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What is This?

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Abstract

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This paper, the second in a series on the relevance of the modernist–postmodernist debate to organizational analysis, looks at the work of the late Michel Foucault. Whilst his work is seen as producing a whole series of problems for those brought up in an Anglo-American tradition of intellectual endeavour, it is maintained that his work is suggestive of alternative ways of approaching problems and ordering material. A three fold periodization of his work is suggested beginning with the 'archeaological' period, then attention is paid to the 'genealogical' period and finally, though less fixed and discernible, his concern for ethics is noted. Ideas and concepts drawn from all but the very last of his writings are then utilized in ways which might allow for a significant reordering in the theory of organizations, particularly in the debate concerning organizational heterogeneity versus homogeneity, the importance of 'total institutions', organizational control of sexuality and the role of new technologies in organizational control systems.

Introduction

Michel Foucault's untimely death in 1984, at the age of 57, has put to an end a steady stream of scholarship which has a direct, though poorly recognized, relevance for the study of organizations. In this paper, an attempt will be made to briefly explicate the role played by Foucault's work in the postmodernism debate and in the light of this contribution show its possible beneficial impact upon contemporary organizational analysis.

As we have seen (Cooper and Burrell 1988), the modernism–postmodernism debate is multi-faceted, but in some ways it is characterized by Habermas's defence of the modernist position against a line of French thinkers leading 'from Bataille via Foucault to Derrida' (Habermas 1981: 13). Foucault and Habermas met in 1983 and 1984 but this merely continued a debate in which they had been engaged for several years. It was unlikely that this exchange ever would have led to a dialogue because the protagonists defined 'modernity' in incompatible ways (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982: 109), and perceived the Enlightenment in particular (and Kant's role within it) in very different lights. As a result, Habermas saw Foucault as producing a failed critique of modernism because the latter supposedly provided outdated and well-worn

attacks on the development of human rationality, no explanation of why the present *should* be condemned, and a reactionary political message. Foucault, for his part, was reluctant to accept the epithet of postmodernism as a description of his work — although, as we shall see, he rejected most labels that critics attempted to attach to his books. Nevertheless, Foucault's critique of modernism is important but is open to a wide variety of interpretation, and so what follows is but one path through his *oeuvres*.

Michel Foucault was Professor of the History of Systems of Thought in Paris from 1970, publishing a series of texts (Foucault 1973, 1975, 1977a, 1977b, 1977c, 1979) in which a number of common themes are discernible, but which were not designed to produce, in any programmatic way, a grand theoretical edifice. Rather, through the medium of a mass of detailed analysis, Foucault was often keen to confront and reject received opinion. In the place of widely-held views, he substituted tentative hypotheses which invite, indeed beg for, heated discussion and debate. He was an iconoclast who suggested alternative modes of thinking. His style is ornate and, like a thicket, often impenetrable — but deliberately and consciously so. It should not be assumed that Foucault's writings are fully coherent to the Anglo–American eye. They are the product of a long European tradition in which philosophical idealism is strongly represented, the epistemology of empiricism is seen as suspect and where a complex, convoluted writing style is self-consciously adopted to escape from what is seen as the limitations and constraints of 'clear prose'. Since his work does not contain a fixed set of theoretical propositions in the conventional sense, it is merely suggestive of alternative ways of approaching problems and ordering material. Futhermore, it is important to note that Foucault's iconoclasm takes him into positions which are not readily defensible and his refusal to retain one position for longer than the period between his last book and the next is certainly problematic. For the sake of exposition, however, let us assume a wide three-fold periodization in his work.

The Archaeological Period

Foucault' earlier work (published in English 1977a, 1975, 1977b) deals provocatively with psychiatry, medicine and the human sciences and the ways in which respectively 'sanity', 'health' and 'knowledge' are perceived, classified and distributed with Western culture.

In *Madness and Civilization* (1979a), which is based upon Foucault's doctoral dissertation, the author presents 'a history of madness in the Age of Reason' in which before — and after — snapshots are presented to demonstrate the presence of a 'target divide' in Western thought. In the mid seventeenth-century 'the great exclusion' had taken place in which deviants had been incarcerated in the newly built lunatic asylums, there to look after themselves. However, psychiatric knowledge developed at the end of the eighteenth-century as a new way to deal with the insane. The brain came to be seen as a

different 'organ' over a brief 25 year period, as a new band of experts came to the fore, who saw madness as their object of study. The history of 'madness', then, is a history with a great break or rupture in it between 1780 and the turn of that century.

Similarly, the development in this period of 'la clinique' — both the clinical lecture and the institution — is the topic of Foucault's *The Birth of the Clinic* (1975). This book is also about a self-constituted class of experts who, through their talk, can establish truth or falsehood. The method of analysis used in writing this kind of history is termed 'archaeology' by Foucault, who develops it much more as a methodology in *The Order of Things* (1973). The project in this text was to write a history of the 'immature sciences', in which the rules of formation *common* to the (apparently unrelated) sciences of natural history, economics and grammar were shown to exist and were described. These anonymous rules of formation concern the discursive practices through which statements are formed and produced. They differ markedly in each period of thought (or episteme) and do not map on to each other. By the nineteenth-century, the key concepts have become life, labour and language and are the provinces of biology, economics and linguistics, respectively. These form new objects for thought, new discourses which have to be seen as independent of the speaker. The autonomy of discourse is maintained by Foucault at this point to such an extent that the knowing subject disappears and is replaced by a concern for discourse alone.

The Archaeology of Knowledge (1977b) represents the long and cryptic methodological summation of this early period. Rather than accept the 'History of Ideas' in which truth is taken to be the accurate representation of reality in an ever-expanding body of statements made by great figures in science, archaeology sees truth as the production of sets of statements and their regulation within discrete systems of discourse independent of the conscious speaker. Thus the archaeological method presupposes discontinuities in the forms of discourse adopted; its key aim is to constitute discursive series and to see where they begin and end. It seeks primarily to understand the 'archive' — the diversity of autonomous and sometimes amorphous discourses.

The early works then, consist of an overriding concern with the literary and the discursive as they relate to the human sciences, particularly those concerned with discourses on madness and disease. The human sciences are not seen as developing after the Enlightenment unilinearly but are held to be fragmented into discrete periods which need to be understood through the notions of 'episteme' and 'archive'. The subject is decentred in this early work since it is not a question of who speaks a discourse, but of what discourse is spoken. In Foucault, there is no unity of history, no unity of the subject, no sense of progress, no acceptance of the History of Ideas.

On the basis of this work, the early Foucault is often assumed to be a 'structuralist', although he explicitly rejected such a label himself (White 1979; Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982). Nevertheless Foucault is structuralist enough to wish to displace the subject and consciousness from the centre of theoretical

concern and, because of this process of 'decentring the subject' (Lemert 1979), human beings appear in his writings as mere objects. Moreover, the search for common features in a variety of discourses suggests a concern for 'the same in the different', a desire to point to underlying commonalities in a wide range of discursive practices; discourses, whether scientific or not, must be analyzed with literary tools and concepts. White, in his discussion of Foucault's structuralism (White 1979) goes so far as to maintain that underpinning 'the archaeological method' of Foucault's early work is a theory of tropes (Morgan 1980; Bourgeois and Pinder 1982) in which analogies and differences are the key focus of attention.

One does not find other features associated with structuralist thought, however. For example, there is no easy acceptance of the geological metaphor (Clegg 1981), or a realist ontology or of Marxian analytical categories (Sheridan 1980; Smart 1983). Indeed, the differences between Foucault and his one-time structuralist colleague and teacher, Althusser (Althusser 1969), are somewhat fundamental and are located in precisely this kind of terrain. Certainly, Foucault's early advocacy of an 'archaeological analysis' stands against Althusser's views on both history and scientific practice. Nevertheless, the archaeological period in the late 1960s can be characterized with some validity as being quasi-structuralist (Hoy 1986: 4) and therefore as not at all in sympathy with the modernist projects of Habermas and other humanists. Interestingly, Foucault himself lost sympathy with this quasi-structuralism, as a whole series of interviews demonstrates (Rabinow 1984). In place of the archaeological method with its emphasis on discourse, Foucault turned to the non-discursive realm, and particularly to the issue of power as understood from the point of view of genealogy.

Genealogical Period

For a while, Foucault attempted to supplement this archaeological theory with genealogy, but, in the later works, the separation between these approaches grows and archaeology assumes a very minor role. The genealogist is a diagnostician who is interested in power, knowledge and the body and how these inter-relate. In relation to archaeology, practice now becomes much more important than theory (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982); moreover, practices become viewed from the inside rather than from the viewpoint of the detached observer. In developing this new stance, Foucault was greatly influenced by his understanding of Nietzsche. For both, the claim of objectivity masks subjective motivations, high sounding stories hide the lowest of motives, accidents and lies lie behind the march of history. Thus, genealogy is opposed to traditional history and the search for underlying laws and finalities. Like archaeology, it stands against continuity and for discontinuities, but inverts the earlier position in that it seeks to avoid the search for depth. Genealogy is interested in the superficial and the unexpected. Reality does not cover up some hidden

underlying essences. It is as it appears. Our knowledge of reality, however, is enmeshed in a power field. Indeed, the petty malices of those who seek to dominate mean that knowledge itself is increasingly part of the play of domination. Thus, the issues of power, knowledge and the body are intertwined as the focus of the genealogist.

Whilst little attention has been paid here to the substance of Foucault's earlier texts, in this section I wish to consider in some detail the work of the genealogical period, for it is here that Foucault's relevance to organization studies is most important. Thus, it is *Discipline and Punish* (1977c) and *The History of Sexuality, Volume I* (1979) to which attention will now be given. Throughout all of Foucault's writing there is a stress on the importance of an historical understanding, stemming not from an interest in the past, but from a deep commitment to understand the present. He maintains that he is concerned with *genealogy* and with locating traces of the present in the past, not with the reconstruction of the past (Foucault 1979; Weeks 1981). Historically, two modes of domination are recognized by Foucault as characterizing the Western world; there are the 'traditional' and the 'disciplinary' and are to be sharply contrasted. *Discipline and Punish* begins a horrific description of the execution of the regicide, Damiens, on March 2nd 1757. His death was to take the following form.

'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 commited the said parricide, 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 . . .' (Foucault 1977c: 3)

Some eighty years later rules 'for the House of Young Prisoners in Paris' were drawn up. These include

'at half past seven in summer, half past eight in winter, the prisoners must be back in their cells after the washing of hands and the inspection of clothes in the courtyard; at the first drum-roll they must undress and at the second get into bed.' (Foucault 1977c: 7)

In these two contrasting descriptions — one of an execution, the other of a timetable — we see the contrast between traditional and disciplinary modes of domination. The disciplinary mode replaced the traditional in less than a century as public taste for physical punishment and 'the spectacle' declined. Punishment began, slowly and in one or two isolated places at first, to become directed towards the 'soul', the mind, the will. Extremes of violence inflicted on the body speedily diminished and, in some cases, even disappeard, but were replaced, according to Foucault, by complex, subtle forms of correction and training. It is his belief that our own contemporary society is not maintained by a visible state apparatus of national guards and state police, less still by shared value systems, but by the hidden techniques of discipline always at work in 'carceral' institutions.

The development of such 'complete and austere' organizations is well described by Foucault. For him, the techniques of discipline and close observation incorporated in the new prisons of 18th century Pennsylvania and Tuscany, France and Prussia derived from three centuries of practices in other spheres, notably education and the military (Sunesson 1985). But there is an astonishing resemblance between the new prisons and other organizations of the disciplinary age: hospitals, factories, housing estates, schools and barracks. Jeremy Bentham's design for the Panopticon — a circular building with central observation tower from which inmates (or workers or prisoners) could be surveyed at work or sleep without being able to observe their observers — becomes for Foucault *the* metaphor for the disciplinary mode of domination. The implication is that, built into the architecture and geometry of disciplinary organizations is the distinctive arrangement of observation and close surveillance.

The eighteenth-century also witnessed great attention being paid to the body as an object or target for manipulation and training. Once the human body became conceptualized as a machine it was thereafter opened up to mechanical rearrangement and tuning. This discovery allows the development of 'political anatomy' where 'power seeps into the very grain of individuals, reaches right into their bodies, permeates their gestures, their posture, what they say, how they learn to live and work with other people' (Foucault 1977c: 28). The minutest features of life become subject to detailed analysis and investigation: regulations become meticulous, inspections fussy, supervision extremely close. Great attention is paid to the posture of school children and the marching steps of soldiers. Whatever the organization, discipline revolves around the minute details of the lives of those subjected to it. Discipline soon comes to require a cellular system of locating and concentrating individuals in space, a time-table for activity, manuals for the correct movement of the body and a precise economical system of command. Individuals become 'cases' who are measured, described, evaluated, examined and compared. Real lives are converted into written case notes. In short, the body loses its mystery.

Similarly, the development of bio-power (Foucault 1979: 140–144) is marked by an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations. This set of techniques focus their attention upon sexuality, for this is the pivot of two axes. One axis is the life of the body and control over it; the other axis is the life of the species and its regulation and domination. Sexuality becomes the prime target for control within disciplinary society and therefore the subject of a steady proliferation of discourses concerning sex. In the nineteenth-century sexuality was increasingly analyzed, classified, specified and examined. Four basic categories of target were recognized. Action was taken against 'the hysterical woman', 'the masturbating child', 'the Malthusian couple' and 'the perverse adult' (Foucault 1979). Many attempts to 'normalize' the behaviour of the population were made as individuals became seen as part of a homogeneous social body (Foucault 1977c: 184). To be sure, specific differences between human beings

were recognized, but only in so far as they deviated from the Norm. The Norm was established by a variety of 'professional' groupings — anatomists, doctors, health workers, demographers, priests, teachers and so on, who focussed their gaze upon the body and the soul of the population (Melossi and Pavarini 1981).

Bio-power was taken from existing organizations, notably the army, and was transplanted into a social setting which was becoming organizational. Political anatomy and bio-power provided the basis for the growth of hospitals, prisons, asylums, housing estates, universities and schools. In turn, these organizations drew support from the establishment and proliferation of the many 'professions' which serviced these carceral institutions. Today, a 'normalizing' function is performed by a whole series of subsidiary authorities who swarm around the 'disciplines'. For example, educationalists, psychiatrists, psychological experts, members of the prison service and magistrates all form parallel judgements of the 'cases' coming before them. Foucault maintains that

'The judges of normality are present everywhere. We are in the society of the teacher-judge, the doctor-judge, the educator-judge, the social worker-judge. It is on them that the universal reign of the normative is based; and each individual, wherever he may find himself, subjects to it his body, his gestures, his behaviour, his aptitudes, his achievements.' (Focault 1977c: 304).

Thus, the prison is only 'the extreme form' of what Foucault calls disciplinary power, for its boundaries extend well beyond the walls of the penitentiary. Within the whole range of organizations found in contemporary society, one finds not a plurality of powers but a unified power field encapsulated within the bureaucratic, military and administrative apparatus. For Foucault, power does not reside in things, but in a network of relationships which are systematically interconnected. Disciplinary power should not be viewed as negative power. It is not a series of prohibitions delimiting, proscribing and discouraging activities of lower-order organizational members. Power should be seen in a positive sense as actively directed towards the body and its possibilities, converting it into something both useful and docile. Moreover, organizational superordinates do not create discipline through their actions or strategies. On the contrary, they are as much disciplined as their subordinates. Disciplinary power is invested in, transmitted by and reproduced through all human beings in their day-to-day existence. It is discrete, regular, generalized and uninterrupted. It does not come from outside the organization but it is built into the very processes of education, therapy, house building and manufacture (Donzelot 1980). Thus, the body of the individual is 'directly involved in a political field: power relations have an immediate hold upon it; they invest it, mark it, train it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs' (Foucault 1977c: 27).

Foucault sees the predominant perspective on power as essentially flawed, for within it power is seen as residing in the state and as filtering down to lower levels such as the school, the courts, and so on. He characterizes this position as

'juridic consciousness'. In contrast, Foucault wishes to conceptualize power as located in the 'micro-physics' of social life in the 'depths' of society. Here, minute and diffuse power relations exist, always in tension, always in action. But it is from this level and from such small beginnings, that 'a global unity of domination' arises or 'the globality of discipline'. So deeply entrenched is the disciplinary mode of domination, so pervasive is it in its operation, and so ubiquitous is it in its location, that changing any part of the power field leaves the basic form untouched. Discipline cannot be simply removed by challenging and overturning the state; it is part and parcel of the everyday life of the body of the individual and of the body politic.

Such a view does not lend itself to optimism since the prospects for an early end to disciplinary power evaporate in its wake. This is particularly so given the nature of 'resistance'. A number of commentators have pointed out that prisons are not at all good at performing the function of disciplining the inmates. Riots, illegal behaviour and indiscipline seem to characterize contemporary prisons as much as the creation of docility. Does this resistance then refute Foucault's perspective on prisons as being the archetypal organization of the disciplinary society? Not so. For him, 'resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power' (Foucault 1979: 95). The very existence of power is seen as relying upon a multiplicity of points of resistance which play the role of adversary, target, support or handle within power relationships. Thus resistance is inconceivable without discipline. Prisons are there to demonstrate the futility of resistance and the importance of discipline. They may be hot-beds of resistance but they provide 'discipline' with an adversary and target against which to pit itself. The existence of resistance does not mean that discipline is threatened. It means that discipline can grow stronger knowing where its next efforts must be directed.

In summary then, Foucault maintains that the despotic character of the disciplinary mode of domination is built into the heart, the essence of contemporary society and affects the body of the individual, of whatever class, at the minutest level. This implies that as the reader peruses this page, the gestures, the posture, the attitude, 'the dressage' adopted in this literary task are part of the political anatomy of society. Even the mundane activity of reading is reflective of a discipline which is transmitted by and sustained within a homogenous collectively of organizational forms. According to Foucault, since all of us belong to organizations and all organizations are alike and take the prison as their model, we are all imprisoned within a field of bio-power, even as we sit alone. The relevance of this view to the critique of conventional approaches to organizational power (Hickson et al. 1971: Pettigrew 1973; Mintzberg 1983) should be obvious (Daudi 1986).

In his last works, Foucault attempted to shift ground yet again from archaeology and genealogy onto the terrain of *ethics*. This area is conceptualized quite differently from the Anglo-American tradition in that he assumes a marked discontinuity between Greek–Roman ethics and those of Christian and modern times. In order to distinguish his study of ethics from the archaeologic-

al study of discourse and the genealogical study of power, Foucault's attention is drawn backwards two millenia. The later work is not what Foucault promised in *The History of Sexuality* vol. 1, and its full relevance and meaning still remains an open issue (Davidson 1986). Thus attention here will be redirected back to the major corpus of Foucault's writing.

The Archaeological and Genealogical Methods Compared

Figure 1 attempts to highlight the difference between the two approaches found in Michel Foucault's work. What it does not reveal are the several continuities between the two methods, including those very features which identify Foucault as an anti-modernist. Common to the two periods are a commitment to a rejection of totalizing visions of history, to an image of discontinuous ruptures in social change, to a concern to decentre the subject and to a questioning of the idea of human progress and enlightenment. What Figure 1 emphasizes is the profound shifts in methodological position undertaken by Foucault as his work developed (*pace* Davidson 1986; Daudi 1986).

Figure 1
Two Analytical
Approaches Found in
Foucault's Writings

The Same	and	The Different
The Archaeological Method Uncover those rules which regulate and govern social practices, and which are unknown to the actors involved.		*The Genealogical Method* Record the singularity of surface events looking at the meaning of small details, minor shifts and subtle contours.
It is possible to achieve some partial distancing from these institutional bonds by a bracketing of 'accepted truth'.		There are no fixed essences or under-lying laws. There is discontinuity and arbitrariness. Since the world is as it appears, one seeks out the 'superficial secrets'.
Act as an 'excavator', revealing depth and interiority.		Act as a recorder of accidents, chance and lies. Oppose the search for depth and interiority.

Clearly, such changes in perspectives and conceptualizations are not unprob-lematic. In recent years, much justifiable criticism has been levelled against Foucault (Gane 1986; Hoy 1986). He has been attacked for his views on sexuality (Weeks 1981; Brake 1982), for his early concentration on the notion of 'discourse' (White 1979), for his critique of Marxism, for his pessimism and for his conceptualization of power (Fine 1979; Minson 1980; Smart 1983). Here, however, attention will focus on the positive aspects of Foucault's work and its relevance for organizational analysis. In this task, we may remember what Foucault has said of Nietzsche

'The only valid tribute to thought such as Nietzsche's is precisely to use it, to deform it, to make it groan and protest. And if the commentators say that I am being unfaithful to Nietzsche that it is of absolutely no interest.' (quoted in Sheridan 1980: 116–117).

As Foucault has done unto Nietzsche so are we able to do unto Foucault.

The Relevance of Foucault for Organizational Analysis

A number of issues stand out for immediate concern at this juncture. Let us look first to some of the issues thrown up by the Foucauldian texts which deal directly with 'organizations' and their impact upon inmates.

To begin with, Foucault's work is worthy of consideration here for it illuminates, in particular, an area of increasing concern in organization theory connected with the heterogeneity or homogeneity of organizational forms. Are organizations all alike or are they all unalike? To what extent are organizations unique and contingent? How far can we generalize about them? Questions such as these raise important epistemological and methodological issues which have been aired in some recent literature. For example, McKelvey and Aldrich (1983) have drawn attention to the supposed utility of the population perspective in standing between two competing 'paradigms' which dominate organization theory. In their view, 'papers in the field generalize about organizations as if they were all alike or refrain from generalizing at all, as if they were all unique' (McKelvey and Aldrich 1983; 101). The all-alike perspective assumes that administration processes are essentially the same in industrial, commercial, educational and other forms of organization (Litchfield 1956). The all-alike perspective, on the other hand, stresses that organizations are so unique and particular that generalizable statements are not worth making. McKelvey and Aldrich (1983: 109) imply that the 'unalike paradigm' is in the ascendancy, for they claim that 'organizational scientists are beginning to believe that organizations come in so many varieties . . . that it no longer makes sense to search for a few essential attributes captured in an all encompassing definition of organization'.

Foucault is of relevance here because contained within his writings is a key to unlock the issues from prior conceptualizations. In this work, with its rich variety of empirical depictions, one finds a complex set of ideas which claim a homogeneity for organizational forms and suggest that all organizations are essentially alike. In Foucault's carefully chosen words, 'prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals, which all resemble prisons' (1979: 83). Prior to this statement, Foucault had maintained that no two things are similar to one another in their particularity. All language, therefore, constitutes an abuse in so far as it gives a single name to things different in time, space and their external attributes (White 1979: 94). 'Sameness' or analogy develops in a linguistic attempt to classify everything which is 'Different'. The perception of 'The Same in the Different' and of 'The Different in the Same' is the origin of all scientific classification schemes where Sameness comes to be formalized and submitted to rules as rationality becomes highly developed. The problem for Foucault is that such classificatory schemes are examples of the trope, 'catachresis' in which all analogies are abused. The reduction of a human's individuality to case notes, of the myriad variety of personalities to human 'types' are examples of scientific discourse in the field of classification which are fundamentally hierarchical (McKelvey 1982).

Thus, the linguistic category 'organization' attempts to reduce 'Difference' to 'Sameness' by assuming that prisons and factories and hospitals are part of a wider scientifically acceptable category which we generically label as 'organizations'. The notion of 'organization' itself may well become for Foucault, a catachresis in that it falsely reduces differences and spuriously elevates similarities. In so doing, it contributes in some significant way to the scientific hierarchization of the disciplinary society.

Meanwhile, in a reaction against both 'paradigms', McKelvey and Aldrich seek to establish an intermediate position in which the view that 'some organizations are like some other organizations' is taken to represent the golden mean. We have already seen that a Foucauldian approach allows for both the search for generic principles and for detailed empirical investigations of strange local events in single organizations. What the approach is loathe to permit is the segmentation and classification of organizational 'types'. In contrast, McKelvey and Aldrich's position can be seen as an attempt to enhance the globality of discipline. Their emphasis 'on research methods that improve the description and classification of organizational forms, define more homogeneous groupings and specify the limited conditions under which predictions may be expected to hold true' (McKelvey and Aldrich 1983: 101) becomes highly suspect because once we follow the route of 'some organizations are like some other organizations' we begin the process of normalizing the field. Normalization, as Foucault shows, is a great instrument of power.

'In a sense, the power of normalization imposes homogeneity; but it individualizes by making it possible to measure gaps, to determine levels, to fix specialities and to render the differences useful by fitting them one to another.' (Foucault 1977c: 184)

Thus, whilst the option of 'some organizations are like some other organizations' seems at first sight to be reasonable, and as representing a professional compromise to the twin difficulties of universalism and particularism, we must remember that professionalism and discipline go hand in hand. By partitioning our multifarious subject matter into neat, manageable, hierarchically ordered categories we actually contribute to the globality of discipline.

Moreover, McKelvey and Aldrich's (1983) discussion of the two 'paradigms' and the third intermediate option of the population perspective excludes a fourth option based upon a use of the two types of Foucauldian analysis. Such an analysis would focus on the multiplicity of factors involved in describing organizational life and events. It would emphasize the complexity, contingency and fragility of organizational forms as transitory manifestations of relationships of dominance–subordination *and* as mere embodiments of an underlying relationship of forces. Organizations come to be seen, therefore, as episodic and unpredictable manifestations of a play of dominations (Smart 1983: 76). Thus, in Foucauldian analysis, the paradox arises when organizations are seen as totally contingent and particularly requiring patient, meticulous, documentary research of their individuality on the one hand, whilst on the other, they are viewed as manifestations of some underlying and

generic Nietzschean 'will to knowledge'. Put simply, such a view implies that, at any one given moment in time, all organizations are unalike in terms of surface features, but are all alike insofar as one can understand their underlying dynamics. *They are all-unalike and all-alike at one and the same time.* They need to be studied both archaeologically and genealogically — which is not at all the same thing as McKelvey and Aldrich are advocating.

Second, the isssue of 'total institutions' (Goffman 1961) and their relevance is thrown up by Foucault's work. In particular, Anthony Giddens (1984) has attacked Foucault's views of time and space, opening up issues of import to the present discussion. Foucault is accused of recognizing that the prison is an 'extreme' form of organization and that therefore it cannot be viewed as being typical of contemporary organizations. Certain organizations are 'complete and austere' institutions but, as Foucault admitted, other forms are not quite like this. Giddens remarks that Foucault's observations on this point are

'of some significance because complete and austere institutions are the exception rather than the rule within the main institutional sectors of modern societies. It does not follow that because prisons and asylums maximize disciplinary power, they express its nature more clearly than the other, less all-embracing organizations.' (Giddens 1984: 155)

As far as Giddens is concerned, 'carceral institutions' are akin to Goffman's 'total institutions' (Goffman 1961) in that they fully control, in an unbroken way, the life of the inmate in both time and space. Thus 'total institutions stand outside others because of the daily life paths of those inside' (Giddens 1984: 184). Conceptualized in this way, the character of other, less embracing non-carceral organizations is such that members move in and then out of them throughout the working week and that their experience of organizational life is thus intermittent. But Giddens' focus on time/space relations leads him to miss the point. He assumes that 'typical' individuals belong to only one organization and, on leaving it at the end of the day, cease to confront the organizational world by 'going home' and re-entering the non-organizational world of civil society. The geographical metaphor used by Giddens apparently involves an acceptance of the validity of the organization/non-organization spatial 'boundary' which people frequently cross. But such a metaphor is of limited utility since individuals confront, interact with and are encapsulated, not by one organizational form, but by many. Even as we sit in our studies, we confront a world organized for us by telephone companies, furniture manufacturers, publishers and clothes designers. The real point is not that most of us do not live in carceral institutions and can therefore escape from their discipline but that, as individuals, we are incarcerated within an organizational world. Thus, whilst we may not live in total institutions, the institutional organization of our lives is total. It is in this sense that Foucault's comment 'prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals which all resemble prisons' has to be understood. In this way, Foucault and Weber are not unconnected, for the 'bureaucratic' mode of domination (Weber 1947) is also the 'disciplinary' mode of domination (Smart 1983, 1985). Individuals may

move in and out of given organizations but remain, for most purposes, within either a form of bureaucratic organization, or at least within a life space which is shaped and moulded by its confrontation with bureaucracy. For Weber, human life takes place within the 'iron cage' of bureaucracy. For Foucault, human life is existence within an institutional framework of incarceration. If we were to follow up these lines of inquiry then, control of space, particularly with regard to the 'life-paths' of organizational members, becomes an issue of some import (Massey and Meegan 1982). The ongoing movement of people and/or their fixed location within the boundary of the organization represents important evidence for the existence of a disciplinary mode of domination.

Third, the rise of information technology and knowledge engineering creates some theoretical space in which Foucauldian insights may be relevant (Poster 1984). Investigation might be directed to the new micro-processor technologies and the ways in which the Panopticon has been updated by computer networking and 'computer architecture'. For example, to what extent has Bentham's geometrical mathematics for optical observation been replaced by the tachographic capabilities of electronic surveillance? Since electronics have largely replaced optics, it may well be that computer networks resemble in several ways the architectural design of the Panopticon — which in its day was 'the ultimate managerial tool'. Similarly, it we are attracted to the notion of the globality of discipline we must be aware that the control of human sexuality is an important research topic. This area, in particular, has the beginnings of a significant reordering of work in organizational analysis (Quinn 1977; Hearn and Parkin 1987). The control of time in religious houses, the control of space in modern factories and the gender-specific allocation of management tasks on the one hand and clerical activities on the other, are possibly linked to a generic process of organizational desexualization. The 'normalization' of sexuality carries with it everywhere the separation of the gender in time and space. Organizations such as the prison, or the ship at sea or the commercial enterprise are all-alike in their attempts to suppress sexuality and are all-alike in their failure to do so (Ignatieff 1978).

Finally, if one looks to the future development of organization theory in the light of the modernism–postmodernism debate, the message coming from Foucault is certainly not of a modernist kind. Enlightenment, progress, the history of ideas, truth, debate and knowledge for him are not part of some modernist march to a better tomorrow. His impact is of a decidely anti-modernist kind. Moreover, his work presents organization theory with a contradiction. At its simplest it is this — it is important to know that the reality of organizations is that they reflect and reproduce a disciplinary society. But to talk about them, to develop discourses and classification schemes for their analysis actively contributes to the reproduction of this discipline. Reality, and our discourse about reality, are both ever more closely confining. Thus we are imprisoned by our knowledge and made freer by our ignorance. Only to the extent that we stop talking about types of organizations do we succeed in not reproducing the disciplinary society. Only to the extent that we speak of 'The

Same *and* the Different' rather than 'the Same *in* the Different' can we hope to develop a 'discursive ferment' in organization theory without developing discipline. Thus the late Michel Foucault has provided us with a pessimistic vision of our role within organizational life but it is a vision which could be developed in fruitful and controversial ways by those interested in opening up our discipline and our organization. We must remember that 'Genealogical analysis stands in a relationship of opposition to the scientific hierarchization of knowledges and their effects, it status being that of an anti-science' (Smart 1983: 77). In the light of all this, Foucault's work is certainly of an anti-modernist kind — and well worth reading at first hand.

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