Literature, Culture and Media
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Lecture – 14
Foucault's Notion of Knowledge and Power

Welcome to the fourth module of the third week. In the preceding module we have covered a major discussion of metanarratives and we had also especially discussed Lyotards work published in 1979 titled *The Postmodern Condition: A Reporter Knowledge*. We have discussed the fourth part and the fifth part we shall start the discussion now. We find that Lyotard has talked about the combining forces of technology and economy.

This combined force of technology and economy is a major argument of the postmodern philosophers. as we have already discussed earlier. Now united with the economic forces the technology also starts influencing the way the state functions. The way the administration of the state functions in the way the policies are also implemented. Lyotard starts by saying that machines have started to control more and more things.

Many functions related with regulation many functions related with reproduction also therefore are being controlled more and more by the machines. The onset of artificial intelligence has only complicated issues. So, in this scenario, in the postmodern world the question we face is not exactly what the machines are doing but who will have the access of towards and the control over information n which has been gathered by machines?

Lyotard also start saying that normally it is the ruling class who have access to the information which is gathered by machines or computers. So, therefore they would have easy access to the data. They would also be in a position of decision makers and therefore the ruling classes would be in an advantageous position as far as the information technology related state functioning is concerned.

At the same time Lyotard also cautions us that the traditional setup of estate is also changing. Gradually it is taking the shape of conglomeration in the shape of corporate leaders, heads of

different organizations including labour organizations religious organizations and administrators also. So we find that in this world now the priorities are shifting. Earlier what used to attract people the professions the institutions the historical traditions,

they are now not attracting the people that much. And it also looks as if they are not going to be replaced at least in the former situation. It results into a particular type of crisis in our world. For example who are the great names in our contemporary history. Who are our heroes so you would find that these situations become difficult and also posit different issues which were not faced by the modernist cultural climate?

Also at this point in his work Lyotard has also referred to a contemporary phenomenon. That is what exactly I was referring to when in the previous module I had referred to this fact that some of his illustrations are rooted in a particular point in history though they do not take away the validity of his arguments.

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- What is new in all of this is that the old poles of attraction represented by nation-states, parties, professions, institutions, and historical traditions are losing their attraction.
- And it does not look as though they will be replaced, at least not on their former scale
- "Identifying" with the great names, the heroes of contemporary history, is becoming more and more difficult.
- Dedicating oneself to "catching up with Germany," the life goal of the French president [Giscard d'Estaing at the time this book was published in France] seems to be offering his countrymen, is not exactly exciting. But then again, it is not exactly a life goal. It depends on each individual's industriousness. Each individual is referred to himself. And each of us knows that our *self* does not amount to much.

So, he has taken the example of a French philosopher to illustrate this idea that every individual has different priorities and different reference points also. So, extreme individuality is also something which we have to recognize because ultimately each individual is referring to oneself. Now this individuality ultimately can also prove to be slightly dangerous and can port us back to Nietchzian argument because each of us knows that our self on its own does not amount to much.

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- This breaking up of the grand Narratives leads to what some authors analyze in terms of the dissolution of the social bond and the disintegration of social aggregates into a mass of individual atoms thrown into the absurdity of Brownian motion*.
- Nothing of the kind is happening: this point of view is haunted by the paradisaic representation of a lost organic society.

*the erratic random movement of microscopic particles in a fluid, as a result of continuous bombardment from molecules of the surrounding medium.

This argument is carried further by Lyotard as to suggest that the breaking up of the grand narratives leads us to what some authors had analysed earlier in terms of the dissolution of the social bond which may also result into the disaggregation of social aggregates in a mass individuals. And here Lyotard has also given the reference to a scientific term and the term he has used the Brownian motion.

Now this Brownian motion is ultimately a representative of extreme flux in a scientific experiment. However, Lyotard has used this word this term in a non-scientific context to represent the same type of a flux. However the thing of this type is happening now and there is a danger that we may be ultimately left wishing for a lost organic society which may yet prove to be an El Dorado for us.

Now there are certain contradictions also our self does not amount to much but no self is an island in itself also. All of us exist, each of us exist in a fabric of relationships that is very complex and very mobile in fact more complex and more mobile than ever before in the history of mankind. All of us are located at different nodal points of specific communication circuits. However tiny we may be in our individual situation.

But in this collected complex web each of us is important. Let us say that all of us are located at a post through which various kinds of messages pass.

Contradiction?

- A *self* does not amount to much, but no self is an island; each exists in a fabric of relations that is now more complex and mobile than ever before. Young or old, man or woman, rich or poor, a person is always located at "nodal points" of specific communication circuits, however tiny these may be.

- Or better: one is always located at a post through which various kinds of messages pass. No one, not even the least privileged among us, is ever entirely powerless over the messages that traverse and position him at the post of sender, addressee, or referent.

No one not even the least privileged amongst us is ever entirely powerless as far as the messages that traverse and position through us you know and therefore the contribution of each individual is also very important.

Criticism

- Lyotard's analysis of the postmodern condition has been criticized as being internally inconsistent.

- Thinkers like Alex Callinicos and Jurgen Habermas argue that Lyotard's description of the postmodern world as containing an "incredulity toward metanarratives" could be seen as a metanarrative in itself.

- According to this view, post-structuralist thinkers like Lyotard criticize universal rules but postulate that postmodernity contains a universal skepticism toward metanarratives, and so this 'universal skepticism' is in itself a contemporary metanarrative.

- Like a post-modern neo-romanticist metanarrative that intends to build up a 'meta' critic, or 'meta' discourse and a 'meta' belief holding up that Western science is empiricist, utilitarian, assuming a supposed sovereignty around its own reason and pretending to be neutral, rigorous and universal. This is itself an obvious sample of another 'meta' story, self-contradicting the postmodern critique of the metanarrative.

Lyotard ideas have also been criticized by various philosophers. Prominent among them are Alex Callinicos and Jurgen Habermas. Basically they have based their arguments on two points. Firstly, they say that even though Lyotard has rejected the previous metanarratives of truth, of progress, of scientific reason etc. But he has also used this term, I mean "incredulity towards metanarratives" in such a way that it is to be treated as a universal scepticism.

If he is so much against the universality of metanarratives how can they scepticism of the postmodern conditions be a universal aspect in itself. So, this is a very valid and very significant objection also. Another aspect which they have used to criticize Lyotards post modernised condition is that he has used primarily the tools of the modernist criticism to assign them instead of using another set of tools.

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- Thus, Lyotard's postmodern incredulity towards metanarratives could be said to be self-refuting. If one is skeptical of universal narratives such as "truth," "knowledge," "right," or "wrong," then there is no basis for believing the "truth" that metanarratives are being undermined.
- In this sense, this paradox of postmodernism is similar to the liar's paradox ("This statement is false.").
- in many respects Lyotard's arguments are open to metanarrative interpretation. Postmodernism is an anti-theory, but uses theoretical tools to make its case. The significance of this contradiction, however, is of course also open to interpretation.

However let us say that even though Lyotards postmodern include incredulity towards metanarratives could be said to be self-refuting, if one is sceptical of universal such as truth knowledge right or wrong then perhaps there is no basis for believing that the truth in master narratives is becoming is being undermined. So in the sense the paradox of postmodernism is similar to the liar's paradox.

When a liar says this statement is false. So the fuzziness of the postmodern condition does not become very clear to us simply if we relate to Lyotards arguments. We can also say that in many respects Lyotards arguments are open to meta-narrative interpretation. Postmodernism is an anti-theory however it has also used. As I have commented earlier the theoretical tools or the previous ages to make its case.

The significance of this contradiction however is of also open to interpretation. However, I would sum up my discussion of Lyotard by saying that he has opened up new critical dimensions and approaches as far as universal cognition is concerned. This discussion is carried forward in an equally significant way by Foucault who we are going to discuss now. A French literary critic, Foucault is known for these critiques of various social institutions.

Most notably psychiatry, medicine and the prison system and also for his theories which were collated in his volumes on *The History of Sexuality*. His general theories concerning power and their relationship with knowledge as well his ideas concerning discourse in relation to the history of the western thought have been widely discussed and applied. Major influences as far as Foucault's ideas are concerned have been on the feminist theories.

The queer theories, the postcolonial theories also.

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Brief Introduction

- Foucault— a French literary critic and historian— is known for his critiques of a number of social institutions like psychiatry, medicine, and the prison system.
  - Also known for his theories collected in *The History of Sexuality*
  - Famous for general theories concerning Power and the relation between power and knowledge as well as his notion of "discourse" in relation to the history of Western thought
- Major influence on social thought, feminism, queer theory and post-colonial theory
- Was critical of social constructs that implied an identity—identity of male/femal and homosexual to that of criminals and political activists.
  - Foucault's theories on identity are embodied in his observation that homosexual identity has evolved over the years from an implied act to an implied identity

He was critic of social constructs that implied an identity from the identity of being a male or a female or a homosexual to that of criminals and political activists. Foucault theories on identity are exemplified by his observation that homosexual identity has progressed over the years from an implied act to an implied identity. His idea is that whereas a couple of centuries earlier homosexuality was considered to be an act,

now it has come to represent an identity within the given social spheres.

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- His work is often labeled as postmodernist or post-structuralist by contemporary critics and readers.
- However, in the 1960s, he was more often aligned with the structuralist movement.
  - Was initially happy with this description; but later distanced himself from the structuralist approach
  - Argued that he did not embrace a formalist approach like the structuralists
  - Was neither interested in being associated with the postmodern label either
  - He preferred to deliberate on the definition and scope of "modernity" in his works.

His work is often described either as a postmodernist or a post structuralist one by contemporary commentators and critics. During the 1960s when he had started to publish he was often more associated with the poststructuralist movement. Although Foucault was initially happy with this description very soon he started to withdraw from this description arguing that unlike the structuralist he had not adopted a formalist approach.

At the same time he was also not very happy by his description as a postmodernist critic. He said that he is more comfortable while he is being referred to as a person who tries to define what modernity is.

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Knowledge and Power

- The theme that underlies all Foucault's work is the relationship between power and knowledge, and how the former is used to control and define the latter. What authorities claim as 'scientific knowledge' are really just means of social control. Foucault shows how, for instance, in the eighteenth century 'madness' was used to categorise and stigmatise not just the mentally ill but the poor, the sick, the homeless and, indeed, anyone whose expressions of individuality were unwelcome.

— Philip Stokes, Philosophy: 100 Essential Thinkers (2004)

Foucault is primarily known for his combined ideas on knowledge and power. In this connection I would start my discussion by coating Philip stokes. Philip stokes says and I quote "the theme underlies all Foucault work is the relationship between power and knowledge in how the foreword is used to control and define the latter. What authorities claim as scientific knowledge are really just means of social control".

Foucault shows how for instance in the 18th century madness was used to get to categorise and stigmatize not just a mentally ill but the poor, the sick, the homeless and indeed anyone whose expressions of individuality were unwelcome. Philip Stokes has very summarily presented what exactly is the relationship between knowledge and power or power in knowledge as Foucault has tried to describe.

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Along with the other the social theorists Foucault had always believed that knowledge is always a form of power. However he is different from others in the sense that he has gone a step further and told us that knowledge can be gained from power and not vice versa only. He says that knowledge can be gained from power producing it not preventing it through observation new knowledge is also produced and gained.

In his view knowledge is forever connected to power and he also writes them in this way power/knowledge. So, that they are combined and it is in this context that we have to understand when this statement that "knowledge is power" in the connection of Foucault theory. Later on towards the end of this slide I have also quoted directly from Foucault and if we particularly look at the last two sentences then this combination becomes clear to us and I read.

Thus there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations. So, in the context of Foucault we find that this age old dictum knowledge power gains a fresh dimension. For him power exists everywhere and it comes from everywhere.

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- In his view, power exists everywhere and comes from everywhere;
  - Key concept as it acts as a type of relation between people—a complex kind of strategy with the power to covertly shape another's behavior.
- Foucault did not see the effects of power negatively:
  - Power didn't just exclude, repress, mask, conceal and censor.
  - It also produced reality: "it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth"
- The significant aspect for him was not power per se, but the effect that power has on whole networks, practices, rituals.
  - How the world around us, and how our behavior can be influenced.

And it was a key concept because it acts as a type of relation between people, a complex form of strategy with the ability to secretly shape another behaviour. It is also notable that Foucault did not view the effects of power in a negative fashion. For him power is not necessarily repressive. It does not necessarily censor, it also does not necessarily conceal. Rather it is a producer of the reality.

It produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The importance for Foucault always laying the fact that power has an entire networks, practices, the world around us and however behaviour can affected and not absolutely power in isolation. He is also primarily known for his idea which has been termed as Panopticism.

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Panopticism

- One of the techniques or regulatory methods of power/knowledge according to Foucault:
  - Panopticon referred to an architectural design by Jeremy Bentham in the mid-19th Century for prisons, asylums, schools, hospitals, and factories.
- Progressive modern democratic state required a system to control its citizens which was different from medieval tortures and dungeons.
- The Panopticon presented a influential and sophisticated method of internalized coercion:
  - Each prisoner separated from the other—no interaction or communication.
  - This structure allowed guards to continually watch each cell from their vantage point, unseen by the prisoners.
  - Continuous observation acted as a control mechanism; a consciousness of constant surveillance is internalized.
- The metaphor of panopticon allowed Foucault to explore the relationship between:
  - Systems of social control and people in disciplinary contexts;
  - Power-knowledge concept

This idea of Panopticism is derived an architectural design which is known as panopticon. This architectural design was finalized by Jeremy Bentham. Bentham, the famous mid-19th century British utilitarian philosopher. Jeremy Bentham had finalized this design primarily for the prisons and insane asylums. Later on it came to be accepted for architecture in the buildings of schools, hospitals and factories.

It is a particular type of an architecture in which a single sentry can keep an eye on all the prison inmates are on all the patients in an insane asylum. He is positioned on a tower centrally located and all the rest of the cells are open so that the person even though his single or only a small team of two people can keep a watch on what is going on inside this big structure. In the 19th century the modernist the states wanted to create structures in such a fashion that the criminals can also be kept in isolation and gradually they may be made to be a useful participant in the social progress. They wanted to do away with the medieval tortures, the dungeons, the beheadings etc. And this idea of panopticon this particular architectural design offered a very powerful yet sophisticated internalized coercion which was achieved through the constant observation of prisoners.

In this type of a design each prisoner or each inmate was separated from the other. They were not allowed any interaction any communication with each other and this structure also allowed guards to continually see inside each cell from their vantage point in a high central tower unseen

by the prisoners. Constant observation acted as a control mechanism it actually ultimately resulted amongst the prisoners and the inmates in a consciousness of constant surveillance.

So when this consciousness of constant surveillance is internalized the behaviour changes. The personality also gradually changes. So panopticon has been used as a metaphor by Foucault here which has allowed him to explore the relationship between systems of social control and people in a disciplinary situation as well the power-knowledge concept. In his view power and knowledge come from observing others.

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- In his view, power and knowledge depend on constant surveillance:
  - It marked the shift to a disciplinary power—supervision of all movements; all occurrences are recorded. The result? Acceptance of regulations and docility – a normalization emerging from the threat of discipline.
- Appropriate behavior is achieved not through complete surveillance, but by panoptic discipline—by prompting people to conform through internalization of this reality.
  - The actions of the observer depend on monitoring the behavior he observes. The power comes from the knowledge the observer has amassed from his observations of actions
  - Foucault says that "by being combined and generalized, they attained a level at which the formation of knowledge and the increase in power regularly reinforce one another in a circular process" (Foucault 1977).
- For Foucault, the danger is not that people are repressed by the social order but that they are "carefully fabricated in it" and because there is a diffusion of power into the behavior of individuals.
  - Power becomes more effective through apparatuses of observation—with knowledge following suit, always in search of "new objects of knowledge over all the surfaces on which power is exercised" (Foucault 1977).

It marked the transition to a disciplinary power with every movement supervised and all events recorded. The result of this surveillance is acceptance of regulations and docility in normalization of sorts is stemming from the threat of discipline and this is exactly what Foucault means by the 'internalization of the consciousness of surveillance'. A suitable behaviour is achieved not through total surveillance but by panoptic discipline.

And inducing a population to confirm by the internalization of this reality that they are under watch in surveillance. The actions of the observer are based upon this monitoring and the behaviours he sees exhibited and Foucault says that the more one observes the more powerful one becomes. The power comes from the knowledge the observer accumulates over a passage of time after looking at the behaviour of the prisoners or the inmates over the passage of time.

So, this knowledge and the power of his position reinforce each other. Foucault ideas about the internalization of the consciousness of surveillance are very important in todays context also. We do not have the architectural structure but let us say that the modern days surveillance technique have also generated a consciousness of surveillance among most of the people today. Foucault also echoes it when he says that the real danger was not necessarily that individuals are repressed by the social order but they are carefully fabricated in it. The internalization of this consciousness changes and alters the behaviours and personality modes of people in a fundamental fashion. The idea ultimately is to create docile bodies who would exactly do what they are expected to do simply because they have this internal consciousness that their behaviour is under constant surveillance.

So Foucault's theory of power in knowledge becomes very significant if we put it in the context of technological advancements.

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During the 1970s he had argued most notably in his books *Discipline and Punish* and the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* that these reorganizations of knowledge were entwined with new forms of power and domination. At that time Foucault was not very well received by the academic circles. Even though he immediately shot into popularity we find that his work did not have enough appeal to the academicians.

However, he has continued and now we find that most of the dialogues of humanities and social sciences whenever they refer to power and knowledge combination are incomplete without any reference to Foucault's work.

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- These comprehensive studies are linked to a more general notion of power:
  - The epistemic and political location of the criticism of power are seen as less than satisfactory by critics (Joseph Rouse)
  - Similarly Foucault's deliberations on the relationship between truth and power have triggered concerns about their reflexive effects for his own analysis
- Foucault is critical of traditional theories of power:
  - Like the Marxist and non-Marxist theories, which he believes are guilty of a certain economism in their analysis of power (Smart, 1985).

These detailed studies of Foucault are connected to a more general conception of power and of the epistemic and political positioning of the criticism of power which many critics have found less satisfactory. Foucault's discussions of the relation between truth and power have similarly provoked concerns about their reflexive implications for his own analysis. Foucault is also critical of traditional theories of power such as the Marxist philosophy.

And also many of the non-Marxist theories also and he believes that they are guilty of a certain economies in their analysis of power.

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Foucault's Lectures on Power

- First lecture delivered at the College de France in 1976
- In his lecture, he remarks that the juridical/liberal theories of power view power as something that can be acquired – like a commodity – and can be exchanged from one person to another through contract (Foucault, 2003).
- Foucault however presents a non-economist analysis of power (Smart, 1985):
  - The juridical/liberal theories of power look at power as repressive.
  - Foucault remarks that we need to rethink this notion of power.
  - According to him, apparatuses of power need to be seen as enabling something more than just repression (Foucault, 2003).

Foucault established his theories his ideas about this combination of power and knowledge in his two lectures which he had delivered in 1976 at the College de France. In the first lecture he had suggested that in the juridical and liberal theories of power, Power is viewed as something that can be acquired like a commodity. It can be exchanged from one person to another through a contractual act.

In the second lecture he goes on to establish that in non-economist analysis of power is somehow different from these traditional approaches towards the analysis of power. The juridical and liberal theories of power understand power as repressive whereas Foucault states that this idea of power needs to be rethought and the mechanism of power need to be seen as facilitating something more than just repression.

In the second lecture Foucault questions how power is exercised. In order to understand the mechanism of power Foucault establishes two limits.
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- In his second lecture at the College de France in 1976, Foucault deliberates on *how* power is exercised.
- In order to understand the apparatuses of power, Foucault institutes two limits:
  - The first relates to the rules of right that legally delimit power;
  - The second relates to the effects of truth or knowledge produced and diffused by power, and which in turn replicate this power.
  - Therefore, Foucault argues that we have a triangle of power, right and knowledge (Foucault, 2003).

The first limit relates to the rules of right that formally delimit power and the second relates to the effects of truth or knowledge produced and transmitted by power and which in turn reproduces power. So once the issues of rights formally delimit power we find the power and knowledge run together and it is therefore, Foucault says that, we do not only have a combination of knowledge and power rather we have a triangle of power right in knowledge.

Each corner reinforcing the other two.

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Extreme force can destroy their target; Discipline and training can restructure it to produce new gestures, actions, habits and skills, and finally new kinds of populations.

Foucault was interested in the difference between enormous but intermittent exercises of destructive force (public executions, military occupations, the violent suppression of insurrections) and the endless restrictions imposed in practices of discipline and training (Joseph Rouse):

- 'It was a question not of treating the body, en masse, 'wholesale,' as if it were an indissociable unity, but of working it 'retail,' individually; of exercising upon it a subtle coercion, of obtaining holds upon it at the level of the mechanism itself --- movements, gestures, attitudes, rapidity: an infinitesimal power over the active body" (Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* 1977: 136-37)
- The human body was entering a machinery of power that explores it, breaks it down and rearranges it.... It defined how one may have a hold over others' bodies, not only so that they may do what one wishes, but so that they may operate as one wishes, with the techniques, the speed and the efficiency that one determines. Thus discipline produces subjected and practiced bodies, "docile" bodies (1977: 138)
- Similarly, schedules, programmed movements, and exercises correlated with developmental stages "served to economize the time of life, to accumulate it in a useful form and to exercise power over men through the mediation of time" (1977: 162)

Foucault has always been obsessed with the idea of power as well as brute force. He says that excessive force can coerce or destroy the target however, discipline and training can reconstruct

it to produce new gestures, habits, skills actions and ultimately different in new temperaments among people. Foucault was interested in the difference between massive but infrequent exercises of destructive force.

Like public executions, military occupations, violence suppression of insurrections and uninterrupted constraints imposed in practices of discipline and training. For him it was simply not a question of treating the body, en masse, wholesale as if it were an indissociable unity but of working it in retail individually of exercising upon it is a subtle coercion and obtaining holds upon it at the label of the mechanism itself.

By controlling the movements, gestures, attitudes, rapidity even an infinitesimal power over the active body. We can try gradually to have a control over the body itself. So the human body was entering a machinery of power that explores it breaks it down and then it rearranges it. It defined how one may have a hold over others' bodies not only so that they may do what one wishes but so that they may operate as one wishes.

And the difference between these two statements is very deep with the techniques, the speed and the efficiency that one determines. Thus discipline produces subject and practiced bodies, discipline produces docile bodies and this exactly is one of the purposes of using force in a systematic manner by the instruments of power. Similarly schedules, program movements and exercises co relate the developmental stages served to economize the time of life.

To accumulate it in a useful form and to exercise power over men through the mediation of time.
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- Foucault argued that these mechanisms of power and knowledge underwent a 'two-stage development':
  - They were initially established to control or neutralize dangerous social elements;
  - And later evolved into techniques for improving the efficacy and productivity of those subjected to them.
- They were also initially refined within insulated institutions (notably prisons, hospitals, army camps, schools, and factories), and were slowly modified into practices that could be applied in other contexts.
- Foucault termed the expansion of the scope of application of these techniques, the "swarming" of disciplinary mechanisms: the mechanisms have a certain tendency to become "de-institutionalized," to emerge from the closed fortresses in which they once functioned and to circulate in a "free" state (*Discipline and Punish*).

Foucault saw these techniques of power and knowledge as undergoing two state development. His idea is that they were initially started as means of control in order to neutralize the dangers of anti-social elements. To organize the behaviour in a suppressive manner of those people who were a threat to a civilized society. They were initially cultivated these practices but initially cultivated within isolated institutions.

Most notably in prisons, in hospitals, in asylums for maintaining stable people also in army camps and gradually they were transferred to his school and factories. So they were gradually adapted into techniques that could be applied in various other contexts. And this idea of applying them from an isolated context to a more open and general context that has a definite appeal to Foucault.

He calls this broadening of the scope of application the swarming of disciplinary mechanisms. The mechanisms have a certain tendency to become deinstitutionalized to emerge from the closed fortresses in which they once functioned and to circulate in a free state. Foucault did not see these new techniques as simply super imposed upon a pre-existing social order.

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- Foucault did not view these new techniques as being overlaid on an established social order.
- In his studies of power/knowledge, he argued that these politico-epistemic practices constituted new object domains for knowledge about "biographical unities" — like delinquency, homosexuality, or hyperactivity, developmental structures and so on (Foucault 1977; qtd in Joseph Rouse)
  - Eventually, these new practices produced new kinds of human subjects.
  - They also produced new kinds of knowledge— new objects to knowledge, and new modalities of power.
- 'What connected the levels of epistemic analysis and political regulation was the practice of "normalizing judgment" and the construction of norms as a field of possible knowledge. Norms seem to have their place primarily in the knowledge of populations, since they demarcate distribution' (Rouse).

His nominalism remains prominent in his studies of power knowledge as it took these politico epistemic practices to constitute new object. He also has talked about the biographical unities like delinquency, homosexuality or hyperactivity developmental structures etc. Ultimately these practices produced new kinds of human subjects but they also produced new forms of knowledge along with new objects to know and new modalities of power.

What connected the levels of epistemic analysis and political regulation was a practice of normalizing judgment and the construction of norms as a field of possible knowledge. Norm seem to have their place primarily in the knowledge of populations since the demarcate distributions.

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- These new norms and standards were also necessary to the new knowledge of individuals.
  - how else could one create knowledge of individuals that did not incorporate their individuality under a type?
  - A normalizing distribution allows one to position a subject within an epistemic field, without reducing the individual to the typical.
- Foucault discusses normalization as a technique of power and its epistemic consequences emerge noticeably in his works.
- 'Normalizing judgment produced a whole range of degrees of normality indicating membership of a homogeneous socialbody but also playing a part in classification, hierarchization and the distribution of rank (Foucault 1977: 184)'

Norms are responsible to the new knowledges of individuals for how else was one to produce knowledge of individuals that did not simply subsume their individuality under a type. In normalization process in normalization distribution process enables us to locate the individual within an epistemic field without reducing the individual to the typical. So Foucault therefore discusses normalization as a technique of power.

And its epistemic implications also emerge clearly in his account. This process produces a whole range of degrees of normality indicating membership of a homogeneous social body. But also playing a part in classification in the creation of hierarchy and in the distribution of rank.

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- Foucault argues that there is no knowledge or a truth outside of networks of power relations.
- The scope of his argument incorporates the 'possibility of a critical knowledge that would speak the truth to power, exposing domination for what it is, and thereby enabling or encouraging effective resistance to it'. (Rouse)

Foucault objects to the very idea of acknowledge or a truth outside of network of power relations. The scope of his objection thus also encompasses the possibility of a critical knowledge that would speak the truth to power exposing domination for what it is and thereby enabling or encouraging effective resistance to it. When we talk about Foucault's relationship between the knowledge and the power we find that resistance is also a compulsory corollary to it.

Foucault has clearly conveyed certain things, certain points as far as the relationship between power and knowledge is concerned.

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- After conveying the following:
    - Power is not an attribute of a single center; it is exercised in social relations.
    - Power is not repressive; it is productive.
    - Power is decentralized and multidirectional.
    - Power is intentional, yet non-subjective.
- Foucault further argues that when only certain people or a group controls knowledge, oppression is a possibility.
    - Thus, the need to figure out who is observing our actions. Who is recording events? Then, at least, we will know who has power and who doesn't.
- In Foucault's view, resistance is immanent to power relations.

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And as far as we view power as being having certain attributes. Power is not an attribute of a single centre. It is exercised in social relationships only. Secondly, power is not repressive it is productive. It is also decentralized and multidimensional and power is intentional yet non-subjective. After having said that Foucault further says that when only a group of people or certain people control knowledge oppression is a possibility.

We need to find out who is recording our actions. And at least then we will know who has power and who does not have the power and therefore Foucault says that resistance is imminent to power relations. However whereas Foucault has detailed his ideas on knowledge and power.

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- Foucault does not provide systematic explanations of his ideas on resistance. Therefore, the possibility and visions of resistance have become contentious issues in the analysis of Foucault's political and theoretical legacy.
- In *The Will to Knowledge,* Foucault says: 'where there is power there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power'
- Further clarification may be taken from in an interview from 1982, which focuses extensively on the question of resistance:
    - 'If there was no resistance there would be no power relations, because it would be a matter of obedience. You have to use power relations to refer to the situations where you're not doing what you want. So resistance comes first'

He has remained relatively silent or hesitant in systematically defining resistance. However in the *Will to Knowledge* he says where there is power there is resistance and yet or rather consequently this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power. Here also his statement is not very clear. At best it tells us about a particular relative position of resistance. However, if we put this quote in the context of one of his interviews,

which were recorded in 1982 we perhaps would to be able to have a better picture of Foucault meant by resistance and I quote "if there was no resistance there would be no power relations because it would be a matter of obedience. You have to use power relations to defer to the situations where you are not doing what you want so resistance comes first."

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- Thus, Foucault's notion of power makes it possible to understand power relations as eliminating the consent/willingness of the subject acted upon, without taking away the agency of the subject.
- Resistance can thus be understood as analogous to 'freedom'.

Foucault conception of power makes it possible to understand power relations as exclusive excluding the consent or willingness of the subject acted upon without therefore denying the agency of the subject. Resistance can thus be understood as an analogous to the freedom.

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- Power is not something possessed by powerful agents—it is co-produced by those who endorse and resist it.
  - Not just a system of dominance that enforces its rules upon all those it controls; All rules are always caught up in constant struggles.
- Foucault's dynamics of power: power is dispersed across complex and heterogeneous social networks marked by constant struggle.
- Can we think of a similar dynamics of knowledge?
- Notion may appear odd at first, because the notion of knowledge as a system of reasonable true beliefs is such powerful concept that most of us are beholden to it.

Foucault clearly says that power is not something which is possessed or wielded by powerful agents because it is co constituted by those who support and resist it. It is not a system of domination as far as Foucault is concerned that imposes it rules upon all those it governs. Because any such rule is always at issues and ongoing struggles. So in in Foucault dynamics of power.

Power is always dispersed across complicated and heterogeneous social networks which are marked by continuous struggle also. What could it mean to conceive similarly of a dynamics of knowledge? The notion may seem initially very strange because the conception of knowledge as a body of true beliefs has such a strong hold upon us. As people we find it very difficult to oppose something handed over to us as knowledge.

Because mankind has been trained to have an ingrained belief in the stronghold of knowledge which cannot be easily challenged. So when we sum up Foucault's contribution to postmodernist philosophy we have to remember that it is a step ahead towards the incredulity which has always emphasized on by the postmodernist belief. If Lyotard has taught us that we should have an incredulity towards metanarratives,

Foucault has also told us that power and knowledge and resistance are a compulsory part of the postmodernist condition. Thank you.