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FOUCAULT, GENEALOGY, HISTORY

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Many critics have analyzed Foucault's "histories" in light of their overt Nietzschean genealogical characteristics.[1] However, I believe that the complexities of the relations between Foucault and Nietzsche's genealogy have only begun to be fully understood. Thus, I propose to undertake yet another analysis of Foucault's genealogical "method." As a focus for this procedure, I will examine Foucault's genealogy with a specific question in mind: what is the nature of genealogy's relation to the past?

Hubert L. Dreyfus has tried to show that Foucault's work is akin to Heidegger's.[2] He does this by insisting that Foucault has to be seen as someone who attempts to relativize the present by revealing other possibilities for existence. That is to say, Foucault has to be seen (for Dreyfus's position to have merit) as someone who turns to other historical periods (epistemes) in order to demonstrate the fact that the present way of punishing or thinking about sexuality is not the only possible way. If our examination of genealogy is to keep Dreyfus's thesis in mind, a more specific formulation of the focal question of our analysis would be: does Foucault's genealogy relativize the present and reveal other possibilities for being? Can Foucault's genealogy relate to the past on that past's own ground—i.e., as a radical Otherness that shatters the self-certainty of the present?[3] On the one hand, if we come to the conclusion that Foucault's genealogy allows the past to exist as a radical Other (if we answer this question in the affirmative), then we will have to agree with Dreyfus's comparison of Foucault to Heidegger. In other words, our conclusion will be that genealogy's relation to the past is one in which the past exists as an Event (*das Ereignis*): the past as event manifests itself, is present; however, it also withdraws from the present; it exceeds all re-presentational schemata. On the other hand, if we find that Foucault's genealogy forces the past to exist within the representational framework of the present (if we answer this question in the negative), then we will have to disagree with Dreyfus's comparison of Foucault to Heidegger. That is to say, our conclusion will be that within Foucault's genealogy the being of the past is only allowed to reveal itself within the essence of our technological present: Enframing (*das Gestell*).

During interviews and lectures, Foucault certainly gives the impression that his work indeed reveals other possibilities for being; that is, Foucault gives the impression that the answer to this question is affirmative. For instance, Foucault gives the following provisional definition to "genealogy" during a lecture in 1976: genealogy is "the union of erudite knowledge and local memories which allows us to establish a historical knowledge of struggles and to make use of this knowledge tactically today" (1980, 83).[4] This belief in the radical nature of genealogy is connected to the rhetoric of "difference" that is prevalent in Foucault's discourse. However, in order to understand more fully the genealogical relation to the past, we must not accept this talk of difference at face value. We must determine the originating force of this difference: does it arise from the mere recombination of terms within the existing system; or, does it refer to a radical break that withdraws from the modern metaphysics of representation?

In this essay, I will explore these questions by comparing the genealogical mode of analysis to that of traditional historiography—keeping in the forefront of this analysis the conceptual poles of relating to the past described above: as event and as representation or repetition. Foucault describes his theoretical conception of the Nietzschean genealogical relation to the past most concisely in "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History." Thus, I will rely heavily on this essay, in the first part of the discussion that follows, in order to determine the nature of Foucault's philosophy concerning these issues. I will also use, in the second part of the following discussion, an example from Foucault's genealogical "practice": his genealogy of the subject of sexuality undertaken in the three volumes of *The History of Sexuality*. Finally, it has been suggested that the thought of Gilles Deleuze belongs, like that of Foucault himself, within this Nietzschean genealogical tradition we are describing (Lash; Mahan 3). If this is the case, Deleuze represents Nietzsche's philosophy taken to its logical extreme: where existence manifests itself as a mere simulacrum or phantasm. Foucault delineates his philosophical relation to this Deleuzean brand of Nietzscheanism most concisely in "Theatrum Philosophicum." Thus, I will turn to this essay, in the third part of the following discussion, in order to provide us with yet another perspective on the way in which the past exists for Foucault. In the end, I will have shown that Foucault's fundamental philosophical assumptions cannot support his claims that genealogy offers us new possibilities for being.

On the Metaphysics of Power

> Nevertheless, as a mere countermovement it necessarily remains, as does everything "anti," held fast in the essence of that over against which it moves. Nietzsche's countermovement against metaphysics is, as the mere turning upside down of metaphysics, an inextricable entanglement in metaphysics.
>
> (Heidegger 1977, 61)

The most important element that distinguishes genealogy from traditional historiography is that the latter, for Foucault and Nietzsche, is a Platonism. Plato, disguised as a historian, seeks the truth of an origin; he does not content himself with the lies of mere copies. This masked historian assumes that the essence of that which is can be found in the enduring conceptual elements of history—those enduring Ideas that are expressed in various ways throughout time.[5] If this actor were to write the history of sexuality, he would discover sexuality's truth or essence. The various particular instances of sexuality would not be important; rather, the historian would discover the Idea of sex that is constant in all these Particulars—these imperfect repetitions.

Nietzsche and Foucault are, of course, self-professed anti-Platonists. Thus, rather than discover an origin, they delineate the forces that participated in a particular occurrence. There can be no origin, for Nietzsche and Foucault, because neither believes in the existence of "things-in-themselves." What we think of as "things" or "entities" are merely the functions of relations of forces. "There are nothing but quantities of force in mutual 'relations of tension.' . . . Every force is related to others and it either obeys or commands. What defines a body is this relation between dominant and dominated forces" (Deleuze 1983, 40). Similarly, rather than trace the progressive manifestations of concepts in terms of their continuities, Foucault and Nietzsche map the discontinuities that arise within a field of material forces in as much as these forces have various interpretations imposed upon them throughout history.

Foucault and Nietzsche, therefore, rewrite Plato based on an inversion of his metaphys-

ics—an inversion that remains metaphysical. Foucault replaces origin and continuity with emergence and descent. Foucault says that genealogy cannot tolerate the concept of origin: 1) because it is an essence; 2) because it is lofty—"we tend to think that [the origin] is the moment of [the] greatest perfection [of things], when they emerged dazzling from the hands of a creator or in the shadowless light of a first morning" (1971, 143)—and 3) because it is revered as a site of truth (1971, 142-3). Thus, what the genealogist finds "at the historical beginnings of things is not the inviolable identity of their origin; it is the dissension of other things. It is disparity" (142). (This disparity at the site of historical beginnings is referred to as an "event," as we will see, in Foucault's "Theatrum Philosophicum.")

Foucault, in a parodic repetition of Nietzsche, calls this historical beginning *Entstehung*: meaning, for Foucault, "emergence" or "the moment of arising" (1971, 148). That which arises out of emergence cannot exist in-itself—or else the genealogist would be witnessing the birth or origin of a "thing"—rather, that which emerges is a function of a "particular stage of forces" (148–49). "The analysis of the *Entstehung* must delineate this interaction, the struggle these forces wage against each other or against adverse circumstances" (149).

Foucault overturns Plato again by replacing the continuity of the Idea with the discontinuity of *Herkunft* (descent). Descent is the endless history of forces overcoming one another: "whatever exists, having somehow come into being, is again and again reinterpreted to new ends, taken over, transformed, and redirected by some power superior to it; all events in the organic world are a subduing, a *becoming master*" *(Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morals* II.12). Descent is the discontinuity that results from this repetition of varying wills securing victory and imposing their interpretation. "Genealogy does not pretend to go back in time to restore an unbroken continuity that operates beyond the dispersion of forgotten things; its duty is not to demonstrate that the past actively exists in the present, that it continues secretly to animate the present" (1971, 146). The study of descent traces these repeated emergences of a different will or interpretation; it traces the "numberless beginnings whose faint traces and hints of color are readily seen by an historical eye" (145). In this way, genealogy records the history of wills in struggle, the history of different interpretations in confrontation.

> If interpretation were the slow exposure of the meaning hidden in an origin, then only metaphysics could interpret the development of humanity. But if interpretation is the violent or surreptitious appropriation of a system of rules, which in itself has no essential meaning, in order to impose a direction, to bend it to a new will, to force its participation in a different game, and to subject it to secondary rules, then the development of humanity is a series of interpretations. The role of genealogy is to record its history: the history of morals, ideals, and metaphysical concepts . . . the emergence of different interpretations. (1971, 151–52)

The genealogist finds this history marked on the surface of bodies:

> Descent attaches itself to the body. It inscribes itself in the nervous system, in temperament, in the digestive apparatus. . . . The body is the inscribed surface of events (traced by language and dissolved by ideas), the locus of a dissociated Self (adopting the illusion of a substantial unity), and a volume in perpetual disintegration. (147, 148)

Thus, *Entstehung*, like will to power, is a play of forces; it is the scene in which forces struggle to dominate. *Herkunft*, then, is the eternal return of dominating forces; it is the repetition of one force overcoming another and, in the process, forming a reality through the imposition of its interpretive grid—a process that forms bodies that are incorporeally marked through interpretive schemata. Descent, for Foucault, denotes the repetition of the marking of bodies by history, the marking of bodies by the repetition of events or emergences.

> What Nietzsche calls the *Entstehungsherd* of the concept of goodness is not specifically the energy of the strong or the reaction of the weak, but precisely this *scene* [my emphasis]where they are displayed [where they are set before us to view, where they are (re-)presented: *vor-stellen*] superimposed or face-to-face. It is nothing but the *space* [my emphasis] that divides them, the void through which they exchange their threatening gestures and speeches. As descent qualifies the strength or weakness of an instinct and its inscription on a body, emergence designates a place of confrontation. (150)

In this way, we can say that the metaphysics of the concept or the Platonic Idea (as origin and continuity) is replaced by beginnings and discontinuity, by emergences and descent. This replacement remains metaphysical, however, in that it still denotes the essence of that which exists (as a field of forces: the power relations of forces and the space or scene of the interactions of these forces) and the modality of that which exists (as the repetition of the imposition of a new interpretation on this field of forces).

What remains metaphysical about this move away from the concept? What, in other words, replaces the Idea or concept as the stable element of our analysis of history? That is to say, if we cannot revert to the continuity provided by the concept of sexuality that exists throughout history, what allows us to analyze various particularities in different times and say that they all fall under the banner of "sexuality"? Answer: the will to power. The will to power replaces the Idea as the *hypokeimenon* of existence: it is that which stands in support of the various "entities" that arise in its field. The will to power, then, is "the fundamental trait of everything real" (Heidegger 1977, 79). The expression "will to power," "as the name for the basic character of all beings . . . provides an answer to the question 'What is being?'" (Heidegger 1979, 3–4). As already mentioned, entities do not exist in-themselves for the genealogist; they exist only as functions of other relations. The space of these relations of forces, this functionality, is what Nietzsche calls will to power.

Foucault gives the name "power/knowledge" to this *hypokeimenon* as function. That is, power/knowledge is not an in-itself; it is not an autonomous entity that can be exchanged; it is "functional" inasmuch as it consists of the relations of forces. For instance, Foucault says that his analysis of power is an "analysis of a multiple and mobile field of force relations, wherein far-reaching, but never completely stable, effects of domination are produced" (1990a, 102). Foucault also makes this point by stressing the fact that power is not a commodity that is possessed. "Power is not something that is acquired, seized, or shared, something that one holds on to or allows to slip away; power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of nonegalitarian and mobile relations" (1990a, 94; on this point, also see Foucault 1980, 89). Similarly, Foucault feels "that power must be understood in the first instance as the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute

their own organization" (1990a, 92). In this way, notions like "subject" or "sexuality" lose their status as autonomous substrata to existence; they are no longer "things-in-themselves" for Foucault.

> One must not suppose that there exists a certain sphere of sexuality that would be the legitimate concern of a free and disinterested scientific inquiry were it not the object of mechanisms of prohibition brought to bear by the economic or ideological requirements of power. If sexuality was constituted as an area of investigation, this was only because relations of power had established it as a possible object; and conversely, if power was able to take it as a target, this was because techniques of knowledge and procedures of discourse were capable of investing it. (1990a, 98)

Thus, the subject or the agent is, like all else, a function. It is constituted by the relations of power/knowledge; for this reason, it does not have an autonomous existence; a plurality of forces determine its outline. It is Foucault's hypothesis "that the individual is not a pre-given entity which is seized on by the exercise of power. The individual, with his identity and characteristics, is the product of a relation of power exercised over bodies, multiplicities, movements, desires, forces" (1980, 73-4). Similarly, Foucault says, in "What is an Author," that "the subject (and its substitutes) must be stripped of its creative role and analysed as a complex and variable function of discourse" (1977, 138).[6]

Foucault's power/knowledge, again like the will to power, is perspectival. It evaluates from a certain perspective, draws the lines, determines relations. As Heidegger has shown, the will to power is an evaluative principle: "when metaphysics thinks whatever is, in its Being, as the will to power, then it necessarily thinks it as value-positing" (1977, 82). Similarly, Foucault's power/knowledge is that which indicates values. For instance, "spaces," in the disciplinary configuration of power/knowledge, provide the framework for what is valued, what is to be known. "It is spaces that provide fixed positions and permit circulation; they carve out individual segments and establish operational links; they mark places and indicate values" (1979, 148).

This carving out of "individual segments" is similar to the way in which the will to power slices up becoming: both make that which exists knowable. In other words, both stabilize becoming, make it predictable.

> In order for a particular species to maintain itself and increase its power, its conception of reality must comprehend enough of the *calculable* [my emphasis] and constant for it to base a scheme of behavior on it. The utility of preservation–not some abstract-theoretical need not to be deceived–stands as the motive behind the development of the organs of knowledge—they develop in such a way that their observations suffice for our preservation. In other words: the measure of the desire for knowledge depends upon the measure to which the will to power grows in a species: a species grasps a certain amount of reality in order to become master of it, in order to press it into service. (*Will to Power*, 480)

In this manner, power/knowledge and the will to power produce reality. They create a horizon, a world, a perspective.

> But it should not be forgotten that there existed at the same period a technique for constituting individuals as correlative elements of power and knowledge. The individual is no doubt the fictitious atom of an "ideological" representation of society; but he is also a reality fabricated by this specific technology of power that I have called "discipline." 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; *it produces reality* [my emphasis]; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production. (1979, 194)

As suggested above, this functionality of the will to power or power/knowledge replaces the Idea as the metaphysical principle that supports historical thinking. The concept is replaced, then, by a play of forces, a drama.

> To return to our subject, namely *punishment*, one must distinguish two aspects: on the one hand, that in it which is relatively *enduring*, the custom, the act, the "*drama*" [my emphasis], a certain strict sequence of procedures; on the other, that in it which is *fluid*, the meaning, the purpose, the expectation associated with the performance of such procedures. (*Genealogy of Morals*, II.13)

The actors in this drama are not important. As we have seen, the actors cannot be agents or subjects with intentions that cause historical occurrences; they are not substances but functions. The important aspects of this drama for the genealogist are the roles or positions that can be filled by other bodies at other times.[7] Will to power and power/knowledge, as schematizing principles, position bodies in this theater of power.

This play of forces (will to power or power/knowledge) is what provides the stability needed for historical thinking. Thus, one particular dominant force or concept is not the enduring element of history; the field of power is one of "multiple and mobile force relations" where domination is "never completely stable" (1990a, 102). However, the principle of domination itself is stable; the fact that one force will control or struggle for control over others is eternal. In this way, will to power and power/knowledge, as principles denoting the essence of existence as forces struggling to dominate, are metaphysical principles.

On the *Kybernêtês* of the Self

> In the domain of pleasures, virtue was not conceived as a state of integrity, but as a relationship of domination, a relation of mastery. This is shown by the terms that are used—whether in Plato, Xenophon, Diogenes, Antiphon, or Aristotle—to define moderation: "rule the desires and the pleasures," "exercise power over them," "govern them" (*kratein archein*). (1990b, 70)

The eternal return of the principle of domination is clearly discernible in Foucault's genealogy of sexuality. In the three volumes of *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault undertakes a genealogy of the modern desiring subject. Usually, sex and the sexual subject are thought of as givens; they are constant, without a history. It is generally assumed that the subject endures repressions of its sexuality throughout history but does not itself have a history. Foucault, however, reverses this assumption: "Sexual behavior is not, as is too often assumed, a superimposition of, on the one hand, desires which derive from natural instincts, and, on the other hand, of permissive or restrictive laws which tell us what we should or shouldn't do" (1988, 287). Thus, Foucault situates sexuality and the subject in history. He steps back to the Greeks, to a time that apparently did not experience "sexuality" as we know it: "instead of studying sexuality on the borders of knowledge and power, I have tried to go further back, to find out how, for the subject himself, the experience of his sexuality as desire had been constituted" (1988, 48).

In this respect, Foucault assumes he will not find sexuality as we know it when he turns to the Greeks. He looks, rather, to the broader realm of the experience of moral existence. From Nietzsche he inherits the assumption that moral experience involves a relation to the self. Nietzsche gives this moral existence the name "asceticism." Nietzsche feels that asceticism, that of the artist for example, can be a healthy self-discipline—that is, if it remains anti-Platonic: a "will to deception." However, if it is excessively ascetic, if the artist places "himself in the service of the ascetic ideal," then the artist and the art are corrupted; they become unhealthy or reactive (*Genealogy of Morals,* III.25). The particular nature of this asceticism changes, of course, over time; however, the fact that human history is one of self-regulation or self-domination is an eternal truth.

Foucault distinguishes various historical configurations with varying systems and means of relating to the self—that of the ancient Greek, of the medieval Christian, and that of the modern. He feels the relation to oneself consists of four dimensions that structure moral experience: "the ethical substance, the types of subjection, the forms of elaboration of the self, and the moral teleology" (1990b, 32; see also, 1983, 237–43). For us today, the ethical substance, that aspect of oneself that is at issue for ethical judgement, is "feelings." For the medieval Christian, we might say, it was desire. For the ancient Greek, *aphrodisia*—a dynamic relation among action, desire, and pleasure—was the ethical substance (1983, 238; 1990b, 39). As a dynamic unity, the concern with *aphrodisia* that the Greeks had was one of quantity. That is to say, the Greeks did not worry about natural and unnatural acts; rather, they concerned themselves with questions of moderation and excess. The ethical relation to the self was one of moderating or restraining the self—a healthy self-discipline. Another concern for the Greek practice of *aphrodisia* was "role": i.e., "in the ancient morality . . . self-control is a problem only for the individual who must be master of himself and master of others and not for those who must obey others" (1988, 261–62). Sexual pleasure is divided into two distinct roles: active/passive or penetrator/penetrated. The first role is filled by free adult males; the latter role is filled by slaves, children, and women. Thus, "for a man, excess and passivity were the two main forms of immorality in the practice of *aphrodisia*" (1990b, 47).

The second aspect that structures moral experience, "mode of subjection"—"the way in which people are invited or incited to recognize their moral obligations" (1983, 239)—can take many forms: "Is it, for instance, divine law, which has been revealed in a text? Is it natural law, a cosmological order, in each case the same for every living being? Is it a rational rule? Is it the attempt to give your existence the most beautiful form possible?" (239). For the Greeks, it was for the latter reason—the attempt to give existence the most beautiful form—that they recognized moral obligations. Their moral reflection on *aphrodisia* was prompted by a wish to "work out the conditions and modalities of a 'use'; that is, to define a style for what the Greeks call *chrêsis aphrodisiôn*, the use of pleasures" (1990b, 53). Thus, the Greek ethic is a practice of self-government; it is an art, *techné*, or technique of the self (1990b, 62).

The third dimension which structures moral experience is the form of relation with the self. By this, Foucault is referring to "the means by which we can change ourselves in order to become ethical subjects," or how "we work on [the] ethical substance." For instance, "in order to be faithful to your wife you can do different things to the self" (1983,

239). The Greek means of forming the self was referred to as *enkrateia*: "the dynamics of a domination of oneself by oneself and the effort that this demands" (1990b, 65). This self-mastery is what permits the Greek to reach the "telos" of his ethical practices—i.e., "the kind of being to which we aspire when we behave in a moral way. For instance, shall we become pure, or immortal, or free, or masters of ourselves, and so on" (1983, 239). The Greeks conceived their telos to be *sôp*hrosyne: moderation (with connotations of freedom) (1990b, 72, 78). "*Sôphrosyne* was a state that could be approached through the exercise of self-mastery and through restraint in the practice of pleasures; it was characterized as a freedom" (1990, 78).

By studying these four aspects of moral experience, Foucault feels he is making it "possible to determine what structured the moral experience of sexual pleasures" (1990, 37). Thus, sexual pleasure throughout history has arisen in various forms; however, these forms have always arisen within that which allows it to arise, that which structures experience: the essence of existence as the relations of forces in their struggle to dominate. We have seen that the Greeks, for Foucault, had an ethics based on an "aesthetics of existence" (1990, 89). The medieval Christians, in their turn, had an ethics based on the "confession of the flesh": the securing of a soul's salvation through a confessional monitoring of it. Here the morality of self-restraint practised by Greek masters is turned into a universal code; that is to say, it is the same restriction for everyone. Modernity's ethical existence is based on the self-examination of the desiring-subject. Deviations are sought out and eradicated. Scientific discourses have arisen in the last hundred years that are able to analyze this sexual subject; these discourses have the task of making the subject knowable and predictable. The subject is positioned within schema by these discourses; movements and desires are charted; timetables are drawn up.[8]

Many forms of the self have arisen in history, to be sure. However, for Foucault they can only arise within the space of what allows them to exist: power/knowledge as the essence of existence. The nature of the force that governs within a particular period will not be constant; however, the fact that forces will be struggling to govern—and that this struggle will produce dynamic historical arrangements—is unchanging. We can see, in this sense, that Foucault cannot offer us alternatives to the "technologies of individualization" through his genealogical analyses. The foundation of his thought, as will to power or power/knowledge, is itself technological. It is for this reason that the Greek experience he uncovers is essentially little different from our own. The event of Greek existence is forced to reveal itself within the space of the technologies of power/knowledge. Thus, the Greeks appear, within Foucault's work, to be simulations of the modern individual. Foucault does not reveal, in the example of the Greeks, a possibility for being which manifests itself as an "Other" with respect to the self-certainty of the present. When he looks to the Greeks, Foucault does not find an alternative to the modern tendency of thinking of the self as a cybernetic organism; rather, Foucault's philosophy makes it impossible to think of any other kind of organism.

The word "cybernetics," the study of the controlling and communicating mechanisms of a machine or organism, comes from the Greek word *kybernêtês* meaning "controller," "pilot," "steersman," or "governor" (Angeles 52). Foucault does not refer to this word; however, if we keep it in mind, it may shed light on his analysis of the subject of sexuality. That is to say, human existence can only arise within the framework of a certain

self-governing for Foucault. The Greek relation to the self, for instance, manifests itself for Foucault as one based on governing and restraint. Similarly, Foucault describes the medieval and modern relation to the self as one based on the schematization of the self through confessional practices. The modes of practising this self-governing are different throughout history; Foucault is correct to illustrate this. However, for all these examples, Foucault finds that their existence has been cybernetically based; that is, the individual only exists in as much as he is a *kybernêtês*.

This limitation of the manifestation of the individual to that which arises as a *kybernêtês* is no doubt related to the way in which Foucault, as demonstrated above, defines the essence of existence in terms of a technological principle—will to power or power/knowledge—and that the modality of this existence is the eternal return. As Heidegger points out, the "willing" that constitutes the will to power, as opposed to mere "striving," is a positing of the self, a commanding of the self, or a putting of the self before the self:

> Willing wills the one who wills, as such a one; and willing posits the willed as such. Willing is resoluteness toward oneself, but as the one who wills what is posited in the willing as willed. In each case will itself furnishes thoroughgoing determinateness to its willing. . . . In contrast, striving can be indeterminate, both with respect to what is actually striven for and in relation to the very one who strives. In striving and in compulsion we are caught up in movement toward something without knowing what is at stake. In mere striving after something we are not properly brought before ourselves. (1979, 40–41)

In other words, since Foucault thinks of the self as a function of forces determined by a will to power or a certain configuration of power/knowledge, he always thinks of the self (regardless of the particular historical occurrence he encounters) as an entity that is posited by the will; every self he encounters is only a self in as much as it manifests itself within modern metaphysics, which bases the truth of a being on "self-certitude" or, with the culmination of modern metaphysics in the will to power, "self-positing" and self-commanding (Heidegger 1992, 91). Thus, the actors within Foucault's cybernetic theater change, but the mask of mastery that they put on is an enduring one.

On Events and Repetitions

> It is not easy to think in terms of the event. All the harder since thought itself then becomes an event. (Deleuze and Parnet 66)

Like Nietzsche and Foucault, Deleuze defines the essence of existence as the play of forces that constitutes the will to power: "There are nothing but quantities of force in mutual 'relations of tension'" (1983, 40). For Deleuze, then, what defines any being, "whether it is chemical, biological, social or political," is the "relation between dominant and dominated forces" (1983, 40). Since that which exists manifests itself as a functional structure of forces, existence is offered up to the interpretation of the genealogist: "A phenomenon is not an appearance or even an apparition but a sign, a symptom which finds its meaning in an existing force. The whole of philosophy is a symptomatology, and a semeiology" (1983, 3). In this way we can say of Deleuze what Bernhard Radloff says of other post-structuralists for whom the totality of being manifests itself as functional structures of inter-related signs or forces: "the mode of manifestation of the things themselves [is limited] to the purely functional structures which can be captured in the abstract calculus of a formal system. . . . And what *can* manifest itself has no ontological

'presence,' only a 'simulacrum' of being" (1993, 639). Thus, Deleuze follows the Nietzschean inversion of Platonic metaphysics in as much as he claims that existence only manifests itself (in its "truth," shall we say) as a simulacrum or a "phantasm."

Foucault attempts to relate his own anti-Platonic philosophy to that of Deleuze in "Theatrum Philosophicum." This Deleuzo-Foucauldian species of the genus anti-Platonic claims to inscribe an excessive sign on the surface of this metaphysical father. This sign is a "phantasm." The phantasm is an incorporeality which is outside the logic of origin and copy. That is to say, the phantasm is not original; nor, however, is it a mere representation since it does not refer to an original model (1970, 166–67). Phantasms and events, which are the result of the colliding of physical forces, incorporeally transform or mark bodies. Like Foucault's notion of power, the event and its phantasm (power relations and their eternal return) mark, carve up, schematize, and regionalize bodies: "Phantasms must be allowed to function at the limit of bodies; against bodies because they stick to bodies and protrude from them, but also because they touch them, cut them, break them into sections, regionalize them, and multiply their surfaces" (1970, 169). Similarly, Foucault asks us to

> imagine a stitched causality: as bodies collide, mingle, and suffer, they create events on their surfaces, events that are without thickness, mixture, or passion; for this reason, they can no longer be causes. They form, among themselves another kind of succession [that of the phantasm] whose links derive from a quasi-physics of incorporeals—in short from metaphysics. (1970, 173)

The overturning of Plato, then, is an incorporeal transformation of a body of texts—the history of Western metaphysics. The overturning of Plato is, for Foucault, the emergence of a new interpretation, a new domination: "How could it change roles on the same stage? Only by being seized, dominated, and turned against its birth. . . . it is necessary to master history so as to turn it to genealogical uses, that is, strictly anti-Platonic purposes" (1971, 159–60).

If we are to think in these terms, of the event and the phantasm, we must think of the past genealogically: the past as a struggle of forces that have inscribed the surface of bodies throughout history. Genealogy, as we have seen, discerns the nature of the "emergence" of an event—what forces are involved and what qualities they possess—and the "descent" of this event in the form of the phantasm as it is inscribed on the surface of bodies.

As with the parodic repetition of monumental history that Foucault's genealogy calls for (1971, 160–61), the perversion of Platonism that Foucault sees Deleuze undertaking involves "humour."

> To convert Platonism (a serious task) is to increase its compassion for reality, for the world, and for time. To subvert Platonism is to begin at the top (the vertical distance of irony) and to grasp its origin. To pervert Platonism is to search out the smallest details, to descend (with the natural gravitation of humor) as far as its crop of hair or the dirt under its fingernails. (1970, 168)

Perhaps, then, to think of the past genealogically means to think of it as a humorous phantasm. The past exists as an event for Foucault and Deleuze; however, it is an event that is repeated infinitely. This repetition makes its existence banal, a parody of itself. It is for this reason that Foucault refers to Andy Warhol as an artist of difference and repetition—in other words, of the event and the phantasm (189).

In this respect, for Foucault, the event does not manifest itself as a radical Otherness; rather, it is merely a repetition of the existing elements of the system. That which exists can only arise within the space of representation for Foucault—within the theater of the will to power as positing, as *vorstellen*. The fact that this theater of power relations eternally returns means that there can be no escape from the system; there are no monumental events that are too colossal (or sublime) to be encompassed within the relations of forces. There can only be parodic repetitions of the monumental for the genealogist (1971, 160). In this sense, the will to power as a purely relational "non-place," as we have seen, replaces the Platonic Idea as that which all existence is grounded upon. "In a sense, only a single drama is ever staged in this 'non-place,' the endlessly repeated play of dominations" (1971, 150). Genealogy, then, cannot think of the "event" as an originary or founding moment—as *das Ereignis*; rather, in a path of thinking which points ahead to Derrida's notion of *arche-différance*, the genealogist believes that the radically new or the originary is always dissolved into the pre-existing elements which constitute the origin as merely their re-configuration: "In the beginning, at the origin, there is the difference between active and reactive forces. Action and reaction are not in a relation of succession but in one of coexistence in the origin itself" (Deleuze 1983, 55). Thus, the event, for the genealogist, is merely an emergence: a particular configuration of forces.

Thus, Nietzschean genealogy, whether Foucault engages in it through Nietzsche himself or through Deleuze, is an overturning of Platonism that nevertheless remains metaphysical: genealogy defines the essence of existence as the functional relations of forces and gives it the name "will to power," "power/knowledge," "emergence" (*Entstehung*), "the event," or "difference"; the modality of this existence, of course, is that of the eternally stable and is given the name "eternal return," "descent" (*Herkunft*), "phantasm," or "repetition." Foucault is willing to accept that his and Deleuze's position (and, implicitly, Nietzsche's) is metaphysical: "*Logique du sens* should be read as the boldest and most insolent of metaphysical treatises" (1970, 170). In fact, Foucault asserts that his and Deleuze's philosophies, like that of Nietzsche according to Heidegger, are the supreme statements of metaphysics, the culmination of metaphysics, the complete formulations of what could only be partially said by previous philosophers in the history of Western metaphysics. This is the case, for Foucault, because he and Deleuze are the first to realize that metaphysics is "discourse dealing with the materiality of incorporeal things—phantasms, idols, and simulacra" (170).

Thus, in thinking the genealogical phantasm of history, we are not discovering new possibilities for being. There can be no such thing as a new possibility for existence since the phantasm and the event, for Foucault, deny the categories of existence and non-existence. In other words, to define existence as the colliding of bodies (the event) and to define the mode of its manifestation as the banal repetition (phantasm) amount to a claim that existence manifests itself as a meaningless "simulacrum of being"; that is, it amounts to an announcement of the utter oblivion of being, an announcement of the culmination of nihilism where the truth of being can no longer be meaningfully distinguished from non-truth: phantasms "should consequently be freed from the restrictions we impose upon them, freed from the dilemmas of truth and falsehood and of being and non-being (the essential difference between simulacrum and copy carried to its logical conclusion); they must be allowed to conduct

their dance, to act out their mime, as extra-beings'" (1970, 170).

In this way, rather than seeking the truth of a historical existence that still speaks to us today, the genealogist seeks its simulation. Rather than forgetting the unimportant or that which may harm, rather than being monumental, the Foucauldian genealogist constructs a counter-memory. This genealogist, this "new historian" (1971, 160), makes the past account for itself: why did the past not stress this detail more, he asks; why did the past not make a monument of this molehill? The past is photographed from a theoretically infinite number of angles—all perspectives combine to give us a panoptic view of the past. All the way down to the smallest details, the past is set before the present as a humorous transparency.

As we accumulate data on the smallest details of the past, the past becomes available to us in our data bases in all its virtual presence; the past is available as a phantasm.[9] The past is not permitted to retreat from the view of our examination; rather, it is re-presented endlessly. Mark Poster calls this phenomenon that strikes at the heart of the present epoch, this proliferation of information from every perspective, a "Superpanopticon" (126). It is a superpanopticon that Foucault helps us to recognize. However, it is a way of relating to the past and a way of relating to existence as a system of forces offered up to total calculation that Foucault's own philosophical assumptions help facilitate.

Because the phantasm and the event are seemingly outside the categories of origin and copy, Foucault insists that they are outside the philosophy of representation (1970, 172). However, in actuality, they express the culmination of Western metaphysics—specifically the modern metaphysics of representation as expressed in the *hypokeimenon* of existence as power relations and their eternal return. That is to say, the genealogist does not allow that which exists (i.e., in the past) to present itself in itself as itself; rather, the past is ceaselessly re-presented within the schemata posited by a general will to power. In this way, Foucault's thought presents us with a philosophy of hyper-representation rather than a philosophy beyond representation. Therefore, when we inquire into the nature of genealogy's relation to the past (and indirectly the "New Historicist" relation to the past)—when we ask whether or not genealogy allows the past to exist on its own ground—our results are negative. That is, genealogy does not allow the past to present itself as it is in itself; rather, the past is endlessly re-presented on the basis of the schemata of the present. The past is not allowed to arise in any other manner than as a set of power relations.[10]

Endnotes

1. For some varying interpretations of this connection (between Foucault's and Nietzsche's genealogies), see Scott Lash, Michael Mahan, John Pizer, Benjamin C. Sax, and Gary Shapiro.

2. For another formulation of this point, see Jürgen Habermas: "Foucault must have been irritated by the affinity that obviously existed between his archaeology of the human sciences and Heidegger's critique of the metaphysics of the modern age" (1987, p. 266).

3. I use the word "past" here for the sake of clarity of expression. My intention is not to refer to the past as an object; rather, in this case, the past should be seen as what exceeds the present. The fact that historical sciences must assign the past the stability of an object is summed up clearly by Heidegger: "In the historical sciences, just as in the natural sciences, the methodology aims at representing what is fixed and stable and at making history an object. History can become objective only when it is past. What is stable in what is past, that on the basis of which histo-

riographical explanation reckons up the solitary and the diverse in history, is the always-has-been-once-already, the comparable" ("Age of the World Picture," in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, p. 123).

4. Perhaps it is because of passages like this from Foucault's speeches that Michael Mahan can assert that genealogy is a "critique." He feels that Foucault's genealogy continues the enlightenment tradition by problematizing the present, by relativizing our historical way of being (p. 181).
5. Perhaps in this instance Plato is wearing the garb of Kant as historian. Kant summed up the illusion of metaphysics for Heidegger in the view that, "even though the linguistic formulations of the essential constituents of Being change, the constituents...remain the same" (Heidegger, quoted, in Hoy, p. 85). On the historian as wearing a "cloak of universals," see "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," p. 158.
6. Of course, for Nietzsche too the subject was a function of language. We think in terms of subject/predicate, doer/deed, substance/attribute etc. because Indo-European languages are configured in this manner (cf. *On the Genealogy of Morals*, I.13; *The Will to Power*,§§ 481-92; and *Twilight of the Idols*, IV.5).
7. The body has a somewhat confusing existence within genealogy: history is inscribed on it, for Foucault; it (as instinct) is somewhat ahistorical for Nietzsche. It is beyond the scope of this paper to deal with this issue; however, Scott Lash and Michael Mahan provide good, somewhat opposed, interpretations of the notion of the body in Foucault and Nietzsche's genealogies.
8. The confession, thus, is what secures a soul within the metaphysics of medieval Christianity. This confession becomes transformed into a scientific examination of the self in the modern age. Confession becomes all-pervasive within the epoch of technology; it becomes the only way to discover the truth of the self. Through psychoanalysis, for example, the self-certain subject of Cartesianism is solidified. "Whence too this new way of philosophizing: seeking the fundamental relation to the true, not simply in oneself—in some forgotten knowledge, or in a certain primal trace—but in the self-examination that yields, through a multitude of fleeting impressions, the basic certainties of consciousness" (1990a, pp. 59-60). Because "the obligation to confess is now relayed through so many different points," Western man "has become a confessing animal" (1990a, pp. 60, 59). Within this technologizing of the individual, this "normalization," the self becomes a transparency to view. No detail is too small to be confessed. The self must be present, his truth available for manipulation. The self can only exist within this panopticism of the present; it cannot withdraw from the representations of modern metaphysics.

   With this in mind, it would be interesting to do an etymological study of the German words for "confession" (the mode or technology of re-presenting the self) and "enframing" (the essence of technology): *gestehen* is equivalent to the English verb "to confess"; *das Gestell*, as noted above, could be translated as "enframing." The stems of these words have the same meaning (to position, to stand, to place, to put, or to set); the only difference is that *stehen* is strong and *stellen* is weak. Perhaps we see in these parallel meanings a long forgotten connection between a technology of the self and the essence of technology.
9. On the proliferation of data and information concerning the past (or, more specifically, the literary tradition) and its relation to "the value of availability," see Bernhard Radloff (1992, especially p. 155).
10. In the process of writing this essay, I accumulated a great debt to Bernhard Radloff. The initial formulation of the ideas expressed herein would not have been possible were it not for several long conversations I was privileged to have with him.

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