

Chapter 1

The Foucauldian Concept of Power

Michel Foucault, one of the most important figures in critical theory has been the centre of attraction on the concepts of power, knowledge and discourse. His influence is perceptible in post-structuralist, post-modernist, post-feminist, post-Marxist and post-colonial theories. The impact of Foucault's works has been reflected across a wide range of disciplinary fields such as, sociology, anthropology, philosophy and history. The thought provoking nature of Foucault's theoretical works has been the reason for very productive debates from the nineteen sixties to the present. The changing position is the hallmark of his thinking he does not consider that the progression of one's thought should follow straightforward where the author moves from immaturity to maturity and develops and improves on his ideas in a linear fashion. In an interview in nineteen eighty three, he responds: "Well, do you think I have worked (like a dog) all those years to say the same thing and not be changed?" (1988: 14). Thus, the changing of a position is an essential part of the development of his thinking. He certainly does not consider that the progression of one's thought should follow a straightforward trajectory where the author moves from immaturity to maturity and develops and improves on his ideas in a linear fashion.

During Foucault's collegiate period Marxism and phenomenology were the predominant theories in French intellectual life. Foucault became familiar with Marxism and phenomenology because they were the most influential bodies of theory during the postwar years. According to phenomenology, meaning has to be found in a person's perception of the universal essence of an object. The existential philosophy of Jean Paul Sartre posited the individual as more or less a free agent who has the responsibility and capacity of organizing experience and making sense of it.

According to Foucault, phenomenology attempts to seek belief in the absolute nature of truth and meaning. Truth and meaning needed a knowing human subject to bring them to light. Foucault is influenced by the historicising work of Martin Heidegger and Georges Canguilhem. Canguilhem was interested in the way in which scientific rationality and reason is always changing. Although Heidegger was a phenomenologist, he emphasized the centrality of the social and cultural contexts in which truth and meaning were produced. For Heidegger, people's ideas and activities were largely determined by the background in which they lived. But people tend to think that they are acting freely and independently on their context.

According to structuralists meaning is relational. Events, ideas and activities do not mean anything in themselves but they only make sense when they are related to other events, ideas and activities. Structuralism celebrates

the death of the subject. Structuralism extends Heidegger's insight that people are not really free to think and act. Their ideas and activities are produced by the structures (social, political, cultural) in which they live. According to this perspective, people do not think or create meanings. On the contrary, structures think and speak through people.

Psychoanalytical theory, especially as developed through the works of Sigmund Freud and, later, Jacques Lacan, continued this critique of the free subject. According to Freud and Lacan, the subject is a kind of myth which emanates from one's repressed desires and the subject's existence is based on ignorance.

The most important influence on Foucault's work, particularly from *The Order of Things* onward, was the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. Nietzsche's ideas on the relationship between truth, knowledge and power influenced him very much. Nietzsche rejected the notion that history unfolds in a rational way with the gradual development of higher forms of reason. Any form of knowledge or truth that emerges in a culture not because it is valuable or eternal, but it is because one group manages to impose their will on others.

Foucault addresses the question of power in his seminal writings. Power is the ability of one entity to influence the action of another entity. Such relationships appear to exist across all scales. In *The History of Sexual-*

ity Volume one Foucault defines power as “the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organisation” (1978:92). Even the simplest particles appear as no more than a stable pattern of energy and power. Foucault argues, in medieval society power had been consolidated largely through the existence of a sovereign authority who exercised absolute control over the subjects through the open display of violence. In the modern era, power is exercised in a different way. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there was an invention of a new mechanism of power possessed of highly specific procedural techniques.

This new mechanism of power is more dependent upon bodies. It is a mechanism of power which permits time and labour, rather than wealth and commodities. By means of surveillance power is constantly exercised. The common conception is that power is attributable to and exercised by agents and is exercised on agents. Power is a total structure of action which does not act directly and immediately on others. Foucauldian power is impersonal, purely relational and blind. His kind of power is neither force nor capacity nor domination nor authority. It is not attributable to anyone or anything. Power is impersonal because it is neither possessed nor exerted by individuals, groups, or institutions. Foucault termed power as a complex set of relations. Power is the sum total of influences that actions have on other actions. Foucauldian power is blind and purposeless.

It emerges from a strategic situation or web of relations. The magnet

model presents a graphic picture of power as relational. It illustrates how power is impersonal; it is not anyone's power, because it is a web of relations among actions rather than among agents. The model also illustrates how power is pervasive. No one can escape from power relations. To act in defiance is to act within power, not against it. In order to escape from power one would have to be utterly alone and free of all the enculturation that makes social beings.

One cannot escape power without achieving complete solitude or total enslavement. Power is not something that individuals can or cannot escape. It is the intricate web of constraining interrelationships that exists, the moment there is more than one agent. The point is that there cannot be interaction among individuals outside power. Power is not something that is acquired, seized, or shared, because it is ever-present in the environment of which human beings are subjects and agents.

Foucauldian power is not domination. It is the complex network acts of domination, submission and resistance. Power constrains actions, not individuals. Power is all about people acting in ways that blindly and impersonally conditions the options and actions of others. The aim of this technology of power is not mere control, which is achievable through imposition or restrictions and prohibitions, but pervasive management. What is new in Foucault's consideration of pervasive management is description of

how it is achieved not just through restrictions, but through enabling conceptions, definitions, and descriptions that generate and support behaviour governing norms.

Power is not just the ruthless domination of the weaker by the strong. The most significant feature of Foucault's thesis is his stress on the modern exercise of the productive nature of power. His main aim is to replace the negative concept and attribute the productive nature to power. It produces reality and truth. Foucault suggests that power is intelligible in terms of the techniques through which it is exercised. Many different forms of power exist in society such as legal, administrative, economic, military, and so forth. What they have in common is a shared reliance on certain techniques or methods of application, and all draw some authority by referring to scientific truths.

Power must be analysed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localised here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation. Individuals not only circulate between its threads but they are always in the position of undergoing and exercising this power.

The most important feature of Foucault's theories on power reveals that power is not a thing or a capacity which can be owned either by State, social class or particular individuals. Instead, it is a relation between different

individuals and groups and only exists when it is being exercised. A king is a king only if he has subjects. Thus, the term power refers to sets of relations that exist between individuals, or that are strategically deployed by groups of individuals. Institutions and governments are simply the ossification of highly complex sets of power relations which exist at every level of the social body.

Foucault distinguishes his ideas on power by criticising power models which see power as being purely located in the State or the administrative and executive bodies which govern the nation State. The very existence of the State in fact depends on the operation of thousands of complex micro-relations of power at every level of the social body. Foucault offers the example of military service which can only be enforced if every individual is tied in to a whole network of relations which include family, employers, teachers and other agents of social education. The grand strategies of State rely on the co-operation of a whole network of local and individualised tactics of power in which everybody is involved. All relations of power at different levels work together and against each other in constantly shifting combinations. The State is merely a configuration of multiple power relations.

Foucault criticises traditional power models; power is not about simply saying no and oppressing individuals, social classes or natural instincts, instead power is productive. It shapes forms of behaviour and events rather than simply curtailing freedom and constraining individuals. He argues in *The*

History of Sexuality, Volume One: “if power was never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but say no, do you really believe that we should manage to obey it?” (1978: 36). There must be something else, apart from repression, which leads people to conform. Foucault suggests that power is intelligible in terms of the techniques through which it is exercised. It generates particular types of knowledge and cultural order. He describes in *The History of Sexuality, Volume One* the concern that developed in the nineteenth century about male children’s masturbation, and the way that this led to the publication of numerous advice manuals on how to prevent or discourage such practices which, in turn, led to a full-scale surveillance of boys. Rather than seeing this as simply the oppression of children and the control of their sexual desire and practices. Foucault argues in *Power/Knowledge*:

Was the sexualising of the infantile body, a sexualising of the bodily relationship between parent and child, and a sexualising of the family domain . . . sexuality is far more of a positive product of power than power was ever a repression of sexuality. (1980: 120)

The discussion of the sexuality of children and the watching, advising and punishment of children in relation to sexual practices actually brought into being a set of sexualized relations and the construction of a perverse sexuality. Power produces different types of behaviour pattern and discipline in human lives. Thus, *Discipline and Punish* states:

We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it excludes, it represses, it censors, it abstracts, it masks, it conceals. In fact, power produces reality, it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production. (1978: 120)

In Foucault's view power and oppression should not be reduced to the same thing for a number of reasons. To identify power with oppression is to assume that power is exercised from one source and that it is one thing. By regulating people's everyday activities, power produces particular types of behaviours. Foucault develops his view of power as productive rather than repressive, in *The History of Sexuality Volume One* he argues that sexuality far from being reduced to silence by the Victorians, became the object of proliferating knowledge which worked in conjunction with administrative mechanisms of social organisation from the end of the eighteenth century onwards.

Power is not an institution, a structure, or a certain force with which certain people are endowed; it is the name given to a complex strategic relation in a given society. This is to suspend a variety of suppositions that routinely come into play when power is discussed. Foucault's works are invaluable in this respect in as much as it explodes a series of prior presumptions and possible misconceptions regarding the nature and

functioning of modern power. Foucault's writings on power should not be read as a form of global theory. Foucault suggests that one should refrain from questioning the objectives and intentions of those exercising power. Power is reducible neither to the actions nor the intentions of its putative agents. Power should be seen as a verb rather than a noun, something that does something, rather than something which is or which can be held onto. Foucault puts it in the following way in *Power/Knowledge*:

Power must be analysed as something which circulates, or as something which only functions in the form of a chain . . . Power is employed and exercised through a netlike organisation . . . Individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application. (1980: 98)

Power is conceptualized as a chain or as a net that is a system of relations spread throughout the society rather than simply as a set of relations between the oppressed and the oppressor. Individuals should not be seen simply as the recipients of power, but as the place where power is enacted and the place where it is resisted. Thus, his theorizing of power re-conceptualize not only power itself but also the role that individuals play in power relations whether they are simply subjected to oppression or they actively play a role in the form of their relations with others and with institutions.

In The History of Sexuality Volume One, Foucault states that “where there is power there is resistance” (1978: 95). It allows to consider the relationship between those in struggles over power as not simply reducible to a master–slave relation, or an oppressor–victim relationship. Where power is exercised, there has to be someone who resists. Foucault goes as far as to argue that where there is no resistance it is not, in effect, a power relation. Resistance is written in to the exercise of power. In order to analyse a power relation, one must analyse the total relations of power, the hidden transcripts as well as the public performance.

The possibility for resistance is an elementary condition for every conceivable relation of power. Foucault maintains that resistance is a necessary precondition for the operation of relations of power. He insists resistance must be a precondition for power, without such forms of contestation and struggle there would be only complete domination, subservience and obedience. Power and the potentiality of resistance are hence thought to be coterminous. Power cannot be treated as complete control or absolute subservience. It is only through the articulation of resistance that power can spread through the social field. Resistance is an internal property of power. It is a condition of operation that remains inherent to power itself. Resistance is everywhere and at every level. Foucault argues that power can be exercised only over free subjects. By freedom, Foucault means the possibility of reacting and behaving in different ways. If these

possibilities are closed down through violence or slavery, then it is no longer a question of a relationship of power. There is no power without potential refusal or revolt.

Foucault's works try to evolve a methodology to analyse power and knowledge. Power is based on knowledge and makes use of knowledge. Power reproduces knowledge by shaping it in accordance with its anonymous intentions. Power re-creates its own fields of exercise through knowledge. In *Discipline and Punish* Foucault points out the relationship between power and knowledge:

Power produces knowledge (and not simply by encouraging it because it serves power or by applying it because it is useful); that power and knowledge directly imply one another: that there is no power relation without the correlation constituting of field of knowledge nor knowledge that does not presuppose and constituted as the same time power.

(1977: 27)

Foucault asserts that knowledge produces power and power produces knowledge by reciprocating each other. He accepts the popular saying that knowledge is power. Foucault states that power is the source of sovereignty. Power is used as a repressive means to control and rule people with individual's body targeted for punishment by means of torture. Torture was

used to get confessions from patients and also used as means of killing offenders through different gradual processes.

Foucault introduces panopticon as one of the regulatory modes of power. Panopticon is an architectural settings designed by Jeremy Bentham in the mid nineteenth century. It was used to regulate the inmates of prisons, asylums, schools, hospitals, and factories. Violent methods and dungeons were replaced by surveillance and observation. Panopticon offers a powerful and sophisticated internalized coercion through the constant observation. The modern structure would allow guards to continually see inside each cell from their vantage point in a high central tower, unseen. The constant observation was seen to act as a control mechanism. Thus, Rudi Visker states in *Michel Foucault Genealogy as Critique*:

Power–knowledge: one has control over the person one observes; one sees without being seen and one can only what one sees in this way because one is oneself not seen. One can only observe because one controls, and one controls all the more and gains the more power as one observes and acquires knowledge. (1995: 67)

The knowledge further categorizes people, sets norms for the society and the subjects are meant to follow the laid down rules. In this way, society is categorized into mental institutions, military institutions, prisons and hospitals from which a madman, a patient and a condemned person must be

kept and observed through panopticon.

The Panopticon is a metaphor that allows to explore the relationship between systems of social control and people in a disciplinary situation, and the power-knowledge concept. Power and knowledge derives from observing others. It marks the transition to a disciplinary power. Surveillance enables every movement supervised and all events recorded. The result of surveillance is acceptance of regulations. Panoptic surveillance aims at transforming individuals such that it shapes their behaviour in prescribed directions and dimensions.

Suitable behaviour is achieved not through total surveillance, but by panoptic discipline and inducing a population to internalize that surveillance. The observer becomes powerful by observing others. Power comes from the knowledge the observer has accumulated from observations of others. Power becomes more efficient and active through the mechanisms of surveillance. The major goal of panopticon is “to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power” (1977: 201). Panoptic surveillance is fundamentally concerned with monitoring and controlling the people.

To Foucault knowledge is a form of power and knowledge can be gained from power. Through observation knowledge is produced. Human sciences

(psychology, sociology, economics, linguistics, even medicine) seek to define human being simultaneously as they describe them. Human sciences work together with such institutions as mental hospitals, prisons, factories, schools, and law courts to have specific and serious effects on people. The human sciences carefully define the difference between normal and abnormal, and then use these definitions always to regulate behaviour. The study of abnormality is one of the main ways in which power relations are established in the society. When an abnormality and its corresponding norm are defined, it is always the normal person who has power over the abnormal. The psychologist tells about madmen, the physician about the patients, the criminologist talks about the criminals, but people never expect to hear the latter talk about the former. In this way, certain people get the rest of them to accept their idea of who they are. The people who decide what knowledge is in the first place can easily claim to be the most knowledgeable.

Foucault challenges the validity of absolute truth claims of the human sciences which are articulate within the confines of a particular discourse and regime of truth. Foucault's point is that regimes of truth, such as those of the human sciences, are infused with relations of power. For him, power exists everywhere and comes from everywhere. It acts as a complex form of strategy with the ability to secretly shape another's behaviour. However, Foucault sees the effects of power as a producer of reality. It produces domains of truth. Thus, Aravind Adiga justifies the notion of truth: "In this way, word gets

around. Secrets get spread. The truth- what really happened in daytime- is preserved” (2008:122). Truth is not outside power. Truth is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraints. Foucault argues that knowledge is power over others, the power to define others. In his view, knowledge ceases to be liberation and becomes a mode of surveillance, regulation and discipline.

Foucault's concepts of history are derived from Nietzsche. He expressed his indebtedness to Nietzsche for having outlined a conception of history called genealogy. It leads to the idea of will to power. Nietzsche believes that power is the motive that works behind the production of knowledge. It is the will to power that motivates all actions of human beings. Knowledge of things are not something the human intellect perceives or intellectually grasps words or merely conforms to use the accepted conventions.

Power is implicated in the manner in which certain knowledge is applied. Truth is not outside power; truth is a thing of this world. It is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. It induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth. Foucault's argument is that social power is ultimately created through individuals who internalize discipline and this internalization is through knowledge. In essence, Foucault agrees with the adage that knowledge is power. Rudi Visker states in *Michel Foucault Genealogy as Critique*:

Foucault is without doubt, aware of the danger that the problem of the relationship between power and knowledge, which alluded to here, can all too easily be oversimplified and sloganized – knowledge is (simply) power. (1995: 56)

Foucault couples these terms, and speaks of power-knowledge, thus emphasizing the fact of their dynamic co-investment. This practical inseparability results in new modes of control in which the growth of human science knowledge, the innovation of intricate disciplinary technologies and the production of the psychological subject come to be linked. The emergence of humanist reform is no longer primarily the body, but souls or minds that increasingly come to be seen as the primary targets of correction. Targets are treated not through the means of pain, but through signs and representations. Knowledge as a modality of power produces profiles of troublesome persons and related behaviours. Thus, individualization is able to capture the problematic facets of deviant subjects. The mechanisms of power produce different types of knowledge.

Foucault describes truth as historical because it is relative to discourse and it is the product of power. Truth is relative to social and learned discourses because truth is produced by power relations. If each society has its own regime of truth, then truths must somehow be produced, in a way that makes them specific to their respective regimes. Knowledge and truth cannot

exist outside the circulation of power. There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth. People cannot exercise power except through the production of truth.

Power does not produce truth in any systematic way. Power produces truth blindly and non-subjectively. The idea of a single meaning is a philosophical myth. There is no meaning but countless meanings. It is produced in discourse and it has nothing to do with how things really are. Truth is not outside power, truth is a thing of this world. It is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. It induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth.

The world or brute reality does not contain truth or facts. Truth works without necessarily referring to how things are. He argues that there are strict historically and culturally specific rules about how truth is both accessed and disseminated. One cannot make any claims about truth except from within quite specific cultural and historical settings. Any system of rules is also a finite system of constraints and limitations. Therefore, truth is of necessity, the subject of struggles for power. In short truth, like every other category, in Foucault, is a historical category. Foucault specifies that the history of truth is specific to the West arguing that there has been an overwhelming obligation in Western history to search for the truth, to tell the truth and to honour certain people who are designated as having privileged access to the truth. He is not interested in spelling out for the reader what the concrete content of the truth

might actually be, instead he is interested in looking at the way rules are set up historically to grant or limit access to something called the truth.

Foucault is interested in the way that power operates through different forms of regime at particular historical periods. In *Discipline and Punish* he describes the way that power has been exercised in different eras in Europe, the application of power moved from the public spectacle of the tortured body of the individual to the surveillance. *Discipline and Punish* opens with the following description:

On 2 March 1757 Damiens the regicide was condemned to be . . . taken and conveyed in a cart, wearing nothing but a shirt, holding a torch of burning wax weighing two pounds” . . . and then “on a scaffold in the Place de Grève the flesh will be torn from his breasts, arms, thighs and calves with red-hot pincers, his right hand holding the knife with which he committed the said patricide, burnt with sulphur and on those places where the flesh will be torn away poured molten lead, boiling oil, burning resin, wax and sulphur melted together and then his body drawn and quartered by four horses and his limbs and body consumed by fire, reduced to ashes and his ashes thrown to the winds. (1980: 3)

After several pages of detailed description of the punishment, Foucault juxtaposes a passage from a list of rules for the regulation of the time of criminals in prison written only a century later. By this simple juxtaposition, he shows the tremendous change that has taken place from public execution and public spectacle to confinement and surveillance. However, he argues that this change constitutes a difference in kind rather than a progression or necessary improvement. Correlating with this shift in punishment, Foucault explores that there is a corresponding shift in forms of power circulating within society. Thus, the king or queen is seen as the embodiment of the nation and power is dispensed from above.

In *Discipline and Punish*, he examines how discipline which is a form of self-regulation is encouraged by institutions. He analyses the way that regimes exercise power within a society through the use of a range of different mechanisms and techniques. He analyses a range of different institutions such as the hospital, the clinic, the prison and the universal practice of disciplinary techniques. Discipline consists of a concern with control which is internalized by each individual. It consists of a concern with time-keeping, self-control over one's posture and bodily functions, concentration, sublimation of immediate desires and emotions. All of these elements are the effects of disciplinary pressure. At the same time, they are all actions which produce the individual as subjected to a set of procedures which come from outside of themselves but whose aim is the disciplining of the self by the self.

In Foucault's account, disciplinary power first began to develop at the end of the eighteenth century. It replaced and worked in tandem with an older form of power which Foucault designates as sovereign power. Sovereign power is operated in feudal societies. There were highly individualised authority figures such as the king, the priest and the father who were designated as the holders of power and to whom allegiance was owed. It operates via divine right, public ceremony and by making examples of those who transgress authority. Foucault argues that forms of sovereign power began to become less and less efficient as a way of regulating the behaviour of populations in Europe towards the end of the eighteenth century leading to the development of new techniques of social control.

Discipline is a technology aimed at keeping someone under surveillance. There are ways to control one's conduct, behaviour and aptitude. It also deals on how to improve one's performance, multiply one's capacities and how to put someone where he/she is most useful. Disciplinary techniques were first developed in the army and the school, and then were very quickly applied to hospitals, factories and prisons. Isolated disciplinary techniques already existed in Ancient and Medieval times. For instance, Foucault cites the Roman legions and monasteries. He draws attention to a major transformation which took place in the army at the end of the seventeenth century with the introduction of the rifle, which meant that soldiers had to be trained how to use them. As a result it was no longer simply enough to be strong. Soldiers

had to be taught how to co-ordinate their movements as a group and to respond instantly on command. Foucault describes these new mass forms of training bodies, gestures and behaviours as a political anatomy aimed at producing docile bodies whose economic and social usefulness could be maximised.

One of the effective techniques in the exercise of disciplinary power is the examination associated within the institutions such as school, hospitals and asylums. The examination is able to combine both surveillance and normalisation and turn people simultaneously into objects of knowledge and power. Through the examination, individuals are required to reproduce certain types of knowledge and behaviour. Their performance can be measured, and entered into a data bank which compares them with others. The examination allows people to be individualised, to become cases which are measured against other cases and are then filed and used by the social sciences such as psychology, sociology, to generate further knowledge. All these data can be generalised and statistical norms can be established with the resultant knowledge being used to tighten control over both populations and individuals. Solutions can then be found to the ways in which particular individuals or classes of individuals deviate from the established norms.

One of the most important devices in the deployment of sexuality is confession. In confession, individuals objectify their desires, pleasures, and fears. Once objectified, desires, pleasures, and fears are amenable to

theoretical analysis and assessment. Confession establishes specific subject-defining power relations. The confessing individual enters into a relationship with one or more of other individuals with authority deriving from special expertise. Confession unfolds within a power relationship, for one does not confess without a partner who is not simply the interlocutor but the authority that requires the confession.

Like the Panopticon, the confession has become an essential technique in the functioning of bio-power. The confession has spread its effects far and wide. It plays a part in justice, medicine, education, family relationships, love relations and in the most ordinary affairs of everyday life. One confesses one's crimes, sins, thoughts, desires, illnesses and troubles. One goes about telling, with the greatest precision, whatever is most difficult to tell. One confesses in public and in private, to one's parents, educators, doctors. The confession can take the form of interrogations, interviews, conversations, consultations, or even autobiographical narratives. Foucault points out that one confesses to a real or imaginary partner who represents not just the other party of a dialogue but the authority who requires the confession, prescribes and appreciates it, and intervenes in order to judge, punish, forgive, console, and reconcile. The confession is employed most readily within those institutions which bear on the knowledge of sexual practices: psychoanalysis, psychiatry, medicine and pedagogy. These sciences carefully assemble and classify people's pleasures.

The pastor is not a magistrate, nor prophet, nor educationalist, nor sovereign, nor benefactor, even though the influence she/he holds over their followers contains elements of all of these leadership roles. This is because the pastor's role is that of a guardian, a spiritual overseer. The shepherd needs to watch over his/her flock with scrupulous attention, to ensure their salvation. Pastorship is hence, a salvation-based form of power; more than this, it is a kind of power, one predicated on the provision of love. The shepherd is an intermediary of a greater power or knowledge – typically that of God – a kind of unquestionable authority comes to characterize his/her leadership. The pastor is understood as bearing a kind of responsibility or accountability for the flock. The pastor is bound by a complex moral tie to each member of the flock, a tie which includes his charge of properly knowing each member. The shepherd needs to know of the needs and deeds, the sins and wishes, the contents of the soul, of each member of the flock. Foucault argues this form of power cannot be exercised without knowing the people and exploring their minds. It reveals their inner most secrets.

Foucault is widely known as a writer on sex and sexuality despite his insistence in interviews that sex is boring. *History of Sexuality* provides an impressive and sweeping map of attitudes to sexuality in several major historical periods. It has very little to say about sex as such, but instead closely examines the history of thought on sex and sexuality, and the discourses on sex which are used to manage populations. For Foucault, sex is

less about bodies, eroticism and desire than it is about technologies of government and technologies of the self.

Foucault explores the ways in which the discourses and technologies on sex produce categories of sexual practices and sexual identity by which people are marked as particular kinds of subjects such as normal or deviant. The notion of subjectivity is based on the body. The type of body one possesses (old/young, male/female, gorgeous/needs) marks as particular types of individuals such as desirable, invisible, disgusting and irrelevant. The way in which people inhabit these bodies shapes the type of life they can expect to live. The ethics and the rules of social and sexual conduct may differ dramatically across history and cultures. Sexual discourses on practices, identity, or body type contribute significantly to how societies establish the truth of the subject, and the norms for the relations that subjects should have with themselves and others.

Foucault makes a distinction between sex and sexuality, sex is a physical act that is also a family matter. It is through sex that one is produced as an individual who belongs to a network of relations and alliances. Sexuality by contrast, is an individual matter which involves personal desires, fantasies, and pleasures. It is also a matter of discourse and governmentality. It is here that norms and standards are established and policed. People come to understand the relationship between our sexuality and our society's rules. This does not mean that sex is something real and sexuality simply an

arrangement of discourses and structures of power. Both are also cultural, through sex people perform sexually established discourses. Sex and sexuality together comprise a set of practices, behaviours, rules and knowledges by which people produce their selves. Sex is far more than a way of procreating, or even a way of experiencing pleasure, it is tied up with meanings and power. Over the centuries, sex and discourses on sex have changed, it has moved from being simply a physical and pleasurable act, to something associated with the perfecting of the self. With the emergence of the Christian era, sex became something sinful. In the eighteenth century sex became a public property. As public property, it became a potential resource that could be threatened or misused, and hence something that needed to be analysed by experts and managed by institutional authority rather than by people themselves.

Sex was transformed from something physical into something discursive, something that must be understood scientifically. It also meant that sex was transferred from the sphere of family matters to a place firmly within institutions, as public property, it had to be studied, known and shaped in ways that were amenable to the interests of society. In the twentieth century, normal people have been understood to be people who enter into heterosexual marriages, buy homes and raise children and household pets. Homosexuals and paedophiles have been marked as deviant, and punished, often brutally. Nuns and priests are seen as ethical subjects because they

choose to abstain from sex on religious grounds. Those who do not fit the pattern, especially other celibates such as the bachelor uncle, for instance, are regarded with suspicion because they are not obviously deviant, or obviously ethical, and they are certainly not obviously normal. Using people's sexuality to classify their subjectivity is an important move, because it focuses attention on the person, rather than the act, and it establishes the grounds for people to be understood and explained as particular types of being. Such individuals have particular relation to themselves, to their society and its norms.

Demographics, economics and eugenics focused on normal subjects mainly married couples because the interest here was in developing a database which could be used to measure levels of production and consumption against the birth rate. The deviant subjects received more attention from the experts partly because whatever is considered normal is also considered self-evident and not requiring. The legal and medical professions were also interested in the perverse adults by placing them in clinics or prisons.

Thus, the body became the site, or the local centre, of power/knowledge under the surveillance of experts and authorised watchers. Sex in the modern age has been dominated by what Foucault calls a *scientia sexualis*, a focus on knowledge rather than pleasure, sex as a key to understanding subjects, and hence to achieving social well being. What is right or ethical in any given period is simply what fits the dominant episteme

and is authorised by the discourses and institutions in which the practice is framed.

Morality refers to sets of rules and prohibitions and the codes of a society while ethics refers to the values these rules ascribe to different behaviours and to how people behave in relation to these rules. An important aspect of both moral and ethical behaviour is that it is a technology for regulating social relations and the relationship with the self. The connections between moral, legal and ethical positions on sex and sexuality are very unstable. Foucault does not attempt to produce a general ethics, but points out those ethical systems that are determined by their social contexts. A particular knowledge is valid in a particular context and by relations of power.

Power is governed with the production of knowledge and disciplines. As knowledge and discipline develop they produce the experts who determine not only how people should act but also what they are. In the discipline of sexuality, the focus is on how disciplinary techniques produce subjects in bodies made docile. In *The History of Sexuality* the focus is on how classification and regulation of various activities came to be the control of sexual behaviour. Marriage has become a procreative partnership and the contractual bundling of two families. Alliances of this kind involve complex rules on sexual behaviour. For instance, brides must be virginal and wives monogamous to insure that offspring are genetically as well as legally legitimate.

Foucault contends that there was a major shift in attitude about sex in the seventeenth century. The change was one from candour and relative openness to a view of sex as properly restricted in its conduct and discussion to certain individuals in certain places. Sex was restricted to the heterosexual married couple in their home. The bedroom of couples as a single locus of sexuality was acknowledged by people.

Foucault's principal aim was to show that sexuality is not natural but an artefact. He delineates that sexuality is at once a product of control and enables an unprecedented measure of control. Foucault's point is that deployed sexuality is the product of the imposition of a new kind of control on certain activities. The key device in controlling the soul was surveillance. The key device in controlling desire was confession. Panopticism enabled self-regulation and confession enabled the quest for normalcy. Part three of *The History of Sexuality* deals with how sexuality became the subject of scientific inquiry. Foucault's focus is how sex was constituted as a problem of truth. Sexuality became not only a matter of sensation and pleasure, law and taboo, but also of truth and falsehood. Sexuality enabled establishment of the normal and the abnormal. Suddenly individuals became vulnerable to classification based on conformity with or deviation from norms generated by a supposedly objective sexual nature. However, conformity with or deviation from norms is not just a matter of what individuals do or do not do. Classification as normal or abnormal is not mere cataloguing of normal or

abnormal actions. *The History of Sexuality* shows how members of a society are made to perceive themselves as having certain sexual natures by application of theories that define the nature of normality and abnormality. There is imposition of a new self-perception, and here too individuals are made complicit in their own control. The other side of the coin is that some members of society are empowered by special knowledge to exercise control over sexuality to prevent and correct deviationism.

In *The History of Sexuality, Madness and Civilization*, and *The Birth of the Clinic*, Foucault describes how human nature became an object of detailed scientific study that enables and supports regulative disciplinary techniques. These techniques were first employed in institutional contexts like the prison and the asylum. In these contexts, the techniques were used to manage well-defined group of individuals excluded from society for socially unacceptable traits and behaviour. Theory based disciplinary techniques were expanded to cover everyone. The suppositions that enabled and justified the expansion were that sexuality is an essential part of human nature and it requires regulation to function properly as part of human nature. Foucault maintains that in the beginning of the seventeenth century, human beings came under scientific scrutiny in a new way. They came to be scrutinized as possessing a nature that determined their needs and desires and conditioned their behaviour. The most central part of that nature was thought to be sexual. The essence of the subject is to be found in sexuality.

The new scrutiny is aimed at discerning whether individuals properly conform to their nature. Individuals were measured against theoretical standards to see whether they were normal or abnormal. In practice, the new scrutiny focused almost entirely on conformity to sexual nature. Previously people had been scrutinized politically, and socially. They had been scrutinized to see if they obeyed or broke the law and observed or violated secular and ecclesiastical prohibitions. When individuals came to be scrutinized to assess their normalcy, they came to be governed less by laws and prohibitions than by norms. Penal disciplinary techniques are always grounded on the threat of force, isolation, and punishment. It makes people want to attain and maintain sexual normalcy by acting in specified ways and not acting in ways judged aberrant. What Foucault means by saying power must be masked becomes clear when people come to participate in their own sexual regulation. Individuals whose sexual behaviour and desires are regulated must believe that it is something about them that requires control. People must believe that their own nature calls for regulation. This happens when learned discourse promulgates a picture of sexual nature as prone to aberrant expression. Control appears necessary to achieve normalcy rather than arising from a particular historical conglomeration of theories, practices, and vested interests.

According to Foucault, what emerged in the nineteenth century was not the refusal of recognition of sex, as is commonly thought. Instead what

emerged was extensive machinery for producing true discourses concerning sex. Those discourses determined what people think it is to be sexed creatures. One of the main themes of Foucault's thesis on sexuality is the rejection of the repressive hypothesis which states that modern capitalist societies usher in an age of increased sexual repression. Instead, Foucault argues that there has been a veritable explosion of discourses concerning sex during the same epoch. Techniques of normalisation produced a multiplication and intensification of precisely the deviant forms of bodily sexualities.

The psychotherapeutic power identifies with observation and therapeutic listening. It is a purposeful and goal-directed form of action performed by the therapist. The performance of therapeutic listening functions as a form of inspection and monitoring, an auditory surveillance that is designed to elicit and sustain patient disclosure. The doctor's gaze yields knowledge and prescriptions of intervention on the basis of visual analysis. The attentive ear of the psychotherapist brings with it a series of psychological knowledge and interpretations. It is an evaluative or diagnostic frame of intelligibility. Psychotherapeutic power is concerned with the therapeutic talking of patients. Therapeutic talk of patients is a personal narrative of which the patient is both the author and the protagonist.

Questioning techniques added significantly to the ability of therapy to construct rather than merely discover the patient's presentation of problems.

In probing etiological and diagnostic information, therapists very seldom ask outright or blunt questions, but approach the characterization of problematized areas more obliquely, picking up on certain trends and tendencies already mentioned by the patient. Psychodynamic therapeutic dialogue is notably problem-centric. Psychodynamic therapists have at their disposal a variety of questioning tactics and rhetorical manoeuvres, which when taken in conjunction with their ability to reconstruct patients' own accounts of certain events, provides them with broad constructive latitude within the therapy. The slightest deviations from a norm are now punishable. Every quality, every facet of human life is now locked into a perpetual relation to the standard of the norm. The psychological, pedagogical, sociological and criminological disciplines continue to contribute to the innovation and extension of new techniques of power. Language is an effective strategy to subordinate and dominate the people. The hegemony of certain languages has situated some humans on the top of the hierarchy. The hegemony of English has been accepted all over the world. "English words have power" (2008:46). Adiga accepts the superiority of English language among the Indians.

Technologies of the self are a series of techniques that allow individuals to work on themselves by regulating their bodies, their thoughts and their conduct. These processes are offered as avenues through which one can achieve a degree of perfection, happiness, purity and wisdom.

Technologies of the self are ways of attempting to live the truth, tell the truth, and be changed by the truth. One of the important technologies of the self is self-knowledge. Knowing the self involves determining the truth about the self, because only in knowing this truth one can work to achieve perfectibility. This notion of self-knowledge was central to technologies of self-formation in Graeco-Roman and early Christian philosophies and practices, where the instruction takes care of oneself is actually meant to know oneself. The self does not emerge in society naturally rather it is constituted through a game of truth, relations of power, and forms of relation to oneself and to others. One cannot know the truth about oneself because there is no truth to know. People cannot escape from the regulatory institutions and discourses in which they are produced.

Foucault depicts that the self is a construct and produced by those techniques that shape it. Foucault's point is that the subject is a product of discourse rather than being prior to discourse. Discourse generates the subject rather than it manifests thinking, knowing and speaking subject. Michel Foucault's essay *What is an Author?* also challenges conventional approaches to authorship. Foucault argues that the author or the subject is not an individual but is a concept defined by specific cultural, ideological and historical circumstances. He establishes the subject or author as a construct and treats it as not genuine but artificial. Barthes and Foucault expose the author as a myth and negate the exceptional genius of author who is supposed

to transcend space and time.

The subject's conscience or self-knowledge is an imposed one, but the individual experiences it as what he or she is. Adoption of the imposed identity is redefinition of one's subjectivity. The modern soul is born out of methods of punishment, supervision and constraint. Disciplinary techniques create a soul that can then be managed beyond the mere imposition of physical constraints on the body. In managing souls, discipline produces subjected, practiced and docile bodies. Dani Cavallaro states in *Critical and Cultural Theory* that subject is a construct of culture and language:

A subject is both active and passive. For example, the subject of a sentence may denote the person that performs the act described in the sentence or the person on whom the act is performed ('Mary ate a bear'; 'Mary was eaten by a bear'). The passive side of the subject is also borne out by a phrase such as 'the Queen's subjects' and by the idea of the subject as medical patient. Post structuralism has emphasized that the subject is not a free consciousness or a stable human essence but rather a construction of language, politics and culture. (2001:86)

Subject has contradictory attributes that is active and passive. These attributes are two sides of a subject. In one level subject thinks it has a free

consciousness and all actions derives from its autonomous faculty. Another aspect is the subject's passive nature, in literal sense subject is an obedient member and comes under an authority. Post structuralist discourses highlight the passive status of subject, it is not only passive but it does not have a free consciousness. The whole identity of a subject is a construct of culture and language.

Foucault provides a general theory of relationship between a body and power. Disciplinary power turns a female body into a docile body. Woman beautifies herself in order to please men. Male norms provide a subversive way of practising this, in spite of the lack of formal legitimatizing. Women have been subjugated by internalized power relations. Women perpetuate themselves through dieting, exercise, fashion, beauty techniques, which transform female body as an object. Women are socialized to be for others—for men. A woman's worth is often dependent on the male gaze. Women exist as an object for masculine desire. Women are other to themselves because they are defined and measured according to masculine perspective that strives to keep them embodied. Women's bodies are produced by a phallo-centric desire. The male gaze transforms female body as an object. There are three ways in which women experience the effects of power on their bodies differently from men. Firstly, disciplinary practices produce a certain image of the ideal size and shape of a woman's body. Secondly, women tend to exhibit a specific repertoire of gestures, including reserved movement and

limited use of space. Finally, the female body is treated as an ornamental surface to be displayed. Here, women utilize various techniques of self in order to gain control of their bodies and seek the perfect body through shaving, cosmetics, hair care, etc.

Foucault treats the family as a relay between disciplinary sites. It is a point of transfer that connects the school and the military, the military and the workforce, an intersection between educational and clinical locations. When individuals are not adequately bettered by a given disciplinary system, they need to be redirected. The family is the non-disciplinary switch-point that makes such redirection of interventions possible. Subjectivity is shaped by the way in which individuals' bodies are acted upon by disciplinary technologies. The body is central to the question of who the self is, because individuals are classified in terms of their bodies and their bodily functions. Women, for instance, generally have a different experience of subjectivity than men. The subjectivity of children or the very old is different from that of young people. Race, ethnicity, physical appearance and health all contribute to how one sees oneself and is seen by others. The images of young and incredibly thin women that appear in magazines predispose girls to think well of themselves only if they can replicate that shape. Foucault develops these ideas by examining how the body is managed, organised and disciplined in institutions such as prisons, schools or hospitals. Governments produce the body, in their discourses, as an object of social concern and uses tools like social policy to

produce particular types of populations. Health policy ensures one is fit and well, and thus able to contribute to the workforce. Policies that proscribe homosexuality ensure that one uses one's sexual energy to produce babies who will become new subjects of the state, and new workers and consumers. In other words, people's physical bodies are seen as resources available to meet the interests of the state.

Foucault argues that the policies developed by disciplinary sites establish discursive norms. In the nineteenth century, in Britain, there were a number of groups and individuals involved in interventions designed to save people from alcoholism, and give them some kind of basic education. This was done not for humanitarian reasons but drunken and uneducated workers were not very productive. In other words, it is good business to keep the parents sober and send their children to school. The idea of the sober, literate factory worker became the discursive norm. Mothers were enlisted through a series of institutional discourses. They were expected to keep an eye on both their husbands and their children, to make sure that they were doing the right thing.

Foucault argues that bio-power is a technology which appeared in the late eighteenth century for managing populations. It incorporates certain aspects of disciplinary power. If disciplinary power is about training the actions of bodies, bio-power is about managing the births, deaths, reproduction and illnesses of a population. Bio-power emerges at the end of the seventeenth

century from a disciplinary focus on individual bodies. It is typically localized to the institutional confines of schools, hospitals and so on. Medicine and health interventions have a crucial role to play. Meticulous attention was paid to individual bodies, to a concern with the body of the population. Singular and collective life came under the influence of power in the respective forms of bodily technologies of discipline and bio-political technologies of regularization. Bio-politics can be understood as that type of bio-power that targets collectivise, constituting its subjects as people, a nation and a race. Bio-power begins with the body and its potentials. Bio-politics is always necessarily a form of government. Bio-power deals with the strategies of the government that acts under the guise of improving the welfare of the individual. Bio-politics is to be understood as the calculated life-management of human population. The state has a crucial role in regulating vital biological processes such as birth, mortality, disease and life-expectancy. These biological processes come under the domain of bio-politics.

Bio-power only occupies a primary position in Foucault's works for a short period. He uses the term governmentality to describe a particular way of administering the population. He later expands the definition to encompass the techniques and procedures which are designed to govern the conduct of individuals.

By government, Foucault means the techniques and procedures which govern and guide people's conduct. He offers the examples of the govern-

ment of children, government of souls and consciences, government of a household, of a state, or of oneself. When he first introduced the term, his focus was exclusively on government in the restricted sense of the exercise of political sovereignty. In short, governmentality is the rationalisation and systematisation of a particular way of exercising political sovereignty through the government of people's conduct. The idea of governing a population, rather than simply ruling over a territory is something that only started to appear in Europe in the sixteenth century, adapting aspects of the pastoral forms of governance aimed at saving people's souls which already existed in the Church.

At the end of the eighteenth century, any crime became a crime against the whole social body and as a result the criminal, became the enemy of society. This led to the idea of a dangerous and monstrous individual. Only someone who is sick or who is not quite rational, or indeed human, could offend against the entire social body. The legal system began to call on a whole array of experts including psychiatrists, social workers and educators whose function is to determine normalcy. They tried to define their very identity in terms of their deviation from the norm. A society which punished infractions against the law was replaced by a society which sought to cure and rehabilitate diseased and abnormal individuals.

The subject occupies a key position in Foucault's work. Foucault distinguishes between the subject and the individual. He is interested in a form of power that transforms individuals into subjects. He uses the word subject

in two senses: in the sense of being controlled by others and also in the sense of being attached to an identity through awareness and knowledge of self. Foucault intends to show the self as a construct and produced by those techniques that supposedly only shape it. Foucault's point is that the subject is a product of discourse rather than being prior to discourse.

The classical age discovered the body as object and target of power. The body is manipulated, shaped and trained to increase its skilful forces. In every society, the body is in the grip of very strict powers, which impose on it constraints, prohibitions or obligations. These methods made possible the meticulous control and the operations of the body. The methods assure the constant subjection of its forces imposed upon them. Many disciplinary methods had long been in existence in monasteries, army and workshops. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the disciplines became general formula of domination. They were different from slavery because they were not based on a relation of appropriation of bodies. Discipline would be effective if it could obtain the effects of utility. Discipline produces subjected and practised bodies. Discipline increases the forces of the body (in economic terms of utility). It dissociates power from the body and it turns into an aptitude, a capacity, which it seeks to increase.

The success of disciplinary power derives from the use of simple instruments such as hierarchical observation, normalizing judgement and the examination. The camp is the diagram of a power that acts by means of

general visibility. For a long time, this model of the limp or its underlying principle was found in urban development. A central point would be both the source of light illuminating everything, and a locus of convergence for everything that must be known.

Foucault lists a number of techniques or principles which facilitate the operation of the mechanisms of power. Space is organised in a particular way, starting with a principle of enclosure which means that people are locked away into institutional spaces: criminals into prisons, children into schools and workers into factories. Within these broad enclosures, smaller partitions, such as cells and classrooms, dormitories and hospital wards are created. People in these enclosures are ranked. Thus, children are divided into classes according to their age and soldiers according to a chain of command. All of these divisions require specially designed architecture to physically maintain these organised social spaces.

Foucault describes another set of disciplinary techniques that relates to the organisation of activity. Firstly, the establishment of timetable meant that groups of people could be engaged in the same task at the same time in schools, factories and workshops. Secondly, forms of group activity are organised, people are trained to perform the same set of movements at the same time, for instance army drills or marching, or reciting lessons together. Thirdly, methods of training the body and its gestures are perfected. In schools, children are taught to hold a pen correctly and to sit at their school

desks in a particular way. All of this was aimed at making the body a much more efficient unit which would waste minimal time in performing useful activities. The success of disciplinary power is guaranteed by additional technologies of generalised surveillance.

Jeremy Bentham's invention of the Panopticon represents a major episode in the history of technologies and architecture. It is based on the architectural principle of a ring shaped building with cells grouped around a central tower. The design of the Panopticon consists of a tower in the centre surrounded by a ring-shaped building composed of cells. The Panopticon allows for the continuous observation of inmates, while simultaneously requiring few supervisory resources. Panopticism is the exemplary technique through which disciplinary power is able to function. It relies on surveillance and the internal training produces to incite states of docility. It need not rely on displays of physical force or violence. Direct force represents merely frustrated or failed forms of discipline.

Major effect of the panopticon is to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. The surveillance is permanent in its effects even if it is discontinuous in its actions. Thus, panoptic surveillance is able to create and sustain power relation independent of the person who exercises it. The inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers.

The Panopticon is a machine designed to carry out procedures for the alteration of behaviour and to train or correct individuals. The modern mode of punishment centres on the attempt to reform the criminal's soul. This stands in stark contrast to the types of public executions routinely practised. It is performed directly on the criminal's body, as a display of the awesome power of sovereign authority. The shift towards imprisonment as a method of punishment is usually attributed to a general humanisation that accompanied the transition to modernity.

There is no need for weapons, physical violence or material constraints, a gaze is enough to regulate an individual. Each person exercises this surveillance over and against himself. It is about preventing people from doing wrong and indeed taking away their very will to do wrong. This is the principle on which modern society operates such as in schools, hospitals, prisons, shopping malls and airports. Any other contemporary public or institutional space is arranged in the principle of panopticon.

Psychoanalytic critics have examined the gaze in terms of gender relations. Laura Mulvey has made vital contributions to the contemporary discourse on the gaze in relation to psychoanalysis and sexuality. Mulvey argues that female characters in Hollywood narrative cinema are generally controlled by the male gaze on two related levels:

Firstly, the male protagonist objectifies the heroine through

his gaze. Secondly, the male spectator identifies with the filmic hero and uses his own gaze to frame the heroine as a passive object. The male urge to control woman stems, in a psychoanalytical frame of reference, from the fact that her lack of a penis implies the threat of castration and is thus a source of anxiety. Men have two options available in coping with this anxiety and both rely on the objectification of woman through the gaze. Objectification can take two forms and from each a particular stereotype of femininity ensues. On the one hand, woman may be devalued, demonized as the quintessential symbol of sexual corruption. Characterized as the overpowering and vampiric beast to be repressed, the demonic woman fuels male fantasies of containment of the female body. This option is connected with sadism. On the other hand, woman may be over-valued as a fetish. (qtd in *Critical and Cultural Theory*, 2001: 137)

Mulvey argues the male protagonist and male spectator objectify the female through their gaze. The male control and objectify the female due to man's anxiety resulting from his castration complex. The objectification of woman can take two forms; one is by degrading woman as mere sexual symbol. Secondly, woman is over valued as a fetish, this is to keep woman as a passive and silent object of worship. Thus, Laura Mulvey's theoretical

positions highlight the vital role of gaze in administering and objectifying the female body.

Discourse originally is a technical term in linguistics and rhetoric. The general meaning of discourse is a reasoned argument but in some usages it has come to mean something equivalent to world view. Foucault admits in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* that his own use of the term is somewhat equivocal and he had used and abused it in a multitude of ways. In the most general sense, he uses it to mean a certain way of speaking. He also uses it to define the group of statements that belong to a single system of formation for example clinical discourse, economic discourse, the discourse of natural history and psychiatric discourse.

Foucault argues that one can only examine a system of discourse, once it has already happened. One cannot extrapolate from one specific historical order and say that a particular rule will be valid tomorrow or next year. One can only describe the rules of a past system of discourse. One cannot make those rules prescriptive and apply them in the future. Discourse does not represent things as they are. Discourse are not transparent windows into the real world.

In *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault develops a whole series of categories to organise both discourse and its relation to other practices, events and objects. The most widely known and widely used of these terms is the

discursive practice. Discursive practices operate according to rules which are quite specific to a particular time, space, and cultural setting. It is not a matter of external determinations being imposed on people's thought, rather it is all about several rules and regulations which a bit like the grammar of a language, allow certain statements to be made. The rules which define a discursive practice do not necessarily always coincide with the works of specific authors, or with specific disciplines or sciences. The discourse of an era, instead of reflecting pre-existing entities and orders, brings into being the concepts, oppositions and hierarchies of which it speaks. These elements are both products and propagators of power. Particular discursive formations of an era determine what time is accounted knowledge and truth, as well as what is considered to be criminal or insane, or sexually deviant.

In any society there are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterise and constitute the social body. These relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse. There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses. In every society, the production of discourse is controlled, selected, organised and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures. Discourse is both which constrains and enables writing, speaking and thinking. Discourse cannot be treated merely as an extension and instrumentalization of power, as that which masks or translates power rather it is inscribed within discourse.

Foucault thinks of discourse in terms of bodies of knowledge. His use of the concept moves it away from something to do with language and closer towards the concept of discipline. One can use the word discipline in two senses, as referring to scholarly disciplines such as science, medicine, psychiatry, sociology and so on, and as referring to disciplinary institutions of social control such as the prison, the school, the hospital, the confession and so on. Foucault's idea of discourse shows historically specific relations between disciplines (defined as bodies of knowledge) and disciplinary practices (forms of social control and social possibility)

By the term discourse, Foucault does not refer to language or social interaction but to relatively well-bounded areas of social knowledge. In any given historical period one can write, speak or think about a given social object or practice. Discourse is not just a form of representation; it is a material condition (or a set of conditions) which enables and constrains the socially productive imagination. These conditions can therefore be referred to as discourses or discursive conditions of possibility. Discourse does resurface briefly in Volume 1 of *The History of Sexuality*. However, he describes discourse as the location where power and knowledge intersect. The term discursive practice refers to a historically and culturally specific set of rules for organising and producing different forms of knowledge.

In *The Order of Things*, Foucault introduces a notion he famously labels as episteme. The episteme or epistemological field is a subset of the historical a priori and describes the underlying orders, or conditions of possibility which regulate the emergence of various scientific or pre-scientific forms of knowledge during specific periods of history. These epistemological fields give rise to the diverse forms of empirical science. The episteme appears and disappears abruptly for reasons. He explains it is similar to a period of history, but referring not to historical events but to the character and nature of knowledge at a particular time. For Foucault, knowledge is defined and organized in various societies and at various times in different ways.

During the Renaissance, all knowledge was based on the idea that one could read the true nature of things by using a principle of resemblance. In the Classical Age which followed, knowledge was based on the idea that words and things could be arranged into orderly tables. In the nineteenth century, the search for historical origins formed the basis for the organisation of knowledge. Foucault remarks in any given culture and at any given moment, there is always only one episteme that defines the conditions of possibility of all knowledge.

Episteme is not a sort of grand underlying theory, it is a space of dispersion. The episteme is not a theme which unites the different discourses rather it is the space they inhabit. It is an open and doubtless indefinitely describable field of relationships. It is not the sum of everything which can

be known within a period but it is the complex set of relationships between the knowledges which are produced within a particular period and the rules by which new knowledge is generated. Within a particular period one can see similarities in the way that different sciences operate at a conceptual and theoretical level, despite dealing with different subject matters. For example, Foucault, in *The Order of Things* analyses the conceptual frameworks, theoretical assumptions, and working methods which certain sciences such as natural history, economics and linguistics, have in common. He states in *The Order of Things*:

what was common to the natural history, the economics and the grammar of the Classical period was certainly not present to the consciousness of the scientist; or that part of it that was conscious was superficial, limited and almost fanciful, but unknown to themselves, the naturalists, economists and grammarians, employed the same rules to define the objects proper to their own study, to form their concept, to build their theories. (1970: 11)

He describes the manner in which events of the world are interpreted as signs of the supernatural world: crop-failure, storms and disease. In fact, any event judged to be exceptional is seen to be indicative of God's anger. Foucault argues that the move from one episteme to another creates a discursive break or

discontinuity. He suggests that these breaks between epistemes are sudden rather than an evolution or reaction to the former times.

New historicism holds that all knowledge and cognition are historically conditioned. It is also widely used in diverse disciplines to designate an approach from a historical perspective. Historicism appeared in Europe and primarily in Germany. It challenged the progressive view of history that interpreted history as a linear, uniform process that operated according to universal laws. Historicism stressed the unique diversity of historical contexts and stressed the importance of developing specific methods and theories appropriate to each unique historical context. Historicism challenges the concept of truth and the notion of rationality in modernity. Modern thinkers held that reason is a universal faculty of the mind that is free of interpretation that can grasp universal and unchanging truth. Historicism questioned this notion of rationality and truth and argued for the historical context of knowledge and reason. Historicism is an explicit formulation of the historicity of knowledge.

It criticizes the concept of truth which transcends history and argues that truth is conditioned by human history. Historicism rejects the central ideas of the Enlightenment, such as the concept of universal rationality, and belief in the progress of human history. These ideas of the Enlightenment are built upon the presuppositions that there is only one kind of rationality applicable to

all people and cultures and that human history is a linear process of progress whose pattern of development was the same for all.

New historicism inspired from various post-structuralist theorists. Ideology manifests itself in all institutions including literature. Ideology operates covertly to subjectivity and subordinate language users to the interests of the ruling classes. It subordinates the interest of the ruling class. Michel Foucault is quite possibly the most influential person in the formation of new historicism. He is interested in the issues of power, epistemology, subjectivity, and ideology. Foucault's ability to pick up common terms and give them a new meaning, thus changes the way critics addressed such pervasive issues as power, discourse, discipline, subjectivity, sexuality, and government. His view that the discourse of an era, instead of reflecting preexisting entities and orders, brings into being the concepts, oppositions and hierarchies of which it speaks. To him these elements are both products and propagators of power, or social forces. Particular discursive formations of an era determine what time is accounted knowledge and truth, as well as what is considered to be criminal or insane, or sexually deviant.

New historicist accepts Derrida's view that there is nothing outside the text, in the special sense that everything about the past is only available to us in textualised form. It is thrice processed, first through the ideology or outlook or discursive practice of its own time then through those of ours, and finally

through the distorting web of language itself. Whatever is represented in a text is thereby remade.

Instead of a literary foreground and a historical background, both texts have equal weight and constantly inform or interrogate each other. It believes that literature does not occupy an aesthetic realm independent of economic, social and political conditions; nor does it have a timeless artistic value. History is not homogeneous and stable pattern of facts and events which form a background to the literature of an era which literature simply reflects. Identity is not unified, unique, enduring or personal. The author and the reader are subjects who are constructed and positioned by the conditions of their own era. The text and co-text are seen as expressions of the same historical moment. Literary work is not primarily the record of one mind's attempt to solve certain problems. It is social and cultural construct shaped by more than one consciousness. Culture and social construct shape and produce it. Literature is not a distinct category of human activity. The literary text is interpreted as product and producer, end and source, of history. History is not a set of facts outside the written text. Here the distinction between history and fiction collapses. History cannot be separated from literature and vice versa. Power is perhaps the most elusive term in the new historicist and cultural materialist vocabulary. It is more frequently used by new historicists. Foucault was particularly interested in knowledge of human being, and power that acts on human beings. For the most part, new historicist critics are not as interested in power plays between monarchs or between monarchs and

usurpers. They are interested in the operations of power within self regulating ideologies. Thus Brannigan states in *New Historicism and Cultural Materialism*:

New historicism is not simply a way of reading literature in its historical contexts. It is also about power relations, ideological functions, epistemic transformations, modes and systems of representation, transgressions of genre, discursive formations and the production of objects of knowledge. (1998: 151).

New historicism is not a way of approaching literature in the light of historical contexts more than that it deals with power relations, ideological functions and epistemic transformations. It paves the way for formation of knowledge and systems of representation.

Foucault's entire philosophy is based on the assumption that human knowledge and existence are profoundly historical. He argues that the most human about man is his/her history. All knowledge and cognition are historically conditioned. He challenges the progressive view of history that interprets history as a linear, uniform process that operates according to universal laws. He criticizes the concept of truth that transcends history and argues that truth is conditioned by human history. He rejects the central ideas of the Enlightenment, such as the concept of universal rationality, and belief in the progress of human history. The ideas of the Enlightenment are built upon the presuppositions that there is only one kind of rationality applicable

to all people and cultures and that human history is a linear process of progress whose pattern of development is the same for all.

Analytic philosophy is characterized by the conception that rationality is ahistoric. It is necessarily prior to all intellectual inquiry and transcends disciplinary, temporal and cultural contexts. Foucault wants to demonstrate that rationality is only one possible form among others. The term *apriori* is a notion usually associated with the work of German philosopher Immanuel Kant. What Kant means by this is that there are eternal ideal types or templates of order which exist outside of time. Hence the idea of beauty, for instance, is eternal and all works of art in some way refer back to that unchanging ideal. Foucault brings this philosophical ideal of order firmly into history. In his model, there are no ideal eternal orders existing outside of time which structure our existence and thought. These orders are all located in time. It is only possible to discover patterns once they have already occurred. It is not possible to apply the orders discovered to future events. Foucault offers a definition in *The Order of Things* where he explains:

This a priori is what, in a given period, delimits in the totality of experience a field of knowledge, defines the mode of being of the objects that appear in that field, provides man's everyday perception with theoretical powers, and defines the conditions in which he can sustain a discourse about things that is recognised to be true. (1973: 158)

Each historical period orders knowledge and constructs concepts according to certain rules. These rules can be deduced from a study of the traces of past knowledge and practices.

During the nineteen sixties, Foucault used the term archaeology to describe his approach to the history of knowledge. One digs down through history to understand the present, to understand what one is today. Archaeology is always very much aimed at producing a history of the present. The principal difference between archaeology and genealogy is that archaeology deals with neutral theoretical systems of knowledge and genealogy deals with power struggles. Genealogy is the history written in light of current concerns. Genealogy is history written in accordance with a commitment to the issues of the present moment. It intervenes in the present moment. Genealogy is an effective history written in the light of current intervention. One examines the past in order to throw light on contemporary problems. Thus, Foucault states in *Nietzsche, Genealogy and History*:

Genealogy is thus, a process of analysing and uncovering the historical relationship between truth, knowledge and power. Genealogy rejects the meta-historical deployment of ideal signification and indefinite teleologies. It opposes itself to the search for origins. (1984: 77)

Archaeology deals with discourses and genealogy deals with power. Foucault describes genealogy as a form of research aimed at activating subjugated historical knowledge. It is the knowledge which has been rejected by mainstream knowledge. He characterises archaeology as the process of unearthing and analysing subjugated knowledge, and genealogy as the method of strategically disseminating such knowledge so that it can be effective for people's struggles. In short, archaeology is about the conditions of possibility which give rise to knowledge, whereas genealogy is about the constraints that limit the orders of knowledge.

Archaeology examines the conditions of possibility underlying the emergence of various systems of knowledge. It examines the ways in which these systems of knowledge create the grounds for producing statements recognised to be valid. Genealogy, on the other hand, examines the constraints, the regimes of truth that underlie the historically variable divisions between the true and the false in knowledge and culture.

In his later works he argues that individuals can in fact cultivate themselves through what he calls arts of existence that not only allow one to become self-determining agents, but also provide the grounds to challenge and resist power structures. Foucault states in *The History of Sexuality, Volume two: The Use of Pleasure*: "I am referring to what might be called the arts of existence what I mean by the phrase are those intentional and voluntary themselves rules of conduct, but also seek to transform themselves"

(1986:10-11). People are not inherently what they are. They are not made by themselves but by powerful discourses and institutions. One can be what one decides to be, and one can change that being when it no longer suits. The concept of unique subject of a person is swallowed up by the social and discursive formations. Thus, he writes in *Ethics: Essential Works of Foucault 1954–1984*:

What strikes me is the fact that, in our society, art has become something related only to objects and not to individuals or to life. That art is something which is specialized or done by experts who are artists. But couldn't everyone's life become a work of art? Why should the lamp or the house be an art object but not our life?. (1997: 261)

The self can be authored by oneself. One can produce one's self and one's life as a work of art. Foucault's early works on subjectivity effectively debunked the idea that identity is inherent or natural, but it failed to explain how and why individuals can in fact act autonomously, or resist the power of disciplinary forces and institutional discourses.

Foucault insists that there is a connection between aesthetics and subjectivity. He writes in *Ethics: Essential Works of Foucault 1954–1984*: “Why should a painter work if he is not transformed by his own painting?” (1997: 131). Foucault's many analyses of art and literature point out that

aesthetics is not only for the elite, but is a part of social practice. Aesthetics is important not because it is a bourgeois practice or beauty is inherently important, rather the idea of aesthetics can be used as a metaphor for the self. By engaging so actively with one's life, one can exercise power in one's own networks. Thus, one can be the star of one's own movie.

Michel Foucault's reflections on power, subject, identity, discourse and knowledge have been re-structured and have deconstructed the contemporary world and its belief. Foucault introduces his reflections on power by criticizing the traditional beliefs on power: power is oppressive and negative. Power is productive. It produces knowledge, subject, truth, identity and even reality. Power is not an institution but it is a strategic relation. Power is not associated with any agent. Resistance co-exists with power. There can be no power relation without resistance. Foucault appreciates the reciprocal relation between power and knowledge. He describes discourse as the location where power and knowledge intersect. Discourse generates the subject. Foucault's entire philosophy is based on the assumption that human knowledge and existence are profoundly historical. The powerful administer the power through effective strategies. Pastorate is a salvation based on power. It is a kind of power, one predicated on the provision of love. Confession is one of the effective devices in the deployment of power. Panopticism is a technique aimed at keeping someone under surveillance. His later works suggest that individuals can cultivate themselves as self-

determining agents through the arts of existence which provides the grounds to challenge the power structures.

The next chapter makes a comprehensive analysis of Golding's works based on the theoretical light of power relations. The Second World War played a crucial role in shaping the career of William Golding. From nineteen forties to nineteen forty five Golding served in the navy which created a huge impact on him. There are certain recurrent objects in his novels that stand for power and domination such as fire, tower, pyramid and bloodshed. Golding believes there is an innate tendency in human beings to involve themselves in evil, selfish and brutal activities.