for A. The overt dimension of power may be investigated by means of observation of behavior: who participates, who profits, who loses, and who expresses himself in the decision-making process. The one-dimensional approach is based on assumptions that were sharply criticized by those who continued it. For example, that people always recognize grievances and acts to rectify them; that participation in power relations occurs overtly in decision-making arenas; that these political arenas are open to any organized group; that the leaders are not simply elite with interests of their own, but represent or speak for the public. All these assumptions lead to a conclusion which is characteristic of the one-dimensional approach: because people who have identified a problem act within an open system in order to solve it, and they do so by themselves or through their leaders, so non-participation or inaction is not a social problem, but a decision made by those who have decided not to participate. The one-dimensional approach provides explanations for the inactivity or non-participation of deprived groups. As human beings are classified under various identities based on economic, social, cultural religious and other

spheres it is quite evident that individuals belonging to one particular group are indifferent towards the issues concerning other groups. Even within its own basic premises, the one-dimensional approach will not be adequate to explaining what there is in low income, low status, and low education, or in traditional or rural culture, that can explain people's quiescence. Furthermore it fails to provide us any mechanism to understand the differences among people who are otherwise similar (in many respects) and different with regard to political behavior.

2. The Two-Dimensional Approach to Power:

Power is activated on the second, covert dimension, not only in order to triumph over the other participants in the decision-making process, but also to prevent decision-making, to exclude certain subjects or participants from the process. One of the important aspects of power, besides attaining victory in a struggle, is to determine the agenda of the struggle in advance. The understanding of the second facet of power changed the explanation of the quiescence of deprived groups. From this point of view, nonparticipation in decision-making would be explained as a manifestation of fear and weakness, and not necessarily as a manifestation of indifference. Since the two-dimensional approach, like the one-dimensional, assumed that the powerless are fully conscious of their condition, it cannot easily explain the whole diversity of means that power exercises in order to obtain advantages in the arena. This approach also did not recognize the possibility that powerless people are likely to have a distorted consciousness that originates in the existing power relations, and thus live within a false and manipulated consensus that they have internalized.

3. The Three-dimensional Approach to Power:

The latent dimension, the dimension of the true interests (Lukes 1974), explains that B does things that he would not have done had it not been for

A, because A influences, determines and shapes B's will. Yet another innovation in this dimension is that this phenomenon can occur without overt conflict. A conflict of interests between the executors of power and the true interests of those who are excluded from the arena creates a potential for conflict—a latent conflict. An approach which assumes latent processes requires a special research methodology. It is not possible to depend upon mere behavioral analysis with observations of individuals, as they are not the only means of understanding power relations. Our existing social systems do not address individual claims and expectations, and in a way this causes the transformation of the individual problems into political issues. What is required is a thorough study of social and historical factors which will enable us to see how human expectations are shaped and how people's consciousness problems are formed.

III. Mechanisms of Power:

After defining the three relevant dimensions, it is important to identify various mechanisms by means of which power operates in each dimension in order to attain its goals.

1. Overt Dimension: Open Conflict in the Decision-Making Arena

In the first dimension, relatively straightforward mechanisms are activated. In order to obtain some advantages in bargaining on important issues, the persons concerned invest some of her/his resources and talents. Resources which are used may be votes in the ballot box, or influence of some higher power which can ensure success in the bargaining game. Possible talents may be personal efficacy, political experience and organizational strength, which the participants use in order to win an advantage.

2. Covert Dimension: Mobilization of Bias; Non-Decision-Making

In addition to the resources of the first dimension, the people with power mobilize game rules which work in their favor, at others' expense.

Decision-making may be prevented by the exertion of force, the threat of sanctions, or the mobilization of bias which creates a negative approach to the subject. Mobilization of bias means the reinforcing and emphasizing of values, beliefs, ceremonies and institutional procedures which present a very particular and limited definition of problems. By mobilizing bias it is possible to establish new barriers and new symbols which are aimed to thwart efforts in order to widen the scope of conflict. These covert mechanisms of non-decision-making are harder to discover than the overt ones such as institutional inactivity resulting in decisionless decisions. As a result the sum total of accumulating outcomes of a series of decisions or non-decisions, and non-events cannot be observed conspicuously. Thus one may mistakenly think that they have not occurred.

3. Latent Dimension: Influence on Consciousness and Perception

The final dimension involves identification of the ways in which meanings and patterns of action which cause B to believe and act in a way that is useful to A and harmful to himself are formed. In situations of latent conflict it is especially difficult to learn how the perception of needs, expectations and strategies contribute in the production of particular beliefs and guide us to act in specific manner.

These mechanisms are less developed theoretically, so apparently they are less clear.

Section- II

Foucault's theory of power is quite distinct from the general notions of power where 'power' refers to something which is used as an instrument of coercion. Foucault's treatment of power leads us towards the idea that power is everywhere, diffused, embodied in discourse[7], knowledge and

[7] Foucauldian discourse analysis is a form of discourse analysis focusing on power relationships in society as expressed through language and practices and based on the

regime of truth. Power for Foucault is what makes us what we are. Thus, "his work marks a radical departure from previous modes of conceiving power and cannot be easily integrated with previous ideas, as power is diffuse rather than concentrated, embodied and enacted rather than possessed, discursive rather than purely conceived and constitutes agents rather than being deployed by them."[8] This is to be noted that we should keep one thing in our mind that the concepts/terms which are used by Foucault have carrying their own way of interpretations and technical meanings.

Foucault has been hugely influential in shaping the notion of power. Power for him is not a thing that is held and used by individuals or groups. Rather, it is both a complex flow and a set of relations between different groups and areas of society which changes with circumstances and time. The other point Foucault makes about power is that it is not merely negative rather it is highly productive. Power produces resistance to itself, it produces what we are and what we can do and how we see ourselves and the world.

I. Salient Features of Foucauldian Analysis of Power:

i. Foucault criticizes the notion that power is wielded by people or groups by way of 'episodic'[9] or 'sovereign'[10] acts of domination or coercion, seeing it instead as dispersed and pervasive. More clearly, since Foucault grasped the sense of power as power is everywhere and comes from everywhere, it is obvious for him to analyze power as neither an agency nor a structure. In episodic or sovereign acts of domination power is nothing but a mere agency and structure and in

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theories of Michel Foucault. Foucault adopted the term 'discourse' to denote a historically contingent social system that produces knowledge and meaning.

[8] J. Gaventa, 'Power after Lukes: An Overview of Theories of Power since Lukes and Their Application to Development', Brighton Participation Group, Institute of Development Studies, 2003, p.1.

[9] Episodic, the term is containing or consisting of a series of separate parts or events.

[10] Sovereignty refers to the notion of laws that are reasonable, just, rational and self-evident are the driving force and organizing principle behind human society.

these models of power, power is not for all people; it is collective and limited in few people.

ii. Foucault uses the terms, 'metapower' [11] and 'regime of truth' [12] simultaneously as both pervades socio cultural situation and these terms are in constant flux and negotiation. Foucault uses the term 'power/knowledge' to signify that power is constituted through accepted forms of knowledge, scientific understanding and 'truth'.

iii. Foucault's theory of power can be viewed as a response to the challenge of the great sociologist Max Weber that power has its reason that reason cannot understand.(this needs clarification)There is no systematic unified account of Foucault's philosophizing of power. Apparently his views on power are more negative than positive, and he did not present his theory of power in a single work or a set of works. If we can reconstruct his theory from his thoughts, it will become obvious that the idea of power, its nature, its diffusion, and its use, are collectively a central theme of his general philosophy.

iv. In *Discipline and Punish,* his analysis of 'power' implies an interpretation. Foucault analyses power through minor procedures that identify and invest the body. In this book Foucault is talking about four investments by the power of the body: (a) Investment as a piece of space, (b) core behaviors, (c) investment as internal and (d) sum of forces. Gradually, we will understand that for Foucault the process of analysis required is simply a 'microphysics' of power.

v. According to Foucault power is nothing but a struggle. Generally, it can be said that there are three types of

[11] For Foucault, metapower sits on a basis of a whole series of power networks. These networks invest body, sexuality, the family, kinship, knowledge, and so forth.

[12] Regimes of Truth are embodied discourse.

struggles: either against forms of domination (ethnic, social, and religious); against forms of exploitation which separate individuals from what they produce; or against that which ties the individual to himself and submits him to others in this way (struggles against subjection, against forms of subjectivity and submission). I think that in history you can find a lot of examples of these three kinds of social struggles, either isolated from each other or mixed together. But even when they are mixed, one of them, most of the time, prevails. For instance, in the feudal societies, the struggles against the forms of ethnic or social domination were prevalent, even though economic exploitation could have been very important among the revolt's causes. In the nineteenth century, the struggle against exploitation came into the foreground. The reason this kind of struggle tends to prevail in our society is due to the fact that, since the sixteenth century, a new political form of power has been continuously developing. This new political structure, as every- body knows, is the state. But most of the time, the state is envisioned as a kind of political power which ignores individuals, looking only at the interests of the totality. Foucault maintained a balance in doing philosophy of power because balancing in power is necessarily 'power-relationship'. In order to saying this Foucault introduces another main feature of power and that is power is relation. According to Foucault, power, is relational because it is always in relation to another that we conceptualize power. In this sense no object or matter is required for power other than the force itself. For Foucault, any force is then a power. We shall discuss the relational aspect of power later.

vi. In the first volume of *History of Sexuality* he claims that we must overcome the approach that power is oppression, and aiming to examine how power operates in day to day interactions between people and institution. Even the most radical form of power for him is oppressive measures are not just repression and censorship, but they are also highly productive. As Foucault is concerned less with the oppressive aspect of power, he proposes a model in which power relation dissipate through all relational structures of the society, and in this model power is exerted and contested. He rejects the view where power is seen as acting from top downwards and also refuted the notion of subject as a simple object for power. Generally power is understood as the capability of a person to impose his will over the others who have no power at all. In this respect power is something that can be owned and can be seen as possession; but for Foucault power is something that acts and manifests itself in a certain way. Power is more a strategy than a possession; it must be analyzed as something which circulates in form of a chain where individuals are vehicles of power. Thus for Foucault power has two attributes. Firstly, power is like a system in which we can see some encompassing relations in the whole society instead of a relation between the oppressors and oppressed, secondly, individuals are the locus of power and not merely the objects of power. What follows from his view may be summed up in the following way:

> 1. The impersonality or subjectlessness of power, since it is not guided by the will of individual subjects; 2. The relationality of power, meaning that power is always a case of power-relations between

> people, as opposed to a quantum possessed by people; 3. Thedecentredness of power, as it is not concentrated on a single individual or class; 4. Themultidirectionality of power, meaning that is does not flow from the more powerful to the less powerful, but rather "comes from below", even if it is nevertheless "nonegalitarian"; 5. The strategic nature of power, as it has dynamism of its own, and is "intentional.[13]

vii. There is another distinct feature derivable from Foucault's elucidation, "that is power is co-extensive with social body"[14] and also power is co-extensive with resistance. By the very nature of it power is productive; thus it is clear to us that power has some positive impacts. The productive nature of power is mentioned in his *The History of Sexuality*, where he talks about resistance as an attribute of power. In his words it sounds like that where there is power there is resistance.

viii. Foucault states that the mechanism of power permits time and labour rather than wealth and commodities. This is a particular notion of power where we find a constant exercise by means of surveillance. If we note Foucault's treatment on the technologies of power, we can see that the prison and its panoptic architecture is a perfect example of the new technologies of power. The 'Panopticon' is a type of institutional apartment designed by the English philosopher

[13] Mark G. E. Kelly, *The Political Philosophy of Michel Foucault,* London, Routledge, 2009, pp.37-38.
[14] Foucault 1980, p. 142.

and social theorist Jeremy Bentham[15] in the late 18th century. It indicates an experimental laboratory of power where prisoners' behavior could be modified and Foucault viewed the "panopticons" as the emblem of disciplinary society. The inmates are observed through the central watch tower in such a manner that they do not know when they are actually being watched. Therefore, they act with the assumption of an omnipresent observer. The principle of the Panopticon is applicable not only to prisons but to any system of disciplinary power (a factory, a hospital, a school). And, in fact, although Bentham himself was never able to build it, its principle has come to pervade every aspect of modern society. It is the instrument through which modern discipline has replaced pre-modern sovereignty (kings, judges) as the fundamental power relation.

ix. There is no denying that Foucault develops an unique account of power, which is not in the form of any theory, whereby we can get a postmodern flavor of his philosophizing. In an interview held in 1983, Foucault made this point explicit that he is far from the theoreticians of power, he insists, he is not developing a theory of power. Whereas a theory of power implies an ontology, which must explain why power exists, Foucault's account of power is exclusively concerned with describing and analyzing how power functions. Furthermore, as Dreyfus and Rabinow claim, Foucault's account of power is in fact opposed to a theory of power.[16]

[15] Jeremy Bentham (1747-1832) is an 18th and 19th century English philosopher, social reformer and founder of modern utilitarianism.

[16] Hubert L. Dreyfus, and Paul Rabinow (1983), *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1982, p. 18.

x. *The History of Sexuality: Will to Knowledge* (1984) is an extraordinarily influential work of Foucault, where he says that we have a negative conception of power, which leads us only to regard power as something that prohibits. Foucault argues that power is in fact more amorphous and autonomous than this, and essentially relational. Power has a relative autonomy regarding of people, just as they do apropos of it: power has its own strategic logics, emerging from the actions of people within a network of power relations. This leads Foucault to an analysis of the specific historical dynamics of power. He introduces the concept of "biopower" [17] which combines disciplinary power as discussed in *Discipline and Punish.*

xi. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969) Foucault discusses the concept of discourse. Primarily he has confined to the description of knowledge and subject and not power. From the idea of archaeology, he moved to 'genealogy'[18] which he conceived as a series of infinitely proliferating branches. The term 'Genealogy' is one that Foucault borrows from Nietzsche [19] . Nietzsche uses this term to describe the emergence of what he thinks of as force relations in regard to particular institutions or practices. For Nietzsche, there are two types of forces, (a) active force and (b) reactive force. Active forces seek to express themselves whether by

[17] Biopower refers to the technologies, knowledge, discourses, politics and practices used to bring about the production and management of a state's human resources. Biopower analyses, regulates, controls, explains and defines the human subject, its body and behavior.

[18] Genealogy is a process of analyzing and uncovering the historical relationship between truth, knowledge and power. Foucault suggests following Nietzsche, that knowledge and truth are produced by struggles both between and within institutions, fields and disciplines and then presented as if the eternal and universal.

[19] Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) is a 19th century German philosopher, cultural critic and philologist. Some of his notable ideas are "genealogy", "last man", "will to power" etc.

artistic or athletic or other means whereas reactive forces do not seek to express themselves. Reactive forces are highly negative as they seek to undermine the expression of active forces. Foucault's genealogies are not positioned at a particular privileged starting point, as there is no origination. His genealogy traces the evolution of practices and the result or the end product is not 'I' but 'we'[20]. It is to be noted that for Foucault, there are twofold task in the genealogy of Nietzsche: (a) Descent approaches seek the separate, dispersed events that come together in a contingent way to make a particular practice. (b) Emergence approaches describe the hazardous play of domination that forms the history of a given practice or group practices. Nevertheless Foucault's subsequent or the next works make clear that genealogy presupposes certain accounts of power and critiques some specific forms of power. Thus, the most significant question regarding the critical force of Foucauldian genealogy constitutes is the account of power that informs it- according to Foucault, what exactly is power?

II. Foucault's Power Thesis: A Threefold Discussion:

More substantively, Foucault's account of power consists of three parts:

1. An analytics of power,
2. A methodology of power,
3. A model of power.

First, his analytics of power consists of interpretative analyses of the conditions, strategies, mechanisms, and effects of power. Secondly, Foucault raises specific methodological concerns that guide his analytics of

[20] Todd May, *The Philosophy of Foucault*, Chesham, Acumen, 2006, p. 63.

power. Lastly, Foucault articulates a model of power implicit in his analytics of power and anticipated by his methodological considerations about it.

1. An Analytics of Power:

This is quite obvious that the notion of power is discussed by so many people nowadays. In Foucault's treatment of power some questions may repeatedly occur. Is power an important subject at all? Is it so independent that it can be discussed without taking into account other problems? With him these types of questions have been raised for the first time in the twentieth century. If we are trying to constitute a general philosophy of Foucault it will be observed by us that the central phenomenon of his general philosophy is power. Since he is of opinion that power is everywhere and comes from everywhere we can make a simple conclusion that the society has power in every layer of it and the relation of power will be symmetrical. In other words if A and B are the two relatum of power relation then power force can be came from both the relatum. Otherwise Foucault mentions that the equilibrium among the different classes will not be maintained and as a result oppression cannot be prevented and it will definitely result in socialist harm. In order to situate the question why power exists, he mentioned two pathological forms rather two "diseases of power"- Fascism[21] and Stalinism[22]. For us these two forms are so puzzling

[21] **Fascism,** political ideology and mass movement that dominated many parts of central, southern, and eastern Europe between 1919 and 1945 and that also had adherents in western Europe, the United States, South Africa, Japan, Latin America, and the Middle East. Europe's first fascist leader, Benito Mussolini, took the name of his party from the Latin word *fasces*, which referred to a bundle of elm or birch rods (usually containing an ax) used as a symbol of penal authority in ancient Rome. Although fascist parties and movements differed significantly from each other, they had many characteristics in common, including extreme militaristic nationalism, contempt for electoral democracy and political and cultural liberalism, a belief in natural social hierarchy and the rule of elites, and the desire to create a *Volksgemeinschaft* (German: "people's community"), in which individual interests would be subordinated to the good of the nation. At the end of World War II, the major European fascist parties were broken up, and in some countries (such as Italy and West Germany) they were officially banned. Beginning in the late 1940s, however, many fascist-oriented parties and movements were founded in Europe as well as in Latin America and South Africa. Although some European "neo-fascist" groups

as in one hand they are historically unique and on the other hand they are not original. These two presupposes mechanisms which are already vivid in most other societies and in spite of their own internal madness, they used to a large extent the ideas and the devices of our political rationality.

2. Methodology of Power:

Foucault's methodological treatments about his analytics of power were inaugurated in the lectures of 1976 are significant. In the first lecture, Foucault draws a classification of the influential conceptions of power and he develops his analytics of power by considering their inadequacies. For Foucault, the two dominant concepts of power are liberalism and Marxism. According to the liberal conception, power is a right that is possessed, used,

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attracted large followings, especially in Italy and France, none were as influential as the major fascist parties of the interwar period.

[22] **Stalinism** is the method of rule, or policies, propounded by Joseph Stalin in Soviet Communist Party and state leader from 1929 until his death in 1953. Stalinism is associated with a regime of terror and totalitarian rule. In a party dominated by intellectuals and rhetoricians, Stalin stood for a practical approach to revolution, devoid of ideological sentiment. Once power was in Bolshevik hands, the party leadership gladly left to Stalin tasks involving the dry details of party and state administration. In the power struggle that followed Vladimir Lenin's death in 1924, the intellectual sophistication and charismatic appeal of Stalin's rivals proved no match for the actual power he had consolidated from positions of direct control of the party machinery. By 1929 his major opponents were defeated; and Stalinist policies, which had undergone several shifts during the power struggle, became stabilized. Stalin's doctrine of the monolithic party emerged during the battle for power; he condemned the "rotten liberalism" of those who tolerated discussion on or dissent from party policies. Lenin's pronouncements, except those uncomplimentary to Stalin, were codified as axioms not open to question. Persons opposed to these new dogmas were accused of treason to the party. What came to be called the "cult of personality" developed as Stalin, presenting himself as Lenin's heir, came to be recognized as the sole infallible interpreter of party ideology. Basic to Stalinism was the doctrine of "socialism in one country," which held that, though the socialist goal of world proletarian revolution was not to be abandoned, a viable classless society could be built within Soviet boundaries and despite encirclement by a largely capitalist world. Stalin, appealing both to socialist revolutionary fervour and to Russian nationalism, launched in the late 1920s a program of rapid industrial development of unprecedented magnitude. A "class war" was declared on the rich farmers in the name of the poor, and Russian agriculture was rapidly collectivized, against considerable rural resistance, to meet the needs of urban industry. The need for expertise and efficiency in industry postponed the egalitarian goals of the Bolshevik Revolution; Stalin denounced "levelers" and instituted systems of reward that established a socioeconomic stratification favouring the technical intelligentsia. Heavy industry was emphasized to ensure Russia's future economic independence from its capitalist neighbours.

and reduced to a commodity, while the Marxist conception of power treats power in terms of capital which maintains relations of production, class domination and also influences social discrimination. Foucault argues that both are ways of understanding power in terms of economy (resources), where the proponents narrowly focus on the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate uses of power. Moreover, since the net result of these two notions is to distort non-economic relations of power and certain oppressive forms of it, Foucault refutes the liberal-Marxist conception of power. He was eager to consider non-economic conceptions of power, which was proposed by Freud[23], Wilhelm Reich[24] and Nietzsche. This is to be noted Foucault's position is distinctly different from the positions of Freud, Wilhelm Reich and Nietzsche. Both Freud and Reich formulated notions of power which is highly repressive. Also for Nietzsche, power is a force exercised in warfare against other hostile forces. Being a benefactor of both non-economic and non-repressive notions of power, Foucault situates his own study of power in the tradition of Reich, Nietzsche and Freud. Nonetheless he expresses deep reservations about the "repressive hypothesis" as he found that they advance theories of power through the mistaken means of resources and repressions. Foucault eventually argues against these special forms of power. His analytics of power methodologically examines not 'what power is', but rather 'how power functions', in other words, the manifestations, mechanisms, strategies, and impact of relations of power. Foucault begins the second lecture by revealing the object of his own study of power. It is at this point that Foucault presents a list of five 'methodological precautions' that guide his analytics of the 'how' of power, and these precautions deserve our attention not merely because they clarify his analytics of power, but also because they would assist us to anticipate his strategical model of power. The **first**

[23] Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) is an Austrian neurologist and the founder of psychoanalysis.

[24] Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957) is an Austrian doctor of medicine and psychoanalyst. His major works include *Character Analysis*.

methodological precaution observed by Foucault's analytics of power is that it focuses on the extreme and local points of the exercise of power, rather than on the embodiment of power in political sovereignty as the authority of right. **Secondly**, his analytics operates not at the level of human interiority, of individuals' conscious intentions or decisions, but at the level of the effects of power on (the constitution of) subjects. **Thirdly**, power is not to be understood as a thing which some individuals or groups possess and wield to dominate others, but as that which produces individuals and forms groups. **Fourthly**, Foucault avoids a deduction of power from its center to its smallest effects, and instead studies the ascent of power from the history and techniques of its smallest mechanisms to more global mechanisms and forms of domination**. Lastly**, the study of power cannot be confused with or reduced to the ideology associated with various forms of power, but must consider the apparatuses of knowledge produced by power.

3. A Model of Power:

Foucault eventually articulates this model, but before we turn to it, two more methodological concerns remain. First, Foucault points out that an analytics of power requires a 'determination of the instruments that will make an analysis of power possible'. Foucault's analytics of power consists of interpretative analyses of power and delimits the field or domain on which such analyses are properly performed. The purpose of Foucault's analytics of power is to document the development of local power relations into new and hidden forms of domination, and he is able to do so because his analytics of power presupposes a model of power which challenges the conventional understanding of power, freedom, and domination. Nevertheless, Foucault's suggestion is that conventional notions about power, domination, violence, freedom, etc. are inadequate or in appropriate for the task. Second methodological concern is his strategical model of power. The conceptual apparatuses are necessary to an analytics of power.

The basic presupposition of the analytics of power is that although the nature of power has changed fundamentally in the last four hundred years.

III. Foucauldian Notion of Power: Various Senses

- **Disciplinary Power:**

For Foucault, discipline is a set of strategies, procedures and behaviors associated with certain institutional contexts which then pervades the individual's general thinking and behavior.

> This new mechanism of power is more dependent upon bodies and what they do than upon the earth and its products. It is a mechanism of power which permits time and labour, rather than wealth and commodities, to be extracted from bodies. It is a type of power which is constantly exercised by means of surveillance rather that in a discontinuous manner by means of a system of levies or obligations distributed over time. It presupposes a tightly knit grid of marital coercions rather than the physical existence of a sovereign. It is ultimately dependent upon the principle, which introduces a genuinely new *economy of power*, that one must be able to simultaneously increase the subjected forces and improve the force and efficacy of that which subjects them.[25]

According to Foucault discipline acts in four different ways.[26] **Firstly**, through certain special disposition of individuals, that is usually attained through imprisonment. This spatial distribution may be obtained in society by other means also, such as individuals' segregation into heterogeneous groups, placing individual and machinery in separate rooms, as indicated by the architecture plan of a factory or by hierarchical relations. Thus individuals come to know their place in the context of the general economy of space associated with the disciplinary powers. **Secondly**, discipline acts through controlling activities. A specific tendency of the disciplinary power

[25] Foucault, 1980, p. 104.

[26] A. McHoul, W. Grace, *A Foucault Primer, Discouse, Power and the Subject,* London, Routledge, 1993, pp. 69-70.

is to use the individual's body to get time and work rather than wealth and goods. **Thirdly**, discipline is all about organizing stages of education, pedagogical practices and this disciplinary power develops a general code of relations between master and disciple in various teaching areas which has a hierarchy and this hierarchical stages is more complex than the previous one through the means of monitoring of the progress the differentiation between more skilled persons and less skilled person is made. **Fourthly**, discipline sets into effect a general coordination of all the parts of a system. For setting up this coordination discipline uses certain 'tactics'. Here the term 'tactics' is to be understood in Foucauldian intention. Through these tactics "the product of the various forces is increased by their calculated combination."[27] One of the intentions behind these methods is to produce regularity but Foucault shows that the effect is just the opposite. This is an unintended effect of the initial disciplinary project.

> The individual is not to be conceived as a sort of elementary nucleus, a primitive atom, a multiple and inert material on which power comes to fasten or against which it happens to strike, and in so doing subdues or crushes individuals. In fact, it is already one of the prime effects of power that certain bodies, certain gestures, certain discourses, certain desires, come to be identified and constituted as individuals. The individual, that is, is not the vis-à-vis of power; it is, I believe, one of its prime effects.[28]

The disciplinary structure described by Foucault is the panopticon as I have stated in the first portion where the salient features of Foucauldian power have been made. Panopticon is an architectural design revealed by Jeremy Bentham as a way to arrange prisoners so that each of them can be observed by the warden of the central watch tower, without the warden

[27] M. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, London: Allen Lane, 1977, p. 167.
[28] Foucault, 1980, p. 98.

being visible to them and with no interaction between prisoners. Foucault describes this in an interview called 'The Eye of Power':

> A perimeter building in the form of a ring. At the center of this a tower, pierced by large windows opening on to the inner face of the ring. The outer building is divided into cell each of which traverses the whole thickness of the building. These cells have two windows, one opening onto the inside, facing the windows of the central tower, the other, outer one allowing daylight to pass through the whole cell. All that is then needed is to put an overseer in the tower and place in each of the cells a lunatic, a patient, a convict, a worker or a schoolboy. The back lighting enables one to pick out from the central tower the little captive silhouettes in the ring of cells. In short the principle of the dungeon is reversed; daylight and the overseer's gaze captures the inmate more effectively than darkness, which afforded after all a sort of protection.[29]

This special spatial arrangement means exposing the individual to maximum visibility, which brings up a new form of internalized disciplinary practice. Thus a new form of power is being born in which individual himself plays both roles of oppressed and oppressor, instead of the power being enforced directly upon the body of the victim by the owner of authority, more to say, the oppressor may well be absent as the prisoner has internalized so well the imposed behavioral code, that he behaves as if the oppressor were always present. According to Foucault, disciplinary power subjugates the modern subject. Disciplinary power is distinctive because it totalizes as it individualizes, or because it creates capacities as constraints. By subjecting individuals to constant surveillance, it forces them to scrutinize themselves constantly: "He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in

[29] Foucault, 1980, pp.147-165.

himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection."[30]

- **Biopower:**

The deliberation leads Foucault to an analysis of the specific historical dynamics of power. He introduces the concept of "biopower" which combines disciplinary power as discussed in *Discipline and Punish.* With the model of bio-power he introduces "biopolitics". Biopolitics invests people's lives at a biological level and makes us live in accordance with norms. In 1976, Foucault gave a lecture on the genealogy of racism in 'Society Must Be Defended', which provides a useful companion to *The Will to Knowledge,* as that contains clearest analyses of his thought on biopower. Foucault explained that biopower is a modality of power that is exercised through our relationship to demography.[31] We modern people have grown up in societies, so we govern ourselves according to what we have come to understand about ourselves in terms of race, class, gender, age, and so on. When Foucault used the term biopower in the 1975 lectures, he was talking about his historical analysis of a particular change that occurred across the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, namely a change in how governments handled 'bio' issues. Bio issues include births, deaths, health, sickness, and demographic (e.g., race, class, and gender) descriptions – were not always formally administered by governments. At one time there were no officers, cabinet ministers, oversight boards, or legislative policy statements that were in charge of demography; governments did not record, predict, or intervene in birth rates, death statistics, or disease management. However, in the eighteenth century when these bio issues came into the sphere of government and administration, the change in the scope of government signaled a change in power dynamics

[30] Foucault*, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Allan Sheridan (trans.), New York, Vintage Books, 1995, p. 203.
[31] M. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction*, Robert Hurley (trans.) Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1978, p. 139.

that Foucault called `biopower.' Biopower does not mean that in the eighteenth century the state began to take control of more aspects of our lives. Biopower refers to a form of power that shapes how we think of ourselves relative to populational factors such as births, deaths, health, sickness, and demographics.

If we look closely at two 'technologies of power' that divide the first and second half of writing, we see that the most profound task of each is the production of power as well as subjects. In *Discipline and Punish*, and the rest of his work that precedes *The History of Sexuality,* Foucault identifies a technology of power he calls 'disciplinary power' which generates norm-governed 'disciplinary subjects' whose subjection is ensured through their production as efficient 'docile bodies'. But beginning with *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault identifies a second technology of power which is developed within and finally converted disciplinary power. This new power is what Foucault terms biopower. For Foucault biopower and disciplinary power differ in the objects they address. While disciplinary power addresses the individual subject through the power exercised directly on the corporeal body, biopower addresses as its central object of the social body. Biopower belongs to system of government which addresses the population body rather than a body of individual. In doing so, it is able to manage social risks by recasting them as individual problems of self-care.

- **Political Power:**

If we reconstruct the philosophical analyses of political power, it will be found that Foucault studies especially power-relations related to government asking who should govern, who is to be governed and how should we conceive the methods of government. In order to situate political power Foucault introduces his own concept of "governmentality". Foucault originally used the term 'govermentality' to describe a particular way of administering populations in modern European history within the context of the rise of the idea of the state. He later expanded his definition to

encompass the techniques and procedures which are designed to govern the conduct of both individuals and populations at every level not just the administrative or political level. In his treatment of "governmentality", it can be noticed that this concept would be a mistake if we treat the notion in terms of oppressive nature of social institutions as for Foucault the opposite is true, that is, the notion of "governmentality" is not associated with oppressive nature but at the same time associated with fragile and they have great potential of change. Foucault says,

> Overvaluing the problem of the state is one which is paradoxical because apparently reductionist: it is a form of analysis that consists in reducing the state to a certain number of functions, such as the development of productive forces of the reproduction of relations of production, and yet this reductionist vision of the relative importance of the state's role nevertheless invariably renders it absolutely essential as a target needing to be attacked and a privileged position needing o be occupied. But the state, no more probably than any other time in its history, does not have this unity, this individuality, this rigorous functionality, nor to speak frankly, this importance; maybe after all, the state is no more that composite reality and a mythicised abstraction, whose importance is a lot more limited than many of us think.[32]

Fundamentally he thinks that political power relations are doomed to fail in reaching their goals. In Foucault's language, "If power is relational rather than emanating from a particular site such as the government or the police; if it is diffused throughout all social relations rather than being imposed from above; if it is unstable and in need of constant repetition to maintain; if it is productive as well as being repressive, then it is difficult to see power relations as simply negative and so constraining."[33]

- **Pastoral Power :**

[32] M. Foucault, *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality,* in G. Burchell, C. Gordon and P. Miller (eds.), Chicgo, University of Chicago Press, 2011, pp. 85-103.
[33] S. Mill, *Michel Foucault,* London, Routledge, 2003, p.47.

Foucault used the metaphor of the pastor as a strategy to explicate another mode of power that is "pastoral power". This mode of power was derived through the traditions of Christianity. Literally, 'pastoral' refers to a pasture where a shepherd cares for a flock of sheep. We can recognize the expression of pastorship from Christianity. Protestant churches, priests, clergymen are called `pastors'. The members of a Christian church are often called the 'flock,' and the Bible uses the sheep and shepherd metaphor to refer to the relationship between people and clergy in a religious settings. The allegory of 'pastoral' serves to emphasize this particular form of power. For example, kings have the reputation of being powerful in a military way, and they enjoy sovereign power. However, pastors have the reputation of being of service to their respective flocks, and that is the characteristic of the pastoral form of power. Foucault used a few more words about this new type of power:

> 1. We may observe a change in its objective. It was a question no longer of leading people to their salvation in the next world but, rather, ensuring it in this world. And in this context, the word "salvation" takes on different meanings: health, we U- being (that is, sufficient wealth, standard of living), security, protection against accidents. A series of ''worldly" aims took the place of the religious aims of the traditional pastorate, all the more easily because the latter, for various reasons, had followed in an accessory way a certain number of these aims; we only have to think of the role of medicine and its welfare function assured for a long time by the Catholic and Protestant churches. 2. Concurrently, the officials of pastoral power increased. Sometimes this form of power was exerted by state apparatus or, in any case, by a public institution such as the police. (We should not forget that in the eighteenth century the police force was invented not only for maintaining law and order, nor for assisting governments in their struggle against their enemies, but also for assuring urban supplies, hygiene, health and standards considered necessary for handicrafts and commerce.) Sometimes the power was exercised by private ventures, welfare societies, benefactors, and generally

> by philanthropists. But ancient institutions, for example the family, were also mobilized at this time to take on pastoral functions. It was also exercised by complex structures such as medicine, which in eluded private initiatives with the sale of services on market economy principles but also included public institutions such as hospitals. 3. Finally, the multiplication of the aims and agents of pastoral power focused the development of knowledge of man around two roles: one, globalizing and quantitative, concerning the population; the other, analytical, concerning the individual.[34]

Foucault invoked these levels of literary meaning to spur our imaginations in the process of trying to make sense of this caring mode of power in democracies. There are limits to the extent of this metaphor. Pastoral power does not mean that power is being exercised through religion. Foucault clearly states:

> …this implies that power of a pastoral type, which over centuries- for more than a millennium— had been linked to a defined religious institution, suddenly spread out into the whole social body. It found support in a multitude of institutions. And, instead of a pastoral power and a political power, more or less linked to each other, more or less in rivalry, there was an individualizing "tactic" that characterized a series of powers: those of the family, medicine, psychiatry, education, and employers.[35]

Pastoral power does not claim that people are locked in cotes like many gaggles of sheep, instead, the allegory of pastoral power serves to emphasize that there are other modes of power other than sovereign power. If we do not recognize power in its many different guises, then we become subject to the effects of power without knowing it. It is Foucault's purpose to make the exercises of power recognizable. The term "pastoral power"

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[34] James D. Faubion, (ed.) *Essential Works of Foucault: Power (1954-1984) Volume-3,* Robert Hurley and Others (trans.), England, Penguin Books, 1994, pp.334- 335.

[35] Ibid., p. 335.

gives us language through which we can recognize the exercise of power compassionately.

So far we have analyzed the notion of power both in broader domain and in a specific domain as dealt with by Foucault. Since our central concern is Foucault's notion of "power/knowledge", we must consider the notion of knowledge independently, before entering into Foucauldian understanding. Hence in the next chapter we shall discuss the philosophical notion of knowledge and attempt to find out similarities and differences between the approaches of mainstream philosophers (epistemologists) and that of Foucault towards knowledges.

Traditional View of Knowledge
and
Foucauldian View of Knowledge

Section-I

Epistemology or the study of the theories of knowledge is one of the most important areas in both analytic and continental philosophy. The questions which are addressed most include the following:

a. What is knowledge and what are the types of knowledge?
b. What are the sources of knowledge?
c. What will be the scope or limits of our knowledge?
d. What are the valid means of our knowledge?

The first problem encountered in epistemology is that of defining knowledge. In order to define philosophical knowledge we have to take recourse to the classification of knowledge which is already there in the philosophical tradition.

Philosophers typically divide knowledge into three categories: personal, procedural, and propositional. Among these three, only propositional knowledge is the primary concern of philosophers. However, understanding the connections between the three types of knowledge can be helpful in clearly understanding what is and what is not being analyzed by the various theories of knowledge.

1. **Personal Knowledge** stands for knowledge by acquaintance. This is the kind of knowledge that we are claiming to have when we say things like "I know Tagore's music."
2. **Procedural Knowledge** is knowledge of how to do something. People who claim to know how to juggle, swim or drive, are not simply claiming that they understand the theory involved in those activities; rather, they are claiming that they actually possess the

skills involved, that they have specific dispositions and are able to do certain things.

3. **Propositional Knowledge** is the kind of knowledge which is concern of most philosophers, and it denotes knowledge of facts. When we say things like "I know that the internal angles of a triangle add up to 180 degrees" or "I know that it was you who stole my heart by your mellifluous voice", we are claiming to have propositional knowledge.[1]

Personal knowledge, arguably, involves at least some propositional knowledge. If I have met Anindita, but can't remember a single thing about her, then I probably wouldn't claim to know her. In fact, knowing a person (in the sense required for knowledge by acquaintance) does seem to involve knowing a significant number of propositions about them. What is important is that personal knowledge involves more than knowledge of propositions. No matter how much one tells about Anindita, no matter how many facts about her I learn, if I haven't met her then I can't be said to know her in the sense required for personal knowledge. Personal knowledge thus seems to involve coming to know a certain number of propositions in a particular way. Procedural knowledge clearly differs from propositional knowledge. It is possible to know all of the theory behind driving a car (i.e. to have all of the relevant propositional knowledge) without actually knowing how to drive a car (i.e. without having the procedural knowledge). At the same time procedural knowledge also seems to involve some propositional knowledge. If one knows how to drive a car (in the sense of procedural knowledge) then she presumably knows certain facts about driving (e.g. which way the car will go if she turns the steering wheel to the left).

[1] J. Hospers, *An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis* (4th Edition), Milton Park, Routledge, 1997, pp. 39-70.

We need to keep in mind that propositional knowledge does not suffice to give us either personal knowledge or procedural knowledge. Personal knowledge involves acquiring propositional knowledge in a certain way, and procedural knowledge may entail propositional knowledge, but the same propositional knowledge certainly does not entail procedural knowledge. Whatever the connections between the various types of knowledge may be, it is propositional knowledge that is central in epistemology.

I. Knowledge and its Tripartite Analysis:

The analytic tradition begins with Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle and continues on to Kant. Much of the time, the analytic philosophers use the tripartite theory of knowledge, whereby knowledge is defined as justified true belief. In the tripartite theory of knowledge, there is a tradition that goes back as far as Plato, who claimed that three conditions must be satisfied in order for one to possess knowledge. This account analyses knowledge as justified true belief. The tripartite theory says if I know something then I have to have at least three conditions: firstly, it has to be true state of affair, secondly, I have to have the belief that it is true and lastly, I must have some substantial evidence or justification for my belief that it is true. Thus, unless one believes a thing, one cannot know it. Even if something is true, and one has excellent reasons for believing that it is true, one cannot know it without believing it. If one knows a thing then it must be true. No matter how well justified or sincere a belief is, if it is not true then it cannot constitute knowledge. If a long-held belief is discovered to be false, then one must concede that what was thought to be known was in fact not known. What is false cannot be known; knowledge must be knowledge of the truth. In order to know a thing, it is not enough to merely correctly believe it to be true; one must also have a good reason for doing so. The tripartite theory of knowledge is intuitively quite plausible and is still widely used as a working model by philosophers.

II. Gettier's Problem:

Although most of the epistemologists agree that each element of the tripartite theory is necessary for knowledge, yet they together are not sufficient. There seem to be cases of justified true belief that fall short of knowledge. For example, we can imagine that we are searching for some source of drinking water to quench our thirst on a hot day and we suddenly see water, or so we think. In fact, we are not seeing water but a mirage, but when we reach the spot, we are lucky and find water right there under a rock. Can we say that we had genuine knowledge of water?

In the article 'Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?' [2] Edmund Gettier presented two cases in which a true belief is inferred from a justified false belief. At least one of his examples can be presented in this context like this:

Let us think that two friends Smith and Jones applied for a job and Smith has enough evidences for believing the below mentioned beliefs:

Jones will get the job and he has ten coins in his pocket. The main evidence of this belief is that the owner of that company in which they applied for the job has told to Smith Jones will get the job and Smith saw Jones has ten coins in his pocket. From this proposition the next proposition is following, that is, the person who will get the job has ten coins in his pocket. For Smith the latter proposition is logically derived from the former as we know that any proposition is logically derived from one valid proposition is bound to be valid. Hence, the latter one is logically derived from the former one and valid for Smith. Now the matter of fact, Smith is unaware about the facts that not Jones but Smith got selected for the job and Smith also has ten coins in his pocket. Thus it is proved that the latter proposition is true but through which the latter proposition is derived, the former proposition,

[2] Gettier, Edmund L. 1963, 'Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?', *Analysis*, Vol. 23. This article is reprinted in A. Phillips Griffiths (ed.), *Knowledge and Belief*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1967.

is false. In the case of this latter proposition the three conditions of knowledge (Justification, truth, belief) are present but one cannot say that "Smith knows that the person who will get the job has ten coins in his pocket." Because the proposition "the person who will get the job has ten coins in his pocket" is true as Smith has selected for the job and he has ten coins in his pocket. But Smith has no knowledge about it. However, Gettier observed that, intuitively, such beliefs cannot be equivalent to knowledge; it is merely by chance that they are true. Hence, there must be a fourth condition in addition to the three above-mentioned conditions, the fulfillment of which is necessary for knowledge.

III. On the Origin of Knowledge: Two Traditions

Each of us possesses knowledge about many things, ideas and events. We know about ourselves; we know about the world around us; we know about abstract concepts and ideas. Philosophers have often wondered where this knowledge ultimately comes from. There are two competing traditions concerning the source of our knowledge in analytic philosophy. These are empiricism and rationalism. Let us take a succinct view of both the traditions:

a) **Empiricism** is the view that the mind at birth is a clean slate and all the characters of knowledge are inscribed on it by experience (sensation and reflection) only. Thus according to this tradition knowledge begins with and ends with experience. This tradition over-estimates senses, as according to John Locke the intellect can function only after simple ideas have been supplied to it. George Berkeley's provocative declaration is 'esse-est-percipi' means to exist is to be perceived by some mind. For David Hume, intellect cannot create one single simple idea of sense. According to these empiricist philosophers the place of intellect is secondary. They hold the view that sense and understanding differ in degree only

hence, they follow sensation-ism.[3] Empiricism is of opinion that the data supplied by experience are discrete, distinct and unconnected and any communication is introduced by the process of association and imagination. As these communicating processes are considered to be purely relative and subjective, so knowledge based on them is taken to be lacking in certainty. Lastly empiricism is dogmatic for it uncritically assumes the constitutive role of experience without reference to a priori elements. In the end it sets no limit to ignorance which finally leads to skepticism.

b) **Rationalism**, on the other hand, propounds that mind is active and creative. As soon as we begin to reflect we become conscious of certain innate ideas[4]. For this type of philosophers, knowledge is constituted exclusively of innate ideas. Real knowledge according to rationalist philosophers, consist in clear and distinct ideas which are given by reason alone. Sense experience can neither constitute knowledge nor can it ever confirm-disconfirm propositions reached by reason. Sense provides only with an occasion for thinking about innate ideas. Rationalism also did not create any clear distinction between sensing and thinking. According to Rene Descartes, clear ideas and clear perceptions have the same status but it was Leibnitz who regarded the distinction between sensation and thoughts as of degree only. This tradition starts with clear and distinct ideas and connects them with the help of logical rules but innate ideas by themselves have no correspondence with facts. Thus for them knowledge becomes purely conceptual. Rationalism too dogmatic since it confines knowledge to innate ideas only and this tradition is ignoring the claims of sense experience thus it terminates in the inconsistent systems of Spinoza and Leibnitz.

[3] Sensation-ism is a doctrine according to which thinking means perceiving or imagining.
[4] Innate Ideas is associated with a philosophical and epistemological doctrine, 'Innatism'. Innatism asserts that not all knowledge is gained from experience and the senses. Plato and Descartes are prominent philosophers in the development of innatism and the notion that the mind is already born with ideas, knowledge and beliefs.

IV. Kantian View of Knowledge: A Brief Deliberation

Immanuel Kant's works comprise three critiques, *Critique of Pure Reason*, *Critique of Practical Reason* and *Critique of Judgment*. Hence, his philosophy is known as criticism, as opposed to dogmatism.[5] Here we will concentrate only on his first Critique, *Critique of Pure Reason*. It is the criticism of pure reason by pure reason itself. According to Kant both empiricism and rationalism fails to provide explanation for human knowledge because both these traditions were based on a common assumption concerning the status of objects. Both the traditions assume that things as object of knowledge exist externally to the mind. The mind needs to approach them in order to know them. But on this assumption concerning the status of objects, how can knowledge be explained? Kant stated that for him knowledge is always scientific knowledge and the clearest examples of knowledge are found in mathematics and physics. If we analyze the knowledge of mathematics and physics then it can be found that such knowledge consist of synthetic a priori judgement. He develops his epistemology by this type of judgment which is both synthetic and a priori. Now one question would arise here, as what is the nature of this synthetic a priori judgement. A proposition or judgment is said to be a priori when it is independent of any experience whatever. Necessity and strict universality are the two criteria of a priori propositions. By the term 'strict universality' it has to be true in all possible worlds. On the other hand, in the context of knowledge or cognition, if one proposition's predicate term does add something to the subject, then the proposition will be called synthetic. For an empiricist, synthetic a priori is absurd and self-contradictory and consequently nonsense. However, for Kant

[5] Dogmatism, according to Kant, is the presumption that it is possible to make progress with pure knowledge from concepts alone, without having first investigated in what way and by what right reason has come into possession of these concepts.

synthetic judgments a priori are the most significant in scientific cognition which are found in mathematics and physics.

A critique of pure reason according to Kant is concerned with the faculty of reason in general, in respect of all knowledge after which it may strive independently of all experience. In other words, Kant's enquiry is transcendental in which he seeks to unravel the a priori elements which the mind brings to bear upon knowing any object whatsoever. A critical philosophy, in the sense of Kant, goes beyond any dogmatic systems insofar as it is an attempt to reach principles, which are prior not only to a particular controversy but to all controversy. The enquiry of Kant is almost exclusively concerned with a priori contributions of mind. The subject of the present enquiry, how much we can hope to achieve reason, when all the materials and assistance of experience are taken away.

Section- II

I. Foucauldian Knowledge: A Philosophical Analysis

Since the time of Socrates, philosophers were typically involved in the project of questioning the accepted knowledge of the day. Later on Locke, Hume and especially Kant developed a distinguished modern idea of philosophy as a critique of knowledge. Kant's monumental epistemological innovation induces philosophers to maintain that the same critique that revealed the limits of our knowing powers could also reveal necessary conditions for their exercise. What might have seemed just contingent features of human cognition (for example, the spatial and temporal character of its object) turn out to be necessary truths. Foucault, however, suggests the need to invert this Kantian move. Rather than asking what, in the apparently contingent, is actually necessary, Foucault suggests asking what, in the apparently necessary, might be contingent. The focus of his questioning is the modern human science (biological, psychological, social). These purports to offer universal scientific truth about human nature that are, nevertheless, often mere expressions of ethical and political

commitments of a particular society. Foucault's critical philosophy undermines such claims by exhibiting how they are the outcome of contingent historical forces and not scientifically grounded truth. Each of his major books is a critique of historical reason.

The most important transformation found in Foucault's philosophy is the way he described the scale and continuity of the exercise of power, which also implicated much greater knowledge of detail. It is in this sense primarily that Foucault spoke of "power/knowledge". In the next chapter, attempt will be made to clarify the concept "power/knowledge". At present in this section let us analyze how Foucault conceives of knowledge. In Foucault's general philosophy the cornerstone is power-relation(s). Hence, it will be difficult for us to see knowledge in his philosophy excluded from power as well as power-relation. "Foucault wants to produce a much more anonymous, institutionalized and rule-governed model of knowledge of production through the power relations."[6]

II. "Historical A Priori": Foucauldian Invention in the Context of Knowledge

In Foucault's writings during 1960s, the word "archaeology" became increasingly prominent. In 1963, Foucault published a book whose subtitle was "an archaeology of medical perception"; in 1966, he presented "an archaeology of the human sciences"; in 1969, he explored "the archaeology of knowledge" itself. With such works, Foucault came forth as a scholar on an "archaeological dig," searching for overlooked treasures among the dust-covered texts in the well-stocked French national library. His subtitles and titles also suggest that if we focus on the term "archaeology," we can gain a clear sense of the perspective from which Foucault was writing during this important segment of his career. In *The Order of Things*, Foucault characterized his idea of "archaeology" as follows:

[6] S. Mill, *Michel Foucault*, London and New York, Routledge, 2007, p. 68.

> Quite obviously, such an analysis does not belong to the history of ideas or of science: it is rather an inquiry whose aim is to rediscover on what basis knowledge and theory become possible [emphasis added]; within what space of order knowledge was constituted; on the basis of what historical a priori, and in the element of what positivity, ideas could appear, sciences be established, experience be reflected in philosophies, rationalities be formed, only perhaps, to dissolve and vanish soon afterwards. I am not concerned, therefore, to describe the progress of knowledge towards an objectivity in which today's science can be finally recognized; what I am attempting to bring to light is the epistemological field, the episteme in which knowledge, envisaged apart from all criteria having reference to its rational value or to its objective forms, grounds its positivity and thereby manifests a history which is not that of its growing perfection, but rather that of its conditions of possibility; in this account, what should appear are those configurations within the space of knowledge which have given rise to the diverse forms of empirical science. Such an enterprise is not so much a history, in the traditional meaning of that word, as an 'archaeology'.[7]

Foucault-as archaeologist aimed to reveal a people's knowledge-style, bringing to light the guiding assumptions that operate prior to any assertions that this or that fact happens to be known. Those familiar with the philosophy of Immanuel Kant will recognize the term "a priori" in Foucault's characterization of "archaeology". "Archaeology" is a discipline that Foucault defined as belonging to neither history nor science in any straightforward way. Although Kant's inquiries, differed from Foucault's insofar as they professed to have a quality of universality and necessity for all human beings and were also neither historical nor scientific. In the late period of 1700s, Kant considered not bits and pieces of factual knowledge, but sought to unveil the underlying structures of the mind that constitute a network of conceptual presuppositions for human knowledge, against which, in terms of which, and by means of which, all contingent facts about

[7] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things,* New York, Vintage Books, 1994, pp. xxi–xxii.

the world could arise to begin with. Foucault gave Kant's search for the universal and necessary a priori conditions of human knowledge a modern twirl, for he spoke of "historical a priori" [8] to be uncovered by his archaeological investigations, rather than a traditionally universal and necessary one. This modification of Kant's terminology reveals Foucault's more unassuming view that there might not necessarily be a single, invariant knowledge-style that is common to all humans but, rather, only a multiplicity of knowledge-styles that vary according to the specific time and place. Foucault's coining of the term "historical a priori," in place of Kant's more timeless "a priori," manifest both Foucault's Kantian roots, side-by-side with Foucault's departure from Kant – a departure partially derived from Martin Heidegger's [9] historical sensitivity, and one that allowed Foucault to make later use of compatible insights from Nietzsche. Specifically, one of Heidegger's contributions to the theory of understanding[10] and interpretation which is known as "hermeneutics"[11] is the idea that whenever we understand something, or say that we "know" something, this understanding rests always/already upon interpretive historical presuppositions. Owing to their generality and obviousness, these presuppositions tend to remain hidden from us, for Heidegger observed that our guiding presuppositions are often invisible, precisely because they are very close to us, just as a person's eyeglasses are typically "invisible" to the extent that they function silently and unnoticeably, and become objects of attention perhaps only when they happen to break. In a clear sense, then, these customarily overlooked presuppositions, or prejudgments as these

[8] This is the order underlying any given period of history. Foucault also uses the phrase, "positive unconscious of knowledge" to refer to the same idea. The episteme which describes scientific forms of knowledge is a subset of this.

[9] Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) was a 20th century German philosopher in the continental tradition of philosophical hermeneutics. He is best known for his contribution to phenomenology and existentialism.

[10] Understanding is an existential structure for Heidegger in which being in the world maintains itself.

[11] Hermeneutics is not only a study but also a kind of methodology of interpretations.

were later referred to by the philosopher Hans-George Gadamer[12] [1900–2001]), which can be said to constitute a significant portion of our "historical a priori." Foucault's work of the 1960s can be regarded as a Kantian–Heideggerian attempt to reveal in detail exactly what these presuppositions were for various fields of knowledge and time periods. "His work during this time was Kantian, insofar as it aimed to establish the "a priori" conditions for understanding in various fields. It was also Heideggerian, insofar as he conceived of the conditions for understanding as being historically rooted."[13] Thus, in Foucault's project Knowledge-styles effectively became interpretation-styles. More clearly, here Foucault outlines what his archaeology aims to manifest historical principles or historical a priori rules. Given this historicization of the a priori, knowledge claims are partial, historically restricted, and thus always open to revision. From the many discursive events it analyzes, archaeology extracts historical a priori, and this synchronic investigation fits nicely with its diachronic-genealogical counterpart. Genealogy's one of the significant tasks is to retrace the various contingencies which have shaped us in order to open up a new space for self-reformation or constituting ourselves anew. It is vivid that Foucault's recognition and acceptance of our finitude, historically-conditioned knowledge, and our need to be open to future interrogations that may fundamentally reconfigure our present convictions, knowledge-claims, and ways of being. Foucault poses a hypothetical question asking how, given our acceptance of partial and local analyses, we can be sure that we are not still being shaped and controlled in significant ways by general structures. Intentionally Foucault denies explicitly that we can somehow stand outside of our own historical context and "see" from a neutral, ahistorical point of view. Our perspective and knowledge claims

[12] Hans-George Gadamer (1900–2002) is a 20th century German philosopher of the continental tradition. He is well known for his masterpiece, *Truth and Method,* for hermeneutic thinking. Some of his notable ideas include "historically effected consciousness", "fusion of horizons" etc..

[13] W. R. Schroeder, *Continental Philosophy: A Critical Approach*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2005, p. 252.

are limited and shaped by the *episteme* we inhabit, which is not saying that we must relinquish all knowledge claims or even the possibility of knowledge or truth. It does, however, require a more humble approach to the pursuit of knowledge, realizing that we do in fact have biases, limitations, and perspectives that may need to be challenged.

In *The Order of Things– An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (1966), Foucault extended his historical examinations to account for the birth of human sciences such as psychology and sociology, along with the analysis of literature and mythology. In this effort, he analyzed in greater detail the global knowledge-styles or "epistemes"[14] of the three ages respectively Renaissance, Classical, and Modern periods. Primarily Foucault emphasizes that if one is to understand history, social structures, and the individuals who operate within those social parameters, it is necessary to focus not on timeless and unchanging essences, but upon processes of emergence, transformation, and erosion. The Classical period of the 1600s–1700s was the setting for the physical sciences, and in knowledge-style, this period was distinguished by the manner of thought previously mentioned: the Classical mind was order-focused, measurement-centered, abstracting, universalizing, and fundamentally impartial in observation. The beginning of the nineteenth century marked the outset of the Modern Age. This is an age characterized by a more deep sense of history and, thereby, of a deeper sensitivity to the crinkling features of human experience. Modern thinkers experienced the breakdown of the Classical quest for timeless universalities, and developed more provisional, conditional, and restrained outlooks that displayed a more pronounced awareness of the theoretician's own contingent existence and intrinsic finitude. "Foucault himself often embodied this awareness, as he reflected on the status of his own writings

[14] In the book *The Order of Things* Foucault uses the term episteme in a special connotation which means the historial, not temporal, a priori which grounds knowledge and discourses. Hence it represents the condition of their possibility within a particular epoch.

as twentieth-century historical artifactual constructions, knowing fully well how time would eventually wash them away."[15]

Foucault in his final book of the decade, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969), formulates the underlying investigative procedure of his earlier books in a linguistically focused manner. He speaks in a more explicit way about various "discourses" and "discourse formations" that are typical for different epochs, and refers to his search for the "historical a priori" of different time periods as an inquiry into the underlying practices that constitute the prevailing discourses. He began to realize more exactly how historical situations are thoroughly complicated: many tensions, alternative and interweaving strands of development, complementary themes, and variable rates of cultural change all figures into any concrete understanding of a historical subject matter, and these tend to foil the quest for global generalities. This conviction that historical studies require an extremely discriminating awareness – an awareness not unlike that of a connoisseur or wine-taster – at this point began to develop a force in Foucault's work, and it led him to complement the Kant- and Heidegger-inspired search for the "historical a priori" with a more self-conscious attention to nuance and detail characteristic of the aesthete – the kind of mentality that he found exemplified in the theorist of the "will to power," Friedrich Nietzsche. We can say differently if there are privileged figures in his work, who are critics of reason and Western thought, they will be Nietzsche [16] and Bataille[17].

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[15] Schroeder, 2005, p. 254.

[16] **Nietzsche** provided Foucault as well as all French poststructuralists the impetus and ideas to transcend Hegelian and Marxist philosophies. In addition to initiating a post-metaphysical, post-humanist mode of thought, Nietzsche taught Foucault that one could write a 'genealogical' history of unconventional topics such as reason, madness, and the subject which located their emergence within sites of domination. Nietzsche demonstrated that the will to truth and will to knowledge is in-dissociable from the will to power, and Foucault developed these claims in his critique of liberal humanism, the human sciences, and in his later work on ethics. While Foucault never wrote aphoristically in the style of Nietzsche, he did accept Nietzsche's claims that systematizing methods produce reductive

III. On Discourse: Non-Foucauldian and Foucauldian Approaches

Foucault had written about the epistemic context within which the knowledge of disciplined inquisition became intelligible and evidentiary. He mentioned the particular investigations were structured by which the concepts were comprehensively intelligible together. How the statements were organized thematically? Who was authorized to speak seriously? What questions and procedures were relevant to access the credibility of those statements which were taken seriously? This scenario situated field of knowledge, which Foucault called the "discursive formation"[18] in his book, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. Foucault recognizes that the positing of discursive formations and the rules of these formations does not make a single concrete statement and he does not even promise that discursive formations will take up the slack where false unities of discourse have been refuted. The project remains an as yet unaware and an unforeseeable conclusion. We have suspended received notions of grand historical continuity, and now we have even erased the more modest signposts of disciplinary divisions. It remains to be seen whether Foucault's method will reconstitute them.

- **Non-Foucauldian Conceptions of Discourse:**

  It appears that prior to our elucidation of Foucault's notion of discourse in the context of knowledge, a brief analysis of non-

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social and historical analyses, and that knowledge is perspectival in nature, requiring multiple viewpoints to interpret a heterogeneous reality.

[17] **Bataille** (1985, 1988, 1989) championed the realm of eroticism, literary criticism, heterogeneity, the ecstatic and explosive forces of religious fervour, sexuality, and intoxicated experience that subvert and transgress the instrumental rationality and normalcy of bourgeois culture. Bataille's fervent attack on the sovereign philosophical subject and his attitude to thetransgressiveexperiences influences Foucault and other postmodern theorists. Throughout his writings, Foucault frequently empathized with the mad, criminals, aesthetes, and marginalized types of people. This empathy is demonstrated in the conclusion to *Madness and Civilization* (1973a), in I. Pierre Rivière (1975b), and in the introduction to Herculine Barbin (1980c).

[18] The regularities that make a given discursive formation indefinable Foucault calls 'rules of information'. This is a term meant to encompass a broad range of principles of relation: rules of formation are themselves of many kinds.

Foucauldian conception of discourse will be appropriate. It is on the background of such alternative conceptions of discourse that we will attempt to place and examine the Foucauldian conception of discourse.

Foucault's approach to discourse is geared towards a counter-reading of historical and social condition; it offers possibilities for social critique and ways of renewing them. Such an approach can be called critical, contrary to the non-critical approaches stemming from linguistics, socio-linguistics, sociology and other traditional disciplines. These non-Foucauldian approaches can be separated into two groups: (1) the formal and (2) the empirical approach. The formal approach to discourse analysis considers discourse in terms of text. Its main precursors are the linguists Harris[19] (1952) and Mitchell[20] (1957). According to Harris, formalist discourse analysts work with variations of formal linguistic methods of analysis, while according to Mitchell, they are interested in the social functions of language and often use (so-called) 'naturally occurring' samples of linguistic usage as data. Formalist discourse analysis is very close to the disciplines known as socio-linguistics and the ethnography of communication. Sometimes the former approach is called "text linguistics" or "text grammars" as advocated by Russian Formalist school and French structuralism. Formal discourse analysis can be critical, as it is found, the systemic functionalist school of linguistics, associated with Halliday[21] (1973) and recently rethought by several analysts attempt to generate a new approach called "social semiotics" or "critical linguistics". Although this type of

[19] Haris (1909-1992) is an influential American linguist. He is best known for his work in structural linguistics and discourse analysis and for the discovery of transformational structure in language. His contributions include operator grammar, sublanguage grammar, the theory of linguistic information, principled account of the nature and origin of language.

[20] Mitchell (1919-2007) is commonly known in the area of Linguistics and Phonetics.

[21] M.A.K. Halliday (1925-2018) is an English linguist who developed the internationally influential systematic functional grammar.

discourse analysis does not always relate to French critical discourse theory (such as Foucault's) yet it offers a version of formal linguistics which reads "naturally occurring" texts as socially classed, gendered and historically located. Halliday's view has been used in relation to feminist theory and practice. For instance, feminist linguist Threadgold (1988) has challenged simplistic arguments against the gendering of pronouns. Threadgold has argued that discourse analysis should not examine how language in general is gendered but how gender-differential forms of access to particular registers and genres have become normal and dominant through complex historical processes. So we should be cautious before we outright reject all formalist versions of discourse analysis as non critical. Formal linguistic methods can be used for critical and political purpose. However the formalist approach is mechanistic, since it attempts to find some general underlying rules of linguistic or communicative function behind imagined or invented texts. In this way, the idea of discourse here becomes quite narrow and different from Foucault's. It is more of a formal linguistic system in its own right than a diversified social and epistemological phenomenon. One extreme version of formalism, known as 'speech act theory', assumes that behind forms of words which functions as speech acts, there exists a more general layer of pragmatic competence which has rules or conditions. The speech act theorist attempts to discover these rules and conditions. Actually performed utterances or "paroles"[22] are secondary while the primary focus is the discursive system underpinning them. Here discourse becomes effectively a kind of grammar.

- **Foucauldian Conception of Discourse:**

[22] Parole is permanent release of a prisoner who agrees to certain conditions before the completion of the maximum sentence period, this is originated by French parole which means voice or spoken words. The term become associated during the middle ages with the release of prisoners who gave their word.

As we will see, in *Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault specifically differentiates his conception of discourse from that of speech act theory and, indeed, from logical analyses which tend to consider language in terms of propositions. Since he is interested in the conditions of discourse, Foucault does not mean, by this term, a formal logical, linguistic, or even language-like system. If formalist approaches to discourse are mostly associated with the discipline of linguistics, 'empirical' approaches, by contrast, largely consist of sociological forms of analysis. In this tradition, 'discourse' is frequently taken to mean human conversation. Like certain kinds of formalism, some types of conversational discourse analysis offer formal descriptions of conversational 'texts'. Yet this is not its only—or its main—goal, for it is primarily concerned with the commonsense knowledge which ultimately informs conversational rules and procedures. In this respect, empirical approaches to discourse can be seen to share Foucault's concern with discourse in terms of knowledge. But, from the outset, it is equally clear that, by 'knowledge', these analysts mean something different from Foucault. In this tradition, 'knowledge' refers to technical knowledge or know-how. For Foucault, 'knowledge' is much more a matter of the social, historical and political conditions under which, for example, statements come to count as true or false.

Discourse is a group of statements which provide a language for talking about, and "representing" the very notion of discursive formation. For Foucault, discourses are made up of statements that set up relationships with other statements; they share a space and establish contexts; they may also disappear and be replaced by other statements. Statements are essentially rare because, while a discourse can potentially taking an infinite number of statements, usually only a limited number actually constitutes any discourse and these are referred to again and again. A discourse refers to the rules

> of formations of statements which are accepted as scientifically true. A discourse is a question of what governs statements, and the way in which they govern each other. Discourse is about production of knowledge through language, and through practices. The language in which we describe "facts" interferes in the process of describing what is "true" or "false". Power produces knowledge, that is, power is implicated in what is considered to be "true" or "false", hence power and knowledge imply one another. Next chapter will try to revisit the relationship among power and knowledge.

Discursive formations are defined as much by what lies outside them as what lies within. Let us take science as an example of a discursive formation; since the sixteenth century, science has moved into more and more areas of experience. Each of these domains can be identified as a science because they have certain common principles for evaluating truth and regulating practices within their fields. The discursive formation of science is also defined in relation to areas that it doesn't take in, those from which it distinguishes itself. These 'others' will vary according to shifts across time. For example in the middle age the 'other' was witchcraft or sorcery. In the era of enlightenment, the 'other' tended to be religious doctrine. And in the time of new-age mysticism is considered as 'other'. But it can be the case that an area which at one time lies outside science subsequently crosses the scientific threshold, and becomes incorporated into it. The increasing scientific legitimacy granted to areas such as naturopathy and herbal remedies is evident of this trend. Foucault describes this part of his work as archival and archaeological. Just as an archaeologist digs through various layers of soil and rock to uncover the various objects from different historical societies that have accumulated within a site, Foucault's archaeology involves working through historical archives of various societies to bring to light the discursive formations and events that

have created the fields of knowledge and games of truth by which that society has governed itself.

Though Foucault rejects the idea of the self-governing subject, pointing out that what come between ourselves and our experience is the ground upon which we can act, speak and make sense of things. For Foucault, one of the most significant forces shaping our experiences is language. Try coming up with a thought, or making sense of an experience, without using language to do so. We not only use language to explain our ideas and feelings to others, we use it to explain things to ourselves. Foucault is not so much interested in language systems as a whole as an individual acts of language or discourse. Discourses can be understood as language in action they are the windows, if we like, which allow us to make sense of, and 'see' things. These discursive windows or explanations shape our understanding of ourselves, and our capacity to distinguish the valuable from valueless, the true from the false, and the right from the wrong.

IV. Discourse and Knowledge:

If Foucault would permit the use of that suspect term of his analysis in *The Order of Things* (1973b) arises from a reading of a particular passage in Borges. Specifically, he claims it arises "out of the laughter that shattered ... all the familiar landmarks of my thought- our thought, the thought that bears the stamp of our age and our geography- breaking up all the ordered surfaces and all the planes with which we are accustomed to tame the wild profusion of existing things ..."[23] This passage provides a window into the insight guiding Foucault's early understanding of the constitution of knowledge.[24]

What Foucault wishes us to draw from this amusing taxonomy, of course, is a realization that its categories and implied definition, the 'knowledge'

[23] M. Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences,* London and New York, Routledge, 1973, p. xv.

[24] By 'early' here, I do not refer to Foucault's structuralism. While remnants of structuralism are apparent in his early works, in my mind the primary thrust of Foucault's argument is a semiological positivism.

which it proffers, have no worse claim to validity or truth than any more familiar and prosaic taxonomy of animals one might find in a sophomore's biology textbook. Indeed, all such orderings of things, granting a certain allegiance to what is called at one point an 'episteme', are precisely as fanciful or as valid as this excerpted from a certain Chinese encyclopedia. To restate what is obvious from even a casual reading of the early works of Foucault, there is not seen to be any sort of underlying meaning or truth within the existence of things, nor any genuine transcendental meaning or truth to be imposed upon the existence of things. Such knowledge is not linked, even incorrectly or incompletely, with any actual order of animals. In giving names and orders are utterly human in origin, but without even anthropological structures shaping the information, their 'truth' is assayed only relative to the truth claims of other orders and names within a larger, on-going pattern of such statements. Hence, what 'knowledge' such statements constitute has no ground in the animals themselves, but rests entirely within the relations between these words and categories inside a broader pattern of discourse. The Saussurean[25] ambiance of Foucault's thinking is unmistakable here. Knowledge, as the terminology suggests, is not so much a discovery, nor even an interpretation, as much as it is a product. It is a production by human statements, as Saussure's semiotics would require. Although the production of knowledge by statements does not result from any single intentional agent; it occurs only inside the validating, material framework of the larger pattern of discourse, which is itself historically more enduring and encompassing than any individual statements. Owing to this, the production of knowledge, furthermore, is not serendipitous or random rather it bears the larger purpose or design of the contemporary pattern of discourse.

[25] Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) was a Swiss linguist and semiotician or semiologist. His ideas laid a foundation for many significant developments in both linguistics and semiology in the 20th century. His is famous of his notable ideas like "structural linguistics", "langue and parole", "synchrony and diachrony" and so on.

On the other hand, less familiar but surely not unknown in present day political theory, this rejection of idealism in Foucault is coupled, here in *The Order of Things*, with an equally radical rejection of all other claims to critical, impartial or certain knowledge. Such claims, it would be understood, are only appeals to a transcendental of sorts. All are derived from a deep, modern and especially 'Enlightenment' desire for a knowledge which liberates the knower from the contingencies of the contemporary existence. In Foucault's own peculiar wording, such claims work only to conceal the perplexing:

> crisis that concerns that transcendental reflexion with which philosophy since Kant has identified itself; which concerns that theme of the origin, that promise of the return, by which we avoid the difference of our present; which concerns an anthropological thought that orders all these questions of man's being, and allows us to avoid an analysis of practice; which concerns all humanist ideologies; which, above all, concerns the status of the subject.[26]

Foucault targets not only idealism, but also transcendentalism in general, even genetic, dialectical and anthropological. His target is that ubiquitous contention of modern Western thought, that knowledge is the staging ground for providing information about responsible human practices and for liberating human subjectivity. In the enlightenment tradition such knowledge is accepted of the proper kind. In political theories many traditionally accepted views have been targeted and questioned. For example, the thrust of Marxist theory is largely the enhancement and the building of awareness of the special subjectivity of the repressed classes. Similarly we find the Freudian psychoanalytic theory endeavors to enhance responsible subjectivity in consciousness. Further Phenomenology turns to the “thing-in-itself” and Existentialism to objective existence in order to identify the more subjective aspects of human actions. Several notions

[26] M. Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and The Discourse on Language,* A. M. Sheridon Smith (trans.), New York, Pantheon Books, 1972, p. 204.

which have been traditionally accepted as elements of liberating theories and also supported in modern and contemporary philosophy are put to question by Foucault. The transcendental role for certain kinds of knowledge which are closely connected to enlightenment epistemology has been critically examined. The modern academic political theory following Kantian linkages Marxism critical theory of Frankfurt school took the early work of Foucault with a great deal of reservation. Perhaps that is why the implicit anti-epistemological challenge of Foucault's early argument has escaped extensive consideration in the hands of political theory. Philosophers and critics have focused on the early arguments of Foucault in the context of the relationship of power and knowledge. Foucault claimed that since the classical age of the French Enlightenment, the pattern of discourse and its constitution of knowledge reflect the common interest or desire of modernity for domination and control through systematic objectification of experience. According to Foucault power is perceived here as an external force which can be possessed and/or put to use. The further implication, in modernity the forces of power have biased knowledge by interloping in the constitution of knowledge within discourse. In other words modernity presents to us an epistemological anomaly where the relations of power constrain the acts and processes of knowing. Unlike critical theorists Foucault does contend that there is in the constitution of knowledge an implicit ideal of knowledge constitution without the presence of relations of power.

V. On Discourse: Habermas and Foucault

Habermas's and Foucault's differences regarding the rational subject shape their debate over democratic discourse. Foucault's ideas on discourse revolve around the relationship between truth and power. According to Foucault, the traditional philosophical dictum, “you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free,” is hopelessly naive. So too is the critique of ideology which, following this dictum, juxtaposes liberating truths to powerful illusions. Foucault argues that truth is neither outside of power

nor missing in power and hence cannot be juxtaposed to it. The production of truth (and truth is produced) is completely permeate with power. Foucault characterizes their interaction: "'Truth' is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it."[27]Foucault explores these power relations which create truth and the power effects truth creates. Foucault explores these power relations which create truth and the power effects truth creates. He analyzes discourses as manifestations of a power/knowledge regime or a regime of truth. In 'The Discourse on Language', Foucault identifies three types of procedures producing discourse. [28] First, rules of exclusion determine what discourse is acceptable. Among these rules are prohibitions, e.g., what we can say, when and where we can say it, and who can say what. Also included here is the division between reason and folly which Foucault understands as a division between common and idiosyncratic speech. Here, too, and to some extent encompassing prohibitions and divisions, the will to truth operates, excluding desire and power from discourse. Second, these external rules are complemented by internal ones, which include mechanisms for identifying truth, such as cultural narratives or author's intentions to which it must conform. They also include techniques or procedures for acquiring truth. The distinct disciplines which identify truth by the methods, rules, tools, etc. used to produce it belong here. Third, conditions of employment and appropriation constrain discourse. Regarding employment, Foucault argues that areas of discourse are not equally open and penetrable. Rituals, fellow ships, and doctrines select qualified speakers. Education determines who earns these qualifications and thereby distributes speakers among kinds of discourse. These three types of procedures respectively master the powers,

[27] M. Foucault, and Colin, Gordon, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, Colin Gordon (ed.), Colin, Gordon, Leo, Marshall, John, Mepham, Kate, Soper (trans.), New York, Pantheon Books, 1980, p. 133.

[28] Michel Foucault, 'The Discourse on Language', appendix to *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, A. M. Sheridan Smith (trans.), New York, Pantheon Books, 1972, pp. 215-239.

control the appearances, and establish the producers of discourse. They are the multiple constraints by which it produces truth. Although power affects how discourses produce truth, truth also has effects of power. Foucault argues that definite relations of knowledge ac company certain types of power. The disciplinary discourse characteristic of our society has this double epistemological and political effects. The first effect, the knowledge relation, also involves overlapping subjectification[29] and objectification. Two modes of producing truth accompany disciplinary power: scientific and confessional discourse. In another context, we have also already seen the sciences associated with discipline. They are the human sciences dedicated to knowing and developing the object Man. What remains, and what is most relevant here, is the subjective side of knowledge confession.

Whereas Foucault regards all speech as discourse and regards all discourses as implicated in power, Habermas defines discourse more restrictively. Discourse is speech freed from power.[30] This communication is rational because only "the peculiarly constraint-free force of the better argument" operates.[31] According to Habermas, ideal speech involves symmetrical relations in "the distribution of assertion and dispute, revelation and concealment, prescription and conformity among the partners of communication."[32] Habermas presents these symmetries as respective linguistic conceptions of truth, freedom, and justice. Unrestrained discussion in which all opinions can be criticized leads to unconstrained consensus, to his discursive definition of truth. Habermas claims that when these symmetries exist, communication is unconstrained by its own linguistic or pragmatic structure.[33]Anything which can be verbalized may

[29] In historical linguistics, subjectification (or subjectivization) is a language change process in which linguistic expression acquires meanings that convey the speaker's viewpoint.
[30] J. Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action* vol. 1, Thomas McCarthy (trans.), Cambridge, Polity Press, 1986, p. 42.
[31] Ibid., p. 26.
[32] J. Habermas, 'Towards a Theory of Communicative Competence', *Inquiry*, 13, 1-4, 1970, p. 371.
[33] Ibid., p. 372.

be said. This responds, in part, to Foucault's concern about rules of exclusion. Habermas seeks symmetry in dialogue because only unconstrained communication creates unconstrained consensus, his discursive definition of truth. The will to truth, to determine the truth by rational argument, motivates Habermasian discourse. But Foucault associates the will to truth, as well as the accompanying exclusion of desire and power from discourse, with our "power/knowledge" regime. In 'The Discourse on Language', Foucault ends his critique of constraints upon discourse by asking whether uninterrupted discourse is desirable. His answer is no.[34] Even Habermas's ideal speech situation, perhaps especially that situation, expresses power. The will to truth manifest in ideal speech is internal to discipline. Habermas characterizes Foucault's relativism: "Each counter-power moves within the horizon of power which it at tacks, and transforms itself as soon as it is victorious into a complex of power which provokes a new counter-power." [35] That is, Foucault's notion of power/knowledge regimes does not permit privileged counter powers. It undermines the validity not only of ruling discourses, but also of his counter-discourse. Yet Foucault needs to distinguish among discourses based upon their complicity in power. Otherwise he cannot answer Habermas's questions: "Why is struggle preferable to submission? Why ought domination to be resisted?" Habermas argues that "only with the introduction of normative notions could he [Foucault] begin to tell us what is wrong with the modern power/knowledge regime and why we ought to oppose it."[36] Foucault, however, does not introduce a normative foundation for his counter-discourse; he merely assumes one. Ironically, his normative assumptions include the traditional association between truth and freedom

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[34] Michel Foucault, 'The Discourse on Language', appendix to *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, A. M. Sheridan Smith (trans.), New York, Pantheon Books, 1972, p. 229.

[35] Jiirgen Habermas, 'The Genealogical Writing of History: On Some Aporias in Foucault's Theory of Power', *Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory*, 10, 1986, pp. 4-5.
Habermas develops this argument in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*, Frederick G. Lawrence (trans.), Cambridge, Polity Press, 1987, p. 238.

[36] Ibid., p. 7.

which he attacks. By unmasking truth as power, Foucault provides a new truth which frees us.[37] Foucault knows that he needs to distinguish among kinds of discourse. He calls for "a new politics of truth" for changes in the "political, economic, and institutional regime of the production of truth."[38]

Habermas's and Foucault's debate on discourse parallels that on subjectivity. Foucault needs to recognize that discourse enables; he requires criteria for distinguishing between power and validity-claims. Habermas provides such criteria with his ideal speech situation. But Habermas neglects how discourse can also constrain. He is insensitive to power, especially to the power of truth.

Foucault seems to challenge the traditional views of knowledge, truth and reason. In his doctrine of "power/knowledge" which he developed post 1970 writings. In this chapter we have discussed Foucault's notion of discourse and also briefly stated his explanatory theory of the cause of our discourses and their change. Foucault's notion of truth in not particularly explored here since our focus is "power/knowledge". His doctrine of power/knowledge does not directly address the philosophical theories of truth and knowledge. Nonetheless he is a critic of the traditional account of knowledge as justified true belief. He uses the term "power/knowledge" to signify that power is constituted through accepted forms of knowledge, truth and scientific understanding. For him truth is a thing of this world which is produces by virtue of multiple forms of constraints. Every society has its regime of truth that is different types of discourse which it accepts and which functions as true. Further there are mechanisms to distinguish true and false and also means by which they are sanctioned. In order to understand Foucault's view on knowledge it is important to understand his doctrine of "power/knowledge". With that intention we move to the next chapter.

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[37] Charles Taylor, 'Foucault on Freedom and Truth', *Political Theory,* 12, 2, 1984, pp. 152-183.

[38] Foucault, 1980, p. 133. (emphasis added).

“Power/knowledge”: A Foucauldian Invention

What is “Power/Knowledge”?

As we have seen in the previous chapters, according to Michel Foucault’s understanding, power is based on knowledge and power makes use of knowledge. At the same time power reproduces knowledge by shaping it in accordance with its anonymous intentions. Power (re-) creates its own fields of exercise through knowledge. Foucault incorporates this inevitable mutuality into his neologism “power/knowledge”, the most significant part that reconciles the two aspects of the integrated concepts together. Foucault wanted us to see both power and knowledge as de-centralized, relativistic, ubiquitous and dynamic systematic phenomena.

In this chapter, first, we would like to give a speculative yet succinct understanding about how Foucault analyzes the very notion of “power/knowledge” in his own works and secondly, we will consider some secondary texts where the concept of “power/knowledge” is discussed. Accordingly in the third section, we can gather some arguments given by Foucault, and philosophically analyze the arguments and some sayings in favor of the concept, “power/knowledge”.

Section- I

- Being a structuralist, Foucault searched a process of truth and studied the formation of language in his earlier work, *Madness and Civilization* (1961), the subject matter of which is the discourse constructed by the knowledgeable persons or experts on the subject. He found that the discourses are constructed by the knowledgeable people; he further contended in this book that counter-knowledge can be formed only by those who are equally experts or ‘higher’ experts. In this work he has tried to establish that it is the knowledge that helps people to govern power.

- Foucault's objective in *The Birth of the Clinic* (1963) was to find out the source of knowledge. He proved through his study that knowledge can be derived from the "gaze"[1] of the sick person and the examination of corpses. This book was read as a critique of modern clinical medicine and stands closer to a standard history of science, in the tradition of Canguilhem's[2] history of concepts. He offers here as well as in his *History of Madness* (1961), a global exploration of what knowledge meant and how this meaning changed in Western thought from the Renaissance to the present. At the heart of his account is the notion of representation. Here if we focus on his treatment of representation in philosophical thought, we find his direct engagement with traditional philosophical questions. Foucault argues that, from Descartes to Kant, representation was simply identified with thought: to think just was to employ ideas to represent the object of thought. But, he adds, we need to be clear about what it meant for an idea to represent an object. For Foucault this was not any sort of relation of resemblance: there were no features (properties) of the idea that they constituted the representation of the object. By contrast, during the Renaissance, knowledge was understood as a matter of resemblance between signs. Foucault maintained that the great "turn" in modern philosophy occurs when, through Kant's contribution it became possible to enquire whether ideas do in fact represent their objects and, if so, how. It is now possible to think that knowledge might be something other than or something more than mere representation. This does not imply that representation

[1] This is a term that Foucault introduces in his The Birth of the Clinic (1963). The French word 'le regard' poses difficulties for translations into English as a translator Alan Sheridan notes. It can mean glance, gaze, look which do not have the abstract connotations that the word has in French. Foucault uses the word to refer to the fact that it is not just the object of knowledge which is constructed but also the knower.

[2] Georges Canguilhem was a twentieth century French philosopher and physician whose areas of research include historical epistemology and philosophy of science.

had nothing to do with knowledge. Perhaps some knowledge still essentially involves ideas representing objects. But, Foucault insists, the thought that was only now possible was that representation itself could have an origin in something else.

- In *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969) Foucault discusses the concept of discourse. Foucault articulates four principles that distinguish the archaeology[3] of knowledge from the history of ideas. Many of us may confuse between archaeology of knowledge and history of ideas but archaeology of knowledge is not the history of ideas. Archaeology defines discourses in their specificity. Man was the primary object of knowledge, or in other words, all knowledge was for the welfare of man. Foucault argues that in our history, knowledge became a tool to subordinate the individual that is subject. Thus, subjectivities and knowledge are truly the major concerns of Foucault's early works. He confined his study to the description of knowledge and subject and not the power. From the idea of archaeology, he moved to 'genealogy'[4] which he conceived as a series of infinitely proliferating branches.

So, the question that readily comes to our mind is: what are the basic differences between these two early mentioned methods, Archaeology and Genealogy, and how Foucault reconciles these two methods in terms of "power/knowledge". In order to sort out some differences, first, we have to consider the relation among these two methods. Archaeology and Genealogy combine in the form of theory/practice where theory is immediately practical in character. As Foucault states "archaeology" would

[3] 'Archaeology' is the term used by Foucault to refer to the process of working through the historical archives of various societies to bring to like the discursive formations and events that have produced the fields of knowledge and discursive formations of different historical periods.

[4] Genealogy is a process of analyzing and uncovering the historical relationship between truth, knowledge and power. Foucault suggests following Nietzsche, that knowledge and truth are produced by struggles both between and within institutions, fields and disciplines and then presented as if the eternal and universal.

be the appropriate methodology of the analysis of local discursivities, while "genealogy" would be the tactics which is taken on the basis of the descriptions of these local discursivities and the subjected knowledge. Secondly, archaeology attempts to show that the subject is a fictitious construct, but genealogy seeks to foreground the material context of subject construction, to draw out the political consequences of 'subjectification', and to help from resistances to subjectifying practices. Thirdly, where archaeology criticized the human sciences as being grounded in humanist assumptions, genealogy links these theories to the operations of power and tries to put historical knowledge to work in local struggles. Fourthly, archaeology theorized the birth of the human sciences in the context of the modern episteme and the figure 'Man', whereas genealogy highlights the power and effects relations they produced.[5] Keeping these differences in mind, we can say that archaeology is not sufficient for Foucault to grasp the notion "power/knowledge". Only when we unite archaeology and genealogy, we shall be able to justify the notion of "power/knowledge" properly.

- In *Discipline and Punish* (1975) Foucault discusses the integral relationships between power and knowledge. He develops for the first time the idea of "power/knowledge" in a precise manner and he links this new form of supervisory social control to the emergence of capitalism. This is a book about the emergence of the prison system. According to him, the prison is an institution and its objective or purpose is to produce criminality and tendency to reoffend. The prison system encompasses the movement that calls for reform of the prison as an integral and permanent part. Jeremy

[5] Foucault's remarks on the distinction between archaeology and genealogy are generally rather vague and confusing. The tools Foucault uses to practice both methods are to all intents and purposes the same. But, if archeology addresses a level at which differences and similarities are determined, a level where things are simply organized to produce manageable forms of knowledge, the stakes are much higher for genealogy. Genealogy deals with precisely the same substrata of knowledge and culture, but for Foucault as a level where the grounds of the true and false come to be distinguished via mechanisms of power.

Bentham's[6] "panopticon"[7], a design for a prison, exercised an influence on nineteenth century strict architecture. Institutional architecture was more generally up to the level of city planning. The general idea of this book is to examine the mechanism of "discipline" in the strict sense, a specific historical form of power that was taken up by the state with professional soldiering in the 17th century, and spread widely across society, first via the panoptic prison, then via the division of labor in the factory and universal education. The purpose of discipline is to produce "docile bodies," the individual movements of which can be controlled, and which in its turn involves the psychological monitoring, surveillance and control of individuals. According to Foucault, imprisonment is more than a legal deprivation of freedom. It is not just a punishment, but a process of converting the imprisoned individuals.

Discipline and Punish is a work where Foucault links knowledge with power. The emergence of penal system or imprisonment owes to the notion of controlling the people by wielding power. It is the wielding of power which brings about discipline in the society. The society thus becomes a disciplined society. Foucault further asserts that it is not always negative and it is not merely destructive; rather it also has positive consequence. He says that discipline produces not only the criminal as a new type of person, but also the obedient soldier, the useful worker, and educated and trained child. Regardless of its institutional ties, the goal of this disciplinary technology is to mould docile bodies, competent individuals who can be used, changed, and developed.

[6]Jeremy Bentham was an eighteenth century English philosopher and social reformer. He was famous for his notable idea of utilitarianism, "greatest happiness principle".

[7]The "panopticon", was a design for a prison produced by Jeremy Bentham in late eighteenth century which grouped cells around a central viewing tower. Although the prison was never actually built the idea was used as a model for numerous institutions including some prisons. Foucault uses these as a metaphor the operation of power and surveillance in contemporary societies.

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault has introduced the theory of power in accordance with the *Archaeology of Knowledge*. Prison and punishment are the manifestations of knowledge and power. Discipline means wielding power. Knowledge gives rise to technologies that exercise power. No knowledge or technology has the potential or effectiveness to implement discipline. The examination system, for example, of students in schools, and of patients in hospitals, is a procedure of control that combines hierarchical observation[8] with normalizing judgment[9]. It is a prime example of what Foucault calls "power/knowledge", since it combines into a unified whole "the deployment of force and the establishment of truth."[10] Foucault portrays the relation of power and knowledge as far closer than in the familiar Baconian engineering model, where "knowledge is power", means that knowledge is an instrument or tool of power, although the two exist quite separately. Hence in order to establish this notion "power/knowledge" we already have entered into the discussion of the notions of power and knowledge independently in previous two chapters.

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[8] In hierarchical observation, the exercise of discipline assumes a mechanism that coerces by means of observation. Duringthe classical age "observatories" were constructed. They were part of a new physics and cosmology; new ideas of light and the visible secretly prepared a new knowledge of man. Observatories were arranged like a military camp, a model also found in schools, hospitals and prisons. Disciplinary institutions created a mechanism of control. The perfect disciplinary mechanism would make it possible to see everything constantly. The problem was breaking surveillance down into parts. In factory, surveillance becomes part of the forces of production as well as the disciplinary process; the same thing occurred in schools. Discipline operates by a calculated gaze, not by force.

[9] Normalizing Judgements first, at the heart of all disciplinary mechanisms, a small penal system, with a micro penality of time, behavior and speech, existed. Slight departures from correct behavior were punished. Second, discipline's method of punishment is like that of the court, but non-observance is also important. Whatever does not meet the rule departs from it. Third, disciplinary punishment has to be corrective, it favors punishment that is exercise. Fourth, punishment is an element of a double system of gratification-punishment, which defines behavior on the basis of good evil. Fifth, the distribution according to acts and grades has a double role. It creates gaps and arranges qualities into hierarchies, but also punishes and rewards. Discipline rewards and punishes by awarding ranks.

[10] M. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction*, Robert Hurley (trans.) Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1978, p. 184.

- *The History of Sexuality: The Will to Knowledge* (1976) is an extraordinarily influential work of Foucault. In his view one problem lies in the fact that we have a negative conception of power, which leads us only to regard power as something that prohibits. Foucault argues that power is in fact more indeterminate and autonomous than this, and essentially relational. Power thus has a relative autonomy regarding of people: power has its own strategic logics, emerging from the actions of people within a network of power relations. This leads Foucault to an inspection of the specific historical dynamics of power. He introduces the concept of "biopower," which combines disciplinary power as discussed in *Discipline and Punish*. Now one question would arise, as what will be the nature of "boipower". Foucault argues that "biopower" is a technology which appeared in the late eighteenth century for controlling populations. This notion not only incorporates certain aspects of disciplinary power which is about training the action of bodies but it is also about managing the births, deaths, reproduction and illness of a population.

Section-II

- In the book *Cambridge Companion to Foucault*, we have found three sections regarding "power/knowledge";

(i) A brief recapitulation of Foucault's account of the interconnected exposure of the new form of power and knowledge in the 18^{th} and 19^{th} centuries.

(ii) The reflections upon the concept of "power" and "knowledge" with a critical discourse of political and epistemic sovereignty.

(iii) In the third phase of this chapter a possible worry is mentioned. If one ignores Foucauldian understanding of "power" and "knowledge" as multidimensional notions then this worry will

occur. He clearly draws a dynamics of power as well as of knowledge.

Foucault wrote about the epistemic context within which the knowledge of disciplined investigation became intelligible and authoritative. He mentioned that the particular investigations were structured owing to which the concepts were intelligible together. He coined a bunch of questions like how the statements were organized thematically, who was authorized to speak seriously, what questions and methods were relevant to access the credibility of those statements, which of them were taken seriously, and so on. This scenario situated the field of knowledge, which Foucault called the "discursive formation"[11] in his book, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*.

The point to be noted here is: Foucault talked about the "discursive formation" and "discursive practice" simultaneously, so the questions naturally occur as whether there is any difference between the two, and if yes then what is it. We have found that Foucault maintains a clear distinction between "discursive formation" and "discursive practice". As we have mentioned earlier the "discursive formation" is roughly equivalent to a scientific discipline while "discursive practice" refers to a historically and culturally specific set of rules for organizing and producing different forms of knowledge. It is not a matter of external determinations as being imposed on people's thought; rather it is a matter which, somewhat like the grammar of a language, allows us to make certain statements.

Foucault often described the correlative constitution of two levels of knowledge through the politico epistemic practices. We might sense a tinge of 'nominalism' in Foucault's studies of "power/knowledge", since he took the politico epistemic practices

[11] The discursive formation is roughly equivalent to a scientific discipline.

to constitute new object domains for knowledge such as delinquency, hyperactivity, homosexuality so on. Ultimately these practices will produce new kinds of human subjects and new forms of knowledge along with new dimensions of power.

Secondly, Foucault did not often explicitly address the relation between his discussions of "power/knowledge" and that of the traditional ways of conceptualizing knowledge. He had more to say about how his understanding of power differs from its treatment in mainstream political theories. According to him, mainstream political approaches include sovereign power and its legitimacy. Foucault repeatedly situated his reflections as an attempt to dissociate the orientation of political thought from the questions of sovereign power and its legitimacy. Hobbes's *Leviathan*, and the social contract tradition more generally, had imposed the scope and the legitimacy of the power of the sovereign as the original and basic questions of politics. But Foucault argued that in European monarchy there are some conditions engaged to both the underlined conceptions of sovereign power and the questions of law and right have a historical location. The conception of sovereignty that emerges from this historical moment has four crucial approaches for Foucault. **First**, sovereignty is a viewpoint in which the particular conflicts that resolves their competing claims into a coherent system. **Second**, the dividing question in terms of which these claims are dismissed is that of legitimacy. The **third** point concerns the specific conception of power entailed by this understanding of sovereignty as the embodiment of law or legitimacy. **Fourth**, there are no limits to the scope of sovereign power. So, in a sense we cannot distinguish between sovereign power and juridical power. Thus, Foucault also speaks interchangeably of "sovereign power" and "juridical power".

Foucault claimed that in response to the consolidation of the European monarchies this conception of sovereignty and of sovereign power arose. Hence it would be a blunder to equate sovereignty in his sense with the state. We now have two reasons in support of our said thought. First, power is conceived and exercised in terms of sovereignty in other social locations, wherever power is deployed to restrain or punish what escapes the bounds of a unified scheme of what is right. Second, although sovereignty was conceived as a viewpoint of judgment above all particular conflicts, no actual sovereign could realize this conception in practice. Thus, political theory increasingly deployed this conception of the sovereign's position against its nominal inhabitant. This detachment of the principle of sovereignty from its embodiment in any actual sovereign is pivotal to understand Foucault's position. Sovereignty in this sense has been removed from any political location, and is instead a theoretical construction with respect to which political practice is to be evaluated. Thus, Foucault framed his investigation as an alternative to the preoccupation of political thought with the question of 'sovereignty' and 'legitimacy'. Thirdly, Foucault's more general understanding of power as dynamic begins with his rejection of any reification of power. He insists that "power is not something that is acquired, seized, or shared, something that one holds on to or allows to slip away"[12] or that "power is employed and exercised through a net-like organization."[13] In this context, we can understand Foucault's assertion that "power is everywhere not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from

[12] M. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*: *Volume I*, Robert Hurley (trans.), New York, Pantheon Books, 1998, p. 94.

[13] M. Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, Colin Gordon (ed.), Colin, Gordon, Leo, Marshall, John, Mepham, Kate, Soper (trans.), New York, Pantheon Books, 1980 p. 98.

everywhere."[14] Power is neither possessed by a dominant agent, nor located in that agent's relations to those who are dominated, but is instead distributed throughout several complex social networks. Power can thus never be simply present, as one action forcibly constraining or modifying another. Its constitution as a power relation depends upon its reenactment or reproduction over time as a sustained power relationship. Power is not something present at specific locations within those networks, but is instead always at issue in ongoing attempts to (re)produce effective social alignments, and conversely to avoid or erode their effects, often by producing various counter alignments. But what could it mean to conceive of a similar dynamics of knowledge? Foucault had taken a first step toward such a multidimensional conception of knowledge even before *Discipline and Punish*, when he clearly draws a distinction between the formation of a discursive field of knowledge (savoir) and the specific statements held true at specific points within that field (connaissances). These both words (savoir and connaissances) refer or translate knowledge in English. Knowledge as savoir is dispersed across the entire field rather than located in particular statements or groups of statements. Foucault spoke in this way to indicate that the senses of "seriousness" and possible truths of any particular connaissances were determined by their place within a larger field.

What we observe from the above investigation is that knowledge is established not only in relation to a field of statements, but also to objects, instruments, practices, research programs, skills, social networks, and institutions. Some elements of such an epistemic field reinforce and strengthen one another and are taken up, extended, and reproduced in other contexts; others remain isolated from, or

[14] Foucault, 1998, p. 93.

conflict with, these emergent "strategies" and eventually become forgotten curiosities.

Now one question which comes to my mind is that what kind of relation between the strategical alignments that constitute knowledge and those that form a configuration of power is Foucault narrating? He noted that, "Relations of power are not in a position of exteriority with respect to other types of relationships (economic processes, knowledge relationships, sexual relations), but are immanent in the latter; they are the immediate effects of the divisions, inequalities, and is equilibriums which occur in the latter, and conversely they are the internal conditions of these differentiations."[15]

It occurs that Foucault is not equating knowledge and power, but he is recognizing that the strategic alignments that constitute each contain many of the same elements and relations. He repeatedly insisted that his arguments were of quite restricted generality, both historically and epistemologically. He wrote immensely about the interconnected discourses of psychiatry, criminology, pedagogy, and clinical medicine, but was disinclined to extend his arguments beyond what he once called these dubious disciplines. His more general remarks about power and knowledge are more difficult to constrain in this fashion. We have seen that the natural sciences offer important analogues to detailed aspects of Foucault's historical studies of power and knowledge. Irrespective of whether or not these analogies can be sustained, Foucault's insistence that power and knowledge be understood as multidimensional relationships rather than things possessed must have more general significance. There are undoubtedly significant structural differences in the ways that alignments of power and of knowledge are organized and deployed in different fields and historical periods.

[15] Ibid., p. 94.

Nor would one expect to always find the same patterns of interaction between knowledge and other kinds of relationship among us and the world. But if we are right in attributing to Foucault an account of the dynamics of knowledge, this should have important consequences still to be worked out for epistemology and the philosophy of science.[16]

- In an anthology *The Final Foucault*, there is an article, 'Foucault Philosophy' written by Garth Gillan where interestingly Gillan has shown some significance of the concept "power/knowledge". Foucault's writings institutionalize a certain form of violence that belongs to the texts themselves and is part of their self-consciousness. Discontinuity in the concept of method is one of the marks of such violence. We don't find any addition or gradual accumulation of new data and perspectives do Foucault's works move beyond their predecessors by questioning their legitimacy. Here we might identify a postmodern flavor of his philosophy, as for postmodernism there will be no system building phenomenon. Though Foucault stated that he was not doing postmodernism at all but sometimes his remarks are very close to the claim of postmodernism. Actually Foucault did not comment on the term "postmodernity" beyond saying how vague and imprecise it was, making a subtly ironic reference to an enigmatic and troubling "postmodernity". He contended that he prefers to discuss how "modernity" has been historically defined.

  It is found that in analyzing the concept "power/knowledge" Foucault does not uses the logic as ideal, thus "logic is not the model for Foucault but the discourse is."[17] In logical theory we

[16] G. Gutting (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Foucault (Second Edition)*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 120

[17] Gillan, G. J. 'Foucault's Philosophy', James Bernauer and David Rasmussen (eds.), *The Final Foucault*, Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1994, p. 35.

assume a hierarchy of concepts through the relations of subordination and dependence. Therefore as a result some universal concepts have been produced through logic. Whereas in Discourse we can see a heterogeneous practice is involved. Discourse is the domain of the irreducibility of the distance between questions and answers. Thus Foucault's Discourse signifies something at the point where limits are crossed.

- In the same anthology, there is an article, 'Michael Foucault's Ecstatic Thinking' written by James W. Bernauer, where the writer makes it clear that Foucault's history of knowledge-power relations implicitly struggled against the reduction of reason to nature. "Reason ceased to be for man an ethic and became a nature".[18] Here we can see Foucault's Christian experiences of Power and Knowledge. Christian experiences emphasizes the development of new form of individualizing power, that of the pastorate, which has its roots in the Hebraic image of God and his deputed king as shepherds. This power is productive, not repressive. Exercising authority over a flock of dispersed individuals rather than a land, the shepherd has the duty to guide his charges to salvation by means of a continuous watch over them and a permanent concern with their well-being as individuals. Christianity intensifies this concern by having the pastors assume a responsibility for all the good and evil done by those for whom they are accountable and whose actions reflect upon their quality as shepherds. What is paramount in the exercise of this pastoral power is a virtue of obedience in the subject, a virtue which becomes an end in itself. The obedience

[18] Foucault, Michel. *Mental Illness and Psychology*, Alan Sheridan (trans.), New York, Harper Colophon, 1976, p. 87.

which is intrinsic to the exercise and responsibilities of pastoral power involves specific forms of knowledge and of subjectivity[19].

In order to fulfill the responsibility of directing souls to their salvation, the pastor must understand the truth, not just the general truths of faith but the specific truths of each person's soul. For Foucault, Christianity is unique in the major truth obligations which are imposed upon its followers. In addition to accepting moral and dogmatic truths, they must also become excavators of their own personal truth. Perhaps the most dramatic illustration of this obligation to discover and manifest one's truth took place in those liturgical ceremonies in which the early Christians would avow their state as sinners and then take on the status of public penitents. The Christian campaign for self-knowledge was not directly developed in the interest of controlling sexual conduct but rather for the sake of a deepened awareness of one's interior life.

So far as Foucault is concerned, the state is not a super-human agent, having wills and intentions analogue to those of people. This doesn't mean we should give up the notion of state, but we should go beyond it when analyzing power relations: as he puts it "the State, for all the omnipotence of its apparatuses, is far from being able to occupy the whole field of actual power relations."[20] Relationships between parents and children, between lovers, employers and employees – all are power relations. In every human interaction, power is subject to negotiation, each individual having his place in the hierarchy, no matter how flexible it would be. In conclusion, Foucault analyses the relationships between

[19] The subject is an entity which is self-aware and capable of choosing how to act. Foucault was consistently opposed to nineteenth century and phenomenological notions of universal and timeless subject which was at the source of how one made sense of the world, and which was the foundation of all thought and action.

[20] M. Foucault, 'Truth and power', in Colin, Gordon (ed.), *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, Colin, Gordon, Leo, Marshall, John, Mepham, Kate, Soper (trans.), New York, Pantheon Books, 1980, pp. 107–133.

individuals and society without assuming that the individual is powerless compared to institutions, groups or the state. He doesn't minimize the restrictions imposed to individuals, but thinks that power is not concentrated, but diffuse throughout the whole society. This allows us to see it at work in each human interaction and thus to see how resistance always shows up. Power is seen as a more volatile, unstable element, which can be always contested, so power relations must be permanently renewed and reaffirmed.

- In the book *Michel Foucault***,** writer Sara Mills analyzes that Foucault is very aware of how much easier it would be to approach the history of knowledge and ideas by tracing the ideas of 'great thinkers' of western culture but instead he has decided to determine, in its diverse dimensions, what the mode of existence must have been in Europe since the 17th century in order that the knowledge which is ours today could come to exist, more particularly that knowledge which has taken as its domain this curious object which is man. It appears that he would like to focus on the mechanism by which knowledge comes into being and is produced. This mechanism also includes the human sciences in which Foucault situates his work.
- In the interview titled as 'Prison Talk' Foucault mentioned "it is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power."[21] This is a significant theoretical advance in this connotation of knowledge, as it strengthens the way that knowledge is not unhindered, rather an integral part of struggles over power. Further, in producing knowledge one is also making a demand for power. For Foucault, to exercise this newly formed immixture "power/knowledge" emphasizes the way that these two concepts, power and knowledge, depend on one another. Thus, for Foucault, if there is no

[21] S. Mill, *Michel Foucault*, London and New York, Routledge, 2007, p. 69.

equilibrium of power relations between groups of people or between people among genus or institutions, there will be a production of knowledge. Because of the institutionalized imbalance in power relations in between men and women in Western countries, Foucault would say, more informations will be produced about women. As a result there were so many books found in libraries about women but few about men, and similarly, many about the working classes but few about the middle classes.

Foucault characterized "power/knowledge" as an abstract force which determines what will be known, rather than individual thinkers develop the ideas and knowledge. In Foucault's vision, it is "power/knowledge" which produces facts and individual scholars are simply the vehicles or the sites where this knowledge is produced.[22] It is to be noted that if we allow ourselves to think in this way, then we may be able to analyze the extent off the role of individuals and impersonal abstract forces in the production of knowledge.

Foucault asserts that a set of procedures which produce knowledge and keep knowledge in circulation can be termed as an "epistemic".[23] In every historical period there are certain set of rules and conceptual tools for thinking about what counts as factual changes. An example of such a conceptual tool that Foucault had in mind is a "will to know", which characterizes the episteme thereby developing a set of procedures for categorizing the objects. This "will to know" or "will to truth" is neither universal nor immutable. In other words, for Foucault's project there is no 'the truth'. We can

[22] Ibid., p.70.

[23] This term which Foucault introduces in his book, *The Order of Things*, refers to the orderly 'unconscious' structures underlying the production of scientific knowledge in a particular time and place. It is the epistemological field which forms the conditions of possibility in a given time and place.

get the similar line of thought in the work of Thomas Nagel[24] where he proposes in his book *The View from Nowhere* that our knowledge is situated in our practices. This claim has at least two implications:

(i) Our knowledge changes as our practices change. In different periods our knowing is different. This does not mean that nothing we know is ever true.

(ii) Our knowing is not only inseparable from our practices generally; it is inseparable from the norms which regulate those practices.

From the first implication it is implied that, Foucault's view is also the same as of Nagel. If both, Nagel's and Foucault's views are right then one cannot claim that there is nothing we ever know is true. Second implication becomes significant in the context of Foucault's genealogical works, where the theme of power emerges as a central concern of his thought. If knowledge occurs within our practices, and power arises within those same practices, then there must be an intimate connection between knowledge and power.

- In an interview entitled 'Truth and Power', he examines the way that truth, like knowledge, is not an abstract entity as many within the western philosophical tradition have assumed. He contrasted the conventional view of truth which is conceived as a kind of richness, fecundity, a gentle and insidiously universal force with "the will to truth" whose function is to identify what will be considered to be true and what will be considered to be false.[25]

  Foucault is not concerned to set up the notion of truth in opposition to a Marxist notion of ideology of false ideas, but to analyze the

[24] ThomasNagel is an American philosopher whose area of interests, philosophy of mind, political philosophy and ethics. His region is western philosophy but the school is analytic philosophy.
[25] Mill, 2007, p.74.

procedures which are used to maintain these distinctions.[26] This is one of the difficulties which we find in his work, since for postcolonial theorists it seems indispensable to see the representations by the colonial powers of colonized countries as false. It is clear that in Foucault's perception truth, power and knowledge are intricately connected and what we need to analyze now is the working of power in the production of knowledge.

- In another book called, *The Philosophy of Foucault* by Todd May, the term Genealogy is one that Foucault borrows from Nietzsche. Nietzsche uses this term to describe the emergence of what he thinks of as force relations in regard to particular institutions or practices. For Nietzsche there are two types of forces, (a) active force and (b) reactive force. Active forces seek to express themselves whether by artistic or athletic or other means whereas reactive forces do not seek to express themselves. Reactive forces' expression is highly negative as they seek to undermine the expression of active forces. Foucault notes that there are twofold task in the genealogy of Nietzsche; (a) descent approaches seek the separate, dispersed events that come together in a contingent way to make a particular practice and (b) emergence approaches describes the hazardous play of domination that forms the history of a given practice or group practices. Foucault's genealogies do not found themselves at a particular privileged starting point, there is no creation. His genealogy traces the evolution of practices and the product matter of Foucauldian genealogy is not 'I' but 'we'.

Section-III

Foucault's intention was that the study of human beings, the goals of power and the goals of knowledge cannot be separated: in knowing we control and in controlling we know. "Power/Knowledge" recombines the analysis of

[26] Ibid., p.75.

the epistemic with analysis of the political. Knowledge for Foucault is unfathomable apart from power.

Discourse introduces the concept of “power/knowledge” precisely as a replacement for the Marxist notion of ideology. Foucault’s most interesting contributions was to challenge a particular notion of power, power-as-sovereignty, and to juxtapose against it a vision of surveillance and of discipline. At the heart of this project was a belief that both our analyses of the operation of political power and our strategies for its restraint or limitation were inaccurate and misguided. For Foucault, there is no pure knowledge apart from power; also knowledge has real and irreducible importance for power.

Foucault described the constant exercise of power involved greater knowledge of detail hugely. It is in this regard primarily that Foucault focuses on the term "power/knowledge”. By the term “power/knowledge”, he described knowledge as being a coalescence of power relations and information seeking. Thus according to Foucault apparently knowledge is taken to be a form of power. But after reading many of Foucault’s monumental works simultaneously it is found that mechanisms of power produce different types of knowledge which collate information on people’s activities and existence. The hugely gathered knowledge further reinforces the exercise of power. Hence Foucault will have to reject the idea that he makes the claim knowledge is power and says that he is interested in studying the complex relations between power and knowledge without saying they are the same thing.

Archaeology was an essential method for Foucault because it supported a historiography that did not rest on the primacy of the consciousness of individual subjects. But mere archaeological analysis could say nothing about the causes of the transition from one way of thinking to another and so had to ignore perhaps the most forceful case for the contingency of

entrenched contemporary positions. Genealogy, the new method first deployed in *Discipline and Punish*, was intended to remedy this deficiency.

Discipline and Punish (1979), the bellwether of Foucault's new sensitivity in this regard, is illustrative of the path which led Foucault to this important shift in emphasis. Investigating the emergence of the modern science of penology (the study of the punishment of crime and of prison management), as he had previously the medical, mental and general human sciences, Foucault encounters aspects of the mundane practices of penology which compel us to rethink his earlier understanding of power and knowledge. The minutiae of penology, the placement of windows, and the manner of the service of meals manifest a remarkable permeation of such 'knowledge' by the relations of power. Foucault was led to conclude that he has the grounds to suggest a somewhat different linkage between the constitution of knowledge and the relations of power. The grounds for this new conception are intriguing. The very pervasiveness of the fingerprints of the relations of power in knowledge suggests an ontological place for human power relations in the process of the constitution of knowledge. That is, the relationship between power and knowledge would not be the coincident arrangement of the contemporary era as Foucault's earlier perspective implied. Rather, at some basic level, the relationship is more enduring than any particular historical arrangement between knowledge and power. The ubiquitous trace of power relations in knowledge is seen not as circumstantial, but as ontological. To be sure, he readily admits that there remains the obvious congruence of contemporary knowledge with the ends of contemporary power relations, a congruence that exhibits the earmarks of the bourgeois-Enlightenment effort to impose the norm of its own version of rationality on human practices. Foucault makes this precise point in *Discipline and Punish* by contrasting the punishment during

ancient-regime[27]of the body with modernity disciplining the soul. Yet, in this work, Foucault uses this revelation of the contemporary arrangement of power and knowledge, not to suggest that knowledge has been conquered by the powers that be, but to illustrate a basic relationship of power and knowledge.

The relationship of power and knowledge pushes Foucault to reconsider both the character of the patterns of discourse wherein knowledge is constituted and also examine the place of power relations in this schema. If all knowing bears the imprint of the relations of power, then the ongoing pattern of discourse, that which was previously called the 'episteme', can never fairly be construed as neutral to or unbiased by the relations of power. The episteme cannot be depicted as having been captured in some fashion by the bourgeois, the owners of the means of production, or whomever, and then put into their service. Instead, in some manner, this ongoing pattern of discourse must be intimately joined with the relations of power at its heart. The mere concern with whom discourse serves as if power were a separate reality that compelled discourse to its purposes, is now considered as mistaken. Power relations and discourse are understood as fundamentally inseparable.

Another important significance of "Power/knowledge" is that it includes three inter-related steps. These are;

1. The interpreter has to take a pragmatic stance of some kind, on the basis of some shared social emotion or feeling, about the direction in which things are transpiring. For example we can say, in any given society at any given time there will be various groups possessing different shared feelings and lived experiences about a given state of affairs. Even were a general consensus about the social situation to come about in a particular place at a particular

[27] The political and social system of France before the revolution of 1789, basically it is nothing but a system which no longer prevailing.

time, it would only prove that a certain orthodoxy has taken over in this society, and not that the situation has arrived at a status of a single objective truth. Hence the interpreter never represents a pure truth or an inclusive social feeling, but only he can interpret the view of a certain social group, and he has to be critical towards this relativity and also accept its limitations.

2. The interpreter has to supply a disciplined diagnosis of what has happened and what is happening in the social body that explains the shared feeling. At this stage, the work involves a gray and meticulous search in archives and laboratories in order to establish what has been said in the past and in the present by whom and to whom and with what results. In the framework of the diagnosis, the social critic has to investigate the context as an inseparable part of his field of research. This contextual research is different from the research that is common in the social sciences, which behaves like an entity with internal rules of its own, ignoring the broader social context within which it functions, and relating to important variables as though they were self-evident.
3. To complete the task, the interpreter has to give the reader an explanation as to why the practices he has described create the common good or evil that was the reason for the interpretative research.

Foucault claimed that there is no such thing as the objectivity of the scientist, and no validity in the privileged intellectual pose of standing outside the social order like a prophet. Since knowledge is one of the things that define power in the modern world, the researcher is not powerless and is not outside power, he is part of the power relations whether he wants to be or not.

The stories Foucault told about the emergence of these new forms of knowledge and power have an ironic side. They are intended as

counterpoints to the familiar stories of the enlightened humanization of punishment and the liberation from sexual repression. Foucault's irony works by portraying the very practices of humane penal reform and sexual liberation as instead further enmeshing us in a carceral society and an enforced regimen of truth. Yet for many readers his irony is troubling.[28] The tone of Foucault's drawing suggests that these new forms of "power/knowledge" ought to be resisted. Yet he resolutely rejects the idea that there is any ground or standpoint from which such a call to resistance could be legitimated. The connection he proposes between power and knowledge is not just a particular institutional use of knowledge as a means to domination. Foucault objects to the very idea of any knowledge or truth outside the networks of power relations. The extent of his objection also encompasses the possibility of a pivotal model of knowledge that would speak the truth to power, exposing domination for what it is, and thereby authorizing or encouraging effectual resistance to it. To see how Foucault's discussion of "power/knowledge" took him in this direction, and what its outcomes are for the political and epistemic positioning of his own work, we need to attend to his discussion of the problem of sovereignty. This in turn will allow us to assess the implications of his demand on a situated dynamics of power and of knowledge.

The character of power is also reevaluated by Foucault while keeping intact his revised conception of the cohesion of power and discourse. Following from the priority of the relationship of power with discourse, the relations of power are not simply an unlovely reality from which, with the appropriate knowledge, one might somehow escape. Knowledge, appropriate or otherwise, is ineluctably derivative of the power/discourse relationship. As such, it would be mistaken to interpret the exercise of power only in terms of a repression from which an escape to liberation would be either necessary or possible. The omnipresent imprint of power

[28] David Couzens Hoy (ed.), *Foucault: A Critical Reader*, Oxford UK & Cambridge USA, Blackwell, 1986, pp. 69-102.

relations on the constitution of knowledge and the priority of power relations are corresponding to subjectivity. This leads Foucault to portray power as necessary, positive and productive.

Nevertheless, Foucault's most radical period was during the early 1970s, when he was first formulating his theory of "power/knowledge". Contrary to the mistaken beliefs of many critics and possible supporters, this theory was never (even in its most radical phase) has a simplistic claim that people in power unilaterally declare what is to be considered true. Nor even that power and knowledge were thought to be in a figurative relation to each other. There is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations. Especially the exercise of power depends on a domain of knowledge for it to operate on. Conversely, one cannot conceive of such activities as constituting a single domain unless one can discover or otherwise establish lines of relation drawing them together. But, of course, once this has been accomplished, they are by that very act left open to being dealt with as superficially different manifestations of a single entity.

Foucault is not identifying knowledge and power, but he is recognizing that the strategic alignments that constitute each hold similar elements and relations. Although, their alignment as relationships of power is part of the framework of an epistemic field, and vice versa. How knowledge and power come together is historically specific and may vary significantly in different domains. Foucault proposed these remarks about knowledge and power as an interpretation of his philosophical and social studies. They were put forward to make sense of how the observation, documentation, and classification of individuals and populations contributed to newly emerging strategies of domination, which themselves were part of the complex social field within which those techniques and their applications came to constitute knowledge. We can now approach the crucial question.

Even supposing we grant everything about Foucault's insistence upon the interrelated multidimensionality of knowledge and power, how would that respond to Taylor's[29] or Rorty's[30] concerns about the epistemic coherence and political significance of Foucault's work? Their worry was that Foucault could not coherently make truth claims, criticize power, or offer hope for a better world. It might be suggested here that Foucault has offered a different sense of what it is to make truth-claims, criticize power, or offer hope. Foucault's critics presuppose a conception of epistemic and political sovereignty. To claim truth or to criticize power is to try to stand outside an epistemic or political conflict in order to resolve it. Truth and right are conceived as the unified structures from which conflict, struggle, and difference are legally prohibited, as all competing declarations and all conflicting representatives receive their proper needs. Lastly, few words may be added on the basis of our understanding of Foucault's "power/knowledge". We must be in a position to grasp the special concepts of "power/knowledge", "subjectivity", "discourses". Further he introduces certain methodical terminologies with a special intention to use them in his theories like Archeology and Genealogy.

For Foucault, power and knowledge are not seen as independent or separate entities but are indivisibly related. Knowledge is always an exercise of power and power always a function of knowledge. Moreover, his most famous example of a practice of power/knowledge is that of the confession, as outlined in *The History of Sexuality.* Once solely a practice of the Christian Church, Foucault argues that it became diffused into secular culture (especially psychology) in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Through the confession (a form of power) people were incited to 'tell the truth' (produced knowledge) about their sexual desires, emotions and dispositions. It is through these confessions that the idea of sexual identity

[29] Charles Taylor is a living Canadian philosopher who is famous for his contributions to political philosophy, the philosophy of social sciences and intellectual history.
[30] Richard Rorty (1931-2007) is an American philosopher. He coins the notions like "postphilosophy", "ironism", "epistemological behaviorism".

at the core of the self came into existence (again, a form of knowledge), an identity that had to be monitored, cultivated and often controlled (again, back to power). It is important to note that Foucault understood power/knowledge as productive as well as constraining. "Power/knowledge" not only limits what we can do, but also opens up new possibilities, or ways of acting and thinking about ourselves.

Foucault did acknowledge that his "power/knowledge" configuration inclined to be one-sided. Yet, remaining on his side for the moment, there emerges an awarness that admits a profound religious disposition. This involves the idea that knowledge is always contaminated by some kind of power relation or structure, and that one's claims for certainty are decreased by human finitude and the social construction of reality.

There is a more general challenge put by Foucault's "power/knowledge" that is yet to be fully cherished by liberation and political theology. That is, the circulating nature of power demands that Christians attempt to move from faith toward public policy. As Charles Davis expresses the matter, "political theology manifests a tendency to leave faith as transcendent, soaring above the political sphere in eschatological flight, rather than making it enter more deeply than ever into political reality through a newly found self-reflective autonomy and responsibility of critically conscious Christians."[31]

Let us conclude this chapter with two brief critical reflections. The first concerns Foucault's frequent appeal to images of war, conflict, and resistance. It has been already pointed out that he explicitly proposed this militarily scenario to emphasize the dynamics of power and knowledge. Yet feminist theorists have often reminded us of the epistemological and political dangers of building militarism and violence into our very tools of

[31] Foucault, 1980, p. 74.

theoretical analysis and political criticism.[32] So one important question to be raised about Foucault's work is to what extent his treatment of the dynamics of power and knowledge remains associated to Nietzschean warlike scenario, and the related notions of strategy and tactics. A second question concerns the scope of Foucault's argument that he repeatedly insisted that his arguments were of quite restricted generality, both historically and epistemologically.

[32] Two excellent examples of such feminist reflection are Nancy Hartsock, *Money, Sex, and Power: Toward a Feminist Historical Materialism,* Boston, Northeastern University Press, 1985 and Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective",*Simians, Cyborgs, and Women,*Donna Haraway (ed.) New York, Routledge, 1990, pp.183-201.

Conclusion

Many of the readers including myself who admire and have learned from Foucault's notion of the undifferentiated power also try to understand what Foucault ascribed to modern society. Foucault seemed to have been confused between two different expressions or manifestations of power: one of institutions to subjugate individuals and the other of behaviors of individuals in society, which are a result of following social rules and conventions. It is sensible at this juncture to enquire why Foucault puts emphasis on power in the first place. It is also relevant to ask about the nature of connection between one's motive for imagining power and the image one ends up with.

We can think about power in at least four different ways:-

(1) to imagine what we could do if we had power,

(2) to speculate about what we would imagine if we had power,

(3) to arrive at some assessment of what power we would need in order to defeat present power and instead establish a new order of power,

(4) to make several things/events/actions meaningful which would have been otherwise totally insignificant and valueless without the dimension of power.

Foucault was primarily attracted to the first and second alternatives as he emphasized the productivity of power and its provocative inventiveness, the entire procedure of how disciplines and discourse manipulate the human world of actions, attitudes and thoughts, thereby facilitating accomplishment of real tasks and authority. The third and fourth alternatives are utopian and disloyal for Foucault. He was not interested in them since they are significant either in the context of moral choice or rationalized political preferences. What our analyses clearly indicate is that his interest in domination was critical and unparalleled. His visionary of power has been uniquely fascinating. Further his imagination of power was

an outcome of his analysis of power to reveal its injustice and cruelty. Foucault challenges that the idea that power is wielded by people or groups by way of episodic or sovereign acts of domination or coercion, seeing it instead as dispersed and pervasive. Power is everywhere and comes from everywhere, so in this sense is neither an agency nor a structure.

In *Discipline and Punish* and *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1* - Foucault searches the elevation of some of the concepts, forms of knowledge, practices, social institutions and techniques of government which have contributed to mapping modern European society and culture. As we have seen, he calls the method of historical analysis he employs ‘genealogical’. Genealogy is a form of critical history in the sense that it attempts a diagnosis of what we are and of the present time. In this moment in order to question what is postulated as self-evident to dissipate what is familiar and accepted.

What distinguishes genealogical analysis from traditional historiography is that it is a structure of history which can account for the constitution of knowledge, discourses, domains of objects 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 history. Genealogy investigates the complex and shifting network of relations between power, knowledge and the body which produce historically specific forms of subjectivity rather than assuming that the movement of history can be explained by the intentions and aims of individual actors. Foucault connects his genealogical studies to a modality of social critique which he describes as a 'critical ontology of the present'. Because in one of his late papers he explains that in order to create the space for an experiment with the possibility of going beyond them, an ontology of the present involves an analysis of the historical limits that are imposed on us. Hence, genealogy is

a form of social critique that seeks to determine possibilities for social change and ethical transformation of ourselves.

Rather than simply locating power in a centralized impersonal institution, such as army or the police, as earlier Marxist theorists had done, Foucault was interested in local forms of power and the way that they are negotiated with by individuals or other agencies. This concern with the materiality of power relations at a local level can be seen to have influenced many feminist theorists, such as Judith Butler[1], who have tried to develop models of the relation between gender and power without assuming that power is simply located in institutions and who have tried to see gender identity as something that one performs in particular contexts, not something that one possesses.

The search for the true meaning of 'self' and 'identity' has always been a significant area of research in Philosophy. As opposed to the traditional notions of 'self' as a rigid and fixed entity, the discourses surrounding 'self' have undergone several changes with onset of postmodernism and post-structuralism. Michel Foucault, one of the prominent thinkers of the 20th century, rejected the idea of 'self-constituting subject' and instead, focused on the context within which the subjects are produced. Discarding the presence of an essential or real self, he stated that the discursive representations and practices 'systematically form the objects of which they speak', thereby naturalizing different types of social control. Along similar lines, Judith Butler, argues that, all bodies are gendered from the beginning of their social existence, which further means that there is no 'natural body' that exists prior to its cultural inscription. Gender, therefore is not something that one is but rather something that one does or acts and becomes. In this context, this objective of this paper is to see how

[1] Judith Butler is a living American philosopher and gender theorist whose work has influenced political philosophy, ethics and the fields of third-wave feminism.

identities, especially gender identities are not the source of actions (expressed in the form of speech or gestures); rather, we find that the very construction of identities is caused by the performative actions, behaviours and gestures, imposed by the hetero-normative, patriarchal structure of the society and normalized eventually through a repetitive performance of those acts.

The idea of the self has long been salient in feminist philosophy, for it is integral to the questions surrounding personal identity, self, social history, and agency. Simone de Beauvoir's provocative declaration, “He is the Subject, he is the Absolute—she is the Other,” signals the central importance of the self for feminist philosophy. To be the “Other” is to be the non-subject, the non-person, the non-agent—in short, the mere self. In law, in customary practice, and in cultural stereotypes, women's selfhood has been systematically subordinated and belittled. Throughout history, women have been identified either as inferior to men or as their opposites, since they have always been characterized as less rational and more emotional. It is through their perceived differences from men that their subordination has been justified. In mainstream, understanding self (as a knower and a rational agent) is atomistic in the sense that it focuses on the requirements of abstraction, detachment (view from nowhere) and rational understanding. Atomistic self is autonomous, independent and self-sufficient. On the other hand feminist approach towards self is relational as they focus on human situatedness, connection, communication, relational existence and dependence. For them autonomy does not presuppose detachment rather attachment and dependence are undeniable facts of human existence. They prefer relational autonomy where individuals can communicate without any threat or fear of oppression. For mainstream, attachment is a threat while for feminist, detachment or separation is a threat. Since women have been cast as lesser forms of the masculine individual, the paradigm of the self that has gained ascendancy in popular western culture and in mainstream philosophy has been derived from the

experiences of the predominantly white and heterosexual, mostly economically advantaged men who have wielded social, economic, and political power and have dominated the arts, literature, the media, and scholarship in various areas. As a result, feminists have not merely perceived the problem of self as a metaphysical issue but also have drawn attention to its ethical, epistemological, social, and political dimensions. Responding to this state of affairs, feminist philosophical research on the self has taken at least three main tracks: (1) critiques of dominant modern, Western views of the self, (2) reclamations of female identities, and (3) reconceptualizations of the self. The last mentioned task is taken up to show that the self is both (a) a dynamic, relational individual beholden to unconscious desires and social bonds and (b) an intersectional, multilayered phenomenon. Such revisiting of the nature of self not only pose a challengeto the standard philosophical models for their underlined biases but also shifts the center of our attention towards multi-layered models of the relational self. In this connection, we shall focus on the second track of the feminist philosophical research as mentioned above- that is, the reclamations of female identities with special emphasis on Michel Foucault and Judith Butler.

Foucault in the later part of his life said that his project had been to historicize and analyze how in western culture the specific 'truth games' in the social sciences such as economics, biology, psychiatry, medicine and penology have developed knowledge and techniques to enable people to understand themselves. Foucault not only provides quite a shift from earlier discourses on the self, but also brings in notions of disciplinarity, governmentality, freedom and ethics as well as notions of corporeality, politics and power and its historico-social context. His own understandings about the self altered over the years and later in his life, he felt that he might have concentrated 'too much on the technology of domination and power'. For Foucault both technologies of domination and technologies of the self- produce effects that constitute the self. Thus Foucault opposes the

model of the self-constituting subject by proposing its opposite, the self-constituted subject. To claim that "the self is constructed" is to assert that whatever meanings or attributes the self acquires are in fact constituted and variable. Within a number of texts, Foucault clearly questions whether there is a "materiality" to self which is in any sense separable from the ideational or cultural meanings that constitute self within specific social fields. In The *History of Sexuality: Volume I* he claims that the self is a site of culturally contested meanings. In this text Foucault claimed quite clearly that there could be no self before the law, no sexuality freed from the relations of power. Here one may misread Foucault and may say that since for Foucault, the self proves to be a point of dynamic resistance to culture per se, this self is not culturally constructed, in fact, the inevitable limit and failure of cultural construction. But Foucault wants to argue and does claim that selves are constituted within the specific nexus of culture or discourse/power regimes, and that there is no materiality or ontological independence of the self, outside of any one of those specific regimes. His theory nevertheless rests on a notion of genealogy. Although Foucault appears to argue that the self does not exist outside the terms of its cultural inscription, it seems that the very mechanism of “inscription” implies a power that is necessarily external to the body itself. For me one critical question that emerges from these considerations is whether the understanding of the process of cultural construction on the model of “inscription” entails that the “constructed” or “inscribed” self have an ontological status apart from that inscription, which Foucault wants to refute. By maintaining a self which exists prior to its cultural inscription, Foucault appears to assume and ascribe a materiality to the self prior to its signification and form.

What we clearly see is that, the culturally constructed self would be the result of a diffuse and active structuring of the social field with no magical or onto-theological origins, structuralist distinctions, or fictions of bodies, subversive or otherwise, ontologically intact before the law. For Foucault,

the self or subject ‘is not a substance. It is a form, and this form is not primarily or always identical to itself’. Self means both ‘auto’ or ‘the same’ so understanding the self implies understanding one’s identity.

Poststructuralists and critical race theorists have been particularly vocal about this failure to come to grips with the diversity of gender, and they have offered accounts of the self which are designed to accommodate difference. The earlier work of poststructuralist Judith Butler maintained that personal identity, the sense that there are answers to the questions ‘who am I?’ and ‘what am I like?’ are only illusions. The self is merely an unstable discursive node—a shifting confluence of multiple discursive currents—and sexed/gendered identity is merely a “corporeal style”—the imitation and repeated enactment of ubiquitous norms. For Butler, psychodynamic accounts of the self, including Kristeva's[2] and Chodorow's[3], camouflage the performative nature of the self and collaborate in the cultural conspiracy that maintains the illusion that one has an emotionally anchored, interior identity that is derived from one's biological nature, which is manifest in one's genitalia. Such accounts are pernicious. In concealing the ways in which normalizing regimes deploy power to enforce the performative routines that construct “natural” sexed/gendered bodies together with debased, “unnatural” bodies, they obscure the arbitrariness of the constraints that are being imposed and deflect resistance to these constraints. The solution, in Butler's view, is to question the categories of biological sex, polarized gender, and determinate sexuality that serve as markers of personal identity, to treat the construction of identity as a site of political contestation, and to embrace the subversive potential of unorthodox performances and parodic identities. Her later work also

[2]Julia Kristeva is a Bulgarian French philosopher, semiotician, psychoanalyst and feminist. She is now a professor emeritus at the University Paris Diderot. Some of her notable ideas are “The Semiotic of the Pre-Mirror Stage”, “Intertextuality”.

[3] Nancy Julia Chodorow is an American sociologist, feminist and psychoanalyst. She is known for her famous doctrine, “Psychoanalytical Feminism”.

continues to emphasize the relationality of the self through its dispossession by the very discursive structures that call the self into existence.

There are myriad problems surrounding sex/ gender distinction. Among those problems one is 'Is gender uniform?' and this is what Judith Butler attempts to critique with her "normativity argument". Judith Butler's normativity argument regarding sex/gender distinction makes at least two claims:

- The first is, unitary gender notions fail to take differences amongst women into account, thus failing to recognize the multiplicity of cultural, social, and political intersections in which the concrete array of 'women' are constructed.[4]
- Butler's second claim is that such false gender realist accounts are normative. That is, in their attempt to fix feminism's subject matter, feminists unwittingly defined the term 'woman' in a way that implies there is some correct way to be gendered a woman.[5] That the definition of the term 'woman' is fixed supposedly operates as a policing force which generates and legitimizes certain practices, experiences, etc., and curtails and delegitimizes others.

  In order to better understand Butler's critique of stable, heteronormative gender identity, we have to consider her account of gender performativity. It would be relevant to mention at least two arguments regarding gender performativity of Butler.

i. Performativity of gender is a stylized repetition of acts, an imitation or miming of the dominant conventions of gender**.** Butler argues that the act that one does, the act that one performs is, in a sense, an act that is been going on before one arrived on the scene. Gender is an impersonation…becoming gendered involves impersonating an ideal that nobody actually inhabits.

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[4] Judith Butler, *Subjects of desire: Hegelian reflections in twentieth century France*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1999, pp. 19–20.
[5] Ibid, p. 5.

ii. Subversion through performance isn't automatic or easy. Indeed, Butler complaints that people have misread her book, *Gender Trouble*. The bad reading goes something like this. I get up in the morning, look into my closet, and decide which gender I want to be today. I can take out a piece of dress and change my gender, stylize it, and then that evening I can change it again and be something radically different, so that what we get is something like the commodification of gender, and the understanding of taking on a gender as a kind of consumerism…[treating] gender deliberately, as it's an object out there, when my whole point was that the very formations of subjects, the very formation of persons, presupposes gender in a certain way- that gender is not be chosen and that 'performativity' is not a radical choice and it's not voluntarism…Performativity has to do with repetition, very often the repetition of oppressive and painful gender norms…This is not freedom, but a question of how to work the trap that one is inevitably in. Butler also writes that it seems to her that there is no easy way to know whether something is subversive. Subversiveness is not something that can be gauged or calculated…I do think that for a copy of subversive of heterosexual hegemony it has to both mime and displace its conventions.

In view of the argument raised at the beginning of this point, feminist approach towards self is found to be relational as they focus primarily on human situatedness, connection, communication, relational existence and dependence. Here one can attempt to bring together the notion of the constitutive self as propounded by Michel Foucault on the one hand and that of the performative self by Judith Butler on the other.

Foucault's analysis of productive bio-power points to a complex interaction between modern forms of power and knowledge: "the exercise of power

perpetually creates knowledge and, conversely, knowledge constantly induces effects of power."[6] For Foucault, power can be said to create knowledge in two related senses. First, the sense that particular institution of power makes certain forms of knowledge historically possible. In the case of the social sciences, for example, it is the refinement of disciplinary techniques for observing and analyzing the body in various institutional settings that facilitates the expansion of new areas of social research. Power can also be said to create knowledge in the sense that institutions of power determine the conditions under which scientific statements come to be counted as true or false. According to Foucault, then, "truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power".[7] This description suggests that the production of 'truth' is never entirely separable from technologies of power. On the other hand, Foucault maintains that knowledge induces effects of power in so far as it constitutes new objects of inquiry – 'objects' like 'the delinquent', 'the homosexual' or 'the criminal type' - which then become available for manipulation and control. For example, he claims that it is the knowledge generated by the human sciences which enables modern power to circulate through finer channels, gaining access to individuals themselves, to their bodies, their gestures, and all their daily actions.[8] It is in order to signal the mutually conditioning operations of power and knowledge that Foucault speaks of regimes of "power/knowledge" or "discourses"; that is, structured ways of knowing and exercising power.

Foucault's view of power is directly counter to the conventional Marxist or early feminist model of power which sees power simply as a form of oppression or repression, what Foucault terms the "repressive hypothesis".

[6] M. Foucault and Colin, Gordon, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, Colin Gordon (ed.), Colin, Gordon, Leo, Marshall, John, Mepham, Kate, Soper (trans.), New York, Pantheon Books, 1980, p. 52.
[7] Ibid, p. 131.
[8] Ibid, p. 151.

Instead, he sees power as also at the same time productive, something which brings about forms of behavior and events rather than simply curtailing freedom and constraining individuals. He argues in *The History of Sexuality, Vol. I*, if power was never anything but repressive and it never did anything but only say no, do we really believe that we should manage to obey it? Implicit in this quotation is the sense that there must be something else, apart from repression, which leads people to conform. The question that readily comes to our minds is that what will be the novelty in his treatment of power. Foucault signifies the new form of "bio-power" comprised of two aspects. One is concerned with the efficient government of the population as a whole and focuses on the management of the life processes of the social body. It involves the regulation of phenomena such as birth, death, sickness, disease, health, sexual relations etc. The other aspect, which Foucault calls "disciplinary power" targets the human body as an object to be manipulated and trained. In *Discipline and Punish* Foucault studies the practices of discipline and training associated with disciplinary power. One of the key features of disciplinary power is that it is exercised directly on the body. The aim of these practices is to simultaneously optimize the body's capacities, skills and productivity and to nourish its usefulness and docility. It is not, however, only the body that disciplinary techniques target. Foucault presents disciplinary power as productive of certain types of subject as well. In *Discipline and Punish* he describes the way in which the central technique of disciplinary power (constant surveillance) is initially directed toward disciplining the body, takes hold of the mind as well to induce a psychological state of conscious and permanent visibility. In other words, constant surveillance is internalized by individuals to produce a kind of self-awareness that defines the modern subject or agent. In keeping the idea in mind that modern notion of power operates to produce the phenomena it targets Foucault challenges the juridical notion of power as law which assumes that power is simply the constraint or repression of something that is already constituted.

In modern society, Foucault claims that the behavior of individuals and groups is pervasively controlled by the standards of normality which are propagated by a range of normative knowledge like criminology, medicine, psychology and psychiatry. Individuals of modern period, become the agents of their own normalization to the extent that they are subjected to. It is Foucault's insight into the productivity of the practices and technologies characteristic of normalizing bio-power that underpins his general conclusion that power in modern societies is a fundamentally creative (in a way positive) rather than repressive (in a way negative) force.

Recognizing the problems with attaching labels to Foucault's work, we wish to examine the extent to which he develops certain postmodern positions. We do not read Foucault as a postmodernist thinker, but rather as a theorist who combines pre-modern, modern, and postmodern perspectives. His application of genealogy to formative moments in modernity's history and his exhortations to experiment with subjectivity place him with the periphery postmodern discussion. We see Foucault as a profoundly conflicted thinker whose thought is torn between oppositions such as totalizing/de-totalizing phenomena and tensions between discursive/extra-discursive theorization, macro/micro-perspectives, and a dialectic account of domination/resistance. Nevertheless, Foucault claims that modern regimes of power operate to produce us as subjects who are both the objects and vehicles of power. Along similar lines, Lyotard[9] also claims that in postmodern culture or postindustrial society the very nature of knowledge essentially has changed. On Lyotard's account, the computer-age has transformed knowledge into information, to be specific, coded

[9] Jean-Francois Lyotard (1924-1998) is a 20th century French philosopher, sociologist. He is best known for his articulation of "postmodernism" after the late 1970s and analysis of the impact of postmodernity on the human cognition.

messages within a system of transmission and communication. The status of knowledge has transferred from subjective to objective as knowledge becomes like commodity. Knowledge is manifested through acquired learning transmission and miniaturaization of machine. Hence, if one person is able to codify and decipher the machinery language s/he will be able to get that knowledge easily. More clearly, by getting these kinds of knowledge there is no need to inculcate change internally, only the ability to use the machines and translate languages properly is sufficient. Hence, in the postmodern culture and in the postindustrial society the definition of knowledge also undergoes gradual change. We begin with a point of his postmodernistic turn, which can be developed in the form of new historiographical approaches which Foucault terms 'archaeology' and 'genealogy' which is previously discussed in first chapter. We shall now explicate Foucault's postmodern perspectives on the nature of modern power and his argument that the modern subject is a construct of domination. In his later writings, most notably in *The Use of Pleasure*, Foucault employs historical research to open possibilities for experimenting with subjectivity, by showing that subjectivation is a formative power of the self, surpassing the structures of knowledge and power from out of which it emerges. This is a power of thought, which Foucault says is the ability of human beings to problematize the conditions under which they live. He thus joins Lyotard in promoting creative experimentation as a leading power of thought, a power that surpasses reason, narrowly defined, and without which thought would be inert. In this regard, Foucault stands in league with others who profess a postmodern sensibility in regard to contemporary science, art, and society. We should note, as well, that Foucault's writings are a hybrid of philosophy and historical research, just as Lyotard combines the language games of the expert and the philosopher in *The Postmodern Condition*. This mixing of philosophy with concepts and methods from other disciplines is characteristic of postmodernism in its broadest sense.

Foucault's work provides an innovative and comprehensive critique of modernity. Whereas for many theorists modernity encompasses a large, undifferentiated historical epoch that dates from the Renaissance to the present moment, Foucault distinguishes between two post Renaissance eras: the classical era (1660-1800) and the modern era (1800-1950).[10] He sees the classical era as inaugurating a powerful mode of domination over human beings that culminates in the modern era. Foucault follows the Nietzschean position that dismisses the Enlightenment ideology of historical progress: "Humanity does not gradually progress from combat to combat until it arrives at universal reciprocity, where the rule of law finally replaces warfare; humanity installs each of its violations in a system of rules and thus proceeds from domination to domination." [11] Yet, ridiculously, Foucault believes that the modern era is a kind of progress - in the dissemination and refinement of techniques of domination. On this point, his initial position quite unlike that of Marx, Weber, or Habermas who attempt to identify both the emancipatory and repressive aspects of modernity.

There is another kind of resemblance in the philosophical analyses of power amongst Foucault and feminist philosopher Karen J. Warren[12]. Karen J. Warren in his book *Ecological Feminism* discussed that there are at least five types of power to define some bifurcations between patriarchal and matriarchal issues. These forms of power are "power-over power", "power-with power", "power-within power", "power-towards power" and

[10] G. Gutting, *Michel Foucault's Archaeology of Scientific Reason*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 30.
[11] M. Foucault, *Language, counter-memory, practice: selected essays and interviews,* United States of America, Cornell University Press, 1977, p. 151.

[12] Karen J. Warren is a 20th and 21st century eco feminist philosopher who is champion in the realm of critical thinking in eco-feminism. She is interested in finding the connections between the subordination of women and others and the subordination of the environment.

"power-against power".[13] The intention of "power over power" is to maintain and justify the relations of domination and subordination by oppression or coercive forces in which threat, restriction of freedom, displeasure of the people who are in the down position by the people who are in the up position is quite a normal picture. "Power with power shares or maintains coalitionary, solidarity or other relativity equalizing power relations with others sometimes this power with power is liberating."[14] "Power within power" in a sense, deals with our inner resources. It is either life affirming or life denying; either it contributes to life's manageability or unmanageability, either it brings ecological sustainability or unsustainability.[15] "Power-towards power" is the power of individuals and groups of individuals who exercise power when they make changes in their lives and when they move from something to something else. "Power against power is reserved for what is left. It is the power exercised by Downs against Ups in an already existent Up-Downs set of relationships."[16] If this thesis is going to reconcile the five types of power propounded by Warren and the notion of power, given by Foucault we must be in position to say by analyzing Foucauldian treatment of power relations it is not only the Foucauldian model of power, challenges the relationships of dominance and subordination which patriarchy involves the uses of power in illegitimate manners but also accepts that power relations have a huge positive and productive impact over society. It is mentioned earlier that the treatment of Foucault's power is highly relational too. Hence, except "power over power" Foucault would like to accept the other four types of power more or less.

[13] K. J. Warren, (ed.), *Ecological Feminism,* London and New York, Routledge, 1994, pp. 182-183.

[14] Ibid, p. 182.
[15] Ibid, p. 182.
[16] Ibid. p. 183.

Many feminists have taken up Foucault's analytic of "power/knowledge", with its emphasis on the criteria by which claims to knowledge are legitimated, in order to develop a theory which avoids generalizing from the experiences of Western, white, heterosexual, middle-class feminisms. Drawing on Foucault's questioning of fixed essences and his relativist notion of truth, feminists have sought to create a theoretical space for the articulation of hitherto marginalized subject positions, political perspectives and interests. While there is considerable overlap between Foucault's analytic of "power/knowledge" and feminist concerns, his work has also been subject to strong criticism by feminists. This more critical body of work takes issue with precisely those aspects of Foucault's conception of power that Foucauldian feminists have found useful. The most commonly cited feminist objections center around two issues: his view of subjectivity as constructed by power and his failure to outline the norms which inform his critical enterprise.

Nancy Fraser[17] in her book, *Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse, and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory*, argues that the problem with Foucault's claim that forms of subjectivity are constituted by relations of power is that it leaves no room for resistance to power. If individuals are simply the effects of power, mere 'docile bodies' shaped by power, then it becomes difficult to explain who resists power. Thus, Fraser finds Foucault's assertion that power always generates resistance incoherent. According to Fraser, "only with the introduction of normative notions could he begin to tell us what is wrong with the modern power/knowledge regime and why we ought to oppose it."[18] In Fraser's view, Foucault's normatively neutral stance on power limits the value of his work for feminism because it fails to provide the normative resources required to criticize structures of domination and to guide programs for social change. Like Fraser, Nancy

[17] Nancy Fraser is 20th century American critical feminist thinker whose main interest includes political philosophy.
[18] Nancy Fraser, *Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse, and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory,* Minnesota, University of Minnesota Press, 1989, p. 29.

Hartsock[19] finds Foucault's conception of modern power problematic in so far as it reduces individuals to 'docile bodies' rather than subjects with the capacity to resist power. Hartsock argues, moreover, that Foucault's rejection of the Enlightenment belief that truth is intrinsically opposed to power (and, therefore, inevitably plays a liberating role) undermines the emancipatory political aims of feminism. By insisting on the mutually conditioning operations of knowledge and power, Hartsock contends that Foucault denies the possibility of liberatory knowledge; that is, he denies the possibility that increased and better knowledge of patriarchal power can lead to liberation from oppression. For this reason she believes that his work is incompatible with the fundamentally emancipatory political orientation of feminism. These criticisms of Foucault are directed at the conception of the subject and power developed in his middle years. Some feminists have argued, however, that in his late work Foucault modifies his theoretical perspective in ways that make it more useful to the project of articulating a coherent feminist ethics and politics.

As we conclude, it must be cleared that this dissertation does not offer any evaluation of Foucault's works. There are much controversial analyses of "power/knowledge". Before one can engage in fruitful evaluation of this notion, however, it is important to have a clear understanding of what it actually claims. The purpose of this dissertation is to revisit the intellectual grounds in which Foucault's idea of "power/knowledge" germinated and took its shape; however our intention is not to provide a summary and review of his work. Foucault was, rather, an historian-philosopher of a sort that is central to the French intellectual tradition, and his thoughts and works are worth reading as a researcher in philosophy.

[19]Nancy Hardsock was a feminist philosopher whose area of interest was in feminist epistemology.

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This is to certify that AYANIKA CHATTERJEE **presented a paper entitled** SELF AND GENDER : MICHEL FOUCAULT & JUDITH BUTLER **at the International Seminar on *Understanding Self* at Jadavpur University on 26th and 27th March, 2019.**

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