The Emerging of the Entrepreneurial Self and Its Current Hegemony. Some Basic Reflections on How to Analyze the Formation and Transformation of Modern Forms of Subjectivity

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Abstract: Many governmentality studies are concerned with the formation and transformation of modern forms of subjectivity. These studies revealed the appearance of an "entrepreneurial self" during the latter part of the 1970s that now appears to become the hegemonic conception. But why did this self emerge and how did it become hegemonic? These questions lead us to another more fundamental problem as it is not yet clear how to understand the formation and transformation of modern subjectivity without essentializing or discursively dissolving subjectivity. Grounding myself in FOUCAULT, I suggest theorizing this formation and transformation of modern forms of subjectivity in terms of effects of dispositive practices. However, we first need to reconstruct this method using essays of Michel FOUCAULT and ground it in critical social studies. Furthermore this method of analyzing dispositives has to be extended to take the categories class, race, and gender into consideration. Since some studies already address the female entrepreneurial self, I ground critical social analysis in gender. The reconstruction of FOUCAULT's approach grounded in critical social analysis then serves as a methodological starting point for the study of transformations and formations of subjectivity forms.

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1. The Emergence of the Enterprising Self as a Hegemonic Form of Subjectivation

For some time now in the framework of Governmentality Studies, the radical restructuring process of the social welfare state has been discussed under the label of "economization of the social." The economization of the social is described on the one hand as an orientation on criteria of efficiency proper to societal areas in which the modern social welfare state is actively present and

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where it is attempted to solve problems in one way or the other.[1] On the other hand, it is described as a specific individual form behavior—self referentially and in terms of society—from the perspective of the economization of the social. [1]

Governmentality Studies is an area of research that has become increasingly important over the past 15 years, mostly in Anglo-Saxon countries, but more recently also in the German speaking world (where it is typically called *Gouverne-mentalitätsstudien*).[2] This field is a theoretical expansion and development of Michel FOUCAULT's analysis of power and his theory of the Fordist form of social regulation.[3] FOUCAULT[4] coined the neologism "governmentality" to describe the conceptual interconnection between "govern" (*gouverner*) and "mentality" (*mentalité*). Beginning with the concept of governing, FOUCAULT understands subjectivation as a (trans-) formational process in which individuals are subjected to a specific form of self-reference and reference to others by means of the specific forms of rationality and technology of governing. [2]

Various studies in Governmentality Studies have investigated the contemporary means of the formation or transformation of modern subjectivation. One result of these was the positing of the "enterprising self," which emerged during the last third of the twentieth century. This self is defined by the steering of action, feeling, thinking and willing on the basis of an orientation on the criteria of economic efficiency and entrepreneurial calculation. For Richard SENNETT (1998), the enterprising self exists as "the flexible individual of capitalism in a self-entrepreneurial response. It must extol itself and be in a position to present itself accordingly. The enterprising self is regarded in many studies as the contemporary form of hegemonic subjectivation and thus as the hegemonic form in which individuals view, perceive, and experience themselves and others. [3]

The enterprising self is regarded as hegemonic, because it can be found in different lifeworlds, where it is dominant. According to Günter VOSS and Hans

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1 Gilles DELEUZE (1979, p.327) drew attention early on to the notion that the social is not an ahistorical form of human existence. "The social" refers much more "to a *particular sector*, in which various problems, exceptional cases, specific institutions, qualified personnel … are situated." (All direct quotes are translated from the German editions. The English titles of books were already translated into English, e.g., those of WEBER and FOUCAULT, have been used.)

2 The most important anthologies concerning this field in the German-speaking world are BRÖCKLING, LEMKE and KRASMANN (2000), PIEPER and GUITEREZ RODRIGUEZ (2003) as well as the special issue of the journal "Peripherie" (2003); for the Anglo-Saxon realm, see the anthologies BARRY, OSBORNE and ROSE (1994), BURCHELL, GORDON and MILLER (1991), DEAN and HINDESS (1998). Noteworthy are also some essays in the journal *Economy and Society*.

3 Although FOUCAULT's research up until the second half of the 1970s situated power primarily in the areas of confrontation, war, and conquest, he recognized at the end of that decade that such an approach was seriously lacking in two respects: First, it concentrates on the disciplining of bodies without systemically attending to the more comprehensive processes of subjectivation. Second, it proved embarrassing that in his critique of state-centered analyses, FOUCAULT directed his gaze one-sidedly at local practices and specific institutions—such as the prison or hospital—and thus overlooked in his analysis the state itself, understood as the result of societal relations of power. Beginning with these considerations, after 1978 FOUCAULT worked on the defining connection of forms power with forms of subjectivation (cp. also BÜHRMANN, 2004).

4 See FOUCAULT (2000a, 2000b).

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PONGRATZ (1998), the enterprising self appears in the work world in the form of an "entreployee" (*Arbeitskraftunternehmer*) and supersedes the "life long mass worker of Fordism."[5] Monica GRECO (1993) draws attention to the demands on the enterprising self that also pervade individuals' free time. Making a good impression, looking healthy, and exuding energy are regarded as proof of a will committed to entrepreneurial success. Anthony GIDDENS (1997, pp.120/121) also refers to this will to success (which must be constantly proven), stating succinctly that "[t]he individual cannot be content with an identity that is simply assumed, inherited or built upon. The identity of the person must be extensively revealed, constructed, and actively maintained." The enterprising self is thus a self that is not liberated but must be constantly worked on. It is an employed/active self. GIDDENS appears to be referring to individuals in western industrialized countries, irrespective of origin, ethnicity or race, and gender. [4]

In light of this diagnosis, the following central—although not systematically researched—question emerges: Which social practices enable the enterprising self to appear, and how did it come about that this self attained hegemonic status? In my opinion, the lack of research with respect to this inquiry cannot only be attributed to a lack of interest. The reason for this has to do much more with the deeper, methodological problem of how the transformation process mentioned above can be conceptualized and empirically described without taking recourse to an ontology of a specific form of subjectivation and without dissolving the problem discursively, the latter resulting in the trap of a form of linguistic idealism. Speaking on behalf of this thesis (in my opinion) is the fizzling out of a controversy some time ago in Governmentality Studies surrounding the limitations and possibilities of the perspective of Governmentality Studies. At the center of this controversy was the question concerning the ontological status of the enterprising self. [5]

2. The Controversy Surrounding the Ontological Status of the Enterprising Self

In this controversy, the claim is made (to varying degrees) that Governmentality Studies concentrates too much on the programmatic level and neglects the subjective capacity for learning or disavowal in the forms of subjectivation. In this view, the governmentality approach comprehends only a normatively reduced and smoothed over version of reality, and ignores both the individual and collective ability to proffer resistance. This criticism has been repeatedly voiced by scholars such as Katharina PÜHL and Susanne SCHULTZ.[6] In reply to the latter, Ulrich BRÖCKLING understands the enterprising self as a "subject in the gerundive" (BRÖCKLING, 2002, pp.178-79), which does not refer "at all to any empirically existing entity" but rather the direction in which the individual is changed and should change." Above all, it appears important to BRÖCKLING (2002, p.179)

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5 Unlike the *career employee*, the *entrepreneur* is characterized in particular by an increased level of self-control with respect to his or her activities, a compulsion to increase the economical value of professional skills and work output, as well as an economization of everyday life (see VOSS & PONGRATZ, 1998, p.131).

6 See PÜHL and SCHULTZ (2001); PÜHL (2003); SCHULTZ (2003).

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that the enterprising self does not represent an ideal type in Max WEBER's sense
of the term, because of its "appellative, if not prescriptive characteristics." But
why is this so important? In order to answer this question, I will turn briefly to
WEBER's concept of the ideal type. [6]

At the center of the methodological considerations of WEBER is the ideal-type
conceptual image (*idealtypische Begriffsbildung*). With the ideal type, WEBER
wishes to simultaneously demarcate two boundaries, delimiting his approach
firstly from the description of individual cases offered by historical scholarship,
and secondly from the nomothetic statements made by the natural sciences.[7]
Concerning the logical structure of the ideal-type conceptual image
(*idealtypischen Begriffsbildung*), WEBER clearly points out the nature of this type:

> "It [the ideal type] is achieved through the one-sided improvement of one or more
> aspects and through the amalgamation of a volume of diffuse and discreet—here
> more, there less—individual phenomena that are in some places not at all yet
> present. The latter are added to the one-sided, prescinded aspects, forming a unified
> mental image. In its conceptual purity, this mental image is nowhere to be found in
> reality. It is a utopia. For historical scholarship, it becomes more important to
> establish in each individual case, how near or far the reality of this case is in relation
> to the ideal picture" (WEBER 1904, p.191). [7]

As Ralf BOHNSACK (2000, p.183) points out, such a "one-sided improvement" of
the specific aspects of a case allows one to construct a better model in some
cases and a poorer one in others. [8]

In any case, for WEBER there is a "provisional *example*" (*Veranschaulichung*) at
the beginning of the ideal type image (WEBER 1920, p.31). The former serves to
"gradually compose" an ideal type "by gradually assembling extracted
components from individual historical realities" (WEBER 1920, p.30). Thus, the
valid conceptual understanding of an ideal type is to be found at the end of an
investigation, not at the beginning. (Incidentally, this is very nicely demonstrated
in WEBER's account of the emergence of capitalism and the ideal type of
bourgeois entrepreneur, which he outlined in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit
of Capitalism* (1920).[8] Nevertheless—and this will become clear in this study of
Weber—there are individual elements of this ideal type to be found in reality. That
is to say, what individuals say, think, and feel about themselves indicates
particular aspects of the bourgeois entrepreneur. And they are proud of this to an
extent. They are even angered by the use of these elements for other ends. [9]

Before proceeding further, I would like to assert the following in light of my brief
discussion of WEBER: Although a complete embodiment of WEBER's ideal type
is no where to be found in reality, he nevertheless proceeds with the construction
of his account by using real existing and thus non-discursive elements. It is likely
the case that BRÖCKLING insists that the enterprising self is in no way an

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7   See also BOHNSACK (2003, p.144).

8   For a detailed discussion, see SCHROER (2001, pp.15-42).

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empirical entity or an ideal type, because he fears that such claims necessarily involve the use of an ontological category. In this view, it is much more the case that the enterprising self is a vanishing point of the neo-liberal management program. By taking this line of approach, BRÖCKLING becomes ensnared in a kind of linguistic idealism to the extent that he remains exclusively on a discursive level. BERGEN's approach can only salvage this apparent "advantage" to the extent that he refrains from inquiring into a possible subjective mediation of specific forms of subjectivation.[9] [10]

3. The Enterprising Self as a Real, Existing Product of Discursive and Non-Discursive Practices

I find BRÖCKLING's explanation of the enterprising self as a vanishing point of the neo-liberal management program to be implausible for two reasons: First, he contradicts himself by regarding the enterprising self as a vanishing point of "lines of force," while at the same time understanding the latter as the interplay of discursive and non-discursive practices that FOUCAULT describes using the concept of the "dispositive." Fundamental to FOUCAULT's notion of the dispositive, however, was his repeated claim of its material existence, in particular its subjectivizing effects.[10] Secondly, although BRÖCKLING repeatedly places himself in the tradition of Governmentality Studies, he nevertheless ignores the requirement of the governmentality perspective that obliges one to inquire into the concrete, local practices of governing apparatuses.[11] Thus, he does not take into consideration the very real conditions under which specific forms of subjectivity historically form or transform. In 1980 at UC Berkeley, FOUCAULT (1980) reiterated the importance of this perspective in an instructive lecture that has, unfortunately, garnered little scholarly attention. In both of the main works belonging to his so-called ethical phase,[12] FOUCAULT highlights this perspective. In the second volume of his trilogy, *Sexuality and Truth*, FOUCAULT writes that

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9 BRÖCKLING has attempted to dismiss criticism here as a form of "misunderstanding" or even "sociological misunderstanding" (2002, p.179).

10 Anne WALDSCHMIDT (1995, p.38) gives a detailed explanation of the French term *dispositif*: "The French term 'dispositif' is found in technical, legal, medicinal, and military contexts and indicates a precautionary measure (*Vorkehrungen*), the aim of which is to conduct a strategic operation. A dispositive implies components that belong together and form an apparatus, machine, or mechanism. It can also mean an ensemble of actions, steps, and tasks, which are implemented for the preparation of interventions and incursions. A dispositive implies the construction of a set of rules and the manufacturing of conditions that permit a particular process to run its course. In short, a dispositive is an arrangement, an ordering, an installation, a gadget, or a structure." Later in this essay, I will treat the methodological value of the concept of the dispositive in more detail.

11 See OPITZ (2004, p.21).

12 Many commentators claim that FOUCAULT's work is characterized by rifts or discontinuities. Typically, three phases are differentiated, which are regarded as standing in a highly negative systematic relation to one another. This division is grounded in accordance with the strictly differentiation of the focal points and methods of the investigations: In the discursive-theoretical phase, FOUCAULT investigates discourse. In the theory of power phase, his interest is largely limited to the analysis of relations of power. Here, new studies detect a new orientation to the extent that FOUCAULT distinguishes between power and rule and introduces the concept of governing. In contrast to this, the ethical phase is understood as a radical return to the theme of power. According to this interpretation, FOUCAULT effects a radical "break" after the "failure" of his genealogy of power and "returns" to his "earlier existential work" or his "subject-theoretical questions."

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the interesting correlation for him is, in particular, the one existing "in a culture between areas of knowledge, normative systems, and forms of subjectivation (FOUCAULT, 1989, p.10). Thus, it is valid in researching this correlation to direct one's gaze to the very real, existing effects of those dispositives and their collective as well as individual forms of mediation, and, consequently, to go beyond a perspective that concentrates exclusively on the programmatic level. [11]

When the focus concerning the enterprising self is the real, existing product of different discursive and non-discursive practices, then it is in fact crucial to seek out those practices and their relations in order to investigate the emergence and hegemonic success of the enterprising self at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Clues as to how to carry out the research of these practices and their relations can be extracted, in particular, from FOUCAULT's prolific studies of the (trans-) formational process of the forms of modern subjectivation. [12]

Beginning with a "critical ontology of the present,"[13] FOUCAULT employed the dispositive analysis in his working out his primary inquiry into the formation and transformation of modern forms of subjectivation. In his approach, he connected the critical perspective of discursive analysis with the analysis of power. As of yet however, there has not been a systematic reconstruction of either the two methodological perspectives (as they are connected in FOUCAULT's own analysis of modern subjectivation) or of the methodological consequences that result from such an analysis. Although FOUCAULT vigorously describes in his *Archaeology of Knowledge* the method of discursive analysis and demarcates his own analysis of power in different ways from others, he does not develop a corresponding instrument. With regard to his dispositive analysis here, FOUCAULT limits himself to the term "precautionary measures" when analyzing the dispositives. [13]

Gerhard PLUMPE and Clemens KAMMLER pointed out early on the research deficit of a systematic reconstruction of the Foucauldian form of analysis (1980, p. 212). Beginning with this assessment, Siegfried JÄGER (2001a, p.88) has recently put forth new suggestions for a direction to develop the analysis of dispositives. He proposes a mediation between enunciative, active implementations of knowledge as well as reificative activities or the visibility of knowledge.[14] JÄGER (2001a, p.83) identifies the "fundamental feature of the dispositive" as the "processing context of knowledge elements that are entwined in language/thought-actions-objects/visibilities." He depicts this fundamental feature itself as a "triangle or as a rotating and historically processing circle with three central flow-path points or thoroughfare stations" (ibid.) located between discourse, non-discursive practices, and visibility. It remains an open question however, how this triangle or rotating and historically processing circle should be

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13 Concerning the position of knowledge and politics in the Foucauldian ontology of presence and its aims, compare in particular SCHÄFER (1995) and LEMKE (1997). For the "affinities" between these critical ontologies and the philosophical positions of HEIDEGGER, see especially ROSENBERG and MILDMANN (2003).

14 Cp. JÄGER (2001a, 2001b).

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systematically analyzed. At this point, it is helpful, I believe, to take another look at FOUCAULT's investigations. [14]

4. The Reconstruction of Foucauldian Dispositive Analysis[15]

In dealing with FOUCAULT's investigations, it is to be noted that his "vagabond thinking" (EWALD, 1978, p.8) did not, as Gilles DELEUZE (1992, p.150) points out, "develop, but rather moved forward through crises" and is not to be confined to an apodictic form of reading. Thus in the following remarks, I will not make do with an eclectic instrumentalization of Foucauldian categories and terminology. Rather, I will undertake a systematic reconstruction of his process of dispositive analysis beginning with his thoughts on the analysis of discourse and power. [15]

4.1 The analysis of discourse

FOUCAULT offers a detailed depiction of his analysis of discourse in the *Archaeology of Knowledge* as a self-contained approach that is located "beyond hermeneutics and structuralism."[16] Using this approach, he wishes to distance himself from central hypotheses of "traditional treatment of history." For FOUCAULT, the goal of the *Archaeology of Knowledge* is, namely, to engage in "a pure description of discursive events" (1973, p.41). This "pure description," which treats the material "in its original neutrality," serves "as a horizon for the investigation of the unities constructed within it" (ibid.). [16]

In this context, FOUCAULT first scrutinizes the concepts "tradition," "influence," "evolution," and "Geist" because he assumes these imply the illusion of historical continuity. Where representations of continuity are asserted, FOUCAULT introduces the category of discontinuity and the concepts of "rift," "threshold," "series," and "transformation." Second, FOUCAULT rejects the category of meaning.[17] He wishes to scrutinize the discourse concerning "the fact and conditions of the discourse's manifest appearance and not to dwell on the content that may be concealed therein, but rather on the transformations that the discourses have effected" (FOUCAULT 1970, p.238). Finally, FOUCAULT abandons the notion of a sovereign subject[18] in so far as he conceives of discourses as a self-contained order, which is inaccessible with regard to the

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15 The main points of the following explanation were developed in my research for the piece, *Der Kampf um "weibliche Individualität". Ein Beitrag zur Analyse moderner Subjektivierungsweisen im Deutschland der Jahrhundertwende* [The battle for female individuality: an analysis of modern forms of subjectivation in Germany at the turn of the century]. The research results have been made accessible to the public as a habilitation (a postdoctoral thesis relating to qualification as a university lecturer (see BÜHRMANN, 2004).

16 This is the actual title of a study by Hubert L. DREYFUS and Paul RABINOW (1987) about FOUCAULT's approach to research.

17 Georg KNEER (1996, p.220) as well as DREYFUS and RABINOW (1987, pp.111f) draw attention to FOUCAULT's reduction of the hermeneutical concept of meaning to a particular variety of hermeneutics, namely, hermeneutical intentionalism.

18 The rejection of a sovereign subject does not mean that FOUCAULT negates every representation of an acting subject, as HABERMAS assumes (1985). See also BÜHRMANN (1995).

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intentions of the individuals involved in them when one's attempt ignores the objects or contexts of the discourses.[19] [17]

Through this deconstructive operation, FOUCAULT (1973, p.41) establishes the archaeological area of research that is constituted by "the totality of all effective statements (whether they are written or spoken is not important) in their dispersion of events and in the forcefulness that is proper to each one."[20] The starting point of the Foucauldian analysis of statements is thus the chaotic diversity of all statements whose positivity is in need of investigation. The point here is to analyze the historical conditions of the actual existence of the statements. Beginning with actual positive existence of the statements, FOUCAULT (1973, p.170) then proposes to call a large quantity of statements a discourse "insofar as they belong to the same discursive formation."[21] In analyzing the discourses, he differentiates four complexes that are characterized by regularities in their discursive practices and correspond with the identified existence functions of the statements.[22] Thus, discourses are structured and constituted by the formation rules of objects, enunciative modalities, concepts, and strategies. [18]

These formation rules are explained by FOUCAULT in the *Archaeology of Knowledge* in the following way: With regard to the formation of an object, the discourses are

> "to be treated as practices, which systematically construct the object that they speak about. Although these discourses consist of signs, they use these signs for more than simply a description of things. This *more* makes them irreducible to speaking and language. This *more* must be brought to light and described" (FOUCAULT 1973, p.74). [19]

FOUCAULT asks, thus, which object or area of knowledge in the discourse is produced and according to what rules. [20]

Beginning with the above, he defines the formation of enunciative modalities as the position of the speaking individual. At the same time, FOUCAULT poses the following question:

> "Who speaks? Who in the mass of all speaking individuals present establishes this kind of language? Who is the owner? Who obtains from it its uniqueness, its prestige, and the reverse: from whom does it obtain if not its guarantee, at least its claim to truth? Which statute do individuals posses, what regulatory or traditional, legally

19 See FOUCAULT (1973, p.178).

20 SCHÄFER (1995, p.171) indicates that FOUCAULT uses the concept "event" in a specific way: "*Event* does not imply that a decision, a contract, a period of government, or a battle is meant. It means rather the reversal of a relation of power, the toppling of a ruling power, the changing of a language" (FOUCAULT, 1991, p.98).

21 In this context, FOUCAULT (1973, p.58) speaks of a discursive formation if "one can delineate a similar system using a specific number of statements."

22 For the correspondence between statement and discourse analysis, see KAMMLER (1986) and HANKE (1999).

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defined or spontaneously accepted law do they possess to produce such a discourse?" (1973, p.75) [21]

In relation to the analysis of the formation of concepts, FOUCAULT concentrates on the problem of how specific concepts are bound together in a discourse. The issue here is to analyze the dispersions, which are the defining elements between the concepts, deductions, derivations, coherences, incompatibilities, substitution possibilities, contradictions, etc. Such an analysis also addresses, in a specific and particular way, a "*pre-conceptual* level," namely, the field in which "concepts stand in juxtaposition, and where the rules are subordinated to this field" (ibid.). [22]

With regard to the investigation of the strategic decision, FOUCAULT (1973, p.96) concedes that this still has the "form of a scaffolding" and thus is only able to provide here a very vague investigative direction. In doing so, he proposes to define the discursive breaks, to investigate the economy of the discursive constellation, and to research the function of the discourse in the field of non-discursive practices. For FOUCAULT, what is particularly important here is the following question: What function does a discourse have in the field of political and economic—thus non-discursive—practices? According to FOUCAULT, different strategies of theoretical choices can be defined in a discursive formation. Therefore, the economic, medicinal, or biological discourses yield "specific conceptual organizations, specific regroupings of objects, specific spaces for types of statements, which form issues or theories according to their level of coherence, strictness, and stability" (FOUCAULT, 1973, p.94). To this extent, the strategies of theoretical choice could be understood as options, discursive objects to treat, enunciative modalities to be made available, as well as terminology to be manipulated. These strategies regulate, in particular, the boundaries of contemporary and adjoining[23] discourse from one another, the relation of these discourses with each other, and their influence on each other. For FOUCAULT, these relations ultimately constitute an "economy of discursive constellations" (FOUCAULT 1973, p.97), which in turn structures the functions that the discourse exercises in the field of non-discursive practices. [23]

In conclusion, one can say that, in FOUCAULT's descriptions of the process of discursive analysis, he first asks which object or area of knowledge is discursively produced, second, according to what logic is the terminology constructed, third, who authorized it, and, finally, which strategic goals are being pursued in the discourse. [24]

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23 FOUCAULT (1973, p.97) draws special attention to the specific role of contemporary and adjoining discourses: "In order to speak about the decisions that, among all of them, have been understood, that could have been understood (and only these), one must describe the specific moments when the decisions occurred. What is most important here is the role that the discourse under investigation plays in relation to the discourses that are contemporary and adjoining to it.

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4.2 The analysis of power

As mentioned above, FOUCAULT did not formulate a systematic conceptual apparatus in connection to his analysis of power. Nevertheless, he shapes his approach to power in contrast to other depictions. In doing so, FOUCAULT conducts—as in the discourse analyses—a variety of deconstructive operations in his analysis of power. First, he criticizes the classical theory of sovereignty and simultaneously rejects what he takes to be a Marxist view of power and class power that locates power in the hands of one or a few, because these assume the fiction of a power-possessing individual.[24] Instead of asking who possesses power, FOUCAULT inquires into power relations as the effects of complex societal relations of power and thus changes the perspective of the analysis, because he attempts to regard the practices of individuals as those that really are and selects at the same time the dispersed relations of power as the starting point.[25] Secondly, FOUCAULT rejects the economic conceptions of power. Contrary to the principles of localization and centralization, he assumes in his analysis of power that power must be analyzed on the assumption of it running from "below to above" through "infinitely small mechanisms," because these "micro-powers" run through the entire body of society (FOUCAULT, 1978, p.83).[26] Third, FOUCAULT insists that one must give up

> "always describing the effects of power in a negative way, as if they tend only to 'exclude', 'suppress', 'repress', 'censor', 'abstract', 'mask', 'conceal'. In reality, power is productive and it produces the real. It produces the areas of objects and truth rituals: the individual and his or her knowledge are the results of this production" (1976b, p.250).[27] [25]

Fourth, FOUCAULT is opposed to an opposition between power and knowledge. He tends much more to assume a constitutive relation between power and

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24 See KAMMLER (1986, p.143).

25 See FOUCAULT (1976b, p.99).

26 FOUCAULT (1978, p.110) asserts that "between every point in the body of societies, between a man and a woman, in a family, between a teacher and student, between those who know and those who don't, there are relations of power, which are not the plain and ordinary projections of the great sovereign power onto the individual; they are more the moving and concrete ground in which power is anchored, the conditions of power that enable it to function."

27 The criticism expressed by Hinrich FINK-EITEL (1989), Nancy FRASER (1994), Jürgen HABERMAS (1985), Axel HONNETH (1985), Georg KNEER (1996), Charles TAYLOR (1988) and Michael WALZER (1991) that FOUCAULT offers a one-sided analysis of the repressive side of the conditioning of the individual appears to me to have little plausibility to the extent that FOUCAULT did in fact emphasize the productive authorities of bio-power, which are related back to the control and navigation of the social body. Yes, he clearly indicates that individuals always participate in the constituting process or reproduction of particular formations of power. On the other hand, criticism errs in charging that FOUCAULT only emphasizes the productive side of power. FOUCAULT (1976b, p.22) states, "so that no misunderstandings arise, I do not assume that sex has not been forbidden, locked away, masked, or been unrecognized since antiquity … I do not say that the forbidding of sex is an illusion, but I claim that it is an illusion if one makes it a fundamental and constitutive element from which history can be written—which has been said since the beginning of modernity. All these negative elements—forbidding, denial, censoring, negating—which the repression hypothesis casts as a central mechanism, which aims at denial, are doubtless only pieces playing a local and tactical role in a discursive strategy, namely in a technique of power in a will to know that in no way allows itself to be reduced to repression."

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knowledge in which the discourse assumes a place where political battles are fought. Because FOUCAULT (1978, p.75) places truth and power in a constitutive relation, he also then inquires into "what kind of power … [is able to] produce the discourses of truth that equip them in a society such as ours with such powerful effectiveness." [26]

These deconstructive operations also aid FOUCAULT in shaking the trusted "certainties" of traditional theories of power. And so through an entirely similar operation as in analysis of discourse, he achieves his genealogical object of investigation: the dispersed, decentralized relations of power. These are formed into specific formations of power in exactly the same way as dispersed statements form discursive formations. FOUCAULT then analyzes in various investigations the way dispersed, decentralized relations of power are bundled with specific formations of power. Thus, he describes in a way the genesis of bio-power and the disciplinary power, which, unlike bio-power, is concentrated on the control or guidance of individual bodies. When one studies the analysis of power however, one discovers that FOUCAULT pursues questions here that resemble those in his analysis of discourse. To avoid unnecessary redundancies, I will now illustrate this using an example of his analysis of the disciplinary society in *Discipline and Punish*.[28] [27]

This investigation begins with the observation that a transformation of the technology of power took hold in the seventeenth century. Whereas punishment previously assumed the form of a public spectacle, in the middle of the eighteenth century it began to be removed from the public eye and shifted to behind prison walls. At the same time, punishment took the form of precise temporal sentences instead of bodily torture. The body was thus subjected to these sentences as well as a well-conceived assignment in space. [28]

The strategy outlined here, which I understand as a power-strategic choice, is grounded for FOUCAULT in the problem of the politics of economics and population, to which the old form of power could no longer offer an effective solution. Thus, instead of forming the primarily reducing and repressive functioning of the classical juridical form of power, there is a modern form of power, namely, discipline. The latter functions mainly as value adding and productive. FOUCAULT inquires here further, trying to answer the following question: Through what specific techniques or technologies of power and authorizations powers are the specific structures and relations of power produced? In his answer, he describes the infinitesimal techniques that he marks as techniques of discipline. FOUCAULT understands the highest level of discipline as the tactic, understood as the art of making individuals into elements subordinated to an overarching machinery, which is achieved through a specific spatial arrangement of bodies and an exact temporal encoding of activities. In order to optimize the knowledge about individuals, they are inserted into a network of hierarchal levels of surveillance. At the same time, specially qualified

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28 I neglect to mention here that in Discipline and Punish, FOUCAULT also analyzes the dispositive of incarceration, thus the interplay of those discursive and non-discursive practices through which people are produced in the form of disciplined individuals.

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personnel assume the task of implementing the normative sanctions. In armies, schools, factories, and hospitals, a system of "subordinate judiciaries"[29] is trained: Thus, there arises a micro-judiciary of time: delays, interruptions, and absences are recorded; the micro-judiciary of activities: negligence and inattentiveness are punished mercilessly; the micro-judiciary of bodies: "inappropriate" behavior and gestures lead to punishment; the micro-judiciary of sexuality: shameless behavior of every kind is punished in court. This system of subordinate judiciaries functions in a normative way, because one documents the actions, capacities, failures, and violations. With the help of this documentation then, norms are formulated,[30] which lead to a hierarchal differentiation of individuals. Finally, the techniques of the surveillance hierarchy and the norming sanctions are concentrated in the ritualized act of the examination, which allows for the connection of the technology of power and determination of truth. In this way, a specific field of power relations arises in which surveillance controls are established and individuals become objects of normative controls. [29]

According to FOUCAULT, the architectonic realization of the ideal principle in this field of power is to be found in Jeremy BENTHAM's 1787-conceived panopticon. This is because the panopticon enables a single observer in a tower to conduct surveillance of all the prison's inmates. The effect of the panopticon lies in its capacity to create a conscious and permanent state of "visibility in relation to the prisoners, which automatically ensures the functioning of power" (FOUCAULT 1976a, p.258). Because the inmates are forced to constantly act as if they are being watched, it is thus possible to establish a relation of power without physically and concretely exercising power. The inmates of the panopticon even support the network of power implemented around them to the extent that they are simultaneously targets and the justification of this form of power. [30]

The principle of the panopticon—illustrated in the example of the prison— contains, according to FOUCAULT, the concentrated form of all the disciplinary mechanisms that are typically designed for the disciplinary society.[31] The function of the prison is not limited to punishing individuals by depriving them of freedom. It is much more the case that a "transformation of individuals is being effected" (FOUCAULT, 1976a, p.317). People are to be "mechanized according to the general norms of industrial society" (FOUCAULT, 1976a, p.310). In the process, the disciplinary apparatus has subordinate judiciaries at it disposal, which can be understood as the authorization authorities, physiognomy, moral attitudes, labor capacity, and also behavioral potential of the individuals. FOUCAULT understands this panoptism from a micro-processing perspective in the birth of the prison as paradigmatic for macro-structural phenomena. From this perspective, he describes the propagation of the panoptic principle: Beginning with the prison, this principle establishes itself in other institutions such as the

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29 See FOUCAULT (1976a, p.230).

30 FOUCAULT (1976a, p.392) defines the norm as a "mixture of legality and nature, of prescription and constitution."

31 According to SAWICKI (1994, p.616), the prison does not serve FOUCAULT as a metaphor for modern societies (cp. also BREUER 1987, pp.324ff), but is much more to be regarded as a theoretical model.

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school, military barracks, hospital, and factory, and finally forms a "regime of discipline" that leads to a "society of normalization." [31]

This brief outline of the analysis of power in *Discipline and Punish* makes it clear in my opinion that the approach employed by FOUCAULT in his analysis of power is similar to his studies of discursive analysis. Thus, he inquires into the structures of a specific field of power relations, into the technology that enables them, into the reasons for or against a strategic choice of a specific structure of power relations, and, finally, into the reasons why certain power centers emerge, which allow for this power technology to function in a frictionless way. Beyond this, FOUCAULT focuses on the analysis of rules in both his analysis of power and discourse, according to which the dispersed relations of power form. FOUCAULT also investigates here the specific formation levels, which in his analysis of power, do not stand next to each other in an unmediated way. [32]

Using the Foucauldian terminology for the analysis of discourse, I speak thus of the field of power relations with respect to the question concerning power relations, of the formation of the technology/techniques of power with respect to the question concerning technology, of the formation of the authorization authority with respect to the issue concerning certain power centers, and, finally, of the formation of the strategy of power in relation to the issue concerning the strategy of power. This terminology will be used in the following to describe the various levels of the investigation in the framework of a dispositive analysis of the relations inhering in formations of power. [33]

4.3 The dispositive analysis

FOUCAULT researches in his dispositive analyses the relations between the formation levels of his analysis of power and discourse. In *Discipline and Punish*, he investigates not only which disciplinary technologies are used, but also which conceptual architecture accompanies them. He analyses not only the history of the emergence of certain subordinate judiciaries, but also to what extent these support the emerging human sciences in order to authorize themselves as the "rulers of truth" in the discourse. On a fundamental level, FOUCAULT asks how certain discourses are linked with certain formations of power to form a specific dispositive. Again using an example from *Discipline and Punish*, I would like to briefly describe in the following how FOUCAULT thinks through these connections. I will also concentrate at this point on the connection between the question concerning the formation of the field of power relations and the question concerning the formation of specific object or area of knowledge. [34]

In *Discipline and Punish*, FOUCAULT describes the relation between power and knowledge as reciprocal and positive. As FOUCAULT perceives it, power and knowledge refer to one another in a constitutive way.[32] He describes this referential context as a power-knowledge complex. An example of this is the shared basis of the humanization of punishment and the formation of the human

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32 See FOUCAULT (1976a, p.39).

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sciences.[33] Because of the accumulated knowledge within it, disciplinary technology as well as the panoptic field of power produced through and by the former play a central role in the formation of the human sciences. These are bound with the objectivizing disciplinary procedures of control, which had their "topsoil and their pattern in the little and malicious thoroughness of discipline and its complementary inquiries" (FOUCAULT, 1976a, p.290). In the process, the practices of the extraction of knowledge are transformed: The subject and object of knowledge, but also the form of the knowledge extraction, become effects of the power-knowledge complex, the heart of which establishes mechanisms of "objectivizing hypostatization" (FOUCAULT, 1976a, p.394). With the aid of this modern technology of power, one objectivizes people, their souls, being, and behavior insofar as they are isolated, quantified, hierarchized, and publicly exhibited. Thus, the human sciences produce "objective" truths concerning the "nature" of humans.[34] At the end of these social processes stands the establishing of an "incarceration dispositive" in which the technologies of power and knowledge practices are folded into the production and modeling of specific features of individuality. For FOUCAULT (1976a, p.216), this individuality is "cell shaped (on account of the spatial parceling out); it is organic (thanks to the encoding of activities); it is evolutional (because of the accumulation of time); it is combinatory (because of the juxtaposition of forces)." [35]

This example should clarify that in his object-related studies FOUCAULT links the procedure of his analysis of power with his analysis of discourse. He investigates namely—beginning with the question concerning the (trans-) formational process of the modern form of subjectivation—which object or area of knowledge is discursively produced, the question of which logic is implemented to engender the terminology, who the authority is that speaks about the object, and, finally, which strategic goals in this discursive practice are being pursued. Furthermore, he investigates through which authorities of authorization as well as technologies of power these discursive practices in which field of power relations are supported or implemented, and which power-strategic goals they serve. Beginning with several statements and relations of power, there enters into the procedure of the Foucauldian dispositive analysis reconstructed here an analysis of the relations of power (in addition to the analysis of relations of discourse) and an analysis of the interplay in the form of discursive and power formations. [36]

With a view to the preceding, I would now like to lay out the following variegated and interdependent levels of investigation:[35] For the analysis of discursive relations, one can (with FOUCAULT) distinguish between the levels of the object or area of knowledge, the enunciative modalities, the construction of concepts, and the strategic choice. In view of the analysis of the relations of power, I speak then of a field of power relations, the authority of authorization, the technologies of power, and the strategies of power. If one connects these discourse-analytical

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33 See FOUCAULT (1976a, p.34).

34 See also DREYFUS and RABINOW (1987, p.210).

35 All these levels are interdependent and thus are characterized by mutual dependencies; therefore, the actors involved must be distinguished from their practices.

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and power-analytical formation levels in a systematic way, then four different levels of investigation of the dispositive analysis result, which I would describe as follows: the area of reference, the authority of regulation, the procedure of regulation, and the strategic imperative. In the area of reference, the connection between the object and field of power relations occupies the central point; in the authority of regulation, the important aspect is the connection between the authority of authorization and the enunciative modality; in relation to the procedure of regulation, the main area of interest is concentrated on the connection between the construction of concepts and the technologies of power; finally, the strategic imperative is directed at the possible connections between strategic choice and the strategy of power. Figure 1 illustrates (with reference to FOUCAULT) the results of the dispositive analysis systematically reconstructed here.
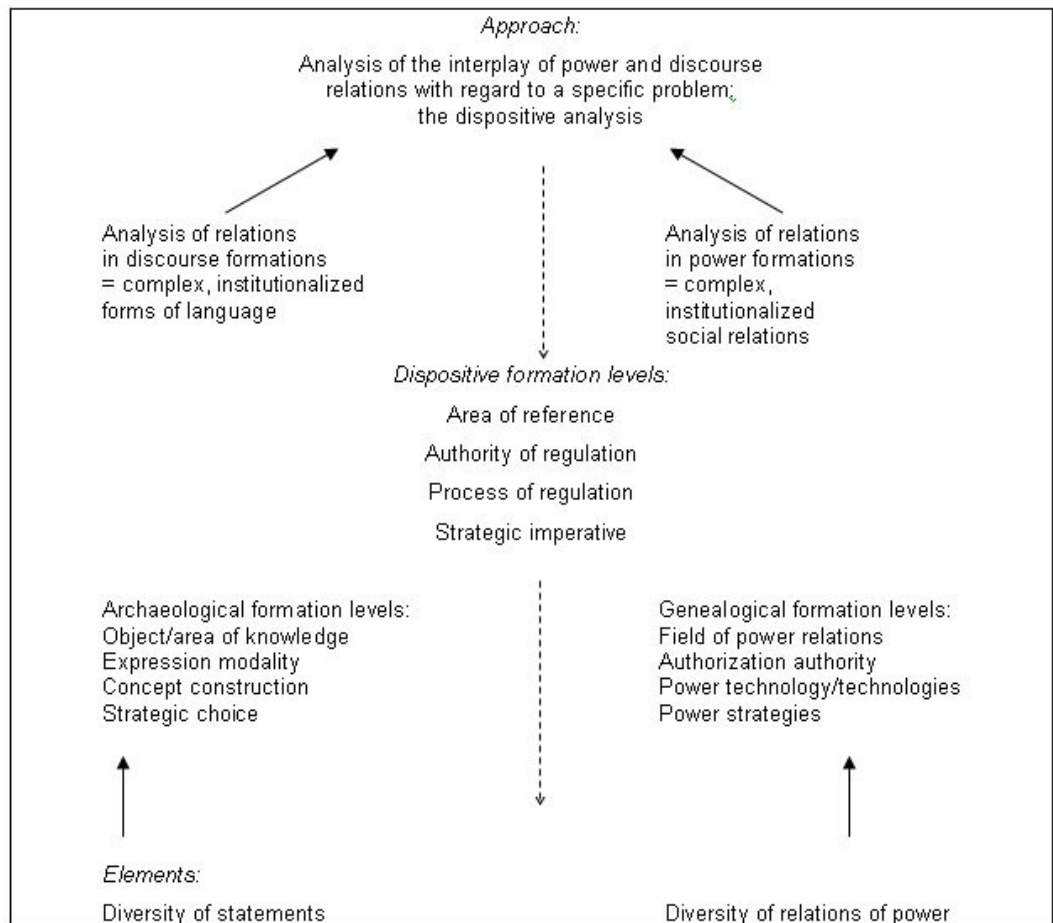

Figure 1: Dispositive-analytical levels of investigations following FOUCAULT [37]

5. The Socio-Theoretical Foundation of the Dispositive Analysis

Beginning with this reconstruction of the Foucauldian dispositive analysis reveals, admittedly, a methodological problem, because of FOUCAULT's assuming in his dispositive analysis (as modeled on the basis of his power-analytical form of procedure in *Discipline and Punish*) a primarily micro-structural perspective, which he wishes to have understood as being applicable as a paradigmatic

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analysis of macro-structural phenomena. This implies that he interprets the results of his dispositive in the context of modernization processes but does not think about them in a socio-theoretical way. [38]

At the beginning of this paper, I remarked briefly that the necessity of the enterprising self to act in a way that is independent of socially structuring categories such as class, ethnicity, race, and gender appears to be a valid assumption. With regard to the category of gender however, Ulrich BRÖCKLING and Katharina PÜHL clearly state that the above claim is only a rhetorical call for "equal rights." [39]

BRÖCKLING (2002, p.184) maintains in his admittedly non-representative observation of gender construction in self-management consulting that the enterprising self appears to "have no self." The "total mobilization under the banner of the market" (ibid.), as he explains, equally encompasses men and women but does not necessarily encompass them in the same way" to the extent that women are effectively treated as the marked gender (*markiertes Geschlecht*). Career consultants for women explain this by insisting, "that the prospective female entrepreneur must cope with different problems than men" (ibid.). Thus, women should pursue specific coursework in order to become "fit for the market." [40]

This ambivalence concerning the rhetorical neutrality of gender and the real marking of gender is treated by PÜHL (2003) in her discussion of the consequences of the *Hartz-Reformen*[36] for gender relations. According to PÜHL, although women are referred to in the framework of the *Hartz-Reformen* as entrepreneurial selves in a gender-neutral fashion, the existing gender-specific division of work and its consequences remain concealed. This is particularly evident with regard to two points: the de facto responsibility assumed by women for doing household work and child raising, as well as the existing disadvantages faced by women (in comparison with men) in the labor market.[37] Ignoring these two phenomena leads precisely, however, to real discrimination against women. [41]

Based on these considerations, the result is that the enterprising self at least appears to be marked in terms of gender. Thus, it is necessary to develop a socio-theoretical basis of the procedure of the dispositive analysis. This procedure must be modified in such a way that socially structuring categories such as the category of gender can be included. [42]

I would like to present my proposal here for a social grounding of the Foucauldian dispositive analysis using the category of fender. I will begin with Regina

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36 Introduced by the German government in January 2005, the *Hartz-Reformen* (named after the Hartz Commission) refer to a set of laws passed in order to add greater flexibility and dynamism to the German economy. These laws roll back the social welfare and decrease unemployment benefits. Central to the *Hartz-Reformen* was the promise of large-scale job creation. There has been widespread criticism of these reforms, because unemployment has actually increased since their adoption.

37 See also HOCHSCHILD (2002).

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BECKER-SCHMIDT's proposal of a theory of a relation between the genders.[38]
With the concept of gender relations, BECKER-SCHMIDT refer to the totality of
institutionalized conditions as well as normative regulations by which the genus
groups are socially formed into a relation at a particular historical point in time in a
specific culture.[39] In order to define a historically concrete gender relation, one
must therefore investigate "which positions these genus groups assume in the
social hierarchies, and which pattern of legitimation there is for the vertical
ordering of the sexes" (BECKER-SCHMIDT & KNAPP, 1995, p.18). Additionally,
one must ask where the breaks and postponements exist through which change
tendencies in relation to gender relations appear. [43]

A fruitful way of answering this question lies first in taking view of the
contradictions marking the social relations of power. The issue then becomes
tracking down the interstices between the gender-marked forms of subjectivation
and the social relations of power or the genders. This moves our view, however,
from the tendencies of continual development—near which FOUCAULT's
dispositive analysis seems to lie, although he constantly insists on the import of
breaks—to the conflict-ridden and contradictory constellations residing within the
totality of society. Moreover, it will become clear then that family, the military,
church, work sphere, etc.—which are for FOUCAULT the locations of the micro-
processing of discipline and normalization—are not only isolated spheres but are
rather hierarchically bound together.[40] [44]

From this perspective, FOUCAULT's model of the normalization society gains an
additional concept that explicitly[41] assumes the complexity of hierarchal gender
relations and thus looks into the relations of subordination and promotion in which
individuals must live. Thus, it is clear how men and women are involved in a
hierarchical, conflict-ridden way within a contradictory social context. Additionally,
one can conduct research to discover through which specific forms of
subjectivation do men and women experience the various and contradictory forms
of socialization (*Vergesellschaftung*), which extend into their personality
structures. [45]

For the Foucauldian dispositive analysis, this implies that the diverse formation
levels in the dispositive are to be investigated with a view to the socially
structuring category of gender. Additionally, a historization and contextualization

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38 See also OTT (1998).

39 See BECKER-SCHMIDT (1990, p.392); BECKER-SCHMIDT and KNAPP (1995, p.18).

40 Regina BECKER-SCHMIDT and Gudrun-Axeli KNAPP (1995, p.10) also make remarks about
the sphere of professional work and housework: "Hierarchies are present in gender relations,
because professional work is deemed to have a higher value than housework, and male work
means exclusively professional work while housework is regarded as the responsibility of the
woman. The man dominates both the professional sphere as well as the family, because in both
spheres his professional work determines the gender relations. The lower esteem for
housework in comparison with every professional form of work is also applied to typical
women's work—these jobs are normally lower paid, less in demand, and socially less protected.

41 That FOUCAULT makes reference to this dimension is pointed out by Ute WALDTSCHMIDT
(1995, p.28): "The relations of production and working conditions that are structured in our
society in a contradictory and hierarchal fashion appear to resonate in the Foucauldian concept
of power. Clear remarks on this topic are, however, not found in Foucault."

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of a historically specific dispositive must be followed and be carried out with a view to the complexity of specific hierarchical relations between the two genus-groups. Thus, the levels of investigation that I have reconstructed here with a view to the Foucauldian dispositive analysis require an additional level: the level of historization and contextualization as well as the individual levels of formation, their interplay in a historically specific dispositive in the field of the complex and contradictory social relations of power and rule. [46]

6. Conclusion

For the past 25 years, Governmentality Studies have maintained that there has been an emergence of the enterprising self and that it has assumed a hegemonic position as a form of subjectivation at the beginning of the twenty-first century. This approach has not, however, answered the question of how this form of subjectivation is produced and how it has come to be hegemonic. I believe this research gap is attributable to a deep methodological problem: in large part, there has been no adequate of explanation of how the process of (trans)formation of modern forms of subjectivation (maintained by those in Governmentality Studies) should be theoretically conceptualized and empirically described while avoiding an ontological reduction of subjectivation and a discursive dissolution of subjectivation, the latter leading to the trap of a form of linguistic idealism. My proposal for a solution to this problem is to conceive of the process of the (trans-) formation of modern forms of subjectivation as an effect of discursive and non-discursive practices, thus as dispositive practices. From this perspective, it becomes important then to investigate these practices and their formation in the form of a dispositive. It was exactly this question though that FOUCAULT dealt with in his comprehensive studies concerning the formation and transformation of modern subjectivation. For the operationalization of this process, I have systematically reconstructed the dispositive analysis on the basis of its application in FOUCAULT. Yet it turns out that the reconstruction indicates that the Foucauldian dispositive analysis is not based on social theory and that it enables the systematic incorporation of socially structuring categories such as class, ethnicity, race, or gender. [47]

Keeping in mind that Governmentality Studies has already posited the gendered marking of the enterprising self, I developed then first a proposal for the social foundation of the Foucauldian dispositive analysis using as an example the category of gender. In doing so, I proceed to the outline of theory of gender relations. This is to make clear how social groups and/or genus groups are placed in relation to one another through specific processes, e.g., of social differentiation, inclusion and exclusion, or promotion and subordination. [48]

I think that the ideas formulated here for a socio-theoretical grounded dispositive analysis provide the methodological prerequisites for further research concerning why and by which means of institutions the form of subjectivation of the enterprising self became hegemonic at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The research on this problem itself, however, remains to be taken up by other efforts. [49]

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