

Does Foucault Substitute Genealogy for Critique?— —What Are the Implications of His Work for the Role of Public Intellectuals?

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Abstract: Foucault, like Nietzsche, was opposed to the idea of historical metaphysics. In his conception genealogy is not positivism or empiricism, but a system of power and discourse behind knowledge, and genealogy is dedicated to the struggle against the order of discourse. Power is not just a force, but the essence of the world, that is, the human drive based on the "instinct to survive", in which all the sorrows and joys that arise are the whole of history. Genealogy is about people discovering themselves, discovering our problems, and creating a better, more superior power.

Keywords: critique, power, genealogy

1. Introduction

Michel Foucault's change from historical research and analysis referred to as archaeology to genealogy to uncover hidden conflicts and contexts as a way of valuing contemporary aspects is considered ground-breaking in sociology. Genealogy articulates problems that aren't apparent to everyone but concerned with the submerged challenges whose solutions are beyond normal strategies. Genealogy has been linked with philosophical tradition characterized with a continuity of intellectual work from a group of thinkers in various sociological relations. Researchers have demonstrated different views on genealogy as established by Foucault as a discourse that denaturalizes and renders what was historically undertaken as necessary. Genealogy is considered as a standard for realism theory since all that is considered in the discourse is articulated as the truth. Before the genealogical perspectives, archaeological aspects had grassroots in the ethical and moral lifestyle of the people. Throughout the genealogy discourse, Foucault challenged the past centuries modern moral philosophies to build an intellectual modernity in terms of knowledge, a good example is the madness/genius overview. The aspects of truth are neither accessed by chance as demonstrated by Foucault nor through knowledge/truth. Traditionally truth was considered uniform, linear and regular. Through a range of resources, the essay underpins key aspects in Foucault's genealogy discourse and its implications to public intellectuals.

2. Foucault's concept on critique

The concept of "Critiquing" raised mixed reactions from different authors in the field of sociology. Initially, critique was considered as a general practice that is, there are no specific objects being referred. Viewing critique as an approach of philosophy creates no room for distinction between philosophy and critique which are perceived to operate as a definition to another. Therefore, researchers in sociology perceive that critique is associated with generalization which is highly constrained in the field [7]. Foucault not only asks what critique is, but seeks to understand the kind of question that critique institutes, offering some tentative ways of circumscribing its activity. Under the umbrella of criticism, Raymond Williams and Theodor Adorno have accomplished several aspects in the field of sociology. Raymond Williams is known through his criticism between humanism and social theory. Raymond's analysis on humanism and sociology doesn't consider epistemological or historical transformations [20]. Contrary, Theodor Adorno criticized all aspects that posited existence of historical and immutable principles to social reality. The philosopher believed that the danger cultural industry is rooted in the false psychological needs that could only be possible through capitalism which endangered a more technically and intellectual art in the society [1]. From the perspectives of the two philosophers, it's evident that differentiating critique and philosophy is essential to avoid the generalization aspects which are termed

invalid in the field of sociology.

Raymond demonstrated that critique in the field of sociology has been embedded on the concept of “fault finding”. Raymond proposed that we find a vocabulary for the kinds of responses we have, specifically to cultural works. Therefore, according to Raymond, many authors in cultural discourse had judgements instead of a more specific response which can be termed as a practice [21]. Foucault’s view on critique conquers with what Raymond reflects where critique is a practice that suspends judgements and offers new values in the field. Adorno further demonstrated the dangers of judging intellectual phenomenon as it creates the tendency of the later authors to look more powerful compared to the earlier [3]. Based on the critic of Adorno, the author opposed the commodity forms which were highly dominant in the cultural phenomena and he was convinced that they damage human life and society [5]. However, despite of the critiques, Adorno didn’t oppose the popular cultural expressions. In this way, Adorno demonstrated why judging isn’t essential but the ability to create value and bring new practices is the requirement in a critic. The specific response of Adorno in the cultural industry was the commodity form which he felt would hinder the intellectual and value art in the society. A good example of the cultural aspect that was commercialized include music which further landed to the hands of monopolies [2].

Foucault’s writings on “What is critique” provided an overview of what it constitutes and activities. Foucault revealed that critique is a central enterprise in question that doesn’t only identify the problem but also the what it inspires to do with proofs. Therefore, Foucault affirms that critique is dependent on objects which must define the critique itself. The objects include social conditions, forms of knowledge, power, and paradigm at large which aren’t evaluated on the basis that they are wrong or right. It must bring the relief of the paradigm through crucial evaluations on the objects rather than approximations and judgements [9]. Withing the critical and post critical theory, Foucault reflects that there is a need to rethink critique as a central practice that poses limits on the sure way of knowing something. Critique emerges as a result that there are no discourses that are adequate to cater for all objects and phenomenon in the field of sociology. In this view, its notable that the critics are there to evaluate discourses to come up with a better version with considerations that they won’t be judgements but specific responses on objects to make more sense. Thus, critique must be formulated in established and ordering way of knowledge or truth which hence Foucault’s view that a critique is a critical attitude representing a virtue [15].

Foucault’s view o critique as a virtue can be summarized as a quality that characterizes and conditions a given activity in responding to objects in a discourse. Through virtues, the philosopher demonstrated that he wants to come up with discourses that are beyond the notion of philosophy which aren’t structured by prohibitions or interdiction. Schubert (2021) [19] demonstrated how the Foucault’s *Confession of Flesh book* portrayed the concept of self-critical hermeneutics is linked to the foreign power of a subject [17]. The issues of power and freedom emerged to be crucial in the period and the debate has evolved over time. Based on the virtues portrayed in the book of Foucault, critiques are virtues that should have structure and conditions that reflects the objects. According to Thompson (2017) [20], critique is not only the subfield for sociology, philosophy and social sciences but a distinctive form that posits more comprehensive to explore social realities and diagnose social pathologies. The totality of the individuals and the social life and processes they undergo is also a point of concern in the critical theory. Thompson demonstrates that critical theory is a form of judgements, evaluations and practical transformations in social criticism. In relations to what the Foucault demonstrated, Thompson affirms that critique relates to everyday life of individuals and social processes with a deeper understanding and more rational knowledge of the world they live.

Altogether, critique is perceived to have a deeper analysis on the subject of the discourse to come up with better with findings that have virtue and transformative in the social environment. The philosophers have a common understanding that critique isn’t a from a judgement but rather a practice with more ethical and philosophical views. Therefore, critique is a comprehensive aspect that individuals to relate between subjects and objects in the world. Subjects in the social criticisms must grasp the totality, reality and actual forms to uncover the social conditions where knowledge is articulated. Based on this understanding, we can identify if Foucault substituted genealogy for critique.

3. Foucault’s genealogy of power and contributions in public intellectual

Foucault’s investigations and evaluations shed light on different areas including human, social and the medical sciences. Michel Foucault's genealogy of power examined economic thought and other human sciences to understand how individuals became subjects in the modernity. Throughout his investigations, history was taken as a present aspect especially with the transitions from archeology to

genealogy^[8]. Foucault's vast oeuvre ranged from books, interviews, course, and lectures to determine why the humans became subjects in modernity age. Foucault's contributions are arranged in phase; structural, genealogical and governmental^[4]. Contributions and views of Foucault have had tremendous solutions on non-discursive practices hence differing with archeology. Through the genealogical view, Foucault concentrated on power which is perceived to be generated from knowledge and hence the emergency of truth regimes. Foucault sought the connections among knowledge, power and truth, following Friedrich Nietzsche's genealogical^[11]. Based on the evaluations of Foucault, genealogy discourse did start from the origin to neglect other aspects in the field of sociology, philosophy and cultural industry. However, Foucault demonstrated that genealogy pays more attention to discontinuous and specific aspects in the discourse^[8]. Genealogy is described as a combination of three major aspects namely discontinuity, specificity, and exteriority. Discontinuity mean that the discourse hasn't considered evolutionary time whereas specificity reflects a discourse that doesn't generalize subjects and objects but offers specific time and space of the critique. Exteriority indicates the considerations of external aspects or powers influencing the discourse.

Based on the evaluations of genealogy, Foucault assumed the argument that power is always repressive in power relations. Foucault focused on disciplinary powers in institutions, especially schools, prisons and hospitals amongst others. Furthermore, Foucault concentrated on different forms of power that creates room for productivity in humanity to positively influence the social processes in the society. Through his evaluations, Foucault identified that there were new forms of power that characterized the 18th and 19th centuries which wasn't repressive but transformational to foster human life. The type of power relations was demonstrated as biopower by Foucault. Biopower as demonstrated by Foucault has positive influence on life as it constitutes transformational power of mechanisms compared to other forms of power that were termed as repressive and reputative. Repressive power according to Foucault, is characterized with limits and lack^[18]. The lengthy discussion on the forms of repressive powers were demonstrated in the *Will to Knowledge and Society Must be Defended* by Foucault. Through the books, Foucault demonstrated how repressive powers hides the productive capabilities (Foucault and Ewald, 2003). Biopower considered the levels of life of the people and paved ways for the people to become productive in different ways. Through the discourse, Foucault mentioned that biopower was adopted and utilized with the repressive forms of power. Biopower and biopolitics marks historical evolutions from considering politics from sovereignty to society. From this basis, it's notable that Foucault moved from the micro-institutions to macro-institutional levels in the genealogy discourse^[16].

From the biopower and biopolitics, that's when the subjects in discourses were undertaken a both individual and collective levels as a population. The process of transitions occurred during the 18th century where population was taken as a representation of the social, political and economic aspects^[16]. The main reason for the collective nature of aspects, is that the government realized that they cannot be able to manage people at the individual levels but as a group. Specific aspects of the populations emerged to be the key aspect for instance, birth, reproduction and behaviors amongst others. Foucault developed a genealogy of how the governments operated from the 16th to 20th centuries. Through the developments, Foucault was able to understand and evaluate the classical, liberalism and neoliberalism perspectives and come up with critiques. Specifically in the perspectives, Foucault highlighted population management and the application of biopolitics. Foucault various writings the different scales of biopolitics (subjective, territorial, geopolitical, state, international) and the different analytical levels (episteme, identity, visibility, techne, and ethos) were significant^[13]. The structural changes in sovereignty as demonstrated by Foucault started in late 17th and ended in the early 19th centuries where individuals in the society were undertaken as vessels and they could live or die through declarations. The states exercised power over the people and they had no choice but to surrender depicting the asymmetry form of rights.

Therefore, the genealogy of government practices started shifting in the end 17th century where key changes in modes of control, surveillance, and the disciplined individuals. In the end of 18th century, the new forms came up demonstrated new ways of caring and maintaining the population across the states. Forms like territories were key in the repressive sovereign community but further changed to be a resource for the states. The analysis now demonstrates the powers relations that emerged in the 17th century are biopower whereas the ones in the 18th century are biopolitics.

4. Truth and specific intellectuals

Foucault disowned the issues of universal intellectuals and demonstrated the need for individuals to participate even in areas where they aren't experts. However, based on the aspects of critique and genealogy, the intellectuals advocated must be specific, organized and creates values in the relations

between subjects and objects. Foucault demonstrated that experts aren't there to be the final decision makers on what is right or wrong but to point out the ensemble of rules which can be used to identify wrong or right in the discourse and the specific aspects of powers attached to the truth. In this way, the people have underlying rules and power relations that condition the discourses they make [6]. Throughout the identification and evaluations of intellectual projects, Foucault utilized his personal and social life experiences to demonstrate how they connect, that's how he came up with the conventional method in psychiatric treatment. Through his schooling Foucault was questioned on his homosexuality which by that time was being perceived as the biggest shame as demonstrated by Macey (2019) in *The Lives of Michel Foucault*. Throughout the books [14], Foucault demonstrated his stands on prisons, sexuality and madness. The intellectual adventure of Foucault reflects real life experiences, they never remained stuck in him, but required him to think and go beyond them to identify specific solutions.

Through an interview, Foucault's views on madness were summarized. To start with, Foucault indicated that madness cannot occur in a wild state but within the society and they are isolated in the form of repulsions. It's perceived that madness was there in the Middle age and Renaissance period attached to the social horizon of everyday activities of the individuals. Throughout the 18th century, madness disappeared as a result of repressive powers that led to the confinements of the individuals reducing their productivity and positive influence. In the 20th century, madness is confined in the natural phenomenon and the truth in the world. The evolution of madness therefore demonstrated how it came to be a crucial aspect in intellectual project hence the attentions of psychiatry to madman. Thus, the experience of madness is restored from the powers of confinements and repulsions. Through the madman, the medicalization of madman is essential to protect important interests hence advancing the notions that were held before [10]. Thus, based on the findings and views of Foucault, madness and civilization are dependent on the society we live and the cultural, economical and intellectual structure reflects how they are determined in the society. In this case, it's notable that the society creates its own experience madness and it's the primary source of the solutions.

Importantly, it's good to mention how Foucault presented himself in the lectures, books and courses as an archivist compared to public intellectual to confront governments. Through the genealogy discourse, Foucault demonstrated governments as the political subjects not an object or addressee. The biggest relationship and power relations between them in his research constituted the governed and the government. Through the distinctions, it was simple for Foucault to demonstrate how the government must act with the governed to ensure productivity and positive influence. Compared to historical lifestyle and governance, through genealogy, Foucault extensively provided specific aspects and there was no generalization but specific responses on the objects and subjects. Most type of leadership adopted in the countries today can learn a lot of intellectual truth that helps them for years and not just a period of time. For instance, the neoliberalism discourse of governmentality has essential truth for subjectivity to create freedom for the individuals. However, neoliberalism offered new space for self hence creating room for dispositif as demonstrated in biopolitics in the genealogy discourse [12]. The biggest correlations that were brought to light on the basis of power in the genealogy discourse is that power requires political subjects, the government and the governed to be balanced or rather they should both have roles to play.

5. Conclusion

Altogether, Foucault's views on critique and genealogy discourse cannot be substituted. Critique is represented as a virtue in the social structure that is specific in responses and transformative to bring new values. Contrary, genealogy discourse is a historical technique that questions philosophical and social structures to account for the totality, scope and key influences they have to the governed and the governments. Therefore, Foucault's genealogy cannot be substituted for critiques on the given philosophical and social structures. The two aspects stand on their own to create room for crucial specific responses to what is happening in everyday life of the individuals in the society. The role of Foucault's views in public intellectual has been indicated based on how power relations have traversed government as transmission points rather than fixed subjects to create the balance that is needed so that both the governed and the government are governing.

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