Foucault's new functionalism

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Each of Foucault's major theoretical expositions of the concept of power – his critique of Rusche and Kirchheimer at the beginning of *Discipline and Punish*, his discussion of the "apparatus [*dispositif*]" of sexuality in *The History of Sexuality*, volume 1, and his response to questions posed by Dreyfus and Rabinow in the late essay "How is Power Exercised?" – reiterates various methodological precautions.[1] Power, Foucault argues, is not a property, a possession, a commodity one can exchange for something else, a resource, or an institution. Further, power is not a function of law, morality, repression, or the economic base. Commentators have energetically exposed the culprits of these methodological errors, writers and schools of thought whose names Foucault rarely mentions – Durkheim, Weber, classical Marxism, phenomenology, depth hermeneutics, Lukàcs, Marcuse and the Frankfurt School, Althusser, and Habermas.[2] Foucault's theory of power is closely linked to concrete empirical studies, which in turn contribute to the refinement of his theoretical tools. Such is not the case, however, with Foucault's concept of resistance, which he articulated solely in theoretical terms. Foucault has asserted in essays and interviews that every power relation is accompanied by points of resistance, such that – as he puts it in Volume 1 of the *History of Sexuality* – "resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power (HS, 95)." But in spite of his repeated theoretical claim that resistance is the "irreducible opposite (HS, 96)" of power, this former concept received little attention in Foucault's historical studies. Why did Foucault insist on the centrality of resistance to all power relations but devote his studies of modernity almost exclusively to an analysis of modern forms of power, without ever examining corresponding forms of resistance?

In this essay I argue that this imbalance is no accident but the result of the functionalist manner in which Foucault theorizes power. I begin by

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developing a detailed explanation of how the pieces of what Foucault calls a "*dispositif*" fit together. Foucault conceives a "function" as the most elementary unit of the power *dispositifs* he describes in *Discipline and Punish* in roughly the same way he conceives a "statement" as the basic unit of "discursive formations" in *The Archeology of Knowledge*.[3] Although Foucault never defined this term explicitly, a function can be understood in the context of his theory of power as any discourse, practice, or effect of the latter that produces a designated or latent consequence in a given social context. From the point of view of social theory, Foucault's concept of function is articulated on the same analytical level as Weber's concept of "social action," Parsons's concept of the "unit-act," and Luhmann's concept of "meaning."[4] My argument, based on Deleuze's somewhat enigmatic references to Foucault's "new functionalism,"[5] is that Foucault conceives power *dispositifs* as systems of coordinated functions, "functional systems." All *dispositifs* are composed of both highly specific functional requirements, or "targets," and a peculiarly heterogeneous cluster of social processes, or "tactics," to which the latter correspond. Because Foucault employs the concept of power in large part as a tool for studying the latent functions of human language, social institutions and everyday practices, I think Deleuze is correct to describe his work as a kind of functional analysis. Deleuze's phrase "new functionalism" is appropriate in this context because, as I argue, Foucault's conception of power replaces the ahistorical assumptions of sociological functionalism with a Nietzschean view of history as a play of "haphazard conflicts." For Foucault, the general target of power *dispositifs* is not socialization, structural stability, equilibrium, or the reduction of complexity, but as he puts it in *Discipline and Punish* "the ordering of human multiplicities (DP, 218)." Foucault maintains that every form of power achieves this "ordering" in a highly specific manner, such that its unique targets and tactics cannot be transposed onto other historical contexts.

My thesis is that the tools Foucault employs to conduct a functional analysis of power relations limit his analyses of resistance to the conceptual grammar of "dysfunctionality." Once power is conceived as a functional system, independently of the positions, projects, strategies and experiences of concrete human agents, resistance can be conceived only as a grid of counter-functions that undermine or threaten the operations of a given power *dispositif*. I argue that this hyperfunctionalist theorization of the power-resistance relation entails, contrary to Foucault's own nominalistic intentions, an untenably static and structuralist model of modernity.

The present essay is also intended as a critique of postmodernist readings of Foucault that suggest that his account of modernity is not based on a "general theory" or "metanarrative."[6] For I contend that *all* forms of social theory and analysis rest upon determinate normative, theoretical, and empirical assumptions about how human society works. Such assumptions, in my opinion, remain implicit even in postmodern approaches to social theory that claim to reject "grand theory" and "metanarratives." In what follows, therefore, I attempt to reconstruct as rigorously as possible what I take to be the basic elements of Foucault's conceptual apparatus in order to subject some of his chief assumptions about the nature of modern forms of power to critical scrutiny. The argument proceeds in three steps. I begin by showing how Foucault develops his theory of power as an attempt to resolve the aporias of his early studies of discourse. Then I develop a detailed explanation of his theory of power as a form of functional analysis. In the last section I explicate and criticize Foucault's theory of resistance.

From discourse to practice

Foucault's technical use of the term "function" dates back to 1969, when he published the essay "What is an Author?" and the book *The Archeology of Knowledge*. At this time Foucault turned to an analysis of "discursive functions," a task characterized by the question, "What are the modes of existence of this discourse?," in order to undermine the methodological presuppositions of modern humanism, embodied in the hermeneutic quest to discern the deep meaning of a text for an author, a reader or a culture. Although Foucault later renounced his assumption in these writings that the rules governing discourse are independent of social and political processes,[7] his early uses of the term "function" illuminate his later reappropriation of this conceptual vocabulary to describe modern power relations. My concern here is not to attempt an explication of the highly complex terminology Foucault deploys to analyze discourse, a task others have boldly confronted.[8] I am interested in these early texts in the present context because they help explain the theoretical dilemmas that led Foucault to develop his "new functionalism."

First, Foucault's early rejection of questions concerning the expressive meaning of discourse bears comparison to his later repudiation of the Weberian problem of "legitimacy" in order to analyze the "poly-

morphous techniques of subjugation" that constitute the power relationship.[9] Foucault replaces both sets of questions by a methodology we might call "functional analysis." Second, his early definition of the "*épistème*" as a "historical *a priori*" bears comparison to his later conception of the *dispositif* as a "grid of intelligibility," and points directly to the question this account of Foucault's theory of power is concerned to answer – namely, how do the units of a power *dispositif* fit together? The connections between Foucault's early ideas and his later work on power are as revealing as their differences. In this section I examine each of the above themes in turn.

Functional analysis

In "What is an Author?" Foucault rejects questions about authorial intention in favor of an examination of "the modes of circulation, valorization, attribution, and appropriation of discourses" – that is, the study of how discourse functions in relation to other discourses, institutions, and social processes.[10] Introducing the notion of an "author-function" to displace questions about the authenticity or originality of texts, Foucault defines the author as a mere "functional principle by which, in our culture, one limits, excludes, and chooses."[11] A similar rejection of questions about expressive meaning occurs on a far more elaborate scale in *The Archeology of Knowledge*, in which Foucault attempts to "bracket" – to follow Dreyfus and Rabinow's appropriation of this Husserlian notion[12] – at once the claim of discourse to assert the truth and its more general claim to make sense. Foucault's goal is to develop tools for "a *pure description* of discursive events";[13] thus he introduces a new linguistic function called the "statement" [*énoncé*]:

> The analysis of statements, then, is a historical analysis, but one that avoids all interpretation; it does not question things as to what they are hiding, what they were 'really' saying, in spite of themselves, the unspoken element that they contain...; but, on the contrary, it questions them as to their *mode of existence* ... what it means for them – and no others – to have appeared when and where they did.[14]

The purpose of this "archeological" method might be understood as a functional analysis of discourse: throughout the tortuous argument of the *Archeology*, Foucault consistently contrasts the methodological presuppositions he is concerned to criticize – ranging from those of bourgeois historicism, hermeneutics, and phenomenology to those of

Althusser's Marxist version of structuralism – with the "archeological" analysis of how the parts of discourse (objects, enunciative modalities, concepts, and strategies) function in relation to one another, to constitute those systems Foucault calls "discursive formations."

Without further explicating Foucault's method of discourse analysis, I want to point out crucial differences and similarities between these early analyses of the "modes of existence" of discourse and Foucault's later studies of power. First, the major difference: in his post-*Archeology* writings Foucault abandons his earlier insistence on the autonomy of discourse in order to examine the relation between discourse and the social context in which it emerges. "Non-discursive practices" – enumerated already in the *Archeology* as "an institutional field, a set of events, practices and political decisions, a sequence of economic processes ... techniques of public assistance, manpower needs, different levels of employment, etc."[15] – receive new attention, not only as a possible source of internal discursive transformations, but as a system of phenomena governed by rules of its own, independently of those determining discourse. The abstract, analytic vocabulary Foucault employed to study the "modes of existence" of discourse in the *Archeology* is now translated into that of war, battle, and conflict. As Foucault stated programmatically in one interview:

> I believe one's point of reference should not be to the great model of language [*langue*] and signs, but to that of war and battle. The history which bears and determines us has the form of a war rather than that of a language: relations of power, not relations of meaning.[16]

Despite these substantial methodological refinements, however, a major similarity remains between Foucault's "archeological" study of discourse and his approach "from below" to the study of power relations: both attempt to replace the methodological presuppositions of the human sciences with a technique Deleuze has aptly labeled "functional analysis."

If Foucault was concerned in the *Archeology* to repudiate both the hermeneutic quest for a deep truth embedded in discourse and the phenomenological attempt to reconstruct its meaning, he is correspondingly suspicious, in formulating his theory of power, of the traditional problems of political philosophy, characterized by questions concerning sovereignty, right, obedience, and legitimacy. According to Foucault, these notions presuppose a purely negative conception of power as mere "subtraction [*prélèvement*]."[17] Foucault links the latter to

the "juridico-discursive" form of power, embodied in the monarch's right to dominate or kill his subjects. If Foucault's theory of discourse declares the "death of the author" in order to conduct a functional analysis of language, his theory of power is concerned to "cut off the head of the King," that is to bracket the problem of legitimate power, in order to conceptualize "how things work at the level of on-going subjugation."[18] Just as Foucault had earlier replaced the humanistic question "Who is speaking?" with a functional analysis of discourse, he now repudiates the traditional question "Who has power and what does he have in mind?" with a functional analysis of power, a method embodied in the question "How is power exercised?"[19]

Foucault's claim is not simply that questions about the legitimacy of power are senseless or incoherent. While Foucault's earlier rejection of phenomenology, hermeneutics, and structuralism suggested that their methodological presuppositions were bound to the "analytic of finitude" characteristic of the modern human sciences, such that these methods would ultimately disintegrate,[20] his repudiation of the "juridical" conception of power is based on both methodological and political considerations. Foucault's methodological argument is that the focus on questions of law and legitimacy is blind to the positive and productive effects of power; in the framework of law, power is conceived as a possession, like a right or a commodity, or as a purely negative, repressive mechanism, like censorship.[21] Foucault's political objection to the "juridical" model of power is the closely related claim that the discourse characteristic of this latter conception of power has served to mask the spread of new "disciplinary" control mechanisms through modern industrial societies:

> Modern society ... from the nineteenth century up to our own day, has been characterised on the one hand, by a legislation, a discourse, an organisation based on public right, whose principle of articulation is the social body and the delegative status of each citizen; and, on the other hand, by a closely linked grid of disciplinary coercions whose purpose is in fact to assure the cohesion of this same social body.[22]

Foucault maintains that it is a general characteristic of power to hide its own operations: "Power is tolerable only on condition that it masks a substantial part of itself" (HS, 86). Foucault's functional conception of power is an attempt to grasp the "disciplinary mechanisms" that gradually emerge in the very social contexts in which the legalistic model of power is employed as a political tool. Thus Foucault's functional analysis of power relations entails a repudiation of the problem of legiti-

macy in the same way his previous studies of discursive functions demanded a bracketing of the truth and meaning of texts. Foucault would therefore replace, Weber's concept of a "legitimate order," for example, with the study of how power functions, an "analytics of power" (HS, 82). In the space left open by the disappearance of the Weberian problem of legitimate domination, Foucault introduces his model of power as a *dispositif*, which makes possible an analysis of "polymorphous techniques of subjugation" without the interference of questions concerning their possible legal, normative justifications.[23] A comparison of Foucault's concept of a *dispositif* to his earlier notion of the *épistème* will help introduce more general questions about Foucault's "new functionalism."

From épistème to dispositif

Foucault developed the concept of an *épistème* in *The Order of Things* (1966), written when he was still concerned to study the rules of discourse alone, without extensive attention to their relation to social practices and political institutions. Although Foucault abandoned this concept soon after writing the *Archeology* in 1969, a brief discussion of its major purposes in his "archeology of the human sciences" illuminates the dilemmas that may have led Foucault to formulate his theory of power in functionalist terms.

The *épistème* is a tool for delineating the changing rules governing scientific inquiry in a given historical period. Like Thomas Kuhn's notion of a "paradigm," which refers to the working model of assumptions employed in the natural sciences, Foucault's *épistème* refers to the epistemological conditions, at a given moment of history, of the more ambiguous discourse of the "human sciences."[24] Foucault specifies these conditions more precisely in the *Archeology*, where he redefines the *épistème* as "the total set of relations that unite, at a given period, the discursive practices that give rise to epistemological figures, sciences, and possibly formalized systems."[25] But in *The Order of Things* Foucault explains this project in the rather Kantian language of "conditions of possibility," which he attempts to historicize through the concept of the *épistème*:

> [My aim is] to rediscover on what basis knowledge and theory became possible; within what space of order knowledge was constituted; on the basis of what historical *a priori* ... ideas could appear, sciences be established, experience be reflected in philosophies, rationalities be formed, only, perhaps, to dissolve and vanish soon afterwards.[26]

Foucault's book focuses on the three major epistemological configurations of the West – those of the Rennaissance, the Classical age, and Modernity. On the basis of the *épistème* concept Foucault attempts to show how human beings living in each epoch find a highly specific ensemble of working assumptions and conceptual tools available to them for thinking about themselves and the world.

Two outstanding ambiguities of Foucault's conception of the *épistème* are relevant to his later description of power relations in terms of a *dispositif*. First, as a specification of "conditions of possibility" for scientific activity, the *épistème* seems at once to hover above and inhabit particular instances of inquiry like Kantian transcendental categories: although the inquiring social scientist cannot attain knowledge of the *épistème* as such, the latter still "determines," in some unspecified manner, her thinking activity. The second, closely related ambiguity of Foucault's notion of the *épistème* concerns its apparent unity. Although the *épistème* may be composed of heterogeneous discursive elements – statements by philosphers, scientists, novelists and the like – Foucault implies that it, like Kuhn's notion of a "paradigm" for normal science, is a coherent, neatly unified system, a "total set of relations" within which all intelligible ideas and experiences at a certain time are constituted. Numerous commentators have pointed out the similarity of Foucault's epistemic configurations to what the later Heidegger called "epochs of Being."[27] Like Heidegger's *Seinsgeschichte*, Foucault's "archeology of the human sciences" seems to postulate unified epistemic formations through which all human beings in a given historical period relate to themselves and the world.

But Foucault cannot explain the resemblance of the *épistème* to ideas advanced by Kant and Heidegger without violating his own methodological code. First, whereas Kant took the transcendental categories to be universal features of human cognition as such, Foucault's anti-humanistic stance in *The Order of Things* allows him no such ahistorical basis, and thus demands a non-transcendental account of how an *épistème* "determines" the activities of particular scientists. Second, Heidegger can presuppose the systematic unity of each "epoch of Being" only because he believes that all humans experience temporality and history according to common "existential structures;" but Foucault cannot resort to these ontological paraphernalia to explain the unity of the *épistème* without regressing into the very anthropologism he is trying to overcome in *The Order of Things*.

Foucault's inability to solve either of the above problems without violating his own methodological standards certainly contributed to his eventual abandonment of the *épistème*. But the concept of a *dispositif* with which Foucault replaces the *épistème* in his later work must confront new versions of the questions which the latter failed to resolve. First, Foucault must explain, without resorting to a Kantian transcendental logic, how power *dispositifs* shape the historical conditions and limits of social action. Second, Foucault must explain how conglomerations of functions are coordinated to form a power *dispositif*, without totalizing this notion into an ontological horizon in the manner of Heidegger.

The concept of *dispositif* is the basis of Foucault's attempt to convert the quasi-transcendental *épistème* into a sociological model of human societies as functionally coordinated systems. If the *épistème* was intended to specify the system of relations among the components of discourse, the *dispositif* is a tool for analyzing the complex relations among discursive practices, non-discursive practices, and their reciprocal effects on society at large. The *dispositif*, Foucault states in one interview, is "a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourse, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions – in short, the said as much as the unsaid."[28] The "total set of relations" which characterized each *épistème* has now been replaced by a rather ill-coordinated conglomeration of elements, which together function to satisfy what Foucault has called an "*urgent need*."[29] The most basic unit of this coordination process is the "function," a component as elementary to the *dispositif* as the "statement" was to the "discursive formation" in the *Archeology*. I want to suggest that the *dispositif* concept can be understood as a tool for studying both the functional imperatives ("urgent needs") of different social formations and the complex processes, embedded deep within the social nexus, through which these imperatives are satisfied. In the next section I discuss in some detail both how Foucault conceives the character of these "functional imperatives" and how he explains the manner in which a *dispositif* forms to satisfy them.

The targets and tactics of bio-power

The conception of "functional imperatives" that Foucault implicitly employs in his studies of power is poles apart from that embraced

by anthropological and sociological functionalism, for which functional imperatives are quite general and transhistorical "control values" which can be applied to the behavior of any "system" whatsoever – "the maintenance of life processes" (Malinowski), "structural continuity" (Radcliffe-Brown), "the maintenance of equilibrium" (Parsons), "system integration/social integration" (Lockwood), or "the reduction of complexity" (Luhmann).[30] Foucault, by contrast, would reject the teleological assumptions underlying the attempts of causal functionalists to explain the existence of specific modes of behavior or institutions in terms of their beneficial effects on a given social structure, as well as the related notion that a single set of functional imperatives can be operationalized to analyze all human societies. Foucault believes that every *dispositif* is uniquely suited to a highly specific historical situation and can be understood solely in that context: "The forces operating in history are not controlled by destiny or regulative mechanisms, but respond to haphazard conflicts."[31] Foucault's theory of power is an attempt to analyze at once the functional requirements specific to a given historical conjuncture and the complex manner in which the latter are fulfilled or modified historically. The *dispositif* concept can be understood as a tool for describing the social context in which this coordination of functions to imperatives occurs.

Foucault's theorization of power implies a rejection of sociological functionalism's attempt to study all human societies on the basis of a single set of functional imperatives, in part because this method can only operate through an artificial uncoupling of actual social processes from the abstract requirements they must allegedly satisfy. The functional imperatives which interest Foucault, however, are not merely sociological concepts useful for studying human societies, but a direct reflection of the specific conditions obtaining in them, and which Foucault calls "power." In Foucault's social theory functional imperatives neither encompass a society like a Hegelian *Geist*, hover above society like Parsonian "normative patterns," nor determine society "in the last instance" like Althusser's "overdetermined" economic base; like power itself, they come "from below," (HS, 94), and they reflect at once the state of scientific knowledge, the socio-political conditions, and the level of economic capacities within a particular historical context. Foucault's theory of power therefore undermines the functionalist sociologist's separation of ahistorically specified functional imperatives from concrete social processes. Functional imperatives, in Foucault's anti-teleological model, are woven thickly into the social nexus; they do

not cause their own fulfillment precisely because they are always already embedded in the same historically specific social processes whose rationale and logic they describe.

Why use the term "functional imperative" at all, then, to characterize Foucault's theory of power, if it potentially implies this misleading and ahistorical separation of social relations from the imperatives they must "satisfy," as well as the teleological assumptions associated with causal functionalism? Despite these risks, I have chosen to adopt the rather clumsy term "functional imperative" in the present context because it provides a useful description of the *targets* towards which a given system of functions, or *tactics*, aims its operations under specific historical conditions. In *Discipline and Punish* Foucault makes the revealing statement that "every system of power is presented with the same problem" – namely, "the ordering of human multiplicities [*l'ordonnance des multiplicités humaines*] (DP, 218)."[32] Although this statement is surprising in light of Foucault's rejection of the transhistorical claims of sociological functionalism, it provides him with a highly abstract basis for analyzing the historically specific targets and tactics of domination which function to achieve this "ordering." Foucault implies, however, that the changing historical logic of power *dispositifs* can be rendered intelligible only by disentangling the specific targets and tactics through which the latter operate.

Foucault's analysis of "bio-power" attempts to describe the major functional imperatives which have emerged within the West during the last three hundred years, roughly since the "Classical" age. Under absolutism, according to Foucault, power is basically a means of subtraction, a sovereign ruler's right of appropriation and murder (HS, 136). The bio-power which replaces subtractive power, by contrast, is a calculated management of life itself, a form of "government," as Foucault puts it, in which scientific knowledge and mechanisms of social control are combined and coordinated to regulate human life.[33] Foucault relates the emergence of bio-power in Europe during the late seventeenth century to diverse historical factors – the growth of economic productivity, demographic expansion, the rise of the modern state, the improvement of agricultural technology, and the general development of fields of knowledge relevant to human life processes – which made possible a relaxation of major threats to human social existence, like famine and disease (HS, 142). The result of these heterogeneous developments is the replacement of subtractive power with a new form, bio-power:

> In the space for movement thus conquered, and broadening and organizing that space, methods of power and knowledge assumed responsibility for life processes and undertook to control and modify them (HS, 142).

Bio-power is associated with two closely related functional imperatives, aimed at different levels of the same basic target: first, the *disciplines* focus on the individual human body, demanding "the optimization of its capabilities, the extortion of its forces, the parallel increase of its usefulness and its docility, its integration into systems of efficient and economic controls;" and second, the *regulation of populations*, aimed at the "species-body," entails an integration of knowledge concerning biological processes – "propagation, births, and mortality, the level of health, life expectancy and longevity" – into political decisions and strategies of social control (HS, 139). Foucault grimly summarizes the basic feature of societies characterized by bio-power: "The life of the species is wagered on its own political strategies" (HS, 143).

Although Foucault apparently intended to analyze the second functional imperative of bio-power, the regulation of populations, in the concluding volumes of the *History of Sexuality*, his interests shifted in the years before his death in 1984.[34] Thus, aside from his relatively meager theoretical remarks in "Right of Death and Power over Life" – the last chapter of the *History of Sexuality*, volume 1 – Foucault's only extensive discussion of bio-power occurs in *Discipline and Punish*, where he analyzes in detail its other major functional imperative, that of "discipline," which targets the individual human body.

Consistent with the general function of bio-power, Foucault defines discipline as a "unitary technique by which the body is reduced as a 'political' force at the least cost and maximized as a useful force" (DP, 221, see also 137–138). This elegantly simple formulation explains exactly what the "disciplines" aim to achieve: their target is the human body, and their goal is simultaneously to exploit it and render it docile and cooperative. Foucault's argument in the latter half of *Discipline and Punish* suggests the ways in which this same basic imperative became operational through extraordinarily heterogenous tactics in the major institutions of European society during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries – hospitals, schools, factories, military barracks, and eventually, prisons. In each institution, according to Foucault, the human body becomes the target of diverse, often hidden, control mechanisms, such that it is rendered at once docile and useful. Power *dispositifs*, then, are composed of both socially constructed functional require-

ments, like the disciplinary imperative to dominate the individual human body, and a peculiarly heterogeneous cluster of tactics which provisionally satisfy the latter imperative. It was apparently Foucault's concern to characterize power relationships in the context of intelligible historical processes without violating his Nietzschean rejection of both chiliastic and dialectical models of human progress which led him to explain power in the conceptual grammar of imperatives and functions. Power is intelligible, he implies, only because it is composed of both these poles, tactics and targets.

The tactics of power are defined by the individual "functions" which together aim at the same basic targets, and thereby satisfy the imperative in question. Foucault frequently employs the term "function," above all in *Discipline and Punish*, to analyze the processes through which the changing functional imperatives of a social formation are constructed, fulfilled, and transformed. Foucault never provided a theoretical exposition of his basic categories, but his extensive use of the term "function" in *Discipline and Punish* suggests the following definition: a function is any discourse, practice, or effect of the latter which produces a designated or latent consequence in a given social context. A *dispositif* emerges when a cluster of functions aims toward the same set of targets, such that a functional system is formed.[35] Foucault has described the process by which a *dispositif* comes into being quite explicitly:

> The rationality of power is characterized by tactics that are often quite explicit at the restricted level where they are inscribed (the local cynicism of power), tactics which, becoming connected to one another, attracting and propagating one another, but finding their base of support and their condition elsewhere, end by forming comprehensive dispositifs [*s'enchaînant les unes aux autres, s'appelant et se propageant, trouvant ailleurs leur appui et leur condition, dessinent des dispositifs d'ensemble*] (HS, 95; VS, 125).

Foucault's most extended discussion of a specific power *dispositif* occurs in the latter half of *Discipline and Punish*. Having described the slow emergence of disciplinary power in the armies, schools, and workshops of the seventeenth century, Foucault argues that the tactics of discipline gradually replace the older, subtractive power mechanisms throughout European society. The basic imperative of disciplinary power, the need to render individual human bodies at once docile and useful, is executed through similar techniques in the major institutions of the nineteenth century – in families, schools, bureaucracies, military barracks, hospitals, police forces, factories, and penitentiaries.

Foucault's lengthy discussion of these tactics is designed to characterize as precisely as possible the specific aim, technique and context of eac disciplinary "function." In some of the most detailed and meticulous passages of *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault shows how diverse aspects of the social world – architectural forms, optical schemas, time-clocks, systems of classification, even individual gestures – become functional to the disciplinary *dispositif*. For example, discipline operates in eighteenth century Europe through a few general tactics, which are employed in diverse institutional contexts to satisfy its functional imperatives: space is organized, enclosed, partitioned and divided according to hierarchical rankings, such that individual activities can be at once supervised and optimized (DP, 141–149); time is divided, regulated, programmed and coded, such that individual activities can be synchronized according to predetermined rhythms and incorporated into efficiently functioning machines (DP, 149–156); spatial distributions and temporal patterns are then coordinated, so that the institution in question can attain maximum efficiency with a minimum of interference (DP, 156–69). The common denominator of these heterogeneous tactics is their basic target – the individual human body which, according to the imperatives of the disciplines, must be rendered at once docile and useful.

In each case, the imperatives of discipline are integrated into a given institution (schooling, production of goods, state administration, etc.); no matter what the designated purpose of the institution, Foucault maintains, the imperatives of discipline can and in fact do infiltrate it. The disciplinary *dispositif* is constituted when the imperative to render the body at once compliant and functional becomes an essential part of the internal procedures of these institutions. Yet Foucault insists quite explicitly, against Weberian theories of bureaucratization and organizational rationalization, that this *dispositif* is never reducible to the institutions through which it operates:

> 'Discipline' may be identified neither with an institution nor with an apparatus [*appareil*]; it is a type of power, a modality for its exercise, comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets ... it may be taken over either by 'specialized' institutions ... or by institutions that use it as an essential instrument for a particular end ... or by pre-existing authorities that find in it a means of reinforcing or reorganizing their internal mechanisms of power ... or by apparatuses [*des appareils*] that have made discipline their principle of internal functioning ... or finally by state apparatuses [*des appareils étatiques*] whose major, if not exclusive, function, is to assure that discipline reigns over society as a whole (DP, 215–216; SP, 217).

Disciplinary power is not to be explained in purely institutional terms, according to Foucault, because its *targets* and its *tactics* are its definitive characteristics – i.e., the functional imperative to dominate the human body while rendering it useful. Foucault's claim, however, is not that the disciplines can somehow completely succeed in achieving their common goal, optimizing individual capacities to a maximum degree while rendering their human bearers thoroughly docile. His point is rather that similar tactics of disciplinary control have spread throughout modern societies, causing human activities to become structured within a field of possibilities defined to an ever increasing degree by the disciplines.

But why, according to Foucault, does bio-power come to replace the subtractive form of power characteristic of absolutism? Foucault refuses to provide a systematic or causal explanation of the historical changes his interpretation of modernity describes. Despite his general remarks in the *History of Sexuality*, volume 1, on the historical context in which the modern power *dispositif* emerged, it is not readily clear why Foucault believes the latter has proven so useful in so many different social and institutional contexts. Why does the "constricting link between increased aptitude and an increased domination" (DP, 138), which characterizes disciplinary power become functionally necessary throughout modern social formations?

Foucault relates the replacement of subtractive power by bio-power to economic, socio-political, and scientific factors, but he refuses to subsume these complex transformations under any one of the latter variables. In Foucault's theory of modernity there is no primary causal mechanism which is equivalent to the classical Marxist dialectic of productive forces and productive relations.[36] Just as Althusser maintains that superstructures and the economic base are coordinated through relations of "mutual effectivity," such that each structure contributes to the development or atrophy of the other, Foucault suggests that modern forms of power are embedded in the very same social processes they effect. Although Foucault's analysis of the spread of disciplinary practices through the major institutions of modern social formations bears comparison to Althusser's theory of "Ideological State Apparatuses," Foucault will have nothing to do with Althusser's rather theological faith in that endlessly deferred "last instance" of economic primacy.[37]

Foucault concedes, however, that bio-power contributed to the rise of capitalism by providing methods for integrating large groups of people

into the developing economic system, a process that he calls "the adjustment of the accumulation of men to the accumulation of capital (HS, 141)." These techniques for controlling masses of human beings began to spread through Western societies during the eighteenth century, according to Foucault, precisely because at that time the socialization of human beings into docile and efficient subjects became a functional presupposition for the intensification of capital accumulation. But Foucault follows Althusser's critique of "expressive causality" in Hegelian versions of Marxism,[38] refusing to explain either the spread of disciplinary power or the rise of the capitalist economic system solely in terms of the other:

> If the economic take-off [*le décollage économique*] of the West began with the techniques that made possible the accumulation of capital, it might perhaps be said that the methods for administering the accumulation of men made possible a political take-off [*un décollage politique*] in relation to the traditional ritual, costly, violent forms of power, which soon fell into disuse ... In fact, the two processes – the accumulation of men and the accumulation of capital – cannot be separated; it would not have been possible to solve the problem of the accumulation of men without the growth of an apparatus of production capable of both sustaining them and using them; conversely, the techniques that made the cumulative multiplicity of men useful accelerated the accumulation of capital (DP, 220–221; SP, 222; see also DP, 138, 163).

In Foucault's view, therefore, a relationship of functional interdependence obtains between the modern power *dispositif* and capitalism – as Axel Honneth has recently suggested, employing Weber's famous metaphor, a kind of "elective affinity [*Wahlverwandtschaft*] – but not a situation of functional subordination. Foucault believes, in short, that the emergence of bio-power and the accumulation of capital are fundamentally irreducible types of social processes.[39]

But disciplinary power, Foucault maintains, was also linked to other factors not related intrinsically to the dynamics of capital accumulation. First, disciplinary procedures constituted what Foucault calls the "dark side" of the development of egalitarian legal systems and parliamentary republics in Europe during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. According to Foucault, the liberties guaranteed by the bourgeois constitutions of this historical period could only be enforced through the "non-egalitarian and asymmetrical" tactics of the disciplines. Although the legal experts of this epoch described power relations in the "juridical" discourse of legitimacy and the rule of law, the disciplines functioned simultaneously as "a sort of counter-law," which

enabled power to operate on and dominate individual bodies selectively, without reference to legal standards. Second, Foucault maintains that the emergence of the modern power *dispositif* stood in a precise functional relation to developments in the human sciences, which provided diverse tools for accomplishing the imperatives of this form of power. At the same time, specific fields of knowledge – "agronomical, industrial, economic" – because of their relevance to both the techniques of bio-power and the machinery of capitalism, received a major impetus toward further development. Foucault summarizes the complex relation of bio-power to European society at large in this era with the cynical suggestion that "the 'Enlightenment', which discovered the liberties, also invented the disciplines" (DP, 222).

Foucault's critique of both traditional and radical conceptions of power can succeed, however, only if the alternative model he introduces to replace the latter can contribute to a more intelligible, coherent, and differentiated interpretation of modernity. I suggested above that Foucault's failure to investigate in any detail forms of resistance to the *dispositifs* he has described leads to highly problematic ambiguities concerning the parameters of modern power relations. I now return to the issue of resistance in light of the model of Foucault's "new functionalism" reconstructed above. In the next section I argue that the aporias and contradictions associated with Foucault's concept of resistance point towards more general deficiencies in his functionalist theorization of power.

Resistance as dysfunctionality

Foucault seems to have developed his theory of resistance only after writing *Discipline and Punish* (1975), perhaps in response to critics who claimed his conception of power was totalistic. In *The History of Sexuality*, volume 1, Foucault introduces the suggestion that "resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power" (HS, 95). The very existence of power relations, Foucault maintains, "depends on a multiplicity of points of resistance (HS, 95)." Foucault's conception of resistance can be understood in part as a critical response to Marxist theories of revolution. Since the theoretical debates concerning revisionism within the Second International, the question of resistance to capitalist forms of domination has received extensive attention in the Marxist tradition. Foucault's critique of Marxist theories of revolution is based above all on a rejection of the assumption that the state appa-

ratus is the locus of capitalist hegemony. Even Western Marxist theoreticians as sophisticated as Lukàcs, Gramsci, and Althusser never completely broke with the étatist assumption that resistance to capitalism necessarily entails a seizure of the bourgeois state apparatus in order to transform it into an organ of non-exploitative relations of production. Foucault repudiates this state-centered model in favor of the argument that resistance, like power, is dispersed through the social nexus on a local level:

> These points of resistance are present everywhere in the power network. Hence there is no locus of great Refusal [*un lieu du grand Refus*], no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions or pure law of the revolutionary. Instead there is a plurality of resistances [*"des" resistances*], each of them a special case ... by definition, they can only exist in the strategic field of power relations (HS, 96; VS, 126).

The theoretical and political positions Foucault is concerned to criticize are easy enough to discern, but the model of resistance he introduces to replace the latter is, in my view, vague and often contradictory. Many commentators have in fact concluded that the ambiguity of Foucault's account of resistance is linked to the totalistic, undifferentiated, and confused character of his theory of power. For example, Jürgen Habermas and Nancy Fraser have both effectively criticized Foucault's conception of resistance on the grounds that it is at once cryptonormative and unmotivated – Foucault fails to theorize explicitly the normative notions his own description of bio-power presupposes, and he provides no substantive reasons why individuals should oppose domination instead of merely adapting to it.[40] Without denying the importance of this normative line of critique, I want to analyze and criticize Foucault's studies of power and resistance from a different point of view, that of social theory. My concern here is to examine more closely the social-theoretical implications of the functionalist model of human society on which Foucault's analyses of both power and resistance are based.

I agree with Habermas and Fraser that the power-resistance dualism is at the heart of Foucault's difficulties. Any viable interpretation of Foucault's theory of power must therefore attempt to define the character of resistance more precisely and substantively than Foucault himself does. For unless his theory of power is to collapse back into a social ontology of the Heideggerian variety, power *dispositifs* cannot be defined solely in terms of their positive properties, but must also refer in some manner to the concrete entities that are manipulated or sup-

pressed by them. Peter Dews states this point as follows: "A *purely* positive account of power would no longer be an account of power at all, but simply of the constitutive operation of social systems."[41] In one interview Foucault seems to recognize these dilemmas by suggesting that resistance is a kind of primordial, physical force, an expression of the fundamental stubbornness of the human body itself:

> There is ... always something in the social body, in classes, groups and individuals themselves which in some sense escapes relations of power, something which is by no means a more or less docile or reactive primal matter, but rather a centrifugal movement, an inverse energy, a discharge ... a plebian quality or aspect.[42]

Although Foucault never deployed this theoretical model to study concrete forms of resistance in any detail, he does discuss an important example in the early chapters of *Discipline and Punish*. The execution of criminals under the subtractive mode of power was often accompanied by disturbances and transgressions – "there was a whole aspect of the carnival, in which rules were inverted, authority mocked and criminals transformed into heroes" (DP, 61). As the forms of insubordination accompanying public executions became increasingly threatening to the sovereign whose power the spectacles were supposed to signify, this violent form of punishment gave way to a new strategy, embodied in the discourse of the humanist reformers of the eighteenth century (DP, 75–82). This example illustrates Foucault's claim that resistance always accompanies the exercise of power, but it hardly justifies the populist philosophical anthropology on which his ultimate appeal to "plebian instincts" is based. Furthermore, much of Foucault's own account of modern power, particularly in the concluding chapters of *Discipline and Punish*, seems to contradict his assertion that the human body is inherently uncooperative and obstinate. Here Foucault implies that disciplinary power has spread its tendrils so thickly through modern societies that viable strategies of resistance have become structurally impossible. His rather reckless references to the "disciplinary society," the "society of normalization," and the "carceral continuum," reminiscent of Adorno's view of late capitalism as a "total system" and Marcuse's "one-dimensional society," imply that all facets of social life within the advanced industrial world have congealed into a single system of anonymous domination to which, as Foucault himself puts it in a revealing passage, "there is no outside (DP, 301)." Aside from a vague reference in a lecture to the possibility of a "non-disciplinary form of power," Foucault seems to have remained completely silent about the possible locations of forms of resistance to biopower.[43]

The central reason for this quagmire, I want to suggest, is the functionalist manner in which Foucault theorizes power *dispositifs*, a mode of analysis which constrains his account of resistance to the conceptual grammar of "functions." For the concept of "function" is, in my view, as elementary to Foucault's account of resistance as it is to his conception of power. Like power, resistance is also composed of functions – that is, discourses, practices, or effects of the latter which produce a designated or latent consequence in a given social context. Thus resistance and power are made of the same "contents" – namely, functions; the difference between them depends on the form in which these functions are organized. In contrast to power, resistance is not a functionally coordinated system; it is composed of a "multiplicity of points," clusters of counter-functions which lack the common targets characteristic of power relations. Foucault describes these "points of resistance" through a complex series of spatial metaphors:

> [Resistances] are the odd term [*l'autre terme*] in relations of power; they are inscribed in the latter as an irreducible opposite [*irreducible vis-à-vis*]. Hence they too are distributed in an irregular fashion: the points, knots, or focuses of resistance are spread over time and space at varying densities, at times mobilizing groups in a definitive way, inflaming certain points of the body, certain moments in life, certain types of behavior (HS, 96; VS, 127).

Foucault's metaphors in this passage suggest that in contrast to power, which is composed of functionally coordinated *dispositifs*, resistance is fragmented, disjointed, and spontaneous, composed of "points" and "knots," which lack unity, coherence, and systematicity. I want to suggest that these scattered instances of resistance are intelligible precisely because, like power, they are composed of both tactics and targets, functions and imperatives. The components of a power *dispositif* aim, through similar tactics, at the same general targets (the body, the population, and so forth), but resistance is characterized by tactics and targets that are either functionally irrelevant to or directly interfere in the operations of the dominant power system. Thus if Foucault considers power a "dense web [*épais tissu*]," a network of coordinated functions, he describes resistance as a "swarm of points [*l'essaimage des points*] (HS, 96; VS, 127)," a field of erratic, capricious, irregularly-behaving functions. The point here is not that power suppresses some primordial, rebellious, "plebian" instinct, for this romantic claim is blatantly incompatible with Foucault's own anti-foundationalist, anti-essentialist methodological stance. Rather, Foucault appears to be suggesting that the functions out of which resistance is constituted are "nomadic;" they refuse subsumption within all regularly organized systems. In short,

the only distinguishing property of the functions which compose resistance in Foucault's account is their "dysfunctional" consequences on the dominant power *dispositif*.

I want to specify more closely the deficiencies of Foucault's functionalist theorization of resistance by comparing it briefly to Parsons's famous analysis of deviance in the conceptual grammar of dysfunctionality in his *The Social System* (1951). In Parsons's sociological functionalism, deviance is defined in terms of motivational orientations which fail to correspond to the "institutionalized" norms of a given society, resulting in dysfunctional "strains" to its equilibrium. "Social control mechanisms" ranging from physical compulsion to psychotherapy are then deployed to counteract deviance and restore the system to its natural state of equilibrium.[44] A surprising affinity between Foucault's concept of resistance and the conception of deviance embraced by Parsons points to the heart of Foucault's difficulties: like deviance in Parsons' framework, which is always defined as an aberration from the "institutionalized" motivational orientations of a given social system, resistance for Foucault can be delineated solely with reference to the operations of a given form of power. The distinguishing feature of the functions of which resistance is composed, like the "deviant" motivational orientations in Parsonsian normative functionalism, is simply the fact that they have not been "institutionalized" or integrated into the dominant power *dispositif*. This purely reactive conception of resistance makes sense only in conjunction with the totalistic view of power Foucault claims to reject. Just as Parsons was attacked for the claim that social systems are characterized by a single dominant set of institutionalized norms, Foucault can be criticized for the formally identical assumption that the disciplinary power *dispositif* has become hegemonic throughout the developed industrial world. If power *dispositifs* do not encompass entire societies like Heideggerian "epochs of Being," then some positive and autonomous effectivity must be attributed to forms of resistance on both a local and a global level. But because Foucault conceives resistance solely as an array of counter-functions which bypass or oppose the imperatives of the dominant power *dispositif*, he lacks the conceptual tools with which to analyze modes of resistance in terms of their own specific contents, trajectories, and conditions of existence.

The problems associated with Foucault's functionalism do not end here. In the final chapters of *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault describes the modern power *dispositif* as a system which tends to integrate all

local sites of resistance into global power regimes. For example, in "Illegalities and Delinquency" (DP, 257–292) Foucault proposes to explain the increasing spread of forms of delinquency in conjunction with prison reform measures in terms of the functional needs of disciplinary power itself:

> If the prison-institution has survived for so long, with such immobility ... it is no doubt because this carceral system was deeply rooted and carried out certain very precise functions. [...] the prison, and no doubt punishment in general, is not intended to eliminate offences, but rather to distinguish them, to distribute them, to use them: [...] penalty does not simply 'check' illegalities; it 'differentiates' them, it provides them with a general 'economy.' [...] Legal punishments are to be resituated in an overall strategy of illegalities. The 'failure' of the prison may be understood on this basis (DP, 271; 272).

The basic implication of this argument is the hyperfunctionalist suggestion that both the "control mechanisms" that were deployed to combat the spread of delinquency and delinquency itself have been transformed into positively operating functions of the modern power *dispositif*. All of the strategies of resistance Foucault mentions in his account of the "carceral system" are, in the last instance, rendered functional to the imperatives of disciplinary power. I suggest that at this juncture Foucault has in fact undermined the sole concept on which basis power and resistance could be differentiated at all within his framework, namely that of "dysfunctionality." For delinquency, in the above example, not only has no positive, transformative, or "dysfunctional" effect upon the tactics and targets of bio-power, but becomes a constitutive element of the latter. Foucault thereby fuses power and resistance together into a seamless continuum of functions that are fundamentally indistinguishable from one another. Foucault suggests, in a textbook example of a functionalist explanation, that the continued deployment of the same prison-reform strategies, despite their ostensible failure to control delinquency, can be explained precisely through these unintended, beneficial effects upon the disciplinary power *dispositif*. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that such arguments are based upon what Jon Elster has called the "Strong Functional Paradigm," which assumes that "all institutions or behavioral patterns have a function that explains their presence" and which, on this basis, "tends to see every minute detail of social action as part of a vast design for oppression."[45]

In my view, the static, undifferentiated character of Foucault's account of power and resistance is linked intimately to his failure to relate the latter to the economic, social, and political institutions associated with

the historical and national forms of welfare-state capitalism. For all of Foucault's analyses of bio-power constantly presuppose a general institutional environment, composed of the capitalist economy and the interventionist welfare-state apparatus, which is nevertheless relegated to the periphery of his theoretical framework.[46] I believe that the one-dimensionality of Foucault's account of modernity could be overcome only if this latent social and institutional context were examined explicitly in relation to the techniques Foucault associated with bio-power. Indeed, our understanding of welfare-state capitalism could benefit greatly from an analysis and theorization of the complex historical links between bio-power and the diverse institutional arrangements of capitalism.[47] This type of approach would, of course, undermine Foucault's assumption that the coherence and unity of power *dispositifs* is established solely on the microsociological level of everyday practices and entail, by contrast, a rigorously non-essentialist analysis of the specific economic, social, and political relations of which both the micro- and macro-dimensions of domination in the developed capitalist societies are composed. The basic presupposition of this alternative approach is not that power is composed of coherent, functional systems which encompass entire societies, but that no single power *dispositif* could ever completely fix all social relations within the spatio-temporal grid of modern capitalism and thereby attain definitive closure. The analysis of the micro- and macro-dimensions of these heterogeneous power relations would produce a more differentiated model of the multiple, competing sites of struggle throughout modern capitalist social formations, without subsuming them into an all-encompassing power-resistance dualism. This strategy of analysis is in fact entirely consistent with Foucault's own methodological insistence that power must be conceived as a decentered and dispersed web, not as the zero-sum possession of the state apparatus or the hegemonic economic class.[48]

Conclusion

The problems I have discussed in this essay under the rubric of Foucault's "new functionalism" are also closely linked to his attempt to study the historical constitution of modern forms of subjectivity solely in terms of the spread of instrumental rationality and disciplinary power.[49] The sociological problem of human agency is, according to Foucault, bound irrevocably to the "analytic of finitude" associated with the human sciences and intertwined within the processes of coercive individualization brought on by disciplinary power.[50] For

Foucault, therefore, sociology amounts to an attempt to study the historically specific effects of disciplinary power as universal facts of social life: "Society as the subject matter of sociology is the system of disciplinings."[51] It is for this reason, I believe, that Foucault described power and resistance solely as conglomerations of functions, without reference to the projects, strategies, and experiences of the human agents which "inhabit" or "bear" them. I have tried to suggest, however, that one major implication of Foucault's genealogical distance from the problem of human agency is an objectivist, functionalist mode of analysis which cannot adequately distinguish power from resistance. The consequence of Foucault's declaration of the "death of man," in short, is a sociologically problematic inability to explain how historical forms of domination are generated, reproduced, resisted, rearranged, and transformed through diverse modes of individual and collective practice – an agenda which, as many social theorists have argued in recent years, need not rest upon the assumptions of humanism, the philosophy of consciousness, or the metaphysics of presence.[52]

In the late essay "How is Power Exercised?" (1982), Foucault seems to have recognized these problems and attempted to redefine power as "a set of actions upon other actions" and resistance as a "strategy of struggle."[53] Unfortunately, Foucault was not able to explore the ramifications of these suggestive reformulations for his own historical studies and theoretical framework. As a result, contrary to his own nominalistic intentions, Foucault's account of modernity collapses into a series of static, structuralist totalizations, which could only be salvaged through the reintroduction of the very types of action-theoretical and interpretive concepts his analysis had attempted to bracket. The latter move, however, would also explode Foucault's attempt to theorize modernity in purely functionalist terms.

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Notes

1. See Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1977), 24–31. Hereafter cited in text as "DP;" Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume I, An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1978), 81–98, 135–145. Hereafter cited in text as "HS;" "How is Power Exercised?" is included in Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, second edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 216–226.
2. See, for example, Dreyfus and Rabinow; Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. Seàn Hand (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986); David Garland, "Punishment and the technologies of power: The work of Michel Foucault," in *Punishment and Modern Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 131–156; Axel Honneth, *Kritik der Macht* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1989), 123–224; Mark Poster, *Foucault, Marxism and History* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984); Barry Smart, *Foucault, Marxism and Critique* (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983); and the essays in *Foucault: A Critical Reader*, ed. David Couzens Hoy (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989).
3. Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon, 1972), 31–39, 79–105.
4. Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, vol. 1, 4–26; Talcott Parsons, *The Social System* (New York: Free Press, 1951), 7; Niklas Luhmann, "Sinn als Grundbegriff der Soziologie," in Jürgen Habermas and Niklas Luhmann, *Theorie der Gesellschaft oder Sozialtechnologie? – Was leistet Systemforschung?* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1971), 25–100.
5. Deleuze, *Foucault*, 25; see also Axel Honneth's interpretation of Foucault's theory of power as a type of "systems theory" in *Kritik der Macht*, 196–224, and J. Cohen and A. Arato, "The genealogical critique," *Civil Society and Political Theory* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 255–256, 267.
6. Among the most philosophically rigorous defenders of this position are Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow. See their "What is Maturity?" Habermas and Foucault on "'What Is Enlightenment?'" in Hoy, *Critical Reader*, 109–121, especially 114–119; and *Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, 104–126, 197–204, especially 122–124. Despite my disagreement with their epistemological stance, my own understanding of Foucault's intellectual development, in particular his early writings, is strongly indebted to Dreyfus and Rabinow's excellent analysis in the latter work. A more recent attempt to defend a postmodern reading of Foucault is William E. Connolly's "Beyond good and evil: The ethical sensibility of Michel Foucault," *Political Theory* 21, 3 (1993): 365–389. For a feminist critique of postmodern interpretations of Foucault, see Lois McNay, *Foucault and Feminism: Power, Gender and the Self* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1992), 116–156, especially 130–139.
7. Dreyfus and Rabinow, *Beyond Structuralism*, 44–125.
8. Ibid., 44–103.

9. Foucault, "Two lectures," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon, 1980), 96.
10. "What is an author?" in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon, 1984), 117. Foucault makes the same point in the lecture "L'ordre du discours," translated as "Discourse on Language" in the *Archeology of Knowledge*, 215–238.
11. *Foucault Reader*, 119.
12. See Dreyfus and Rabinow, 49.
13. *Archeology*, 27.
14. Ibid., 109; italics added.
15. Ibid., 157.
16. "Truth and Power," *Foucault Reader*, 56. In contrast to Foucault, whose theory of power entails a strict separation of power and meaning, Bourdieu has argued that relations of meaning compose a central medium of symbolic power: "Knowledge of the social world and, more precisely, the categories that make it possible, are the stakes, par excellence, of political struggle, the inextricably theoretical and practical struggle for the power to conserve or transform the social world by conserving or transforming the categories through which it is perceived." See Pierre Bourdieu, "The social space and the genesis of groups," *Theory and Society*, 14, 6 (1985): 729. Whereas Foucault's conception commits him to the highly problematic type of functionalist analysis which will be outlined and criticized below, Bourdieu's focus on struggles for hegemony over economic, symbolic and cultural capital leads to a radically anti-functionalist analysis of social reproduction. For an attempt to criticize Bourdieu's position from a Foucauldian and Heideggerian perspective, however, see Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, "Can there be a science of existential structure and social meaning?" in *Bourdieu: Critical Perspectives*, ed. C. Calhoun, E. LiPuma and M. Postone (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 35–44.
17. The term "*prélèvement*" has been misleadingly translated into English as "deduction" in *History of Sexuality: Volume 1, An Introduction*, 136. I find this translation inadequate because the word "deduction" not only connotes "subtraction," but also the form of logical reasoning opposed to "induction." "Subtraction" therefore seems to me a much less ambiguous rendering of Foucault's concept of "*prélèvement*," which he in fact defines as a "*méchanisme de soustraction*." See Foucault, *La volonté de savoir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1976), 178. Hereafter cited in text as "VS." The term *prélèvement* can also mean "taxation," as in *prélèvement obligatoire*.
18. *History of Sexuality*, 1, 89; "Two Lectures" in *Power/Knowledge*, 97.
19. These questions can be found, respectively, in "What is an Author?" in *Foucault Reader*, 101; "Two lectures," 97; and "How is power exercised?," 216–226.
20. See Michel Foucault, "Man and his doubles," *The Order of Things* (New York: Vintage, 1973), 303–343.
21. Foucault has made arguments to this effect most lucidly in interviews. See *Power/Knowledge*, and *Michel Foucault: Politics, Philosophy, Culture*, ed. Lawrence Kritzman (New York: Routledge, 1988).
22. "Two lectures," 106.
23. Ibid., 96.
24. Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970). For a more detailed comparison of Foucault and Kuhn, see Dreyfus and Rabinow, 69–70, 76–78, 197–200.
25. *Archeology*, 191.

26. *The Order of Things*, xxi–xxii.
27. See, for example, Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, trans. F. Lawrence (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1990), 266–267; and Deleuze, *Foucault*, 14, 58. On Foucault's relation to Heidegger see also Hubert Dreyfus, "Being and power in Heidegger and Foucault," in *Michel Foucault: Philosopher* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 80–95.
28. Michel Foucault, "The confession of the flesh," in *Power/Knowledge*, 194.
29. Ibid., 195. See also Gilles Deleuze, "What is a *dispositif*?" in *Michel Foucault: Philosopher*, trans. Timothy J. Armstrong, 159–169.
30. The classic statement of the basic assumptions of sociological functionalism is Robert Merton, "Manifest and latent functions," *Social Theory and Social Structure* (New York: Free Press, 1968), 173–139. See also Talcott Parsons, "The present status of 'structural-functional' theory in sociology," *Social Systems and the Evolution of Action Theory* (New York: Free Press, 1977); David Lockwood, "Social integration and system integration," reprinted in *Solidarity and Schism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 399–412; Niklas Luhmann, "Funktionale Methode und Systemtheorie" in *Soziologische Aufklärung, 1: Aufsätze zur Theorie Sozialer Systeme*, six edition (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1991), 31–53; Jürgen Habermas, *On The Logic of the Social Sciences*, trans. S. W. Nicholsen and J. A. Stark (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989), 74–88. The term "control values" [*Kontrollwerte*] is introduced by Habermas in his discussion of Parsons, ibid., 83–84.
31. Foucault, "Nietzsche, genealogy, history," in *Foucault Reader*, 88. On the varieties of causal functionalism see Jon Elster, "Marxism, functionalism and game theory," *Theory and Society*, 11 (1982): 453–455; and Anthony Giddens, "Functionalism: après la lutte," *Studies in Social and Political Theory* (New York: Basic Books, 1977), 96–135.
32. All citations in French from "DP" are in *Surveiller et Punir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975), here 219. Hereafter cited in text as "SP."
33. See "How is power exercised?," 221; and the essays by participants in Foucault's seminars reprinted in *The Foucault Effect*, ed. G. Burchell, et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).
34. For Foucault's own account of these changes, see "Modifications," *The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality*, 2, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1985), 3–14; *Résumé des cours, 1970–1982* (Paris: Julliard, 1989), 133–166; and his late interview, "On the genealogy of ethics," in Dreyfus and Rabinow, 229–253. See also Mark Poster, "Foucault and the tyranny of Greece," in Hoy, *Critical Reader*, 205–220. Foucault's lecture "On governmentality," delivered at the Collège de France in 1978, provides some indication of the direction in which his research on population regulation was evolving prior to these thematic shifts. A transcript of the lecture is reprinted in Burchell, *The Foucault Effect*. See also *Résumé des cours*, 99–122; and Foucault's lecture "Omneset gingulatim," in *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values*, 1, ed. S. McMarrin (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 224–255. Lois McNay has argued convincingly that Foucault's turn toward ethics and "practices of the self" in the second and third volumes of the *History of Sexuality* can be interpreted as an explicit attempt to overcome the theoretical limitations of his previous conception of modern individuals as the merely passive agents of power. See *Foucault and Feminism*, 48–82. Though Foucault himself was not able to explore the implications of his analyses of premodern (ancient Greek, Hellenistic Roman and early Christian) forms of selfhood for his previous studies of modern power, McNay argues that his "ethics of self-

actualization" is in fact based upon a dynamic conception of structure and agency (akin to that of Giddens) as interdependent and mutually constituting (ibid., 59–70). The latter, in her view, provides a useful theoretical perspective for contemporary feminist social analysis because of its implicit anti-essentialism and its non-foundationalist affirmation of individual autonomy (ibid., 83–115). I would argue, however, that the deficiencies of Foucault's conception of modern power (i.e., of structure) could not be corrected adequately simply by introducing a more active conception of human agency, such as that which he developed in his final works, into his functionalist analysis of the modern disciplinary *dispositif*. Rather, as I suggest below, a more systematic consideration of the role of human agency in reproducing and resisting modern power *dispositifs* would undermine Foucault's attempt to conceive the latter in purely functionalist terms and, subsequently, imply a far more differentiated model of the institutional infrastructure of modernity than Foucault's conceptual apparatus could provide. McNay confronts this problem effectively on the structural level by criticizing Foucault's monolithic view of power for a number of problematic assumptions and oversights – e.g., for an almost total gender blindness, for a lack of attention to subjective experience (in particular to that of women), for an excessively one-dimensional view of civil and political rights as nothing more than mechanisms of social control, and for its implicit relativism and cryptonormativism (ibid., 28–47, 130–189). Against postmodernist readings of Foucault, McNay maintains that questions about human agency must always be posed with reference to "general social dynamics," (ibid., 7) but her argument implies that the categories Foucault deploys to examine premodern forms of selfhood can be transposed relatively unproblematically onto modern social formations. Unfortunately, McNay does not attempt to specify in any detail how the forms of active and autonomous human agency she associates with Foucault's conception of selfhood fit into the actual institutions and practices of modernity. For a discussion which suggests that Foucault considered the action-structure dualism to be a uniquely modern cognitive operation, see Barry Smart, "Foucault, sociology and the problem of human agency," *Theory and Society*, 11 (1982): 121–141. For a detailed elaboration of the view that the latter dualism is itself generated by the historically specific social relations of capitalism, see Moishe Postone, *Time, Labor and Social Domination: A Reinterpretation of Marx's Critical Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 264n, 286–306, 319n, 395–396, and passim.

35. This account of the relation of "functions" to "*dispositifs*" in Foucault's theory of power is formally analogous to the relation of "elements" to "discourses" in Laclau and Mouffe's *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (London: Verso, 1985), 105–106, passim. Just as Foucault conceives social relations within modern social formations as a field of functions which, to the extent that they aim toward the same targets, may ossify into more structured power *dispositifs*, Laclau and Mouffe conceive social life as a conglomeration of elements (i.e., available meanings and significations dispersed within a given historical context) which may be articulated as discourses within more general interpretive frameworks. Laclau and Mouffe, however, introduce a third term, "moments," to distinguish those elements that have been subsumed within hegemonic discourses (i.e., the "moments" of discourse) from unarticulated elements. Foucault differs from Laclau and Mouffe, of course, in his complete rejection of their interpretive focus in favor of the analysis of anonymous flows of functions between tactics and targets. I argue below that Foucault's radically objectivist posi-

tion, as well as his failure to distinguish the local from the global dimensions of the functions, tactics and targets he is concerned to examine, contributes substantially to the highly problematic intermeshing of power-functions and resistance-functions which occurs in his studies of bio-power. For another comparison of Foucault to Laclau and Mouffe, see Bob Jessop, "Poulantzas and Foucault," *State Theory* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990), 241–242.

36. Many commentators have misinterpreted Foucault on this point. See for example Michael Walzer's claim that Foucault is a "functionalist Marxist" in "The politics of Michel Foucault," in Hoy, *Critical Reader*, 57. For a general discussion of Foucault's anti-causal analysis of the rise of capitalism see Martin Hewitt, "Bio-politics and social policy: Foucault's account of welfare," *Theory, Culture & Society*, 2 (1983): 67–84, reprinted in *The Body: Social Process and Cultural Theory*, ed. Mike Featherstone, et al. (Newbury Park: Sage, 1991), 225–255.
37. See Louis Althusser, "Contradiction and overdetermination," in *For Marx*, trans. Ben Brewster (London: Verso, 1969), 87–128; and "Ideology and ideological state apparatuses," in *Lenin and Philosophy*, trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 127–188. On Foucault's relation to Althusser, see Poster, *Foucault, Marxism and History*, 37–40.
38. Althusser, "Contradiction and overdetermination," passim.
39. Axel Honneth, "Nachwort," *Kritik der Macht*, 396. Andrew Arato and Jean Cohen have recently argued that, despite Foucault's methodological disclaimers, his account of the rise of the disciplines in fact attributes major causal significance to two specific developments: the rise of the capitalist economy and the modern nation-state. See their superb essay "The genealogical critique: Michel Foucault," (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 255–298, especially 280–286.
40. See Jürgen Habermas, "Questions concerning the theory of power," in *Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, 282–286; and Nancy Fraser, "Foucault on modern power: Empirical insights and normative confusions," *Praxis International*, 1 (October 1981), reprinted in *Unruly Practices* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 17–34. For a similar argument concerning Foucault's interpretation of progress and historical change see Charles Taylor, "Foucault on freedom and truth," in Hoy, *Critical Reader*, 69–102.
41. Peter Dews, "Power and subjectivity in Foucault," *New Left Review*, 144 (March–April 1984): 90, reprinted in *Logics of Disintegration* (London: Verso, 1987), 144–171. A similar argument is developed by Nicos Poulantzas in "Towards a relational theory of power?" in *State, Power, Socialism*, trans. Patrick Camiller (London: New Left Books, 1978), 148–152.
42. "Powers and strategies," in *Power/Knowledge*, 138.
43. "Two lectures," in *Power/Knowledge*, 108. For an extensive analysis of Foucault's scattered references to this "post-disciplinary" form of power see Nancy Fraser, "Foucault's body language: A posthumanist political rhetoric?" in *Unruly Practices*, 55–68. For a related analysis of the influence of Nietzsche and Deleuze on Foucault's analysis of the body, see Scott Lash, "Genealogy and the body: Foucault/Deleuze/Nietzsche," *Theory, Culture & Society* 2 (1984): 1–18, reprinted in *The Body: Social Process and Cultural Theory*, 256–280.
44. See Talcott Parsons, "Deviant behavior and the mechanisms of social control," in *The Social System*, 249–325.
45. Jon Elster, "Marxism, functionalism and game theory," 454, 455. For a lucid discussion of various alternative explanations for the historical survival of the modern prison in spite of its ostensible "failure" as a means of crime prevention, see David

Garland's "Beyond the power perspective: A critique of Foucault on punishment," in *Punishment and Modern Society*, 157–175, especially 164–168.

46. See Arato and Cohen, "The genealogical critique," 272–286.
47. Joachim Hirsch has suggested that the types of practices and techniques which Foucault associated with "bio-power" were central to the "Fordist" phase of capitalist development. More generally, Hirsch implies, it is only with reference to the complex institutional and social dynamics of capitalism that the abstract, anonymous, and polycentric forms of power which Foucault analyzed so acutely could be adequately explained. Hirsch also suggests that the institutions and practices of bio-power were decisively altered by the crisis of Fordism throughout the developed industrial world in the early 1970s and the subsequent emergence of "post-Fordist" economic, social and political arrangements. See Hirsch's attempt to integrate Foucault's work into an analysis of the crises of the West German welfare state in *Der Sicherheitsstaat* (Hamburg: VSA, 1986), especially 112–125. See also Joachim Hirsch and Roland Roth, *Das neue Gesicht des Kapitalismus: Vom Fordismus zum Post-Fordismus* (Hamburg: VSA, 1986), 48–64, and passim. An analogous reading of Foucault's theory of power as a determinate misrecognition of historically specific practices related intrinsically to the dynamics of capitalism is implied in Moishe Postone's *Time, Labor and Social Domination*, 159n and passim.
48. Similar reformulations of Foucault's theory of power have been suggested by Bob Jessop, Nicos Poulantzas, and Gary Wickham. See Jessop, "Foucault and Poulantzas on power and strategy," 220–247; Poulantzas, "Towards a relational theory of power?" and Wickham, "Power and power analysis: Beyond Foucault?" *Economy and Society*, 12, 4 (November 1983): 468–498. For a recent discussion of Foucault's studies of bio-power in relation to Marxist critiques of capitalism, see Etienne Balibar, "Foucault and Marx: The question of nominalism," in *Michel Foucault: Philosopher*, 38–56.
49. This analytical perspective is essentially identical, in spite of its microsociological focus, to that adopted by Weber in his theory of rationalization. For comparisons of the theories of discipline, rationalization and law developed by Foucault and Weber, see Stefan Breuer, "Foucaults Theorie der Disziplinargesellschaft: Eine Zwischenbilanz," *Leviathan*, 3 (1987): 319–337; Stefan Breuer, "Sozialdisziplinierung: Probleme und Problemverlagerungen eines Konzeptes bei Max Weber, Gerhard Oestreich und Michel Foucault," in *Soziale Sicherheit und soziale Disziplinierung*, ed. Christoph Sachße and Florian Tennstedt (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1986), 45–72; Colin Gordon, "The soul of the citizen: Max Weber and Michel Foucault on rationality and government," in S. Whimster and S. Lash, editors, *Max Weber, Rationality and Modernity* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1987), 293–316; Bryan Turner, "The rationalization of the body: Reflections on modernity and discipline," in ibid., 222–241; B. Turner, "The Disciplines," *The Body and Society* (New York: Blackwell, 1984), 157–176. John O'Neill, "The disciplinary society: From Weber to Foucault," *British Journal of Sociology*, 37, 1 (1986): 42–60; and David Garland, "The rationalization of punishment: Weberian themes and modern penalty," in *Punishment and Modern Society*, 177–192. Foucault's own remarks on his relation to Weber can be found in the interviews "Questions of method," in *Foucault Effect*, 78–79; and "Critical theory/intellectual history," in *Michel Foucault: Politics, Philosophy, Culture*, 25–29.
50. See Barry Smart, "Foucault, sociology and the problem of human agency," 124–130.
51. "Power and norm: Notes," in *Michel Foucault: Power, Truth and Strategy*, ed. M.

Morris and P. Patton (Sydney: Feral, 1979), 66, quoted in Smart, "Foucault," 130. For a different view of Foucault's account of human agency see Lash, "Genealogy and the body."

52. See for example Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977); Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action*, 1 and 2, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987/1984); and Postone, *Time, Labor and Social Domination*.
53. "How is power exercised," 220, 224–225.