Abstract

While Michel Foucault is commonly considered as a thinker with a primary interest in space and spatiality, his use of temporal categories, tropes and metaphors has until recently been only partially reconstructed. Working through different phases of his writings and lectures, this paper argues that Foucault opened a complex and interesting – yet to be acknowledged – analytical perspective on historically dominant, but fundamentally contested forms of social time-regimes, which accounts especially for contingent ruptures, silent continuities and the power-structured contexts of their emergence. Elucidating conceptual tools designed towards the analysis of rationalities and practises of temporal government and approaching social time regimes along the axes of power, knowledge and subjectivity, the aim of this paper is twofold: on the one side, it tries to further contribute to a ‘temporal turn’ in Foucault studies; on the other, it attempts to develop a Foucauldian vocabulary of temporal analysis as an alternative or supplement to established approaches in the field of critical social time studies.

Keywords

Time, temporality, Foucault, power, governmentality, subjectivity, knowledge, political philosophy
Recent debates in the inter-disciplinary field of social time studies have shown an increased reflexivity with regard to the recognition of a plurality of social times (Adam, 1990; Nowotny, 1992). Emphasizing the impossibility of subsuming the heterogeneity of times under a unitary notion of modern clock-time or History as a collective singular noun (see also Koselleck, 2006), these approaches try to make visible the variety of forms and meanings of social times. These insights were accompanied by a second important trend to situate temporal difference in a broader context of social relations of power (see Adam, 1990; Bastian, 2013; Hassan, 2012; Huebener, 2015; Hutchings, 2008; Nowotny, 1992; Sharma, 2014). Here, working with concepts of influence, power and oppression as analytical tools is of utmost importance, but often these are used in a rather elusive and/or metaphorical sense, abstaining from systematic concept-work in order to lay the primary focus on empirical description.

Far from playing out one against the other, this paper tries to investigate how Foucault’s work can be helpful and inspiring in finding and further developing concepts employed as analytical tools to investigate the historical emergence and transformation of powerful social time-regimes. Here, power is not so much understood as being anchored in a particular form, design or object of time, but rather is fundamentally connected to practices of temporalization and timing, conceived in the immanence of social relations of knowledge–power (Foucault, 1995, see also Elias, 1992; Hom, 2018). Therefore, not only could Foucault scholars profit from a dialogue with pluri-temporal perspectives emergent from the field of critical time studies, but these also could gain central insights by making use of Foucauldian vocabularies of power (see for example Odih, 1999). In this regard, Foucault’s research on dominant temporal mechanisms of knowledge–power and his emphasis of the plural, heterogeneous and relational nature of social times are only some aspects of a yet to be acknowledged critical archive of temporal concepts, which have the potential to enrich theoretical reflection and empirical analysis in social time studies. By putting complex dynamics of time, power, knowledge and subjectivity centre stage, social scientists become aware not only of the discursive and relational nature of times in their manifold manifestations, but also of their embeddedness into forms of oppression, marginalisation and inequality. In the same way, making visible the contested nature of temporal forms, the focus shifts from the reification of one dominant time-logic towards bringing the diversity of social and political struggles constitutive for the social organization of time to the centre of attention. Furthermore, a ‘temporal turn’ in Foucault studies could lead to an increased reflective awareness with regard to the use of concepts of time and temporality not only in
Foucault’s work, but as an extension of his *archaeological* and *genealogical approach*, in the field of the humanities more generally. Bringing time theoretical differentiations of Foucault’s work into discussion may also help to open up new and important perspectives on his writings. In general, the focus of earlier investigations has often been limited to the reconstruction of changing concepts of history, while the variety of aspects of time and temporality were subsumed under a general trend towards process-thought in post-structuralist theory. Also, it is not enough to pay attention to the transformation of historical regimes of knowledge–power, but we must analyse the ways and means by which power intervenes into the social organization of time to secure an always fragile trade-off between forms of persistence and change. Here, not only has the exercise of power to be conceived as temporally structured in specific ways, but the social organization of time is pervaded by networks of knowledge–power through and through. Therefore, Foucault can help us finding conceptual tools to reflect and analyse issues of time, power and change in a philosophically compelling and empirically grounded way. Last but not least, a time–theoretical investigation of Foucault could also function as a hinge to connect a diversity of time–theoretical approaches inspired through post-structuralist thought emerging in the field of critical social and political theory, cultural studies, feminist-, queer- and post-colonial studies.

Nevertheless, what makes a time–theoretical investigation of Foucault’s work difficult is that in order to avoid being consumed by a particular philosophy of time and history, he tried to blur all traces that would connect him to one single time–philosophical paradigm. On a metatheoretical level, he largely tried to abstain from making specific time–theoretical assumptions, which go beyond a *radical historization* of knowledge and an emphasis of the *plural, stratified, heterogeneous, eventful* and *relational nature* of social times. In a nutshell, time for Foucault is both understood as principle of social order and change, and he investigated historical variations of temporal forms and manifestations in different contexts and according to different research aims. Here, his task was not to integrate the totality of temporal forms and relations into one grand speculative narrative, but to multiply temporal concepts as analytical devices and to complicate our theoretical understanding in order to deal with time and change in a complex and non-reductive manner. Another main reason why time–theoretical aspects of Foucault’s work have remained largely unexplored is related to his reception in the context of a ‘spatial turn’ in the humanities. In a series of interviews, Foucault diagnosed a historical dominance of concepts of time over space (2003c: 46, 725), which taken in isolation paved the way for many misunderstandings, so that time and
space where often played out against another in a very reductionist way. Therefore, and contrary to many commentators who tried to celebrate Foucault’s work for a final revenge of space against time, his critical remarks aimed at making visible the dominance of historically specific concepts of time, like a generalized and continuous time of history and consciousness, or a standardized calendar of human memory and the state (see Foucault, 1994c: 571ff, 2002b). Foucault also did not think that concepts of time and space should be integrated into a notion of four-dimensional space–time; on the contrary, he opted for a pluralization and differentiation of both concepts. What is most important with regard to relations of time and space, Foucault strictly positioned himself against Bergson’s demand for a pure intuition of time in a non-spatialized form (see Bergson, 2001). On the contrary, the spatialization of time is to a certain extent necessary, if the realm of time, temporality and history is to be made accessible to an analysis of power and knowledge (Foucault, 1994c: 33). To assume that we could stick to a ‘neutral’, ‘non-spatialized’, Foucault also called it a ‘sterile’, conception of time (1994c: 29), is an illusion, because this would be to neglect its political nature and its embeddedness into forces of social relations.

Therefore, this paper aims towards a non-reductive and context-sensitive reading of concepts, tropes and metaphors of time and temporality in Foucault’s work, hereby putting a special emphasis on aspects of power, knowledge and subjectivity. The multiplicity of temporal references in Foucault’s writings can neither be reduced to the influence of one particular philosophical thinker or tradition of time-philosophy, nor can it be subsumed under a generalized notion of process or history. We also should not remain content with emphasizing the multiplicity and diversity of temporal concepts on an abstract level, but instead follow the multiple traces of their linguistic unfolding. Therefore, we should take the opportunity of the last and final publications and try to gain new perspectives on his work, in this case, by focussing on issues of time and temporality. Of course, this present paper can only be an attempt to sketch out some important nodes in a wide net of time-concepts, which have to be further explored in depth. There is still so much time to be found in Foucault’s work.

Foucault’s temporal manifolds

On a metatheoretical level, what I want to show through a detailed investigation of different phases of his work is that we find in Foucault a double strategy of approaching issues of time, temporality and history: first and foremost, he assumes that in time, we have to ‘uncover a principle of manifold relations’ (Foucault, 1994d: 222, my translation), not only connected
to an order of sequence and succession, but also of simultaneity and co-
presence. There exist no temporal atoms making up the building blocks of
history and becoming. Time is neither discretionary nor continuous, but
plural and relational. These multiple time-relations involve different
rhythms, durations, speeds, stratas, developments and periodizations,
which are bound to discursive and bodily practices. As his concept of the
‘event’ makes clear (see Foucault, 1994c: 581), no time is just one time,
because each form of time always gives expression to an intersection of
multiple times. Second, and also of fundamental importance, time is
assumed to be fundamentally related to the exercise of power. Here,
from his early ‘archaeological’ writings, Foucault was interested in the
historically specific ways temporal regimes emerged, were stabilized, inte-
grated and totalized through historically specific orders of science and
knowledge. These formations of knowledge stretch from the micro-level
of everyday conduct to specialized scientific and philosophical discourse,
and are intrinsically connected to social relations of power. This intersec-
tion of knowledge and power makes possible the government of conduct
clear. Through rationalities and technologies of time, which materialize in the
context of powerful ‘dispositives’, like ‘discipline’ or ‘security’. In this con-
xist of powerful ‘dispositives’, like ‘discipline’ or ‘security’. In this con-
text, social formations of knowledge–power are fundamentally related to
processes of temporal subjectivation, which, by way of ritualization, habit-
ualization and internalization of temporal norms, make the individual the
‘the principle of his own subjection’ (Foucault, 1995: 203). In the later
works, time becomes an important element in his investigation of ancient
literature on techniques of the self, involving specialized meditations and
practises directed towards establishing a certain ethos towards time and
temporality. Therefore, time in the work of Foucault is not only pluralized
but understood in its fundamental connection to knowledge, power and
processes of subjectivations. In sum, and against those early commentators
who assumed that Foucault wanted to negate history and dissolve time into
a set of spatial arrangements, his work can be described as fundamentally
directed to the task of an alternative way of ‘writing history’ and of ‘living
time differently’ (Foucault, 2003c: 729, 984). Possibilities of resistance
against dominant articulations of time, power and knowledge find inspira-
tion in his definition of critique as the refusal to ‘be governed like that’
(also, but not only) by and through time (Foucault, 1997a: 26). His histor-
ical investigations are not done in a temper of nostalgia or in an attempt to
do justice to the past, but rather in order to interpret and explain ‘who we
are today’ (Foucault, 1997a: 147f). All his work, beginning from the
archaeological, through the genealogical to the ethical period, is related
to this one question, fundamentally inspired through Nietzsche and
Kant: ‘What are we? In a very precise moment of history’ (Foucault, 1982: 785) and how can we extend or even transgress the historical limits, which fundamentally structure our present temporal being (Foucault, 1997a: 127f), therefore also integrating a perspective on time and change.

What Foucault presents us with are historical investigations of dominant regimes of time, temporality and historicity, which are contextualized in a field of social relations of knowledge–power. Over the course of his work, he had to re-evaluate core questions, aims and methods of his philosophical and historical investigations. Building on Foucault’s own retrospective interpretation, I will work with the periodization of his work into a phase of ‘archaeology’ (from the 60s to early 70s), ‘genealogy’ (until the late 70s) and ‘ethics’ (80s), because each of these transitions also went in hand with important shifts of his time–theoretical core assumptions.5

**Archaeology: The temporal inside and outside of historical regimes of knowledge**

The ‘archaeological’ writings are fundamentally concerned with time and history, both on a philosophical and on an empirically-descriptive level (Foucault, 1988, 2002a, 2002b). Foucault first finds in structuralism an ally in his attempt of writing history differently, while later he reacts to criticism – mainly coming from French Existentialists and Marxists – accusing him of a neglect of history and time with the attempt of temporalizing structuralism from within (Gutting, 1989, Kusch, 1991, Michon, 2002). Hereby, he not only tries to think time and history as plural and heterogeneous along multiple rhythms, durations and systems of reference, but also to move beyond a unitary and reductive notion of change and transformation (Foucault, 2002b). In this regard, Foucault uses spatial metaphors not only to investigate the **plurality**, **relationality** and **complexity** of social times, but also to make visible forms of temporal **selectivity** and **exclusion**.

Inspired by structuralism, *The Order of Things* (2002a, published in 1966) on a methodological level attempts to give priority to a set of co-present structural relations over historical becoming, hereby bracketing aspects of causality in favour of logical and relational thinking (Foucault, 1994a: 821). Approaching history of science through his ‘archaeological method’, Foucault wanted to know, *which fundamental epistemological shifts were necessary to make this kind of empirical knowledge at a given moment in time possible* (see Foucault, 2002a: 35). Therefore, in order to reconstruct the radical transformations of the foundational rules of historical regimes of empirical knowledge (so called *epistemes*), Foucault combined a historical investigation of scientific knowledge in the fields of ‘life’,
‘work’ and ‘language’ since the 16th century with a reflection on philosophical positions, which accompanied these discourses and made them intelligible. According to Foucault, these radical shifts in the ‘positive unconscious of knowledge’ (2002a: xi) went not only in hand with fundamental changes in the structuration and organization of empirical science and philosophy, but also with important transformations with regard to the dominant epistemic schemes of time and history. Beginning with 16th century Renaissance, Foucault describes a historical order of knowledge structured and articulated through categories of resemblance. It is a world that, although already including forms of logic and scientific rationality, is still charged with magical spirit, where everything exists in a state of reciprocal resonance, the whole being implicated in its parts and where is no division between words and things. It gives expression to a relation of ‘anteriority’, so that what can be discovered was already there, referring to a timeless order and eternal truth that needs to be deciphered and interpreted through ‘divination’ (Foucault, 2002a: 65). This changes radically during the 17th and 18th century, when western societies enter the ‘classic age’, fundamentally influenced by ‘rationalist’ thinkers like Descartes and Newton. Thinking in terms of resemblance will now be devalued as unscientific and a new logic of representation is established to give non-formal sciences a strict and robust fundament conceived after the ideal of formalized mathesis, aiming towards the establishment of taxonomies based on a universal method of comparison to structure empirical facts according to a logical division between identity and difference. No longer anchored on the surface of nature, systems of signs become analytical instruments related to an ‘act of knowing’ (Foucault, 2002a: 65), hereby also introducing elements of chance and probability. Although Foucault characterized the classical episteme as a form of spatial thinking, time and chronology were also fundamental, but only in a ‘tamed’ form of causalities, successions and sequences, which could be ordered into uniform and strictly simultaneous tableaus.6 Foucault also called it a ‘classified time’ that imagined progress as a form of ‘squared and spatialized development’ (2002a: 144) based on an a priori spatial continuum and a fixed hierarchy of sequences. The classical episteme changed radically with the emergence of 19th century modern episteme, opening up the spatial grid of representational thought for radical becoming by introducing notions of time and history as enabling condition of empirical statements prior to any fixed continuum. History therefore does not enter the realm of empirical knowledge in ‘a probable form of succession’, but rather as their ‘fundamental mode of being’ (Foucault, 2002a: 300). Foucault’s treatment of time and history in the modern episteme, besides being fundamentally influenced by Heidegger, shares certain
characteristics with Koselleck’s (2006) investigations of the emergence of History as a collective singular noun, different to the prior meaning of histories in plural. But on a closer inspection, Foucault’s argument is different, pointing towards contradictory tendencies of conceptual unification and pluralisation constitutive for the emergence of modern notions of time and history. Furthermore, what makes Foucault’s argumentation unique is that he situates the 19th century turn towards radical becoming in the context of the historical emergence of the figure of the human, together constituting what he calls a thought of ‘anthropological finitude’ (2002a: 283). Therefore, while 19th century thought was so engaged in making an end to metaphysics, it reintroduced metaphysical notions of the human and history. The transformation of the classical to the modern episteme is quite paradoxical: on the one hand, time is freed from the hierarchical and classificatory logic of representations characteristic of 17th and 18th century rationalism, while on the other hand it introduces a new form of ‘temporal immobility’ which becomes conceivable only through the powerful articulation of history and the human. This also brings with it a new understanding of the ‘origin’: while for the classical episteme (and also for Renaissance), the ‘origin’ was situated outside time; in modern thought, beginnings will always be already mediated through History. The reason for this lies in a double movement related to the modern emergence of the human as a ‘strange empirical-transcendental doublet’ (Foucault, 2002a: 347), which brings into view the uncontrollable manifold of non-human times that prefigure and enable empirical human existence, while at the same time situating the former in a transcendental horizon, which unfolds from human vision. Foucault therefore identifies a tendency towards both identity and difference at the root of modern-time thinking, which in the end are nonetheless both placed under the umbrella of the ‘same’, grounded in a metaphysical notion of history and the human.

While the order of things attempted to investigate the transformation of discursive knowledge structures from the positive side of ‘order’ and the ‘same’, Madness and Civilisation (published 1961) was concerned with ‘otherness’, understood as a historical–philosophical investigation of a series of foundational exclusions, enabling the existence of modern socio-temporal order in its positivity (see Foucault 1994a: 498). Against Hegel’s understanding of history as Reason’s development in the consciousness of freedom and Descartes’ attempt to found a rational order of truth in the cogito, Foucault identified a fundamental split between reason and madness at the origins of western philosophy of time and progress, leading to an exclusion of madness, conceived as the ‘other’ of time. Madness is defined as the ‘absence of an œuvre’ (Foucault, 2006c: xi) and Foucault investigates
how it was historically associated with an idea of ‘unproductivity’, a ‘merely fallen time’: ‘the poor presumption of a passage refused by the future, a thing in becoming which is irreparably less than history’ (Foucault, 1988: xxxi). In opposition to this, Foucault introduces Nietzsche’s figure of the ‘tragic’, which – not unsimilar to madness – brings to expression elements of the ‘forgotten’ and ‘expelled’ from Reason’s march towards historical progress (1988: xii). It becomes a form of ‘counter-memory’ that is no longer associated with temporal movement, but leads to a radical ‘immobilisation of history’. Situated at ‘the point at which history freezes’ (Foucault, 1988: xxxiv), and therefore logically prior to the original split between madness and reason, the figure of the tragic makes visible the constitution of the ‘other’ of time: ‘That will allow that lightning flash decision to appear once more, heterogeneous with the time of history, but ungraspable outside it, which separates the murmur of dark insects from the language of reason and the promises of time (Foucault, 1988: xxxiii). Not unsimilar to Johannes Fabian’s writings on Time and the Other, who refers to Foucault as a major influence on his thinking (Fabian, 1983: xiii), modern conceptions of time and history, through their intrinsic connection to a reasoning subject, become a powerful dispositive of social division, where historical becoming is bound to conscious human action, leaving the mad in a realm less than time and history, because they are unable to produce social values and to contribute to cultural and economic progress.

The Archaeology of Knowledge (2002b, first published in 1969) has often been interpreted as a ‘Discourse de la méthode’ to Foucault’s previous works. But to assume that this book was just the attempt of a retrospective reconstruction of a method already operative in The Order of Things would be to neglect his fundamental time-theoretical innovations. Rather, it has to be understood as a work that stands in between two phases, where Foucault first was flirting with structuralism and later tried to overcome its methodological flaws by extending his approach to the realm of knowledge–power and by introducing plural scales of temporal series, enabling him to theorize simultaneous and non-simultaneous series of events forming the structure of discursive formations. Here, Foucault argued against a privileging of long periods of continuity, linear sequences and irreversible processes (especially in the field of ‘history of ideas’) and emphasized the relevance of thresholds, breaks, cuts and ruptures, which make possible an analysis in terms of discontinuities. According to him, the persistence of categories of continuity like tradition, Zeitgeist, worldview and collective memory makes the appearance as ‘if we were afraid to conceive of the Other in the time of our own thought’ (Foucault, 2002b: 13). Although Foucault mobilized an army of concepts
associated with ‘discontinuity’ and ‘rupture’, on a closer inspection, he is far away from playing out the discontinuous against the continuous (see Kusch, 1991: 83ff). Rather, he tries to introduce concepts able to re-evaluate the persistent and immobile in light of series of discursive events. This is also the reason why he – at least for this moment – prefers the notion of ‘transformation’ over ‘becoming’ (Foucault, 2001b: 864), since he wants to remove the continuous from the level of the transcendental. But hereby, he does not eliminate aspects of persistence, order and regularity from view, the opposite is the case. Even his concept of ‘transformation’ is conceived on the basis of regularities of series of events, and it is pluralised, so that we have to investigate these shifts on multiple levels and in terms of their own time(s).

Inspired by Nietzsche and Heidegger, the concept of the event is important throughout Foucault’s whole work, but this should not mislead us to assume that its meaning did not change. During the ‘archaeological’ phase, the event is introduced to describe discursive formations, which are defined as ‘scheme of correspondence between several temporal series’ (Foucault, 2002b: 74). Each temporal series is built of multiple events, which refer to linguistic statements. These events are not ‘immediately given’ (see Kusch, 1991: 59): on a temporal level, they do not refer to a basal temporal building block, discrete in its time-being, or to any kind of measurable ‘time-span’, but to an ‘intersection between two different forms of persistence, two speeds, two developments, two historical lines’ (Foucault, 1994c: 581, my translation). Therefore, there is no event that is just one time, because each event always gives expression to an intersection of multiple times. This idea has similarities with ‘relational’ theories of time that we find in Leibniz or Elias, who defines time as a ‘symbol’ for the synchronisation of different flows of events (Elias, 1992). But time for Elias is fundamentally connected to the human, enabling the operation of ‘temporal syntheses’ or ‘timing’, whereas for Foucault, discursive practises cultivate their own rhythms that follow no pre-established temporal continuum: the time of discourse ‘is not your time’ (2002b: 232); it is ‘not the translation, in a visible chronology, of the obscure time of thought’ (2002b: 138).

**Genealogy: ‘Counter-memory’ in becoming**

Since the mid 70s, there have been numerous attempts to reconstruct Foucault’s methodological turn from ‘archaeology’ to ‘genealogy’ (and later to ethics). In its most general form, ‘genealogy’ represents the methodological extension of discourse analysis to an investigation of dispositives of knowledge–power, which structure behaviour and self-understanding of social subjects according to a functional logic, investing into bodily forces for the sake of economic profit, while repressing political agency (see
Foucault, 1995). Power is here not conceived as a possession, or substance, but as a relation, a technology and a strategy, not as centralized in the state but dispersed throughout the social body. It is tightly interwoven with forms of knowledge, both standing in a relation of mutual support while not being reducible to another. Therefore, power is not only negative and constraining, but also positive, productive and enabling, it is not reduced to law and repression but is connected to forms of normalization (Foucault, 1978: 92f, 1995: 26). History, on the other side, seen from the standpoint of genealogy, is a permanent state of war, a steady confrontation of social forces, and politics is only the ‘continuation of war by other means’ (Foucault, 2003a: 15). In this radical force-field, ‘official’ state-history is written from the standpoint of the victors, while the fragmented voices of the defeated are buried underneath liberal institutions of social justice. Genealogy therefore re-constructs ‘a counter-memory – a transformation of history into a totally different form of time’ (Foucault, 1998: 385) and re-introduces ‘into the realm of becoming everything considered immortal in man’ (Foucault, 1998: 379). It makes visible power-relations, reconstructs their historical emergence and shows how what is considered as necessary in the present is the contingent result of social struggles (see Foucault, 1997a: 119ff, 1998: 396ff). At the same time, genealogy is centred around the body, to make visible the past and present forces that cut through it. On a time-theoretical level, we are confronted with important shifts: the most significant change is (a) the re-introduction of a notion of becoming, which was formerly associated with apriori continuism, and (b) the re-interpretation of the event as a transformation of a force-relation. Therefore, what the ‘series’ was in relation to the ‘archaeological event’, ‘becoming’ is to the ‘genealogical event’. This is a necessary move, because with his new key-focus on the transformation of force-relations, he puts a notion of radical contingency into the heart of his approach, which before was mediated through a notion of regularity, order and lawfulness associated with the operation of forming series of discursive events. Now, what seems regular and orderly in its appearance is deconstructed as a contingent result of social struggles, which leaves no room for stability and persistence beyond the permanence of war and its effects. Therefore, the notion of becoming is introduced in an attempt to ‘immobilise’ time and history anew. Indeed, the re-introduction of ‘becoming’, which was dismissed before in favour of the notion of transformation, neither has to be conceived along the lines of a Newtonian ‘absolute time’ nor as any other form of apriori continuism. In its strictly methodological focus, it is designed to put the emphasis on contingent continuities in the form of historical pathways of events connecting a past and a present.12 And indeed, this is exactly
the core time–theoretical innovation of Foucault’s attempt to rethink history, which connects ‘archaeology’ and ‘genealogy’: bringing a thinking of slow, almost immobile, historical processes typical for the *Annales* together with Nietzschean thinking of the event and therefore finding not only an innovative way to re-think relations of continuity and change, but also to focus on the mutual imbrication of micro- and macro-structural dynamics of social time-regimes.

Foucault will not remain satisfied with the Nietzschean ‘force-ontological’ foundation of his approach. The ‘war-hypotheses’ will be questioned, historicized and finally rejected for being reductionist (Foucault, 2003b; see also Lemke, 2019: 133f). The most important shift of the late 70s and early 80s, besides his substitution of ‘knowledge’ by ‘truth’, is the introduction of the concept of ‘government’ (Foucault, 2007). In a first step, Foucault further develops his notion of power: by conceiving power no longer just in dynamic-structural terms, but from the side of its *exercise*, the *actuality* of a dynamic force relation is emphasized, which ‘exists only when it is put into action, even if, of course, it is integrated into a disparate field of possibilities brought to bear upon permanent structures’ (Foucault, 1982: 788). Foucault defines power as ‘a mode of action which does not act directly and immediately on others. Instead it acts upon their actions: an action upon an action, on existing actions or on those which may arise in the present or the future’ (1982: 789). To exercise power is hereby not reduced to direct influence, but also understood as indirectly structuring the setting of the social context, in which actions take place. Foucault therefore investigates power-relations not as isolated dyads, but rather he develops a ‘field theory of power’ (Wartenberg, 1990: 8; see also Kusch, 1991: 108), which is structural, dynamic and *temporally tensed*. Building on these assumptions, Foucault introduces the notion of government, understood as ‘conduct of conduct.’ ‘For “conduct” is at the same time to “lead” others ... and a way of behaving within a more or less open field possibilities’ (Foucault, 1982: 789).

In his ‘governmentality lectures’ (held from 1977 to 1979 at the Collège de France), Foucault was interested in the historical ways that temporal schemes have been inscribed into rationalities and technologies of government, being fundamental for correlative processes of western state- and subject-formation. Therefore, he sketches historical trajectories of different rationalities of government, beginning with pastoral power, proceeding with raison d’état and the police state, and finally describing the emergence of liberalism and neo-liberalism as specific forms of state-projects, which all go in hand with the employment of specific temporal schemes. Emerging with Christianity and being understood as a ‘prelude’ to governmentality,
pastoral power is not yet oriented towards a fixed territory but characterized by a permanent concern of the shepherd for the guidance of the individual and the survival of the flock (Foucault, 2007: 125). It introduces the interiority of the soul by individualizing the promise of salvation and creating an inner truth, which also functions as a form of submission. Here, the arrow of time points to an eschatological future in which the end of time coincides with a form of eternal truth. According to Foucault, at the end of feudalism, a ‘crisis’ of pastoral power occurs through which the ‘pastoral of the soul’ is transformed into the ‘political government of men’ (Foucault, 2007: 227) and the question ‘how to guide oneself in the best way’ spreads to the entire realm of temporal life. Therefore, we see the advancement of ‘raison d’état,’ which establishes a new time-consciousness at the level of history, no longer directed towards the ‘end of time’ but opening up ‘onto an indefinite time in which states have to struggle against each other to ensure their own survival’ (Foucault, 2007: 365). Now it is the state that stands for an ‘immobile condition’ in that it is fundamentally conservative and protective, securing durée and continuity in the form of an ‘indefinite governmentality with no foreseeable term or final aim’ (Foucault, 2007: 260). Out of ‘raison d’état’ emerges the ‘police state’ as a new governmental rationality directed ‘to the set of means by which the state’s forces can be increased while preserving the state in good order’ (Foucault, 2007: 313). With the help of statistics and police science, it tries to gain knowledge about the population for the sake of the development of state forces. Foucault illustrates the temporal logic of the ‘police’ as a circle that begins with a political intervention that leads through the lives of individuals to increase the state’s forces (2007: 327). However, in contrast to law’s concern for things that are permanent and definitive, the ‘police state’ watches out for the little ‘things of each moment,’ is concerned ‘with the details’ and always needs to act ‘promptly and immediately’ (Foucault, 2007: 340). Finally, through the transition from police to liberalism, the new focus becomes the question how state power can be constricted from within, not in order to abolish it, but rather as an ‘internal refinement,’ which, still in the tradition of ‘raison d’état,’ aims at ‘maintaining [the state], developing it more fully, and perfecting it’ (Foucault, 2008: 28). The rationality of this new liberal practise of government is tightly connected to the emergence of the ‘market’ as a new principle of truth determining the measure and value of things. Liberalism no longer looks out, like ancient societies, as we will see soon, for Kairos: the right moment and due measure of political decision. Instead, the ‘effect[s] of time’ themselves (Foucault, 2007: 22) become the basis for a new liberal technology of power that puts securing the conditions of individual freedom centre stage.
Foucault’s genealogy of the modern state overlaps with his description of three historical types of power, which under (neo)liberal conditions intersect in complex ways: sovereignty, discipline and security,\textsuperscript{15} the latter two ‘dispositives’ together constituting what Foucault called ‘bio-power.’ The concept of ‘dispositive’ in Foucault’s work is highly complex, but its purpose is to integrate and materialize rationalities and technologies of government as forms of knowledge–power into specific apparatuses. The notion of ‘apparatus’ is here used synonymously with the notion of ‘dispositive,’ referring to a relational ensemble of heterogeneous elements, involving discursive and non-discursive aspects, answering to an urgency in society, and – as I will show – being fundamentally concerned with \textit{the social organization of time and temporality}. Like Barbara Adam’s notion of ‘timescapes,’ \textit{dispositives of time} make visible the relational nature of social time(s), but in a way that contextualises it in a broader field of social relation of knowledge–power. Indeed, Adam describes the emergence of timescapes of modernity along a powerful, sequential and additive processes of appropriation, commodification, control and colonialization, but in this way homogenizes on adiachronic plane what she pluralised synchronically, giving voice to an all-embracing force of rationalization which connects the different spheres of \textit{politics, science} and \textit{economy} (Adam, 2004). Contrary to this, Foucault not only tries to pluralize ‘rationalities’ of time-government both on a diachronic and a synchronic level, but to bind them intrinsically to a network of changing regimes of power, knowledge and subjectivation. Therefore, what we find in Foucault are not so much ‘timescapes,’ putting the focus on temporal difference, but intersecting ‘\textit{dispositives of time},’ which historically emerged in different contexts and were designed by social actors to exercise power over another.

Associated with monarchy, law and repression, sovereign power is not only oriented towards the spatial matrix of a territory, but also enfolds and extends in and over time. It holds a permanent dialogue with the past, since it bears the characteristic traits of a ‘founding precedence’ (Foucault, 2006a: 43), that is, an event ‘before time,’ like a mythical origin from which it receives a sacral status of divine right. Sovereignty here obviously shares certain temporal characteristics with ‘Renaissance episteme.’ Structured by an intersection of sacral and profane times, sovereignty refers not only to a single ‘origin’ but also to the temporal choreography of rites of reinstatement, where the past is actualized in the present so that the signs of power can be renewed. As an act of excessive expenditure, on special occasions, sovereign power returns some part of what it first had deduced cyclically recurring from its subjects – their products, their harvest, their labour and their times. Against this subtractive and therefore negative
access to the time of life of the subjects, which for Foucault implies a power over death, he is going to differentiate the positive form of biopower. However, in temporal terms, Foucault did not limit sovereignty to its ‘negative powers’ because it is also fundamentally concerned with the establishment of a unifying form of historiography in the name of the state: ‘a historical narrative whose function was to recount the sovereign’s past, to re-actualize the past of sovereignty in order to reinforce power’ (Foucault, 2015: 239). The working together of these temporal mechanisms for the sovereign serves as an antidote against its inner fear of becoming caught in an eternal circle of emergence, ascent and decline, instead lending it the glance of an endless duration. In its embeddedness into the realm of the juridical, the time of the sovereign appears to be somehow ‘time-less’ and ‘natural,’ which covers up historically contested processes through which local forms of temporal organization were codified through law.

In the context of discipline, emerging from the 16th to the 19th century, while also building on time-rituals of Christian monasteries, time is used primarily as an instrument of control and coordination of individual actions, bodily movements and social routines (Foucault, 1995, 2015). The penal system, psychiatric institutions, the school, etc. take hold, at least for a certain amount of time, of the totality of individual times, including their aspirations, hopes and dreams. The schedule and the calendar (see also Zerubavel, 1985) here represent the primary instruments for the structuration of the rhythms of particular activities, the organization of frequencies of repetition and the alignment of actions to a hierarchy of goals. The central focus of discipline lies on the imperative of ‘efficient time use,’ which is put into action through the analytical division of time into small and smaller units and through the transmission of temporal schemes onto bodily activities. Discipline, through a form of temporal processing of individual actions, attempts to reach the point ‘at which one maintained maximum speed and maximum efficiency’ (Foucault, 1995: 154). In this context, discipline develops a focus on the smallest incidents and events by trying to anticipate and prevent their actualization in advance. Therefore, discipline must work not only on actual but also on ‘potential behaviour’ (Foucault, 2006: 51). Because discipline wants to pre-form the very potential of the individual, it projects a ‘soul’ behind the body, which, as a bearer of future potentials, stands open towards endless processes of transformation. Therefore, and different than sovereignty, which recurs on the image of an unthinkable past and the eternity of law, discipline, especially in the context of penal institutions, refers to the future to prevent the repetition of a particular offence or crime and initiates and constantly evaluates a process of reform on the side of the individual. Along the utopian scheme of ‘panoptism,’
discipline ‘looks forward to the future, towards the moment when it will keep
going by itself and only a virtual supervision will be required, when disci-
pline, consequently, will have become habit’ (Foucault, 2006: 47).
Nonetheless, the actual object of the exercise of power in discipline is
always the physical presence of a subjected body on which it leaves traces
to structure an endless series of rule-following. In analogy to his time–the-
oretical descriptions in *The Order of Things*, discipline works within a time-
frame characteristic for the classic age, based on a highly rationalized, rigid
grid, serving as a standard system of reference for the control of bodily
movements on a demarcated spatial territory. Furthermore, we see the estab-
lishment of ‘time as measure, and not only as economic measure in the
capitalist system, but also as moral measure’ (Foucault, 2015: 83, see also
Harcourt, 2015), aiming towards a normalisation of particular social groups
and individuals. Foucault illustrates this with industrial societies’ urge to
fight forms of ‘temporal irregularity’ on the side of the working class, –
i.e. absenteeism, belatedness, nomadism, debauchery – through time-
discipline, by framing it as hostile acts against society as a whole. Against
this, punishment fulfils several functions: on the one hand, it constitutes a
form of compensation on behalf of society (Foucault, 2015: 7f); on the other,
it works as a preventive deterrent so that new enemies of society do not
emerge in the first place (Foucault, 2015: 177); finally, it installs a procedure
of ‘recovery’ for guilty criminals, which for Foucault gives expression to a
silent infiltration of legal practises through Christian morals from ‘below’
(Foucault, 2015: 106). Therefore, punishment aims at a process of inner
transformation, which constitutes a complex causality, involving both
linear and cyclical dynamics that extend the present act of ‘punishment’
through a permanent process of ‘surveillance’: ‘Punishment is not just an
act that is carried out, it is an unfolding process whose effects on the person
who is its object must be monitored’ (Foucault, 2015: 91). What constitutes
the outline of ‘an abstract, monotonous, rigid punitive system’ (Foucault,
2015: 70) is focused in ‘the last instance’ on exactly one variable: time. ‘Just
as the wage rewards the time for which labour-power has been purchased
from someone, the penalty corresponds to the infraction, not in terms of
reparation or exact adjustment, but in terms of quantity of time of liberty’
(Foucault, 2015: 70). Therefore, no longer stands the sovereign’s deduction
of goods and resources in the foreground; instead, it is the life and times of
individual bodies that move to the centre of attention, making visible ‘the
relationship of the time of life to political power: that repression of time and
repression through time, that kind of continuity between workshop clock,
production line stopwatch, and prison calendar’ (Foucault, 2015: 72).
Because disciplinary time-norms have to be inscribed into the body, the
primary objective becomes the shaping of habits. Contrary to the juridical contract, which binds individuals to their property, it is habit, which makes it possible to fix those individuals, who own no property, to the apparatus of production (Foucault, 2015: 239).

While in ‘disciplinary society’ power tries to take hold of the totality of individual times, the temporal technologies of security apparatuses – in line with governmental rationalities of liberalism – focus on letting times pass. Making use of statistics and probability calculus, they register the frequency of events and project possible future scenarios (see Foucault, 2007: 37ff). Their focus lies on the aleatory, the eventful and the contingent, not as a radical cut, but again in the context of the processual, so that their main objective is the administration and regulation of an open series of events, which are part of a wider reality that is in flux. Security does not care about the total mastery of the life and times of individuals; instead, it attempts to influence the milieu of population development. Contrary to discipline, security does not integrate the events centripetally into the direction of a panoptic centre but takes a step back to get an overall view on social tendencies from a distance, lets things develop according to their own movement (Foucault, 2007: 44), or attempts to put different dynamics in relation so that they mutually amplify, lower another or move in a totally different direction (see Foucault, 2007: 37). The series of events hereby involved do not follow a universal principle of sequence but create temporal order in the medium of time. Liberalism installs an imperative to take seriously all things and events in their own temporal movement, to recalibrate along its flow and to pull down all forms of rigid barriers. Temporal order, it seems, is freed from any external measure and is determined only according to the inner dynamic of movement itself, making only punctual forms of intervention necessary to channel flows and regulate peaks and throughs. However, even in this vision of a more flexible regulation, liberalism has not fully left behind all forms of ‘temporal immobility.’ Here, it is especially a form of temporal fixation that raison d’état had so firmly established in putting the focus on ‘keeping balance,’ which liberalism interprets as a compensation between applying a range of regulatory forms and letting things move their way. Security therefore gives up the hope to be able one day to control the totality of events in a comprehensive way. Rather, the future now appears as radically open. It was already in the context of discipline, but the latter processed time under artificial laboratory conditions and imagined a future point of absolute control without any controlling subject. Security, in contrast, turns the utopian time-image of modernity into its norm: we have to deal with the new each and every moment (Habermas, 1987; Koselleck, 2006). Therefore, comparable to the
transition from the classic age to modernity, we are witnessing the transformation from an ‘ideal-model’ of time-government to a quasi-naturalistic ‘real-time-model’, which is oriented towards a reality that is in permanent transition. The dominant timeframe of security could be termed as a ‘serial-aleatoric evolutionism’ that is oriented primarily to present- and near-future-related processes and understands regulation as a flexible form of time- and space-political context-shaping.\textsuperscript{17}

Finally, in his lectures on ‘The birth of biopolitics’ from 1978–1979, Foucault examines the transformation of a liberal art of governing into a neo-liberal form that structures social relations according to the principle of the enterprise, hereby involving both aspects of discipline and security (see also Bargetz et al. 2015). The neo-liberal subject must be understood as ‘eminently governable’ (Foucault, 2008: 270), also because she/he learns to cultivate specific attitudes towards time that make her/him invest, calculate and plan for an uncertain future. In this context, the dismantling of the welfare state and social security systems supports a radical displacement of risk and responsibility into the realm of individual self-management, which creates the imperative to invest into human capital. Therefore, the subjects are constantly urged to care for the future, making their limited life-time into an object fraught with risk and constant concern, which better be managed with precaution. In this regard, the subjects still project themselves into the future as an integrated unity at the end of time, but they no longer move upwards on an imagined universal ladder of life. Instead, they are confronted with a modular structure of interconnected tasks that secure continual development without any prospect of an end before death (see Bröckling, 2013, 2017). Therefore, in the context of imperatives of economic increase, the time of one’s life has to be interpreted – in the case of doubt, with the assistance of professional guidance – as a coherent, reflexive project that has to be continuously optimized (see Binkley, 2009).

**Ethics: Time and temporality in ancient technologies of the self**

While ‘ethics’ is often understood as a sub-field of ‘practical philosophy’ directed to moral reasoning and acting, what interests Foucault in his later writings is how ethical codes in western history have shaped the subject’s self-understanding in such a way, as he or she is provided with the means to govern him- or herself as the precondition to govern others (Foucault, 2005b). Ethics is therefore not uncoupled from ‘genealogy,’ but rather has to be understood as its extension to the field of ‘technologies of self’ in order to write a ‘history of the modern subject’,\textsuperscript{18} beginning with an
investigation of ancient Greek, Roman and early Christian self-culture\(^{19}\) (see Foucault, 1985, 1986a, 2019). Although his investigations show surprising commonalities with regard to the structures and objectives of ethical concern, while the Greek and Hellenistic culture of the self is characterised through its aim of bringing the individual into a state of autonomy, Christianity tendentially shifted the focus towards a culture of submission and self-renunciation (Foucault, 1993).

Foucault’s historical investigations into ancient ‘self-cultures’ are again fundamentally concerned with aspects of time and temporality. As a reader of Heidegger and Husserl, Foucault is aware that the historical forms of ‘self-relations’ he wants to investigate are fundamentally temporally structured. But against the assumption that these could be understood as generalized conditions of being qua individual *Dasein*, Foucault searches for the concrete ethical codes, guidelines, spiritual exercises and practises which made particular temporal self-relations, including the experience of *being present*, as well as forms of *retro-* and *prospection*, possible. Investigating these ethical codes, it becomes clear that there is *no time to lose* for the fundamental task to constantly examine one’s conscience and to transform oneself according to ethical standards (Foucault, 1985, 1986a, 2005b, 2019). This also *takes time*, which therefore shall be structured well and in line with the right moment and due measure. Constituting the ethical basis for the government others, technologies of the self fundamentally build on the cultivation of an attitude of *attentiveness* and *self-presence*. This on the other hand, needs guidance and rules, which can only be learned on the basis of the constant exercise of *memory*. Against Plato’s anamnesis doctrine, the Stoics will focus extensively on memory training exercises, no longer directed towards a spiritual realm of eternal ideas, but on practical moral lessons given from teacher to student, aiming at the strengthening of the individual’s ability to cope with unforeseen events (Foucault, 2005b: 460). Even expectation, for example in the form of a meditative anticipation of possible dangers, which can happen during the day (*praemeditatio malorum*) or the working through of the all-time given the possibility of one’s death (*melete thanatou*), has to be trained through continuous exercising, not so much to shape the future\(^{20}\) actively but rather to tame a surplus of contingencies in the context of present action (Foucault, 2005b: 477). In addition to the description of ways of exercising and cultivating quasi-existential temporal horizons, on a more instrumental level, the core temporal technology is located at the intersection of *kairos* and *phronesis*: establishing a form of practical wisdom with regard to the determination of the ‘right moment’ on different but interrelated temporal scales (the hours of the day, the seasons of the year and the phases of a
lifetime). In every regard, it is imperative to observe and comply with
differences of times for each practice, and to keep due measure, always
finding a balance between too little and too much. Therefore, developing
an ethical attitude in the context of constituting oneself as a subject of
desire requires calendars and schedules, which have to be handled not
with rigid accuracy, but rather need a ‘flexible interpretation,’ building
on reflexion and practical wisdom, always situating a rule for right
action in the context of changing circumstances. ‘So it was not a question
of determining the “working days” of sexual pleasures, uniformly and for
everyone, but of how best to calculate the opportune times and the appro-
priate frequencies’ (Foucault, 1985: 116).

Through his investigation of early Christianity, Foucault continues his
previous work on the function of historical practices of confession in the
context of the emergence of a modern subject of truth and desire.21 He
defines the confession as ‘a verbal act through which the subject affirms
who he is, binds himself to this truth, places himself in a relationship of
dependence with regard to another, and modifies at the same time his
relationship to himself’ (Foucault, 2014b: 17). Already his investigation
of pastoral power as a ‘technique for the government of souls’ (Foucault,
2003a: 177) had shown that Christianity deployed several temporal techni-
ques for the control of individual life-times, including the guidance of
everyday conduct, practices of self-mastery and rituals of maintaining a
good and a clear conscience through forms of truth-speaking. Foucault
shows how Christian pastoral power tried to get a grip on the totality of
the individual’s lifetime, by integrating him/her into recurring practices of
confessing the truth about his/her self. Since the end of the world and final
redemption did not take place, the church had to deal with the possibility of
suffering relapse into sin as a permanent feature of this world (Foucault,
2014a: 93ff). Baptism and penance provided only limited success into gain-
ing continuous control over the individual, therefore the church institution-
ized permanent rituals of shrift in order to make confession a ritualized
practise, which integrated the will to constantly tell the truth about one-self
into a fixed relation of subordination and control. Because the danger of
relapsing into sin was always given, the confession involved not only the
search for traces of sin in the past and the present, but also in the future.
Nonetheless, the ritualized examination of one’s conscience is fundamen-
tally directed towards ‘a present that is experienced as a “state” [fr. état, dt.
Zustand]’ (Foucault, 2018, 2019: 155, my translation). What emerged with
early Christianity was the ‘flesh’ as a ‘form of experience,’ involving both
‘self-presence’ and a ‘mode of self-transformation’ directed towards ‘saying
the truth’ and ‘abolishing evil’ (Foucault, 2019: 76f, my translation). Even
if these descriptions are not conclusive, it seems like Foucault wanted to tell us that the self-practises he described were fundamental for our way of historically constituting us as temporal subjects, without turning these temporal technologies into timeless categories, but making them understandable in a historical context of social relations of knowledge–power.

**Conclusion**

In this paper, I tried to show that Foucault, over different phases of his work, was deeply engaged with issues of time, temporality and history, while putting a special focus on aspects of knowledge, power and forms subjectivation. Apart from a restless search for strategies to deal with notions of time and history in a complex and non-reductive way, he described historically dominant regimes of time–knowledge, temporal schemes of government, powerful time-dispositives and time-norms, which shape bodies, affects and identities, produce habits and therefore fundamentally direct the conduct of conduct. In his investigation of historical ways to conceptualize and rationalize time, temporality and history, he constantly looked out for strategies to live time differently (see Foucault, 2003c: 984).

As a self-titled ‘philosophical journalist,’ who was concerned with writing a ‘history of the present’, asking the ‘diagnostic question’ of what kind of difference a present introduces in distinction to a past, Foucault’s primary concern always was the present (1994a: 665, 2001b: 848). He understood the latter not as a discrete point in time, but rather as an extended force-field, which structures and therefore both limits and enables our thinking and acting. Therefore, the present, as a ‘system of actuality’ (Foucault, 1994b: 259), is not understood as a stable ground, but rather it is exactly this present – ‘our present’ – which stands in question. Neither ‘we’ nor the ‘present’ are fixed terms, and we should not be led astray trying to turn Foucault’s approach into a kind of ‘presentism.’ Foucault is not trying to write a history in terms of the present, but a history of the present (see Foucault, 1995: 31).

This is also reflected in Foucault’s genealogy of a critical ethos, understood as the art of not letting oneself be governed like that. Inspired by ancient self-relations, Foucault seems to suggest that one part of this critical ethos, which aims towards a desubjugation of the subject (Foucault, 1997a: 32) is turning your life and times into a work of art. Leading us back to our initial investigation of ‘madness’ as ‘original exclusion’ from history and time by defining it as the ‘absence of an œuvre,’ Foucault now seems to understand turning the self-relation into a constant piece of work as an elementary part of an art of voluntary insubordination (Foucault, 1997a: 412).
32). Are these the same kind of practices related to the production of an œuvre that Foucault criticized earlier, which he now suggests we should turn ourselves, our lives, our times to? Of course not, because neither are ‘we’ nor are ‘our times’ the same. Turning one’s time into an œuvre is not thought along a teleonomic history of reason connected to a foundationalist rational subject, but builds on a multiplication and diversification of lifes, times and histories. This may even enable us to think ‘the Other in the time of our own times’ (Foucault, 2002b: 13), but only under the provision that this time would no longer be one, and therefore also not our own anymore, but rather a manifold relation.

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Notes

1. Temporal concepts in the work of Foucault have until recently been only partially reconstructed (see Binkley, 2009; Braun, 2007; Flynn, 2005; Forst, 1990; Hamilton, 2018; Hoy, 2009; Kusch, 1991; Lilja, 2018; Massey, 2017; Michon, 2002; Revel, 2015; Saar, 2008; White, 1973). The only systematic investigation has been provided by Pascal Michon (2002). Michon follows Foucault’s thought on philosophical level, to engage with his attempt to dissolve a unitary notion of history into multiple figures of time. What I will try in this paper is to bring Foucault’s philosophical reflections on history, time and temporality into dialogue with his empirical-analytical investigations of mechanism of power, knowledge and subjectivation.

2. See also Michon (2002). Of course, the philosophical thought of Leibniz (relationism), Kant (schematism, formal apriori, actuality), Nietzsche (untimely, event, repetition, return, genealogy, becoming), Husserl (formalism, historical apriori) and Heidegger (presence, finitude) had a great influence on Foucault, but also the structural Marxism of Althusser (plural and stratified times, critique of Hegelian conception of history), French epistemology of Bachelard and Canguilhem (epistemological rupture, construction of intellectual predecessors)
and the *Annales* school of historiography (plural temporal stratas, serial history, immobile time), not to forget about the writings of Blanchot, Bataille and Klossowski.

3. Nonetheless, in his empirical investigations, time and space are often analysed in strict correlation to each other (Foucault, 2003c: 46, 2005a: 931).

4. ‘[H]ow not to be governed like that, by that, in the name of those principles, with such and such objective in mind and by means of such procedures, not like that, not for that, not by them’ (Foucault, 1997: 26).

5. Therefore, I leave the pre-archaeological, i.e. phenomenological writings (although they are also full of time-concepts) to the side (see Foucault, 1994a). But I also follow Johanna Oksala (2005: 3ff) assuming that the three main topics of Foucault’s research (knowledge, power and subjectivity) were present in all three phases, each time under the priority of one of the three terms. This also made it possible for Foucault to integrate earlier work so easily when his research focus shifted.

6. While I agree with Hayden White that Foucault did not regard the ‘intensification of “historical consciousness”’ of the modern age as a form of social progress, he overstates the time-anxiety that Foucault attributed to the classical age (see White, 1987: 123f). *The Order of Things* made clear that there was indeed a lot of reflection on temporal series, but ‘radical becoming’ was arrested in a spatial frame (like we can observe in Newton’s notion of absolute time), from which it was not set free before the emergence of 19th century historicism.

7. ‘The flow of development, with all its resources of drama, oblivion, alienation, will be held within an anthropological finitude which finds in them, in turn, its own illuminated expression. *Finitude*, with its truth, is posited in *time*; and *time* is therefore *finite*’ (Foucault, 2002a: 86).

8. On this notion, see the inaugural lecture of Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie ‘L’histoire immobile,’ held at Collège de France in 1973 (Le Roy Ladurie, 1974).

9. The book was translated into English in 1964 in an abridged edition. A new and complete edition was published in 2006 with the title ‘History of Madness.’

10. Indeed, Foucault planned to publish certain passages of the *The Archaeology of Knowledge* as an extended ‘Preface’ to the *The Order of Things*, but Jean Hyppolite and George Canguilhem advised him to turn it into a separate monograph (Dosse, 1997: 235).

11. The problem is not new: in contradistinction to his ‘archaeological’ commitment, Foucault – besides his reconstruction of Nietzsche’s understanding (see Foucault, 1998: 369ff) – left us no ‘methodological’ guide, which laid down the basic premises of ‘genealogy’ in a systematic way. Concerning its difference to ‘archaeology’ some commentators emphasize a radical break (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983), while others focus on continuities (Kusch, 1991). For a short time, ‘genealogy’ also ran under the label of ‘dynastics’ (Foucault, 1994b: 405) and ‘anarchaeology’ (Foucault, 2014a: 79).

12. Indeed, Foucault planned to publish certain passages of the *The Archaeology of Knowledge* as an extended ‘Preface’ to the *The Order of Things*, but Jean Hyppolite and George Canguilhem advised him to turn it into a separate monograph (Dosse, 1997: 235).
relations of continuity and on the possibility, to determine tactical aims of a battle strategy with regard to such continuities’ (Foucault, 1994b: 644, my translation).

13. Instead, Foucault will introduce several new concepts to complexify his model of social reality, beginning with a distinction of ‘power-relations’ and ‘capacities,’ ‘relations of domination’ and ‘relations of communication’ (Foucault, 2017: 287f), and later between ‘technologies of power’ and ‘technologies of the self’ (Foucault, 1997b: 225).

14. Hayden White correctly emphasizes that power from the beginning was thought in temporal terms, a fluid that changes its form constantly and therefore – in an almost Kairos-like fashion – can only be caught ‘on the wing’ (White, 1987: 130).

15. Making things even more difficult, these terms refer both to (1) historical forms of power, which Foucault describes in their chronology of emergence, and (2) epistemological frames, which guide and prefigure our understanding of power. In terms of the latter, sovereignty thinks power according to the model of the king, law and repression, while discipline and security stand for a more contemporary understanding, putting the focus on economic efficiency, normalisation and the constitutive aspect of knowledge-power in producing social reality.

16. The time–theoretical arguments in Discipline and Punish (1995) and The Punitive Society (2015) are obviously influenced by the work of E.P. Thompson (1967), but avoid his dualist terminology of task-related time and clock-time.

17. However, we should not underestimate the role of the past in this scenario, since statistical procedures cannot avoid extrapolating from the past to the future, even if they operate under conditions of radical uncertainty.

18. ‘It would be interesting, if one would try clarify, how in the course of history a subject was constituted that is not given once and for all, that doesn’t built the nucleus from which truth enters into history, but rather a subject that is constituted within history, that constantly and again is constituted by history’ (Foucault, 2002c: 672).

19. ‘It seems to me that the stake, the challenge for any history of thought, is precisely that of grasping when a cultural phenomenon of a determinate scale actually constitutes within the history of thought a decisive moment that is still significant for our modern mode of being subjects’ (Foucault, 2005b: 9). The new research focus on ethics also goes in hand with shifts on a conceptual and methodological level, motivated by the necessity of adapting his analytical tools to the social context of ancient societies, because contrary to modern mass societies, individuals are not yet chained to apparatuses, which bind them to a norm.

20. In general, according to Foucault, the future was devalued in ancient Greek and Hellenistic thought, pointing to the fact that those who care too much for the future risk being not focussed enough on the present and the past.

21. Over different phases of his work, Foucault wanted to reconstruct the historical processes through which ‘[w]estern man has become a confessing animal’ (Foucault, 1978: 59).
22. In his text ‘Of Other Spaces,’ Foucault developed his notion of ‘heterotopias,’ understood as spatial utopias or ‘counter-sites’ enacted in the present and also involving the creation of ‘heterochronies,’ which have the capacity to produce an ‘absolute break with their traditional time’ (Foucault, 1986b: 26).

23. Foucault traces elements of this critical ethos back to ancient Greek and Christian ‘techniques of the self,’ the age of reformation and enlightenment, and liberalism (see Foucault, 1997a, see also Sarasin, 2017).

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