

According to Foucault,
archaeology is a
method, whereas
genealogy is a tactic.
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There are a number of continuities of themes and interests in Foucault's work. There is also evidence of shifts of emphasis, changes of direction, developments and reformations, which have led to a number of critiques of Foucault's work to talk about breaks, differences and discontinuities within his work. One moment least a shift of emphasis does appear to be present is in the writings which emerged after the Archaeology of Knowledge and after the brief cultural and political event known as May 68 in France.

Archaeology constitutes a way of doing historical analysis of systems of thought or discourse. To be more precise archaeology seeks to describe the archive, the term employed by Foucault to refer to "the general system of formation and transformation of statements" existent at a given period within a particular society. The archive determines both the system of enunciability of a statement-event and its system of functioning in other words it constitutes the set of rules which define the limits and forms of expressibility, conservation, memory, reactivation and appropriation.

The object of archaeological analysis is then a description of the archive, literally what may be spoken of in discourse; what statements survive, disappear, get re-used etc. The ultimate objective of such an analysis of discourse is not to reveal a hidden meaning or deep truth, neither is to trace the origin of discourse to a particular mind or subject, but to document its conditions of existence and the field in which it is deployed.

Hence, if the object of archaeological analysis is a description of the archive, a description of systems of statements, of discursive formations, the question arises as to possible similarities with the history of ideas. Foucault's

archaeological analysis represents “ an abandonment of the history of ideas, a systematic rejection of its postulates and procedures, an attempt to practise a quite different history of what men have said. “

Foucault’s archaeological analyses actually address a quite specific and limited range of discourses. Principally archaeology has been confined to the field of the human sciences. Whereas Foucault’s works up to and including *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, his subsequent studies of punishment and imprisonment and sexuality introduced a conception of power and knowledge relations and addressed themselves more directly to the question of the relations between discursive formations and non-discursive domains.

An indication of this shift in thematic emphasis appears in a summary of a course he gave at the College de France (1970-71) in which he commented that “ Empirical studies relating to psychopathology, clinical medicine, natural history and so forth , have allowed us to isolate the distinctive level of discursive practices. Their general characteristics and the proper methods for their analysis were delineated under the heading of archaeology.

Studies conducted in relation to the will to knowledge should now be able to supply the theoretical justification for these earlier investigations (“ History of Systems of Thought” in Bouchard, p. 201). The studies of the “ will of knowledge” referred to in this passage are at the works which subsequently appeared on punishment and imprisonment (*Discipline and Punish*) and sexuality (*The history of Sexuality*). In the text cited above Foucault, spelt out in a concise way the transition in his work from *The Archaeology of Knowledge* to *Discipline and Punish*.

There is an element of continuity in this transition, are linked to complex notions of discursive and non-discursive domains. These linkages that are present between non-discursive and discursive practices are depicted as “embodiments” of a will of knowledge. This takes the form of the introduction of a Nietzschean conception of knowledge, as “an invention behind which lies something completely different from itself: the play of instincts, impulses, fears and the will to appropriate.

Knowledge is produced on the stage where these elements struggle against each other” The emergence of a conception of genealogical analysis in Foucault’s work precipitated a displacement of archaeological analysis. However, archaeology did not disappear from Foucault’s analyses; it retained a secondary presence and continued to serve as a methodology for isolating and analysing “local discursivities” in a manner which was complementary to genealogy. In fact there are a number of links and continuities to be found in Foucault’s respective articulations of archaeology and genealogy which undermine any conception of a categorical break or change of direction. In both the archaeological investigations and later in the genealogical analyses no special priority is accorded to science. If there is a change it is that the relatively detached view of scientific discourse as one form of existence arising from a discursive formation is displaced by a more committed position which questions and criticises the effects of power associated with the scientific hierarchisation of knowledges.

Again in both archaeological and genealogical analysis a comparable conception of history is found in which dispersion, disparity, difference and division are conceived to lie behind the historical beginnings of things rather

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than a singular point or moment of origin. Finally, in the *Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault anticipates a very different kind of analysis of knowledge, one that would not be oriented towards the history of sciences but would take a different form. The possibility of an archaeological description of “sexuality” is placed on the following agenda. “.. nstead of studying the sexual behaviour of men at a given period (by seeking its law in a social structure), instead of describing what men thought of sexuality (what religious interpretation they gave it), one would ask oneself whether, in this behaviour, as in these representations, a whole discursive practice is not at work; whether sexuality... Is not a group of objects that can be talked about (or that is forbidden), a field of possible enunciations... a group of concepts... a set of choices... Such an archaeology... would reveal, not of course as the ultimate truth of sexuality, but as one of the dimensions in accordance with which one can describe it, a certain “way of speaking”; and one would show how this way of speaking is inested not in scientific discourses, but in a system of prohibition and values” (*The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p 193) In such a statement Foucault served up notice on the way in which his subsequent studies on sexuality would deploy elements of such an approach but also revealed an antipathy to conventional forms of theory and prepared the way to an alternative ??? genealogy. In the essay “Nietzsche, Genealogy,

History,” Foucault once again differentiated his work from traditional history and indebted himself to Nietzsche for a radical conception of historical analysis, namely genealogy. Genealogy deploys a conception of historical analysis which stands in opposition to a pursuit of the origin of things on the

grounds that such a search inevitably induces particular effects, namely an attempt to “ capture the essence of things;” a tendency to regard the moment of origin as the high point of a process of development. Genealogy reveals disparity and dispersion behind the constructed identity of the origin; it shows historical beginnings to be lowly, and “ measured truth, it posits the ancient proliferation of errors. ” (In D. F.

Bouchard (ed), *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* by Michel Foucault, Blackwell Oxford 1977)) Genealogy as the analysis of historical descent rejects the uninterrupted continuities and stable forms which have been a feature of traditional history in order to reveal the complexity, fragility, and contingency surrounding historical events. Its principal object was first specified by Foucault as that apparently most natural and physiological entity, the body. In making the articulation of the body and history, this focus of analysis established that nothing is stable and that even our physiology is subject to the play of historical forces.

Genealogy seeks to reveal the historicity of qualities and properties which either have been thought to lack a history or have been neglected. Secondly it affirms “ knowledge as perspective. ” The mode of historical sense and analysis initiated by genealogy is one in which there are no universals, no constants to provide a stable foundation of understanding. Such an analysis introduces a conception of discontinuity into the taken-for-granted domains of life and nature. Also, genealogy focuses on events, on their distinctive characteristics and manifestations, not as the product of destiny but as the effect of relations of power and their untended consequences.

Finally, genealogy introduces a mode of historical analysis which affirms the perceptivity of knowledge, a conception of which is in good part already implicit in Foucault's identification of the limits of archaeological knowledge. There is no claim of scientificity for archaeology or genealogy to be found in Foucault's work. However the question of science is addressed in so far as, particular sciences feature objects of analysis and second both archaeological analysis and genealogy are explicitly differentiated, yet related to the domain of science. In the case of archaeology analysis is differentiated from scientific forms of inquiry by differences of method, level and domain of analysis but nonetheless archaeological descriptions may include an issue which is already addressed within a particular scientific field.

For example" in seeking to define, outside all reference to a psychological or constituent subjectivity, the different positions of the subject that may be involved in statements, archaeology touches on a question that is being posed today by psychoanalysis" (The Archaeology of Knowledge, p 207) In the case of genealogical research it is perhaps less obvious that science, or particular human and social sciences, have constituted the object of analysis. However, Foucault's genealogical analysis of discipline and punishment is as much about the emergence of human sciences as it is about the birth of the prison. With a shift of emphasis from archaeology to genealogy the relationship of Foucault's work became quite explicitly one of its critiques. An examination of Foucault's work reveals what appears to be two quite distinctive modes of analysis.

For example, the studies of medical perception and of the epistemological configuration from which the human sciences emerged have been described as archaeological investigations, the later studies of political technologies of the body evident in the practice of imprisonment and the constitution of human sexuality have been described as genealogical analyses. It is undisputable that there is a change of emphasis and a development of new concepts in Foucault's writings in the 1970s; however, such shifts and transformations that are evident do not signify a rigid division between earlier and later writings, rather they are a re-ordering of analytic priorities from a structuralist-influenced preoccupation with discourse (archaeology) to a greater and more explicit consideration of institutions, social practices and technologies of power and the self and their complex inter-relationships with forms of knowledge, in brief the interface between non-discursive and discursive practices (genealogy). A re-ordering of analytic priorities may be detected in the different versions to be found in Foucault's work of the preconditions of existence of the human sciences. The archaeological investigations are directed to an analysis of the unconscious rules of formation which regulate the emergence of discourses in the human sciences. In contrast the genealogical analyses reveal the emergence of the human sciences, their conditions of existence associated with particular technologies of power embodied in social practices.

Essential to the transition from archaeology to genealogy is a change in Foucault's value relationship to his subject matter, a shift from relative detachment evident in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* to a commitment to critique evident in the opposition expressed "to the scientific hierarchisation

of knowledges and the effects intrinsic to their power” 1 in post 1970s writings. Hence, there is a need when questioning Foucault’s work to consider archaeological investigation and genealogical analysis, or as this question puts it archaeology, the method and geology, the tactic.

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