Anita Välikangas and Hannele Seeck
Exploring the Foucauldian interpretation of power and subject in organizations

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EXPLORING THE FOUCAULDIAN INTERPRETATION OF POWER AND SUBJECT IN ORGANIZATIONS

ABSTRACT This paper assesses the recent contribution of Michel Foucault to the study of power and subject in organizations. First, we theoretically examine Foucault's thinking by dividing his works into archaeological, genealogical and aesthetic/ethical phases. We then conduct a review of 113 international journal articles from between the years 2000 and 2009. We do this in order to obtain an overview of the phases of Foucault's thinking that are prevalent in recent organization studies. We find that recent academic studies drawing on Foucault are increasingly leaning towards Foucault's writings on governmentality, as well as on his genealogical works, which have sustained their popularity. Reflecting the growing interest in governmentality and genealogy, we end by pointing out some avenues for future research.

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of the 1990s, a multitude of organization studies drawing from the Foucauldian approach have been conducted (see e.g. Burrell 1988, 1992; Alvesson & Willmott 1992; Knights & Willmott 1999; Knights 2002, Deetz 1992; Townley 1993; Clegg 2002; Barratt 2004; Wray-Bliss 2003; Carter et al. 2002 Caldwell 2007; Miller & Rose 2008). All in all, over the last twenty years, Foucault has become a major figure in studies on organizations, in the UK in general (Carter 2008, 13) and in the realm of Critical Management Studies in particular (Fournier & Grey 2000). There are many reasons for the rise in Foucault's popularity, which reflect academics' interest in his works. These are, for example, the growing number of English translations of Foucault's work, and the institutionalization of Foucauldian studies (Carter 2008, 17-24). Another reason for the popularity of Foucault's works is that they leave great room for interpretation (Knights & Willmott 1999; McKinlay & Starkey 1998), and are thus easily applied to various issues in the field of organizational and management studies.

Our aim in this paper is twofold. First, we theoretically analyse how Foucault viewed the concepts of power and the subject during the different phases of his intellectual career. We divide his works into archaeological, genealogical and aesthetic/ethical phases. We then conduct a review of international journal articles between the years 2000 and 2009. We do this in order to obtain an overview of the phases of Foucault's thinking that are prevalent in recent organization studies. Finally we discuss the potential that the Foucauldian approach has yet to offer the study of organizations.

From the early 1990s onwards, Foucault has been the object of increasing academic interest in the realm of organization studies (Burrell 1988, 1998; Alvesson & Willmott 1992). In addition, the past decade has seen the publication of many articles reviewing and assessing Foucault's contribution to organization studies (see e.g. Knights

2002, Barratt 2004; Chan & Clegg 2002; Carter 2008; Caldwell 2007). So why yet another article assessing Foucault's contribution to the field of organization studies? We simply wanted to obtain an up-to-date overview of how the Foucault's different phases and conceptualizations have been used in the twenty-first century. Are disciplinary power (Foucault 1977) and power/knowledge (Foucault 1972; see also Foucault & Gordon 1980) still the most drawn-upon concepts and tenets of Foucault - or has this changed? We believe that subject and power are the two themes that best connect Foucault's writings to the study of organizations, and therefore these are the concepts under scrutiny. We use our review of recent journal studies as a backdrop in mapping out prominent avenues for future research.

However, Foucault kept significantly changing his research interests and methods throughout his intellectual career, which also means that his use of the concepts of power and the subject altered in the course of his writings. In order to acknowledge this diversity and the various changes in his thinking, we analyse his works by dividing them into three different phases, namely archaeological, genealogical and aesthetic/ethical, since it is often viewed that Michel Foucault's intellectual career had these three main phases (McLaren 2002; Allen 2000; Starkey & Hatchuel 2002). However, it should be remembered that this division has been made by later researchers, not Foucault himself. Foucault himself saw his works as somewhat inconsistent, arguing that they form "an indecipherable, disorganised muddle" (Foucault 1980, 80).

The main works of Foucault's archaeological phase include *The Birth of the Clinic* (originally published in French in 1963), *The Order of Things* (1966), and *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969). In his archaeological works, Foucault was interested in examining the "rules of formation" and "regimes of truth" by which scientific knowledge progresses and through which human beings understand themselves (Knights 2002; Smart 1998).

Respectively, the central works of Foucault's genealogical phase are *Discipline and Punish* (originally published in French 1975) and *History of Sexuality Volume One* (1976). In these works, Foucault abandons his focus on the archaeology of 'epistemes of truth', and applied genealogical analyses of power and knowledge that create the conditions for power to have particular truth effects (Knights 2002).

Finally, in the late 1970s, Foucault turned his attention to ethics and aesthetics (McLaren 2002). The central works of his aesthetic/ethical phase are the second and third volumes of *History of Sexuality*, *The Use of Pleasure* (originally published in French 1984), *The Care of Self* (1984), and many essays and interviews such as 'On Genealogy and Ethics: An Overview of a Work in Progress', 'The Subject and Power', 'The Ethics of the Concern for Self as a Practice of Freedom' and 'Technologies of the Self' (McLaren 2002)[i]. In his aesthetic/ethical phase, Foucault emphasized the role of the active, ethical subject (Smart 1998; Starkey & Hatchuel 2002), and advocated that caring for the self and making one's life a work of art are simultaneously an acceptance of individualized resources and a form of resistance of the regime that makes these resources possible by constituting us as individualized subjects (Knights 2002).

Unlike his archaeological and genealogical writings, Foucault's later topics cannot be easily attached to one specific title. His late works (from 1977 onwards) can be said to cover three specific themes: governmentality, ethics and aesthetics. In our study, we divide this phase into two different categories, namely governmentality and the joint concept of aesthetic/ethical writings. In Foucault's late writings, aesthetical and ethical viewpoints are strongly connected to each other, as can be seen, for instance, from his notion of life as a work of art (see Foucault 1997a, 1997b, 1997c). Studies drawing on the governmentality concept can be distinguished in these writings, since this area has shifted in a certain direction after Foucault's death. This is denoted by the general rise of governmentality studies (see e.g. Dean 1998; Miller & Rose 2008).

**FOUCAULDIAN INTERPRETATION OF POWER AND THE SUBJECT
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Power and the subject are two core concepts of Foucault's thinking, as these two themes are often present either implicitly or explicitly in his writings. However, due to both the variety and diversity of his writings, it is not an easy task to describe how Foucault viewed these two concepts. Regardless of this, we can still make some general distinctions. The concepts of the subject and power are strongly interconnected in Foucault's writings. For instance, in his well-known essay "*The subject and power*" Foucault (2000e, 326–327) claimed that it was not possible to study subjects or the ways by which human beings are made subjects without also studying power and power relations. Thus it can be said that, in Foucault's writings, subject and subjectivity are formed only through power, indicating that they are produced historically through certain discourses and certain desires (Dreyfus 1999; Cooper & Burrell 1988, Foucault 2000b). The 'development' of the central concepts in Foucault's thinking is illustrated in Table 1.

(Insert Table 1 about here.)

In the archaeological phase, Foucault studied the discourses of psychiatry, medicine, the human sciences, and institutional practices. In these works, his overall project can be broadly defined as examining how some discourses claim the status of science, and how they shape the conditions determining the subject's linguistic, economic and biological formation (Foucault 1972; Foucault 1997c, Knights 2002). Throughout his works he also wanted to highlight that power works in micro-relations, capillaries and normal everyday practices (Clegg et al. 2006, 254; see also Foucault 1989).

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In his archaeological phase, Foucault's study of the concepts of the subject and power is tightly connected with the study of discourses. In this context, discourses can be understood as structured and regulated systems of rules, which define who can say what, when, and how (Caldwell 2007, 772). This idea can be found, for instance, in Foucault's book *Order of Things* (2002), where he examines how a set of classical disciplines (such as grammar, political economy and natural history) developed, and the reasons why these disciplines could make certain statements be considered true and others false. In his archaeological writings, the studied systems of rules appear to exist independently of social contexts, and they also define the conditions and hidden rules, which in turn define how the subjects are perceived (Caldwell 2007, 772).

How, then, does Foucault portray the relation between the subject and power in his early writings? Firstly, and perhaps most significantly, he emphasized that it was impossible for a human being to detach him/herself from his/her historical background: "[W]hen he [a human being] tries to define himself as a living being, he can uncover his own beginning only against the background of a life which began long before him" (Foucault 2002, 359). Discourses in particular determine how the subject is perceived, as they define, limit and control the way in which subjects perceive themselves and their relation to the world (Caldwell 2007, 772).

The themes developed in Foucault's archaeology have been greatly studied from the viewpoint of discourse over the last twenty years (see Ezzamel & Willmott 2008). From the perspective given by Foucault's archaeology, prevalent management and organizational theories can be seen as acting as power/knowledge regimes. In a historically specific period, these theories can thus identify how an organization and its correct organizational practices are defined, as well as how workers perceive themselves (Knights & Willmott 1999). Moreover, different organizational discourses illustrate the prevalent truth about different issues, such as working conditions and practices. Nicolas Rose (1999) argues that with the

passing of time, these ways of organizing and perceiving the working subject will become established and viewed as normal, and consequently render alternative ways of organizing and perceiving the working subject as invisible (Rose 1999; Foucault 2000b, 281-301).

Another potential contribution by Foucault's archaeology to the study of organizations and management concerns the evaluation of organizational sciences themselves. David Knights (2002) posits that Foucault's archaeology and the study on the "regimes of truth" provide a fruitful basis for studying the foundations of organizational and management sciences. This is because organizational and management sciences follow the rules and procedures of positive knowledge. However, at the same time, despite their aims for positive science, they are never independent of the power that managers and their corporations exercise (Knights 2002).

The study of different institutions and authorities that establish certain truth-regimes and form subjectivity was a central topic in Foucault's genealogical phase, especially in *Discipline and Punish* (1975) and *History of Sexuality: Volume One* (1981). In these works, he studied how discipline, punishment and sexuality affect the human being at a very deep level. By examining historical conditions, he pointed out that several institutions and authorities use both conscious and unconscious strategies in order to have power over the subject (Knights 2002, 588). He emphasizes that these strategies do not have one specific goal, but that they emerge from a series of accidents and arbitrary or superficial, localized events (Knights 2002, 588).

Another shift also occurred in Foucault's genealogical writings; in his research method. When writing *Discipline and Punish,* he rejected the idea of using archaeological methods, and instead turned to examining everyday life and practices. He pointed out that practices contain their own specific regularities, logic, strategy, self-evidence and reason (Foucault 2000c, 223). This idea is in line with Nietzsche's method of genealogy, which emphasizes that the origin of things is not perfect, and cannot be found in ideal essences.

Instead, the genealogical process highlights the disparity, difference and indeterminacy of historical events (Cooper & Burrell 1988).

The third major difference between Foucault's archaeological and genealogical writings concerns the way in which he viewed the relationship between the subject and power. In his earliest writings, he seems to see power mainly as a repressive force, something that individuals accustom themselves to. However, in his genealogical works, Foucault emphasizes that power is not only negative and repressive but can also be positive, productive and enabling (Foucault 2000e, 341; 1980, 78-109). In schools, prisons, churches and hospitals, authorities want to make subjects reveal some kind of truth about themselves; this truth is not only a passive force, but guides subjects' thinking and self-image in a certain direction (Foucault 1977, 186-187). In genealogical works, Foucault often analyses disciplinary power, which clearly aims to attain these targets. For instance, in the field of prison, disciplinary power is used in order to transform prisoners from law-breaking criminals into law-abiding citizens, capable of living within the boundaries of society (Foucault 1977, 231-236).

Over the last twenty years, Foucault's analysis of disciplinary power has received much interest from organizational and management theorists (see for example Deetz 1992, Knights 2002; Caldwell 2007). This is likely to be because Foucault writes most clearly about the organization itself in his study of disciplinary mechanisms. Here he studies total institutions, such as prison and monasteries, and the techniques and practices by which they are most able to guarantee the maximum obedience of their subjects. These techniques include, for instance, the placing of individuals in isolation from each other; the schematization of days into specific periods of work, meals, and prayers; and the surveillance and examination of all individuals (Foucault 1977, 236-245). Foucault shows that the result of these techniques is that individuals are aware at all times of their status under disciplinary

power, even if they are not able to point out the exact moment when their behaviour and characteristics are observed (Foucault 1977, 236-245).

Another key feature, by which Foucault sees power as functioning in his genealogical writings, is the theme of pastoral power, a power relationship often found in the Judeo-Christian tradition (Foucault 2007, 175, 130). Foucault addressed this topic in greatest depth in his lectures at Collège de France 1977–1978 (see Foucault 2007). Pastoral power is a power relationship, where the pastor aims to modify the spirit and will of the guided person in a certain direction with the help of spiritual guidance and subjects' confessions (Foucault 2007, 181; Foucault 1981; Elden 2005). During the confessions, the pastor aims to gain more knowledge on his subjects (Foucault 1977, 236-245). The result of the practice of confession is that the subject begins to produce a certain kind of truth about him or herself: "Starting from oneself, one will extract and produce a truth which binds one to the person who directs one's conscience" (Foucault 2007, 183).

According to Foucault, the techniques used in pastoral power are present in various institutions and practices, and medicine in particular has been one of the great heirs of pastoral power (Foucault 2007, 199). In the present context, this topic is connected to the increasing use of applied psychology and psychological methods, also in organizational analysis (Rose 1999). As noted by Miller and Rose (2008, 42-44; see also Rose 1999), in the twentieth century, psychology has become one of the main tools for analysing workplaces and economic life.

If we view the contribution of Foucault's genealogy to organizations, we note that in organizational analysis, it is crucial to study the practices, relationships and processes that are produced and reproduced on a daily basis in the organization's local context. Much empirical research on organizational practices has already been made, examining the everyday construction and reconstruction of power/knowledge in the workplace (see e.g. Alvesson and Deetz 2000, 113-137, 167-190, 193-209).

Furthermore, in the light of Foucault's genealogy, it is possible to study the spaces and time produced by different processes' practices (see Dale & Burrell 2008). For instance, the employment relationship is analytical, a conceptual space with geographic (at work) and temporal (time at work) dimensions, and it involves the subject; the worker (Townley 1993). All these dimensions or spaces must be rendered known and articulated before they can be managed (Townley 1993). Furthermore, as Rose (1999) postulates, these are connected to particular institutions, which become their sites, i.e. pragmatic fields of application (such as a prison, mental hospital, medical practice, educational institution, or indeed workplace). Thus knowledge is legitimized, and truth accredited by experts and authorities in their pre-eminent institutional sites and subject positions. Researchers have applied the genealogical method in order to study the history of management thought, by emphasizing that it is possible to study the history of management and organizations without creating new celebratory business narratives (Rowlinson et al. 2009).

In the history of organization and management practices, scientific management is perhaps the best-known example of the attempt to govern the workplace systematically, especially by seeing the professional engineer as an ideal professional manager (Burrell 1992; Burrell 2000; Miller & Rose 2008). However, the idea of a "calculable individual" may come from numerous sites, such as schools, asylums, courtrooms and military organizations (Miller & Rose 2008, Foucault 1977, 1973, 2003).

In governmentality studies, Foucault is interested in how governments form themselves and their objectives (Foucault 2007, 1-3). His view is connected to the rise of administrative society, in which power is dispersed among many actors and institutions in societies (Foucault 2007, 311-316). Moreover, in his lectures, Foucault connected the rise of governmentality to the idea of biopolitics (Foucault 2007, 1). In biopolitics, individual beings are seen and controlled as a population, and as the means used for population control.

Biopolitical measures can be found, for instance, in a government's attempt to increase fertility rates (Foucault 2007, 347-357).

As Miller & Rose (2008) point out, from the 1990s onwards, many studies have been conducted that aim to analyse society in terms of governmentality. These studies have examined, for instance, the emergence of social insurance (Defert 1991; Ewald 1986), education (Hunter 1994), accounting (Hopwood & Miller 1994; Power 1994), crime control (O'Malley 1992), insecurity and poverty (Dean 1991), medicine, psychiatry, the regulation of health (Castel et al. 1982; Miller & Rose 1986; Osborne 1993), child abuse and sexual offenses (Bell 1993), the regulation of unemployment (Walters 1994), and new social strategies of empowerment (Baistow 1995).

In his late works, Foucault (1990, 1992, 1997a; 1997b; 1997c) was particularly interested in analysing the forms of resistance which enable the subject to resist current power formations. In this phase, Foucault sees human beings as having a more active role compared, for instance, to subjects under disciplinary power. He also emphasizes that subjects are able to control themselves using a variety of techniques and forms of resistance (Allen 2000). It should be noted that in these works, Foucault placed "self" as the focus of his study, rather than "subject". This highlights the active role of a human being that Foucault emphasizes in his late writings (see Foucault 1997a; 1997b; 1997c). This shift does not mean, however, that Foucault rejected the theme of subjectivity altogether. Although Foucault speaks of a "self" rather than a "subject", it appears that the notion of self-constituting oneself presupposes some conception of a thinking subject, who is capable of reflecting the kind of self s/he wants to be (Allen 2000). This view is closely interconnected with Foucault's desire to see the self as a work of art. In his later works, he examined how it was possible to minimize the effects of domination and to attain freedom within different regimes of power (O'Leary 2002). The subject essentially recognizes him/herself as someone who can actively work upon the self and on his or her own subjectivity. In particular, 'technologies of the self' allow individuals to

create new modes of being that are distinct from those imposed by the workings of power regimes (Starkey & Hatchuel 2002).

Moreover, in terms of power, in his late works, Foucault shifted his focus from the examination of power to that of resistance and specific techniques by which it is possible for an individual to resist power. Foucault continued to hold onto his opinion that a human being was essentially attached to his/her surroundings. He pointed out that we use different systems in order to understand ourselves (Foucault 1997b). According to him, production technologies permit us to produce, manipulate and transform things, and technologies of sign systems permit us to use symbols, signs, signification and meanings (Foucault 1997b).

Technologies of power also determine how individuals are conducted, and they also guide individuals to certain ends, and objectivize the subject (Foucault 1997b, 225). Lastly, there are technologies of the self, which "permit individuals to effect by their own means, or with the help of others, a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immorality' (ibid.)

The notion of technologies of the self points out that human beings are to some extent able to transform themselves within the existing field of power relations. "It should […] be noted that power relations are possible only insofar as the subjects are free", Foucault (1997c, 292) remarked. In his late period, Foucault considered a subject as able to resist power, since he expressed that in order for power relations to come into play, both sides must express at least a certain degree of freedom (ibid). This idea is linked with Foucault's emphasis that power is essentially relational in character (Foucault 1997c, 291). Around this time, Foucault also emphasized that individuals are able to shape themselves with the help of various practices of self-government, and these practices help individuals to resist the existing forms of domination and discipline (Starkey & Hatchuel 2002, 653). As Knights (2002, 583) points out, in recent decades there has been a growing interest in studying the forms of

resistance within work organizations, seeking alternative ways for a community or project to overthrow the system (see e.g. Castells 1997), and on the other hand, analysing how work within an organization can erode the workers' character and self-identity even going so far as to suggest that the best possible form of resistance is the subjects' total escape from the work organization (see e.g. Collinson 1992).

According to the Foucauldian stance, it is essential to study ethics as a form of practices, i.e. what managers and workers actually do in their everyday activities (Clegg et al. 2007; Starkey & Hatchuel 2002). This viewpoint is very similar to the idea which Foucault expressed. He pointed out that in order to understand subjectivity, it was crucial to study practices: "[I]t is not enough to say that the subject is constituted in a symbolic system. […] It is constituted in real practices – historically analyzable practices" (Foucault 1997a, 277). Thus study ethics should not, according to Foucault, begin by an attempt to find some kind of ideal set of values which human beings take as a basis for their actions, but should instead emphasize that ethical subjectivity is formed only through individuals' everyday actions and practices.

However, it is not possible to examine the notion of the subject without taking into account the Foucauldian understanding of power. In his works, Foucault emphasized that he studied power mainly in order to understand and analyse various issues that it has an effect on. Most importantly, this meant that he was concerned with the formation of subjectivity: "Thus, it is not power, but the subject that is the general theme of my research", he underlined (Foucault 2000e, 327). Foucault emphasized that power is essentially relational, and that it is apparent only when it is exercised (Townley 1993). As a consequence, the main use and importance of power is shown by its effects, and especially by the way it forms and transforms individual subjects. Moreover, Foucault uses the notions of discourses, and the regimes of power/knowledge to demonstrate that power is a network which includes everyone (Feldman 1997). The Foucauldian view that power operates but cannot be owned has

implications for researching power in organizations. The focus shifts from questions like 'Who uses the power?' and 'Through what formal channels?' to examining the ways in which power operates in everyday organizational routines, is spoken about in everyday discourses, and is reproduced and exercised by the subjects over others and themselves.

DISCUSSION: CURRENT TRENDS IN FOUCAULDIAN ORGANIZATIONAL RESEARCH

How have Foucault's conceptualizations of power and subject recently been used in organization studies, and what might be interesting avenues for future research? We conducted literature searches on in order to obtain an overview of the recent trends in this area. Thus, our purpose was to obtain an overview of the recent trends, rather than to conduct a systematic review.

We explored international journal articles that had been published on Foucault and organizations between the years 2000 and 2009. We conducted our initial literature search in October 2010 using Thomson Reuters' *ISI Web of Science,* Ebsco Business Source Premiere and Scopus. We searched for journal articles that had (either in the title or abstract) the term Foucault OR Foucauldian along with one or more of the following terms: organization, business, firm, OR management. This initial search yielded 344 results. We then narrowed them down by eliminating articles that were closer to other disciplines than organization studies, such as those dealing with sociology, politics or philosophy. We followed a similar strategy and procedure with the Ebsco Business Source Premiere and Scopus in order to find journal articles that were not listed in our initial query. Thus we were finally able to narrow our list down to contain 113 articles that either analysed the contribution of Foucault to organization studies or applied Foucault to the study of organizations.

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First, we read summaries of these articles, and categorized them according to our initial categorization according to Foucault's different phases. We, then, examined which concepts of Foucault's work the authors *referred* to most in their articles and read through the article text. As discussed in the previous chapter, we divided these articles into four different categories according to Foucault's different phases: 1) *Archaeology*, which contains the topics of power/knowledge, discourses, and discourse analysis; 2) *Genealogy*, which contains the general reference to Foucauldian power along with the themes of surveillance, discipline, and disciplinary power; 3) *Aesthetic/ethical*, which includes the themes of ethical subject, technologies of the self and care of the self, 4) *Governmentality*, which refers to the concept of governmentality along with administration of population and biopolitics. (See also Table 1).

In most of the cases, it was fairly easy to say what tenets of Foucault's work the authors used in their study. A typical example of this would be an article analysing urban surveillance, social disorder and CCTV (see Hier 2004). If the studied topic is surveillance, it is easily understood why the authors focus most on Foucault's genealogical works, and not, say, on his discussion on technologies of the self. However, not all cases were as straightforward as this, and we often had to read through the article and its references again. If after this it was still not possible to place texts into only one category, we classified the article as belonging to both relevant categories. However, this was rare; of 113 articles we classified only five that belonged to more than one category. These were: Ezzamel and Willmott 2008; Hudson 2004; Jeacle and Walsh 2002; Pandian 2008; and Seeck and Kantola 2009. In addition to these articles, several others reviewed Foucault's contribution to the study of organizations on a general level. We placed these articles into the 'Review and similar articles' category. Table 2 shows the summary of these results.

(Insert Table 2 about here)

Thus we analysed the distribution of these articles into the different phases of Foucault's work.

(Insert Graph 1 about here)

As illustrated in Graph 1, most of the articles that analyse organizations and management from a Foucauldian perspective, refer mainly to Foucault's genealogical period works. In 2002, David Knights argued that Foucauldian analysis in organizations had concentrated on the ideas expressed in *Discipline and Punish* (see Knights 2002, 590). The concept that most organizational researchers have been interested in when drawing on Foucault is power, disciplinary power in particular. Our data suggests that this idea is still prevalent in Foucauldian organizational research. In over one third of the articles (36%), authors referred to themes expressed in Foucault's genealogical works. However, another topic that has gained popularity is the use of the concept of governmentality, as roughly over one third (31%) used this concept for their analysis. This denotes a significant change since Knights' analysis (2002).

Knights (2002, 590) believes that organizational researchers are most interested in Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* because of the theme of surveillance. Surveillance echoes the ideas of institutional gaze and monitoring, both of which have many similarities with the way in which employees are controlled at work (Knights 2002, 590). In our data set, most of the articles dealing with Foucault's genealogical works, the topics of discipline and disciplinary power, were indeed present. Several articles discussed discipline and surveillance in organizations (see e.g. Bergstrom et al. 2009; Dalgliesh 2009; Iedema et al. 2006; Seeck & Kantola 2009). This might indicate that in the last decades, it has been hard for researchers to study surveillance or discipline without referring at least partially to Foucault's work.

Recently, however, Foucauldian views on discipline have been challenged by, for instance, the Deleuzian interpretation (see Caluya 2010).

Knights (2002, 590) suggests that as the researchers have focused on discipline and surveillance, the topics Foucault expressed in archaeological and aesthetic/ethical writings have been largely neglected. Our study indicates, however, that in the last ten years, many researchers have analysed organizations and management in terms of Foucauldian archaeology and aesthetic/ethical writings. From archaeological writings, the Foucauldian notion of discourses in particular has enjoyed steady popularity (see e.g. Dick & Cassell 2002; Bergstrom & Knights 2006; Jack & Lorbiecki 2007; Ezzamel & Willmott 2008). We believe that Foucauldian discourse analysis will continue to receive academic interest in the following years, as it is a promising topic that encourages researchers to make new academic openings (see e.g. Messner et al. 2008; Ezzamel & Willmott 2008; Vaara et al. 2010).

As we can see from Graph 1, governmentality studies have been the object of a great deal of interest in the field of studies on organization and management. To some extent, the studies on governmentality are, however, a separate field from other Foucauldian tenets. It must also be noted that although Foucault may have started the discussion on governmentality, today's research has expanded way beyond Foucault's ideas (see e.g. Burchell et al. 1991; Dean 1999; Miller & Rose 2008).

We also examined the way in which the subject (subjectivity) is portrayed in these articles. In the articles drawing on Foucault's archaeological writings, not much room is given to the idea of the subject (subjectivity). This is understandable, as Foucault only developed these ideas later in his genealogical works. In the genealogical works, he assessed in greater detail how specific discursive practices and power/knowledge regimes shape the way in which one relates to one's self and to others. These topics are discussed in the articles that draw on Foucault's genealogical writings. Interestingly, empirical studies were conducted most often when (the article was) drawing on Foucault's genealogical writings. Empirical

genealogical analysis has been conducted on a variety of topics, such as health care (Forbat et al. 2009), disciplinary technologies in knowledge-intensive work (Bergström et al. 2009) and educational ranking systems (Sauder & Espeland, 2009). These works often emphasize that there is a tight connection between certain organizational practices and the way in which human beings see themselves as a subject. A rather typical example is a study by Sauder and Espeland (2009), in which they note that educational ranking systems push participants to internalize pressures and to become self-disciplined. At the same time, these educational rankings also create resistance in organizations and encourage officials to manipulate the results (Sauder & Espeland 2009). These ideas are in line with the Foucauldian genealogical understanding of subject. First, in these works, Foucault highlights that subjects are not controlled by only external forces, but that power is often internalized. Second, they point out that subjects are not mere passive participants in this field of power relations, but active participants, contributors even. However, our study indicates that organizational theorists have paid more attention to the Foucauldian concept of power than the subject (or subjectivity). In the cases in which organizational researchers study subjectivity, they do this by referring to Foucault's later writings.

We found 14 articles that examined management and organizations in terms of Foucauldian ethics. Many of them were quite theoretical in their approach, and examined the contribution of Foucault's ethics to organizations in general (see e.g. Barratt 2008; Crane et al. 2008; Starkey & Hatchuel 2002). However, a few empirical studies were also published, analysing, for example, the professional identity of AFL footballers (Kelly & Hickey 2008), the workplace health and fitness programme of a large Information Technology (IT) organization (Kelly et al. 2007) and psychological technologies at Danish workplaces (Triantafillou 2003). These articles indicate that researchers often draw on Foucault's later writings when they wish to examine individuals rather than the collective mechanisms of which they are a part.

CONCLUSIONS AND AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In this paper, we have assessed the recent contribution of Michel Foucault to the study of power and subject in organizations. First, we theoretically examined Foucault's thinking by dividing his works into archaeological, genealogical and aesthetic/ethical phases. We then conducted a review of 113 international journal articles from between the years 2000 and 2009 in order to obtain an overview of the phases of Foucault's thinking that are prevalent in current organization studies. We find that recent academic studies drawing on Foucault are increasingly leaning towards Foucault's writings on governmentality, as well as on his genealogical works, which have sustained their popularity.

Firstly, we note that at the beginning of the decade, several general reviews analysed the works of Foucault. Second, we see that during the studied time period (2000-2009), a growing number of articles has been published referring to a specific topic in Foucault's works. The vast number of these articles shows that Foucault's ideas on discourse analysis, disciplinary power, and governmentality have become particularly popular topics in organization studies. Third, the amount of Foucauldian analysis has grown over the years, and researchers have focused more on using and advancing only a particular concept. Our research indicates that studies on governmentality have been particularly popular in the realm of organizational research in the first decade of the twenty-first century. We believe that our study outlines some interesting avenues for future research.

As shown in this paper, governmentality studies have undergone the greatest increase in academic interest. This is probably because they have been influenced in the past two decades by several well-established researchers such as Nikolas Rose (1999), Mitchell Dean (1998), Graham Burchell (1988; 1992) and Peter Miller. Our study also indicates that Foucault's writings in his aesthetic/ethical period have not gained as much interest as

genealogy or governmentality. To some extent, however, governmentality and Foucault's aesthetic/ethical writings are two sides of the same coin: for instance, according to Foucault, techniques of the self are ways for human beings to resist the existing power formations in administrative societies (see Foucault 1997b). We believe it would be interesting to combine some ideas of governmentality and Foucault's aesthetic/ethical thinking (see also Ibarra-Colado et al. 2006). This idea of combining some ideas of governmentality and Foucault's aesthetic/ethical thinking is also supported by a practical matter – Foucault's late lectures given in the 1980s have only recently been edited and translated into English (see e.g. Foucault 2010).

We believe that Ibarra-Colado, Clegg, Rhodes and Kornberger (2006) provide a good example of how governmentality studies can be combined with Foucault's ethical writings. In their article, they provide some tools for assessing organizational practices in terms of Foucauldian ethics. According to them, there are four ways by which it is possible to study ethical subjectivity according to the Foucauldian perspective. Firstly, through ethical substance; the aspects of organizational behaviour that are considered to be relevant from the ethical perspective (Ibarra-Colado et al. 2006, 48; Foucault 1997a, 114). Secondly, the study should include an analysis of the mode of subjectification; how organization members establish their relationships with various ethical standards, rules and obligations (Ibarra-Colado et al. 2006, 48; Foucault 1997a, 264). Thirdly, by examining practices of the self, it is possible to study how people in the organization act in order to be considered by themselves, and by others, as ethical (Ibarra-Colado et al. 2006, 48; Foucault 1997a, 265). These practices of the self are models which an individual subject finds in his/her culture, but which at the same time are imposed upon him/her by the surrounding culture, society and his/her social group (Foucault 1997c, 291). Lastly, the study of aspirations of the self examines the ideal ethical agent, the idealized 'self' that people in organizations aspire to (Ibarra-Colado et al. 2006, 48; Foucault 1997a, 265).

Our study also indicates that studies drawing on governmentality have largely concentrated on examining organizations from a national viewpoint (e.g. Gilbert & Powell 2010; Lin 2009; Murray 2009). We believe that applying the combination of ethics and governmentality empirically in order to understand the governance of moral subjects within states as well as through 'international alliances' such as the European Union, and transnational organizations such as WHO, the World bank, or the United Nations, would be an interesting avenue for future research. This would allow us to examine the extent to which our moral ethics and subjectivities are drawn from transnational organizations as opposed to nations in today's globalized era. We believe that it would be important to study how different conceptions of ethical subjects compete, are contested, and are disseminated globally (see also Banerjee et al. 2009) also in Foucauldian terms, and that his conceptions of ethics, on the one hand, and governmentality, on the other would be useful in such research.

Moreover, the Foucauldian analysis has to also be aware of the changing conditions of the organization of work, due, for instance, to the rise of post-bureaucratic organizational forms (see Casey 2002, 2004).

Longitudinal historical analyses are still largely lacking from Foucauldian organizational research. Most of the organizational theorists apply Foucauldian methodology mainly to study current phenomena, without historical analysis as Rowlinson et al. (2009) have succinctly pointed out. We believe that historical analyses are necessary in order to understand why organizations and organizational practices have developed into a particular form. According to our study, though Foucault's ideas on discourse seem to enjoy continuing interest among organizational researchers, they have not become the most popular study theme. After Foucault's death in 1984, this area has been developed further by many researchers such as Ernesto Laclau (Grant et al. 2009). We believe that further theoretical contributions to discourse analysis could make it easier to conduct empirical studies on organizational practices.
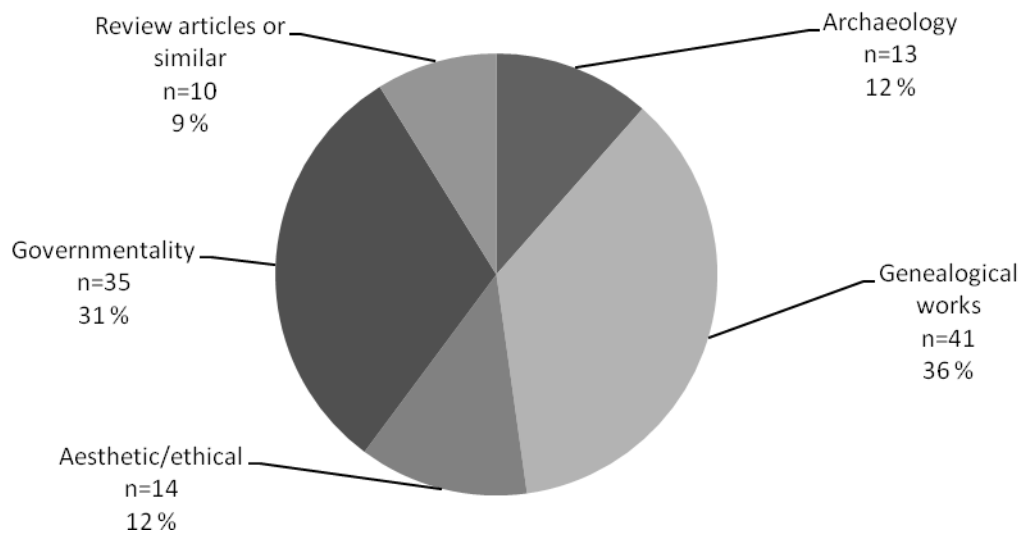
TABLES AND GRAPHS

Table 1 – Foucault's main concepts during his different intellectual phases

	Main concepts	*Subjectivity*	*Power*
Archaeological works	Discourses, knowledge/power	Subject detached (almost determined) from his/her surroundings.	Power and discourses connected to each other; power/knowledge regimes. Somewhat repressive view of power.
Genealogical works	Practices, disciplinary and pastoral power	Different practices and ways of analysing strongly affect the way(s) in which a human being perceives him/herself.	Institutions often apply disciplinary or pastoral power. Idea of positive power: power does not only repress but also produces.
Ethical/aesthetical works	Care of the self; technologies of the self; work of life as an art	Individual is viewed more as a "self" than a "subject".	Individual can resist existing power relations with the help of technologies of the self.
Governmentality	Administration, population, biopolitics.	Governed subjects are seen more as a population than individual beings.	Power relations are found everywhere in society, and various institutions & authorities exercise power over the population.

Table 2 – Journal articles on Foucauldian organizational research 2000-2009

	Archaeology	Genealogical works	Aesthetic/ ethical works	Governmentality	Review articles or similar
2000	2 Topp, W; Xu, Q;	1 Munro, I	0	0	1 Chan, A
2001	0	1 Gilgan, M; Wilson, PM	0	5 Joyce, P; Gilgan, M; Higgins, V; Light, DW; Light, DW; Styhre, A	0
2002	1 Dick, P & Cassell, C	2 Hodgson, D; Jeacle, I & Walsh, EJ	3 Chan, A & Garrick, J; Starkey, K & Hatchuel, A; Wray-Bliss, E	5 Clegg, SR et al.; Flynn, R; Holmes, D & Gastaldo, D; Jeacle, I & Walsh, EJ; Robins, S	5 Barratt, E; Carter et al.; Knights, D; Rowlinson, M & Carter, C; Townley, B
2003	0	3 Bell, E & Taylor, S; Hardy, C; Hatcher, C	1 Triantafillou, P	3 Dent, M; Dupont, D & Pearce, F; Raco, M	1 Wray-Bliss, E
2004	1 Hudson, K	5 Blackford, H; Casey, R & Allen, C; Davey, CL; Hier, SP; Hudson, K	0	2 Flint, J Quaghebeur, K et al.	1 Barratt, E
2005	0	4 Hoobler, JM; Motion, J; Riad, S; Weiss, RM	2 Sewell, G; Sewell, G	3 Fergus, AHT & Rowney, JIA; Fyfe, NR; Gilbert, TP; Swyngedouw, E	0
2006	1 Bergstrom, A & Knights, D	7 Anderson, G; Clegg, SR; Dick, P; Hyde, R; Fournier, V; Iedema, R et al.; Kosmala, K & Herrbach, O; Speed, S & Luker, KA	3 Bicknell, M & Liefooghe, A; Everett, J et al.; Ibarra-Colado, E et al.	0	0
2007	3 Jack, G & Lorbiecki, A; Quist, J et al.	5 Davies, B & Allen, D; Gupta, JA; Hofreiter, R; Munro, I & Randall, J; Skalen, P & Fougere, M	1 Kelly, P et al.	4 Aradau, C & Van Munster, R; Gouldson, A & Bebbington, J; Gupta, JA; Higgins, W & Hallstrom, KT	1 Caldwell, R
2008	5 Backlund, J & Werr, A; Carey, M; Elmes, M & Frame, B; Ezzamel, M & Willmott, H; Messner, M et al.	1 Ezzamel, M & Willmott, H;	4 Barratt, E; Crane, A et al.; Kelly, P & Hickey, C;	6 Fougner, T; Gillies, D; Kupfer, A; Pandian, A; Schee, CV; Zwick, D	1 Carter C
2009	0	12 Ahonen, P & Tienari, J; Bergstrom, O et al.; Chikudate, N; Dalgliesh, B; Forbat, L et al.; Grant, JG & Cadell, S; Lin, A; Maravelias, C; Sauder, M & Espeland, WN; Seeck, H & Kantola, A	0	7 McKee, K; Newstead, C; Nicholls, DA et al.; Pickard, S; Rinfret, S; Seeck, H & Kantola, A; Thanem, T	0
Total	13	41	14	35	10
					113

Graph 1 – Distribution of Foucauldian organizational research articles according to Foucault's intellectual phases

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i There are, however, some problems in this division of Foucault's work into archaeological, genealogical and aesthetic/ethical phases. The most central of these is the placing of *Madness and Civilization* (originally published in French 1961) into this division, since although the book is written during Foucault's archaeological phase, it deals with dividing practices such as his genealogical works (McLaren 2002, 178). It is also worth noting that Foucault wrote actively throughout his career, *Dits et écrits*, Foucault's collected essays and articles in French, contains almost 4 000 pages (ibid). As a consequence, it is very difficult to class each aspect of his work under these three categories.