Genealogy and Subjectivity

Martin Saar

Introduction: Three Dimensions of Genealogy

In philosophy, conceptual difficulties are sometimes invisible in the bright light of the obvious. Michel Foucault's well-known appropriation of Nietzsche's concept of genealogy may give rise to few objections and doubts in certain circles and theoretical contexts. But the new use of an older concept may pose more problems than it can solve, especially when the very terms and conditions of its adoption are neglected. So sometimes the specific power of a concept is lost in its excessive and unquestioned circulation. In the case of genealogy this situation is made even more difficult by the fact that Foucault himself in his famous Nietzsche essay from 1971, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History', apparently subscribed to this concept without reservations and modifications whereas it is far from being a neutral and easy notion.[1] But the use of the concept in Nietzsche is already complex and not easy to understand and his use of it varies throughout his texts. Commentators on his work especially during the last ten years have tried to elucidate this problem and have proposed a variety of interpretative suggestions but none of them has systematically and reconstructively put an end to the debate. But the sense that genealogy is a central category in Nietzsche's works persists. A perfectly analogous situation holds true for Foucault; everyone is convinced of the operative function of genealogy for his critical methodology but none of the suggested reconstructions seems convincing enough to suppress alternative interpretations.[2]

What, then, for Foucault, is genealogy? It would be easy to quote several phrases and quasi-definitions from Foucault that show that his use of the concept is rather loose and varies quite remarkably.[3] At times, Foucault uses the term as a specific methodological term or title for a critical historical-philosophical project (namely his own), in other passages it is used rather broadly and synonymously with 'history' or 'genesis'. And if the survey includes the books he himself called genealogical, i.e. mainly *Discipline and Punish* and *The History of Sexuality: Vol. 1*, and some of the shorter texts of his 'middle' period (ca. 1970–1976/77), this ambiguity is not resolved here either. Even the many interviews centering on methodological questions in which Foucault tries to outline his historical and critical method, as for example the important interview with Dreyfus and Rabinow from 1983, 'The Genealogy of Ethics', are caught up in this oscillation. For Foucault himself, it seems, genealogy comprises several conceptual elements and it includes various theoretical and practical gestures, and he seemed not to be embarrassed about this fact. So, whatever genealogy turns out to 'really' be, it

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seems to be a multiple or differentiated concept or a multi-layered conceptual practice.

Every reconstructive and systematic interpretation of genealogy has to identify a conceptual core and has to differentiate between major and minor traits, even if it unifies the concept against the explicit and variable *façons de parler* of Nietzsche and Foucault themselves. In the following I will try to develop some suggestions towards an interpretation of genealogy that is based on two main ideas. First, it is important to identify three different, but interwoven aspects or levels of genealogy. Genealogy – in Nietzsche and Foucault – consists of an interlocking ensemble of these three levels, and it is important not to lose sight of any of them, even when for the sake of highlighting a certain element, they can be discussed on their own terms. These three aspects are: genealogy should be understood as a mode of writing history or a historical method; it should be seen as a mode of evaluation, i.e. as critique; and it should be grasped as a textual practice or a style specific for a genre. Second, on all of these three levels, there is a decisive and constitutive relation between genealogy and subjectivity or a 'self' that comes into play in different ways and forms. As the story goes, Foucault played a notorious role in the discussion around anti-humanism and a radical critique of the subject during the second half of the 1960s, but he nevertheless near the end of his life said (or confessed) that the question of the subject was always at the 'center' of his theoretical efforts.[4] However one may view this retrospective *mise au point* in general, I will try to argue that for the genealogical elements in his works this is indeed the case.

Genealogy in an interesting and constitutive way always does concern subjects or selves, i.e. something that is concerned about itself in its very being (to paraphrase Heidegger's quasi-definition of *Dasein*). Genealogy always deals with relation to self and with (however abstract) reflexivity. In opposition to other attempts to reconstruct the very project of genealogy I therefore stress a triple relation between genealogy and the subject and, accordingly, I will discuss genealogy in the following as history (§I), as critique (§II), and as a kind of writing (§III).

I. Genealogy as History or Historical Method – Questions of Method

Since Nietzsche introduced the term 'genealogy' into philosophical discourse, the most obvious thing to say about it is that it is a way of writing history. Nietzsche's interest in genetic and evolutionary reflection on the 'origin of morality' in the middle of the 1880s was born out of an interest in a potentially critical historicization of something that until then wasn't historicized, namely moral attitudes and values, ideals, norms and institutionalized modes of thinking and acting. A 'genealogy of morality' worthy of its name for Nietzsche is a thoroughly historical version of a radical critique of morality; the other two he elaborated earlier are a psychological and a linguistic critique. Genealogical motifs therefore are not restricted to his later works that go under this title; they can also be found every-

where where with a critical intention something – by demystifying, denaturalizing, and desubstantializing – is historicized. The direction of Nietzsche's programmatically so-called genealogical works such as *Beyond Good and Evil* and *The Genealogy of Morals* is already laid out or contained in his second *Untimely Meditation* with the revealing title *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life*; for this reason Foucault in his Nietzsche essay could restrict himself more or less exclusively to this text in order to develop his own understanding of Nietzsche's critical impetus and in order to develop the elements which were most interesting to him.[5] But, of course, also almost all of Foucault's own books from the early *Madness and Civilization* on (which was originally called *Folie et déraison*, but later *Histoire de la folie*) excluding the (arguably insignificant) exception of *The Archaeology of Knowledge* are eminently historical books. The method at work in *The Order of Things* is a historical analysis of discourse, the theses on power in *Discipline and Punish* are historical claims, and the shocking effect of *History of Sexuality: Vol. 1* comes from its historical narrative spanning from the 18th and 19th century to our very present, according to which our contemporary concepts of repression and emancipation can and should be seen as intimately linked to a specific type of subjectivizing power.

What exactly is historicized by a genealogy, what are its objects? It historicizes things that had no significant history before; the field of the historical is expanded (cf. Veyne 1978). Nietzsche subjects the allegedly eternal human or moral truths to historical contextualization. Foucault historicizes the allegedly natural or social 'facts', discursive institutions and (following Georges Canguilhem) the normative-epistemic oppositions that govern the differences between the 'normal' and the 'pathological' or the conventions that rule out what falls outside the intelligible, diagnosable, and controllable.[6] This revealing of historical shifts and therefore the variability of epistemic conventions and social norms is initially neutral and in a certain sense 'positivist', but revealing contingency can never be fully neutral.[7]

The early theories of discourse and 'episteme' as well as the later 'analytic of power' are historical exercises. But historicization is not an end in itself and its objects are not irrelevant; it can only develop its force when it turns to objects whose 'meaning' and validity is affected by revealing their historicity. As a first step this just means that present and actual validities and (self-) conceptions have to be – at least potentially – changed. The recounting of the genealogical prehistory of medical concepts in *The Birth of the Clinic* aims at the heart of 'our', i.e. present idea and practice and institutionalization of medicine; *Discipline and Punish* is an indirect attack on 'our' penal system; and *History of Sexuality: Vol. 1* affects our urge for liberation and self-expression by exposing the historical sources and the emergence of this very vocabulary of emancipation. This is the sense of Foucault's well-known formula about his histories being 'histories of the present'. These histories become critical because they expose the historical conditions of our very being. Following the archaeological and genealogical assumptions he laid out in his historical books, the present constitution and intelligibility of the human is affected by the very regimes of truth (or 'episteme') and power (or what Foucault calls 'dispositives' or apparatuses of power) that have brought

them about. It was Foucault's spectacular (and, roughly put, Heideggerian) thesis in *The Order of Things* that this constitution is a rather recent phenomenon, and that man is a rather 'recent invention'.[8] But this thought can be formulated more simply: Foucault claims that epistemic frames and the conditions of power shape and structure the ways in which individuals understand and express themselves, relate to themselves, but also how they can be seen, described and counted on by others. To claim that the subject was always at the 'center' of his works for Foucault therefore means that even the fundamental and radical critique of the subject was part of a redescription or reconceptualization of subjectivity (and never its abandonment). The histories of the discourses and forms of power framing and shaping subjectivities were chapters in the history of the constitution of modern 'man' (or humanity) who has a complex but stable intelligibility (medical, psychological, socio-moral, etc.).

A first answer to the question 'what is genealogy?' can therefore be given: it is a form of writing history. It is a specific writing of history of certain objects. This historiography accounts for 'our' history, i.e. the processes of constitution and construction of present morality, mentality, or 'soul' in all its discontinuities, functional transformations, and contingencies. To account for these stories is the task of an 'other' writing of history called genealogy. So, on the first level, it is a different and radicalized historicism of the self.[9]

II. Genealogy as Critique or Evaluation – Questions of Value

But even if there is a merely methodological level of historicization, its intention and aim is, as I said, certainly not purely neutral. The terms contingency and denaturalization already give an indication of the critical and evaluative dimension. Only objects whose internal structure or whose meaning is altered by historicity are proper objects of genealogies. But does this already prefigure the question of their value or worth? Wouldn't this kind of reasoning fall prey to the naturalistic fallacy?

Again, looking back to Nietzsche proves helpful. In the preface to the *Genealogy of Morals*, commenting on the attitude underlying his earlier works and especially *Human, All Too Human*, he confesses: 'Even at that time my real concern was something much more important than hypothesis-mongering, whether my own or other people's, on the origin of morality (or more precisely, the latter concerned me only for the sake of a goal to which it was only one means among many). What was at stake for me was the *value* of morality.'[10] Genealogical histories pose the questions of value and clear the ground for questions of value because only the degrees of freedom opened up by revealing historical variability and contingency make these questions possible. All substantializing religious, moral or (in the dogmatic sense) scientific talk about the 'essence' of man, or madness (as attacked in *Madness and Civilization*), or of the allegedly 'eternal' meaning of punishment (as denounced in the second part of the *Genealogy of Morals*) means questions of value are excluded.

But the fact that whatever is as it is could also be otherwise doesn't devalue what is as it is *tout court*. Something else has to be said and done about it. For Nietzsche, the questions of value interestingly already seem to be answered the moment they are posed. When you look closely at the kind of 'stories' he gives, you'll see that the revelation of contingency (it could have happened and developed otherwise) almost always already turns into evaluative, value-bearing descriptions: the cultural evolutions in question are processes of violation and subjection, of struggles between strength and intellect, between brutality and deceit. The grand tropes and figures are in a way innocently and directly normative: the opposition between the 'weak' and the 'strong' or of the 'slave revolt' in morality, the pessimistic and proto-Freudian description of the emergence of culture as the renunciation of drives and the 'taming' of wild man, and the emergence of modern societies as the destruction of 'great' individualities. The entire description and vocabulary are fed by a pathos and a contempt that have already become part of the very perception and representation of these cultural and historical processes. In other words, in a rather puzzling way the description and representation, for Nietzsche, already *are* the however implicit evaluations.

The semantic shift that is called for in genealogical writing from a naive and unquestioned moral talk (with its terms 'good' and 'evil', 'guilt', 'responsibility', etc.) toward a cold anthropological-descriptive language is not a search for alternative normative foundations nor a plea for more or other 'sources' of morality than acknowledged before. This is a longing that is obviously seen as fundamentally dogmatic and veiling other hidden motivations by both Nietzsche and Foucault. What they try is to counter the moral perspective with a different one.[11] The empirical and (in a way) naturalistic description of individual suffering, weakness and submission is a protestation against their moralistic exploitation. On the other hand, Nietzsche himself sometimes seems to be trapped in his (in itself rather exploitable) language in a quite coarse and unreflected way.

Foucault is more cautious in this respect and – maybe with the exception of *Madness and Civilization*[12] – he seems to achieve his aims without a naturalistic counter-vocabulary. But the entire enterprise of an 'analytics of power' that, as Foucault says, he doesn't want to find confused with a 'theory of power' (cf. Foucault 1980: ch. IV.2) is nothing else than a rather sophisticated descriptive vocabulary. Its function lies in describing social phenomena to reveal and signify their malleability and instrumentalizablity and in constructing legible constellations between relations of force and power on the one hand, and norms, facts and systems of belief and knowledge on the other.[13] Reading or deciphering these constellations is defamiliarizing and performative. It constructs and enacts textually the hidden violence behind the only allegedly natural state of certain social and historical arrangements. This mechanism is as obvious as it is implicit; for this reason only philosophers (and only much later) can actually be surprised by the fact that *Discipline and Punish* and, to a lesser degree, *History of Sexuality: Vol. 1*, were in their time immediately read and understood as contributions to a fundamental critique of present life and institutions.

It is clear that seen from a more classical point of view there are many deep

philosophical problems with such an enterprise. And these problems were exemplarily highlighted during the long-standing critical discussion of Foucault's work among the later representatives of the Frankfurt School. What are the standards and criteria of a critical devaluation of certain forms and mechanisms of power? When is power to be fought, or, to put it as elegantly as Nancy Fraser: why resist?[14] These questions haven't been answered even after more than 20 years of discussion. But obviously Foucault himself had no general answers for them and maybe didn't even look for them. Maybe at least in this question he was, to a certain degree, a 'post-modern' philosopher (a term he is said to have despised) who is simply the wrong type of theorist to ask these questions. But I want to at least indicate a different perspective or direction in which I think the problem of a mode of critique and its standards should be asked and formulated, which may shed some light on the question of why genealogical accounts evidently possess an enormous normative potential without laying out or constructing normative foundations.

All genealogies have in common a structural reflexivity, a self-implication in the fact that whoever enacts a genealogical criticism does this by criticizing aspects and elements, maybe even 'images', metaphors, patterns of interpretation or 'ideologies' of his or her own culture or background. A genealogical account can only be given of your own culture, your milieu, your family, your *genus*.[15] Genealogical criticism is therefore always self-criticism; and this seems to be one of Foucault's implicit objections to ideology critique in the neomarxist sense, on the basis that the more classical modes of social critique miss this point and try to take a view from the outside or from an allegedly anthropological neutral ground.[16] But this self-implication in every genealogical critique of a certain form of power comes from the very complicity and implicatedness with your 'own' culture and its power. For power to arise and be effective requires the participation of the subjects it acts on. Power can only exert its force in subjectivation and individualization when roles and norms are actively enacted, taken over, incorporated.[17] Doing genealogy then is: telling the subject the story of the powers working on him, telling it the story of its own becoming.

But in order to actually tell these stories to the one affected by it, an 'analytics' or a minimal, descriptive 'theory of power' is needed (even if Foucault didn't like the term). This is nothing but a set of premises, operative concepts and a set of more or less heuristic rules of application. But this 'theory' only realizes itself in concrete historical descriptions. In that it is 'local' or contextual, which is not to say non-generalizable nor relativist. Its applications are restricted to all the places, sites, and fields in which identities, subjectivities and reflexive categories are formed and constituted, i.e. where what Ian Hacking has called 'human kinds' emerge.[18] There is then, an intimate link, between the critical edge of genealogy and a certain historicist social constructivism. Histories of construction become critical when they expose power effects in the constitution of subjectivity, identity, and mentality, in other words, aspects of self.

A 'genealogical imperative' or a 'manual' for a genealogy could then be formulated as such: 'Tell me the story of the genesis and development of my

self-understanding (using the notion 'power' [or related notions, such as strategy, hegemony, or interest, subjection, submission, exploitation, etc.] in such a way that hearing you talk, I don't want to be as I thought I have to be, and that, hearing you talk, I realize that this isn't necessary'. In more classical terms: there is a conceptual itinerary from necessity via contingency to relative or hypothetical freedom as possibility. To see it and reach it there has to be a space cleared by a sense for the possible, a 'Möglichkeitssinn', as Robert Musil has put it. Genealogies open up this space. Critique, then, means creating a 'field of openings' (Brown 2001: 103), a sense for the non-necessary, i.e. for that which might be otherwise because it is as it is now only because a certain power is in play.[19]

The critical aim of genealogy does not consist in creating new or neutral norms but in installing a devaluating, delegitimizing vocabulary within genetic descriptions of existing norms and values. In the background of this lies the assumption that the subjectivities affected by norms only constitute themselves in a web of material and discursive practices and processes and that there is no neutral ground from which to evaluate and measure these incorporated norms. This theoretical assumption about concrete processes of subject constitution, i.e. a certain constructivism of the self, is the background of genealogical historicizations.

Maybe this is the point where it becomes important to distinguish between two broad options, between a (roughly put) 'analytical' and a 'poststructuralist' understanding of Foucault and genealogy. Whereas the first version tries to reveal contradictions or distortions in world-views and life-forms, the second, philosophically more ambitious, tries to reveal ontological effects. This leads to a concern with how bodies and subjectivities are constitutively dependent on discourse and power, and which technologies, institutions and norms produce effects of social inclusion/exclusion, intelligibility/invisibility, worthiness/depravity.[20] It is true and it has often been pointed out that this latter type of inquiry is rather ambitious and creates a whole set of methodological questions that go to the very heart of social ontology. And it is also true that one might be skeptical whether Foucault himself had enough theoretical resources to realize these objectives. This may be the reason why so many theorists who, in my understanding, practice something like a genealogical critique or similar enterprises have recourse to complementary theories or theorems, be they psychoanalytic (as in Judith Butler), materialist (as in Louis Althusser) or head-on ontological (as in Gilles Deleuze or Giorgio Agamben), or a combination of all these.

The risk of what I call the analytic version is that it gives up the level of constitution too quickly and neglects the deep implications for a theory of the subject that are part of the genealogical programme.[21] Both versions agree on a similar view of how to articulate the critical potential of genealogy. Genealogies project delegitimizing, denaturalizing perspectives on the processes of subject constitution and construction. But only the second version subscribes to a deep constructivism that not only tries to elucidate beliefs, self-understanding and agency but also the material or ontological processes governing how these come into being at all.

III. Genealogy as a Kind of Writing or Genre – Questions of Style

After reflecting on the object and the critical content of genealogy I want to turn to a third aspect. In opposition to several other proposals of how to reconstruct genealogy (and, I think, also in contrast to the suggestions made by Raymond Geuss and David Owen in their papers for this symposium), for me the question of form is decisive. In my view, every attempt to account for the functioning of genealogy as a critical method has to take this formal dimension into consideration. Even if there were a unitary answer to the question what kind of critique genealogy is, the question how is it practiced is not settled by answers to the former question. To take this aspect seriously means to claim that genealogy is an irreducible genre of critique, but this also means that genealogical criticism can only be exercised in a certain way. But, then, genealogies are *sui generis*, i.e. they follow the rules and conventions of a certain textual genre and they cannot be reduced to other forms of philosophical texts. On the contrary, they are stylistically more similar to other rather unusual and highly idiosyncratic works in which the encounter of the historical and the critical creates a unique combination of arguments and descriptions (as in the *Dialectics of Enlightenment*, some works of Walter Benjamin or even Max Weber, maybe also Georg Simmel and Sigmund Freud).[22]

The first formal characteristic is that genealogical accounts are highly rhetorical and irreducibly hyperbolic. Genealogies take their critical force from the dramatizing gesture, from the alarming and overpowering representation of scenarios of power; this trait has struck many readers of *Discipline and Punish* and *History of Sexuality: Vol. 1*, and it has sometimes been criticized as manipulative. The narrative or rhetorical tone of genealogies is in general tragic or (stylistically) catastrophic, in some cases even nostalgic.[23] The truly Nietzschean or Foucauldian genealogies are calculations and tales of cost and loss, not necessarily histories of decay.[24] Its theoretical elements are the theory of subject constitution discussed above and the concrete, highly local description of specific cases of 'powerful' subject construction. But the critique is only performed or enacted, it becomes an act, a performance of critique, only in the concrete act of description. There is, then, no genealogical critique outside this very form of representation. The combination of historicization, theories of power and the subject and a diagnosis of the present does not necessarily lead to such an critique; certain formal requirements obviously have to be fulfilled to achieve a certain effectiveness and plausibility that is not reducible to the truth-value of its propositions. This, of course, is an argument that has been made about other philosophical texts as well, most notably in the case of Wittgenstein (and David Owen has developed a plausible Wittgensteinian account of genealogy published in this symposium). But the only analogy I here want to draw from Stanley Cavell's famous statement that the writings of Wittgenstein cannot be reduced to the propositions they articulate, is the following thought: The 'truth' of genealogy, if it has one, is not one pertaining to the truth of its statements and set of propositions alone; the 'truth effect' these texts try to achieve only materializes in the fusion of certain historical hypotheses and a drastic and dramatizing mode of representation.[25]

This does not imply the devaluation of other, and formally more conventional and strictly sociological attempts to do quasi-Foucauldian critical social science (e.g., the highly successful and productive 'gouvernmentality studies'). All I mean to say is that without taking these formal aspects into account the effectiveness of Nietzsche's and Foucault's texts cannot be fully grasped. You cannot understand what *Discipline and Punish* as a text 'does', how it works, what it starts off. Genealogies are a specific kind of text and textual practice.

Their rhetorical-narrative tools are: hyperbole and exaggerating gesture, the theatrical effect; the thick description on the level of material, almost technological and systemic processes; the construction of broad historical lines and developments (the emergence and fall of institutions, practices, norms etc. over a span of time); finally the contrastive and often surprising periodization, the construction of 'primal scenes' and paradigmatic moments that can take the form of a chronological and rather artificial distinguishing of certain dates and moments or even individual biographies.[26] Only stories told this way release the explosive power contained in the revelation of processes of power and forceful construction. In this sense, genealogies are textual shocks and momentous negative world disclosures.[27] They expose single configurations of the social to the blinding light of analysis, where the artificiality of the allegedly natural and the hidden violence behind norms gets cast into sharp profile.

But their effectiveness and sense of urgency is also due to a second formal trait, namely their directedness or 'address'. Genealogical accounts are constitutively directed towards an audience, addressing a virtual readership that is supposed to recognize themselves in them however defamiliarized or estranged, because it is their cause, or the cause of each one, that is addressed and of concern. The reader is supposed to understand him- or herself as the subject and object of those very processes of subjectivation that are being recounted. This second trait is also essentially rhetorical. It cannot be reduced to the explicit propositions of genealogical texts.[28] The 'object' or theme is the subject that is at the same time affected by the story as it is addressed by it and is therefore a part and implication of the account itself. Again, this is an implication of 'self' or subject, here on the most formal level. This trait distinguishes genealogies from two other highly performative textual genres they are quite close to it in other respects. The first, confessional autobiography (mainly) implicates the author as the author-subject and textual object; the second, religious or moral tracts are most strongly directed towards an audience as the target of religious or moral admonition, but it relates the very authority of the account to a third, extra-textual instance (eternal laws of morality, divine authority, etc.). This is not to say that there cannot be hybrids between these subgenres that incorporate some elements of the autobiographical (as in Rousseau) or of the moralistic/didactic (as in Kierkegaard).

This implicating of the addressee is a third way of implicating the self: the story is told to the one (the subject) that it is about. This relation again ties genealogy to self or to the subject as does the historicization of the self, discussed in part I of this paper, and the critical questioning of the self, discussed in part II. Genealogies are 'histories of the present' exactly for the inhabitants of our

present, for a 'we'. But who is the 'we'? They are the unspecified, presupposed, and in a weak sense 'constituted', called-for audience, the addressees for and to whom the genealogical author, often hiding behind the 'mask of the philosopher' writes. He supposes that they are hit, affected and concerned by his historical account, that they are provoked and shocked, struck by the lightning of instantaneous insight into what they are, how they have become and what they might not want to be. He may hope (sometimes in vain), that their having become what they are appears scandalous to them when it is seen in the bright light of historical analysis. He is successful when his readers take over the writing and start off projecting their own versions of the present.[29]

Martin Saar
Institut für Philosophie
Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität
Grüneburgplatz 1
D-60629 Frankfurt am Main
Germany
saar@em.uni-frankfurt.de

NOTES

[1] Cf. Ansell-Pearson 1991, Mahon 1992, and Brown 2001: 99.

[2] Cf., for Nietzsche, the many articles in Schacht 1994, and especially Ridley 1998 and Risse 2001; for Foucault, Visker 1995, Gutting 1990, Mahon 1992, Clifford 2001, and Brown 2001.

[3] Cf. the following passages in Foucault 1994, vol. I: 595, 599, vol. II: 753, vol. III: 145, 147, 165–167, 173, vol. IV: 170–171, 541. As to the rather usual heuristic periodization of Foucault's *œuvre*, I'm following the suggestions made, e.g., in Davidson 1994. But these phases should be seen together with Foucault's talk of 'three domains of genealogy' (Foucault 1982: 237), of 'three axes' or 'three fundamental elements' of experience (Rabinow 1984: 336, 387) which cuts across a mere chronological order. In other words, the practice of genealogy was not confined to one phase of his thought. It could be shown that in all of his works since the 1970s it was a continuous methodological register.

[4] Cf. Foucault 1982: 243, 275. For a recent overview of the various forms of a critique of the subject cf. Védrine 2000.

[5] Cf. Foucault 1971, Foucault 1979, and Foucault 1980. Interestingly, the motif of historicity in Foucault is quite persistent. In one of his earliest writings at all, an overview article on the history of psychological research from 1957, alluding to Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Marxism, he claims that psychology has lost its function and that it needs to return to the question of 'what is the most human in man, namely his history' (Foucault 1994, vol. I: 137, my transl.). On the rather complicated affinities to Heidegger cf. Saar (forthcoming).

[6] For Foucault's important relation to the French tradition of history and theory of science, notably to the works of Georges Canguilhem and Gaston Bachelard cf. Gutting 1989, Dews 1995, and Davidson 2002.

[7] Cf. Foucault 1972: 192.

[8] Cf. Foucault 1973: ch. X.

[9] Cf. Veyne 2001.

[10] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Zur Genealogie der Moral* (1887), in *Kritische Studienausgabe*, edited by Giorgio Colli/Mazzino Montinari, vol. 5, München, 2nd edition: dtv/de Gruyter, preface, sec. 5, 251.

[11] This formulation is inspired by Christoph Menke's excellent discussion of Nietzschean genealogy as an evaluation ('Abschätzen') of the consequences social and moral arrangements have for the individual. See the chapter 'Dekonstruktion, Genealogie, Kritik' in Menke 2000: 49–86. Cf. also Wendy Brown's remarks on 'genealogy's strategy of reversal' (Brown 2001: 98–99).

[12] This was one of the points of contention in the much discussed 'debate' between Foucault and Derrida on Descartes and madness. The relevant point is whether Foucault in this book tries to restore a certain 'immediacy' to the pre-and anti-rational 'experience' of madness. This, of course, is also a distant echo of early Nietzsche's appraisal of the dionysic states of mind in *The Birth of Tragedy*.

[13] For an interesting reading of Foucault in the context of other conceptions of constellation as a concept fundamental to critical social theory cf. Lewandowski 2001.

[14] Cf. Fraser 1981 as one of the first and classical texts; for more recent perspectives on the discussion on Foucault's heritage among his followers on the one hand and the representatives of Critical Theory on the other, see the essays in Kelly 1994 and Owen/Ashenden 1999.

[15] In this sense, genealogical critique is similar to 'immanent critique', given that this is understood to mean that there are no 'external' criteria or what Hegel called 'Maßstäbe' (or yardsticks) of critique in his discussion of the Kantian problematic of a self-critique of reason at the beginning of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. For a recent discussion of immanent critique and genealogy in the context of early Critical Theory cf. Honneth 2001. Being 'immanent', however, doesn't rule out that the genealogical description undertake the uncanny and de-familiarizing enterprise of picturing what is known and familiar as if seen from the outside in order to achieve what Brecht called a *Verfremdungseffekt*. For a thought like this that has been stressed by many commentators cf., for example, Kögler 1992.

[16] Cf. David Owen's contribution to this discussion in this symposium, Geuss 1994 and the remarks on Nietzsche in Geuss 1981. For me, this hypothetical rejection of *Ideologiekritik* follows from Foucault's rejection of the 'repression hypothesis' (in Foucault 1980) and from his general historicist and constructivist suspicion towards any anthropology or universal theory of man.

[17] Cf. the crucial text 'The Subject and Power' (Foucault 1982). Judith Butler may be the commentator who has given this line of thought the most acute formulation: '(. . .) the subject is itself a site of this ambivalence in which the subject emerges both as the *effect* of a prior power and as a *condition of possibility* for a radically conditioned form of agency. (. . .) what is enacted by the subject is enabled but not finally constrained by the prior working of power. Agency exceeds the power by which it is enabled' (Butler 1997: 14–15). This point was also given some elaboration in Butler 2001.

[18] This thought is powerfully elaborated in Hacking 1986; cf. also Hacking 1999 for a more sceptical view on Foucault's role as a godfather of contemporary social constructivism.

[19] My discussion has certain affinities to Michael Clifford's recent and instructive methodological suggestions about genealogy as what he calls (borrowing Tracy Strong's term) a 'politics of transformation' (Clifford 2001: 142–147). Concerning the appellative

character of genealogical accounts that I have tried to capture in the suggested imperative, see also Aaron Ridley's discussion of Nietzsche's 'seduction' (Ridley 1998: 149–155).

[20] The main and rather disparate examples I have in mind are Althusser 1971, Agamben 1998, Butler 1997. All of them would, of course, need to be discussed in detail.

[21] For this second strand, I'm thinking in particular of the essays of Alexander Nehamas, Bernard Williams, and Raymond Geuss in Schacht 1994.

[22] These questions were already discussed in debates on Foucault in the 1980s and have played a quite important role in the German reception. Cf. as an example the discussion between Axel Honneth and Walter Seitter (1989) and the essays by Peter Bürger and Wolfgang Welsch in Ewald/Waldenfels 1991.

[23] Cf. Hayden White's tropological and rhetorical analyses and especially his treatment of Foucault's historiographical style, e.g. in White 1978.

[24] This doesn't exclude the possibility that there can be 'white', i.e. legitimizing and stabilizing genealogies. One should keep in mind that this is what the term meant in the first place before Nietzsche took it up. In philosophy, Charles Taylor's reconstruction of the 'sources of the self' and Hans-Georg Gadamer's historical hermeneutics, that is at its core a theory of tradition, seem to be something just like this. All I want to suggest is that these attempts step out of the range of Nietzsche's and Foucault's subversive intentions, they might even be called 'monumental' histories to use the language of the *Second Untimely Meditation*. Cf. also Alasdair MacIntyre's provocative theses in *Three Rival Versions of Moral Inquiry* (MacInytre 1985), and Williams 1994 who suggests a mediating, half destructive, half constructive reading of genealogy.

[25] Cf. Cavell 1979: preface, xv–xxvi.

[26] The well-known examples for this are the chapters on the ship of fools and the fight against leprosy at the beginning of Foucault 1978, and the Damien episode at the beginning of Foucault 1979. Similar temporal paradigmatic constructions can be found in works as diverse as Deleuze/Guattari 1987, Negt/Kluge (1981) or even Hardt/Negri (2000). More classical examples from the history of philosophy are Rousseau's second *Discourse* and Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire*.

[27] The question of the 'truth' or adequacy of genealogical accounts hasn't been answered by these suggestions. Foucault's confession that his works are 'fictions' is not an answer to it (cf. Foucault 1994, vol. I: 591, vol. III: 40, 44–45). Since his early text *On Truth and Lie in an Extra-Moral Sense* Nietzsche is haunted by the well-known philosophical problem: If there is to be a 'truth effect' to the very act of exposing truth to be, in a certain sense, a 'lie' or a 'mere' construction' or 'effect of language', how can you account for this story itself being true or 'truer' than the first? As I see it, neither Nietzsche nor Foucault gives a plausible general or philosophical answer to this question but they try to circumvent it by the means of several conceptual manoeuvers most of which have to do with the concept of perspectivism. And practising genealogy is one way of not doing (ordinary) philosophy. For an introduction to the discussion and reconstructions of perspectivism cf. de Man 1979, Nehamas 1985, Nehamas 1994, and Clark 1990.

[28] My discussion of the 'address' and the (implication of the) audience of genealogy obviously takes some cues from Derrida's remarks on 'addressing' at the opening of his *Force of Law* (1990) and on the 'teleopoietic' constitution of a future audience in the Nietzschean text in *The Politics of Friendship* (1997), ch. 2. On the audience of genealogy and the role of the genealogical author, respectively, see also MacIntyre 1990: 45–49, 232–233, and 205–206, 214–215.

[29] A German version of this essay was presented in the workshop 'Genealogy as Critique' during the Foucault Conference in Frankfurt, September 27–29th, 2001. I am

grateful to the other speakers, Raymond Geuss and David Owen, whose contributions are published in this journal, to Axel Honneth who was chairing the session, and to the participants in the discussion for their comments and suggestions.

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