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SYSTEMS OF FORMATION IN FOUCAULT'S ARCHAEOLOGY: INCURSION TO THE SUB-LEVELS OF DISCOURSE

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Abstract: Foucault's text The *Archeology of Knowledge*, which can be considered as a founding work regarding the French school of discourse analysis, constitutes its theoretical place positively apart from linguistic analysis and from the textual dimension of discourse. To approximate to linguists the theoretical developments Foucault carries out in the *Archeology of Knowledge*, it seems convenient to recover some of the discussions which might have served as conditions for this text to be presented the way we know it today. In this paper, we analyze the degree and the way of use in Foucault's discursive theory of the structural analysis method as Lévi-Strauss envisioned it to ethnological science in the middle of the last century, considering moreover the effects produced by the notion of structure he recommended in the way historians thought of social duration. Concerning the methodological approach, we use a set of texts related to the debate established between history and anthropology in France in the last century which we suppose served as condition of possibility for the production of the *Archeology of Knowledge*. Confronting these texts with Foucault's work, we explore the existing intertextual relations between the *Archeology* and this material whose previous existence seems to have enabled its appearance. In this direction, we adjust the condition of possibility to which we refer, reducing its scope to what we have decided to take strictly as a *textual condition of possibility* – a category we assume as theoretical support in our analytical work. The results show us that certain traits of structuralist reason seem to have been transferred to a theoretical aspect of *Archeology* defined as a *system of formation* – an underlayer in which multiple elements of social reality establish reciprocal relationships whose systematic complexity serves as a condition of existence to the elements of discourse.

INTRODUCTION

The program of studies and research of the domain we call discourse analysis has been remarkably broad and diverse since the first ventures carried out in its name during the 1960s. In its French tendency, we can largely attribute the hybridism of this field to the achievements of the philosopher Michel Foucault, whose discursive theory owes its elaboration to the interest directed by the author to debates which characterized the encounters and confrontations that took place in the field of social and human sciences during the twentieth century.

The heterogeneity of the field still poses a very unique problem to the linguists who collaborate with it. The text of The *Archaeology of Knowledge,* by M. Foucault, which is among the founding works on which the French school could rise, constitutes its theoretical place positively away from linguistic analysis and the textual dimension of discourse. For this reason, Maingueneau (2015, p. 19) conceives the participation of this text in the analysis of the discourse practiced in France as a more "indirect" influence compared to the works of J. Dubois and M. Pêcheux: "If the latter intended to rely on linguistics, the author of The *Archaeology of Knowledge* refused to do so. What he called 'speech' had no direct relation to the use of language."

To bring the theoretical developments on discourse which Foucault carries out in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* closer to linguists, it seems convenient that we recover certain discussions which seem to have served as a condition for this text to be made public in the way we know it today. As it is not possible, however, to carry out an extensive coverage of the different debates

since which the archaeological work could be produced, we will invest here our interest in a specific discussion developed in a space of communication between history and anthropology during the twentieth century which we believe has somehow contributed to Foucault's archaeology having acquired the profile with which we have been in contact since its publication in 1969.

We refer to the fact that, in the mid-twentieth century, the notion of structure, revived in the anthropology of Lévi-Strauss, gained the center of discussion in social sciences, so history eventually also found itself confronted with the structural theme (BARROS, 2014). In this regard, we believe the form of analysis conceived in *Archaeology,* certainly implicated with historiographic work, operates a certain degree of appropriation of structural analysis, which, in the last century, brought to the field of history an important debate from which new ways of thinking about social duration have unfolded. Besides, the notion of system – an alternative term to the word structure – gained a prominent place in Foucault's text with the introduction of *systems of formation,* whose character and functioning derive from a logic of structure.

Therefore, we will be here committed to analyze the degree and mode of use in Foucault's discursive theory of the method of structural analysis as Lévi-Strauss imagined it for the work of ethnological science in the middle of the last century. Besides, we will consider the effects that the notion of structure he recommended ended up producing in the way historians thought about social duration.

Regarding methodological approximation, we will work with a set of texts referring to the discussion mentioned above which we assume have served as a condition of possibility for the production of *Archaeology of Knowledge.* The reason is that Foucault's text seems to reverberate certain principles previously established in these founding works. Confronting them with Foucault's work, we will therefore be focused on the intertextual relations existing between *Archeology* and these texts whose previous existence seems to have enabled its appearance. The conditions of possibility which we refer to will therefore be considered as given in an intertextual space within which certain texts seem to have made possible the emergence of *Archaeology.* In this sense, we can say that the preceding texts, which can also be situated as intertexts, given their first position in the intertextual space (KOCH, 2017), serve as a condition of possibility to Foucault's work, which later comments them. Perhaps it is pertinent to us, therefore, to adjust the condition of possibility to which we refer, reducing its scope to what we will take strictly as a *textual condition of possibility* – a category that, for this occasion, we will admit as a point of support in our analysis work.

THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SOCIOLOGY, ETHNOLOGY, ETHNOGRAPHY, AND HISTORY, ACCORDING TO LÉVI-STRAUSS

In his article *Histoire et ethnologie,* which is part of one of the editions of *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale* from the year 1949, Lévi-Strauss resumes the interplay of tensions which opposed history and sociology in the first decades of the twentieth century. To build up his position, he decided to give up the term sociology, which he believed to correspond to a science whose developments had not yet fully justified the breadth and complexity of his project. Instead, he dedicates himself to examining the differences between history, ethnography, and ethnology, recognizing the latter two as subdivisions of sociological practice. For the anthropologist, such specializations were guarantors of more precise results, since the objects they dealt

with could be accessed more efficiently by methodological work. Therefore, the analysis of the relations they had with the field of history could yield more important conclusions.

The author distinguished these domains, describing ethnography as a field of "observation and analysis of human groups (...), aiming at the restitution, as faithful as possible, of the way of life of each of them" (LÉVI-STRAUSS, [1949] 2008b, p. 14), while granting ethnology the place of practice conducted by comparative use of documents presented by ethnographers. Based on these first definitions, he pointed out an identity of object between history and ethnography:

> What are, in fact, the differences between the method of ethnography (taking the term in the strict sense, defined at the beginning of this article) and that of history? Both study societies that are different than the ones in which we live in. The fact that such differences are linked to a distancing in time (however small) or in space, or even to a cultural heterogeneity, is secondary when compared to the similitude of positions. (LÉVI-STRAUSS, 2008b, p. 30)

Concerning the used method of work, the author explained that the ethnographer and the historian present facts in accordance with similar requirements, so that the documents produced by the ethnographers could also serve historians whenever the observations were staggered in a period of time sufficiently long for them to become useful to historiographical work. The most important difference would be between history and ethnology. Lévi-Strauss proposed both could be distinguished according to the nature of data with which they organize their knowledge.

> We propose to show that the fundamental difference between them is neither one of object nor of objective nor of method and, having the same object, which is social life, the same objective, which is the best understanding of man, and a method in which only the dosage of research procedures varies, they are distinguished mainly by the choice of complementary perspectives. History organizes its data concerning conscious expressions and ethnology in relation to the unconscious conditions of social life. (LÉVI-STRAUSS, 2008b, p. 32)

In a few and well-organized words, the anthropologist defines the goal which guides the work of ethnologists with remarkable clarity and conciseness, while points out the relationships that link unconscious phenomena to the reality of structures.

> Its goal is to achieve, in addition to the conscious and always different image that men form from their future, an inventory of unconscious possibilities, which do not exist in unlimited numbers, whose repertoire and whose compatibility or incompatibility relations that each maintains with all others provide a logical architecture to historical developments that can be unpredictable, but they are never arbitrary. (LÉVI-STRAUSS, 2008b, p. 38)

In any case, history and ethnology did not ignore the complementary side of the object to which they were dedicated, even though they admitted preference for the conscious or unconscious dimensions of the collective phenomenon. And even going in different directions in carrying out a similar task, the two sciences finally coincided in their work when they sought to deduce the unconscious structure which produced and sustained social reality. This strategy of analysis required the use of historiographical understanding: "By showing institutions that are transformed, only it [history] allows to extract the underlying structure of multiple formulations which remains through the succession of events" (LÉVI-STRAUSS, 2008b, p. 36). By analyzing the relations between the institutions, it would be possible to find, "behind the chaos of rules and customs, a single scheme" (LÉVI-STRAUSS, 2008b, p. 36) that would prove to be active in the various local and time contexts.

Such a scheme could not correspond either to a particular model of the institution or to the arbitrary grouping of characteristics common to various forms: it consists of relations of correlation and opposition, certainly unconscious, (...) but which, being unconscious, must be equally present among those who have never known such an institution. (LÉVI-STRAUSS, 2008b, p. 36)

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE IN ETHNOLOGY

Anticipating the developments of linguistics, the German-American anthropologist Franz Boas already indicated the unconscious nature of cultural phenomena by showing that the structure of language was unknown by the speaker until the advent of scientific grammar (LÉVI-STRAUSS, 2008b). In ethnological reasoning, the premise of the existence of a dimension underlying cultural practices also implied the fact that certain mental forms were unconsciously imposed on individuals, regardless of the time and space to which they belonged. Thus, there was a need for a work describing the relations between the unconscious forms which, articulated within a structure, supported the rules and customs practiced in different societies. To access these relations, however, one had to walk from the observation surface to the area of unconscious or barely conscious elements. (BRAUDEL, [1958] 1978b).

With regard to the method, the correspondence in relation to the order of magnitude of the phenomena with which anthropology and phonology were occupied brought to the former the expectation of using a path analogous to that adopted by the later. If phonologists turned to the scheme of sounds, dedicating themselves to examining their groupings – infra-phonemic structures which constituted the underlying or unconscious reality of language – anthropologists isolated phenomena on a scale close enough to

justify a similar treatment. Thus, if the laws of phonology structure were deduced in the infra-phonemic stage of the language, anthropology, in turn, found the desired cultural regularities in the micro-sociological stage of the studied societies.

On the other hand, the interest in the structuralist perspective led Lévi-Strauss to describe society as a whole consisting of a set of structures in which each of them corresponds to a different order or level of reality. In this sense, kinship phenomena constitute an order of reality related to the anthropological investigation, while linguistic, economic, and historical phenomena, for example, participate in other layers whose responsibility of analysis falls on neighboring fields (LÉVI-STRAUSS, [1958] 2008a). The structural analysis required, therefore, the identification and isolation of the level of reality pertinent to the investigator's work, which is why it implied the selection of a given group of phenomena. Within each structural level, it would still be possible to distinguish two planes, since the *lived order*, which corresponds to objective reality, presupposes the existence of a *conceived order*, which serves as a formal matrix to the set of concrete manifestations (LÉVI-STRAUSS, [1952] 2008a).

In anthropology, in order to move from one dimension to another, social relations had to be taken as raw material for the construction of explanatory models which evidenced the social structure (LÉVI-STRAUSS, 2008a, p. 301). Therefore, the first task was to determine the facts to be examined, which conditioned the other stages of the work. This initial observation was followed by the isolation of the elements pertinent to the analysis of the structure and the determination of its relations within this observed reality (BRAUDEL, 1978b). This work was also conducted with the support of the so-called social mathematics which, moving away from the

traditional quantitative perspective, favored the importance of qualitative data. To these mathematics, instead of numbers were offered relations. Once these relations were strictly defined, descriptive signs were attributed to them, so that their properties were correctly represented in formal language. As a result, certain aspects of the cultural universe had their functioning explained from a set of mathematical formulations.

The material of social mathematics, therefore, required a preliminary treatment. In order to perform the analysis of the social, a restricted unit of observation was determined according to the field and the interest of the researcher in which the phenomena could be described in their most direct manifestation. The ethnographic work – which served as the basis for ethnological research – required the facts to be examined in themselves, in their concrete detail, in the objective processes by which they worked. At the same time, all possible relations between the elements analyzed should also be established. From the precise determination of these relations, mathematics was able to extract a model capable of characterizing them as a whole (BRAUDEL, 1978b).

SOCIAL DURATION IN BACHELARD

Let us now move on to the analysis of how social duration appeared reflected in Gaston Bachelard's work, and then examine how his reasoning was incorporated into the work of historians. At the end of this section, we will be able to verify how the notion of structure had to be confronted with a certain understanding of social duration to be integrated into the field of history.

Since Bachelard's philosophical reflections offered the social sciences the outline of a temporal psychology, the investigators' relationships with time have undergone a considerable change. Let us use his work *La Dialectique de la Durée* in order to briefly present some of his main ideas. In this direction, we shall consider four notions with which the philosopher founded a certain way of thinking about the *Being* in the duration. They are: the *teaching,* the *conduct,* the *rhythm,* and *memory.*

Based on the work of the psychiatrist Pierre Janet, Bachelard (1936/1988) supports a thesis by which experienced time must be explained on the basis of mental time. In this direction, it establishes relationships between the experience of time and psychological causality. Underlying this understanding is, mainly, the founding relations which Janet establishes between knowing and teaching. In order to know, it is necessary to teach, whether in the so-called pedagogical relationship or in the introspective exercise through which we organize our thoughts. And the didactic gesture, in both circumstances, imposes a sequence of ordered actions through which we demonstrate what we intend to teach.

Applying this reasoning to the temporal problem, one can come to the conclusion that time, to be known, must be explained. Its knowledge is not immediate, and the conditions of its teaching are what effectively constitute the temporal psychological phenomenon. "Our personal history is nothing more than the narrative of our unrelated actions" (BACHELARD, 1988, p. 39). In order to tell it, we give it continuity through reasons which connect separated moments between them. Thus, its order is not registered with support in an immediate and intuitive understanding, but according to reasons which make it coherent for those who intend to communicate it. A defined temporal reality is based, therefore, on the work of intelligible organization of a certain set of moments far from each other in time.

But, according to our location in relation to

time, we assume towards it a different conduct because we perceive it either as an obstacle or as a point of support, as we are in its empty duration or its fruitful instant. This brings us to the second explanatory key with which Bachelard builds his reflection on the Being and the duration. In this regard, Bachelard once again resumes Pierre Janet, who admits two possible types of movement in relation to time: a primary conduct, which is equivalent to a gesture adapted to space – its character is inaugural and its duration, ephemeral; and a secondary conduct, which is defined by the additional effort which makes the first one last in time. The extension of the initial act is therefore a continuation effort. It is thus possible to separate the original will, which triggers the act, from another which gives it continuation. It is, therefore, by the work of reason, of clear intention and obstinacy that the first acts can be sustained beyond their fleeting existence.

The third artifice of exposure is the notion of rhythm. To reflect on the construction of duration, Bachelard evokes the reasoning of Gaston Roupnel, to whom the continuity of the historical past depends on the movement of successive beginnings. From this point of view, only what has reason to start over persists. The rhythmic phenomenon is thus taken as the basis of temporal efficacy. Therefore, each division of historical time should be studied according to its particular rhythm. And, if the permanence in time is caused by the ordering of successive restarts, the rhythm of durations is equivalent to a system in which the work of continuation is renewed at each restart.

Memory, the fourth and final key, is described by the philosopher as a faculty which, using reason, is responsible for the organization of experienced duration. If the experience of duration encloses in itself the matter of memories without, however, offering its location, memory fulfills the role of isolating and dating events, ordering them in a schematization with which the narratives about our past are constituted. Previous life is therefore built in memory by an artificial system which, under the pretext of linking certain events, has them in sequence, in order to eliminate the distance which eventually separates them.

Given the verification of this assembly work through which the duration is constructed, it is noted that the continuity of time for the psyche is not originally given, but the result of an elaboration which, proceeding by jumps, excludes useless intervals, to isolate special events. Even presenting themselves in an order of succession, the events with which the understanding of time is formed are not immediately interconnected. In the plane of consciousness, discontinuous temporal elaboration would be the rule, and the continuity by which the past is drawn, the result of a work which produces the duration with the aid of reason.

Thus, it is seen that the dialectics of being in the duration proposed by Bachelard is based on an active opposition between living moments and empty spaces, from which a sequence of events in apparent continuity is constructed.

> The pace of action and inaction seems to us inseparable from any knowledge of time. Between two useful and fruitful events, the dialectic of the useless must be exercised. The duration is only noticeable in its complexity. As poor as it is, it puts itself at least in an opposition with limits. We have no right to take it as a uniform and simple fact. (BACHELARD, 1988, p. 41)

Or by the words of Eugène Dupréel:

> In fact, every known reality can only be under the existence of a series of successive or concomitant events, perceived as regular terms of the same order, among which there is an interval which is always occupied by indifferent events. (DUPRÉEL, 1933, p. 23 APUD BACHELARD, 1988, p. 82)

SOCIAL DURATION IN BRAUDEL

Let us now look at how historians will make use of some ideas introduced in Bachelard's work in order to apply them – in a considerably modified way, certainly – to the problems of history. In his research, the use of the notion of rhythm will relate different time bands, so that the dialectic of duration will refer, in this case, to the relations between structures pertinent to different periods. On the other hand, the system os instants which Bachelard supposes for a biographical trajectory will be replaced by the ordering of the documental series. Having historical sources in sequenced order, in order to link them according to the units of time, historians will then be able to "identify permanences, perceive cycles, evaluate small variations" (BARROS, 2010a, p. 76).

We know, for example, that history has temporality as its central element. What historians associated to the movement promoted by Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch understood in the first decades of the last century with the development of economic history is that time, even on a single scale, can be fractionated according to different criteria. Then, it was possible to talk of multiple temporalities and the explanatory models exhibited a duration which varied according to the registered reality. In addition to the periodizations considered in their research, French historians also turned to the breaking points which separated certain groups of events by the time of crises which changed the social reality.

In the middle of the last century, Braudel told us the other sciences of the social escape the historian explanation, sometimes relying on synchronous time, as social reality actualization, sometimes resting on the phenomena of repetition. At other times, they resort to the "mathematical formulation of almost timeless structures" (BRAUDEL, 1978b, p. 55). They avoid, therefore, the imperious time which serves as a compass to the work of historians, inescapable time which constrain all particular realities.

On the contrary, the historians time "would lend itself less, ... to the agile double interplay of synchrony and diachrony" (BRAUDEL, 1978b, p. 73), because it does not allow to treat the facts as if they were suspended in a still reality. For these scientists, time was measured and each phenomenon corresponded to a point within a scale in which several others are distributed.

Instead of this dichotomy, the science of history worked with a social time decomposed into different chronological realities. To its smallest extent, the events which create decisive moments in the past were considered, taking into account the short time of the different forms of life, of the different orders of reality in which the social could be reflected. This narrow band of events integrated the time of the so-called traditional historiography, which had been privileged in France at the end of the 19th century.

Other less compressed periods, however, began to be considered by economic history, which was guided by the cyclical oscillation of financial indices. Working with extensions which varied around a few tens of years, historians focused on the phenomena of economic reality consolidated a so-called conjunctural time, whose recitative transposed the squeezed duration of "traditional" narratives:

> (...) a price curve, a demographic progression, the movement of wages, changes in interest rates, the study (more imagined than actually performed) of production, an accurate analysis of circulation demand much broader measures. A new form of historical narrative appears, say the "recitative" of the conjuncture, of the cycle, even of the "intercycle", which proposes to our choice ten years, a quarter of a century and, at the extreme limit, the half-century of the classic cycle of Kondratieff. (BRAUDEL,

As a result, other levels of reality, such as techniques, sciences, religious institutions, demographic variables were also analyzed according to this new rhythm of life.

Finally, beyond the conjuncture time, a new temporality, of secular amplitude, began to be used in historiographical research. A long duration, of "more restrained breathing" (BRAUDEL, 1978b, p. 44), made room for the development of an unconscious history, which justified the examination of the forms underlying social reality and its almost immunity to the disturbances of time. The long time was, therefore, the time with which historians devoted themselves to examining the structures. This formula soon came to designate the opposite of the evental history, the one dedicated to the short time of traditional historiography.

Braudel (1978b) told us that the "secular trend", an extreme limit of cyclical and conjunctural time practiced in economic history, had provided a first key to understanding the long duration; and that the second, more importantly, was the concept of structure, with which one could effectively operate the problems of the long time.

To the notion of structure, social scientists attributed the quality of a coherent arrangement, whose fixed and precise relations between its internal elements determined its general functioning. To this understanding of a more architectural character, historians added time, which in a structure was always conveyed at the lowest threshold of its motility. Because of their persistence, the structures obstructed history, serving as obstacles to social change. On the other hand, they were also the support whereby social life was preserved, repeated, and continued.

It became possible, then, being detached to some extent of the demanding time of history. The set of facts examined could be thought of along the quiet organization of an extensive infrastructure which provided steady support. And, resting the other temporal bands on this longer duration, the historian worked to articulate the long time with its decomposed forms, the conjunctural time and the short time, enabling the investigation of social phenomena in accordance with the different rhythms in which they participate. An event, it was said,

> (...) can carry a series of meanings or familiarities. It sometimes bears witness to very deep movements and, by the factitious or non-factitious play of the 'causes' and 'effects' dear to historians of yesterday, attaches a time much longer than its own duration. (BRAUDEL, 1978b, p. 45).

Thus, history offered its explanation of the social, appealing to the intersection of the cadences in which the events are included: "Each 'actuality' brings together movements of different origin and rhythm: today's time dates, simultaneously, from yesterday, the day before yesterday, and yore" (BRAUDEL, 1978b, p. 54). In addition, it was possible to point out the interruptions which separate the smaller periods within longer temporal bands. Historians observed the changes in the structure which redistributed its structuring elements, from which variations occurred within these large systems that penetrated the longitude of time.

The social durations were, therefore, solidary to each other and the fragmentations of time produced by the historians were gathered and articulated by them at the end of their work: "Long duration, conjuncture, event fit without difficulty, because all are measured by the same scale. Likewise, to participate in spirit in one of these times is to participate in all of them" (BRAUDEL, [1958] 1978a, p. 109).

SYSTEM OF FORMATION

Let us now return, in the text of *The

Archaeology of Knowledge, to the discussions we have previously introduced. In those opportunities, we pointed out important foundations without which, we believe, the work we study here would not have reached its characteristic form. Its theory of discourse would not have been possible in the absence of this special conjunction from which it could take a particular direction.

Initially, it should be said that the renewal experienced by historical science in the first half of the twentieth century made room for the issues of structuralism, already present and widely debated in neighboring domains, could affect it in its own dimension. It means that the notion of structure not only brought to history a relational and systemic understanding of the social, but still had to be translated in terms of its existence in time. It was therefore necessary to think about its implications in the reality of social duration, which comprised a central axis of historiographical work.

In fact, it seems productive to understand that the long time in history was "the effect of the methodologically organized elaboration of the series", as Foucault admits (1969/2000, p. 9) in the work we study here. As a result of their application to the recitatives of conjuncture of an Economic History, the series wanted to expand to more extensive periods. But not only this. The presence of long duration in the craft of historians also owes its appearance to the way the timeless structures admitted by ethnologists were reflected and appropriated by historians.

To Foucault (2000), history owed the emergence of new questions it raised and the unprecedented ways of approaching its themes of interest to transformations which were taking place within its own terrain. What should be added to this claim is that it is no longer safe, since the beginning of the twentieth century, to suppose the existence of a well-defined space where historical science

could unconcernedly traverse a certain set of notions with which it would be possible to establish an identity clearly defined and distinguished from other social sciences.

Structuralism, as an epistemological principle, as a rational basis for analysis or method of treatment of an examined reality is, we believe, an element which participates in the explanatory strategy offered in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. In what particular aspect and to what extent this theoretical conception appears, how it dissipates or moves away from its canonical use in structural anthropology is what we now propose to analyze.

Initially, it should be admitted that the transfer of the structural method practiced in phonology to other social sciences made it necessary to differentiate the possible extracts of analysis, in order to locate a given set of elements in which each field and each researcher could legitimately invest their interest. Our assumption is that Foucaultian discursive theory was thus led to a work of identification and isolation of its own level, a specific dimension in which the effects examined and their determinations could be thought of within their own borders. A singular order. A space for reflection pertinent to discursive phenomena. An order, as then it was necessary to say, of discourse.

At this particular level of reality, Foucault assumed the presence of a system from which the elements of discourse are formed. This system, like the structure allowed by ethnologists, guarantees its functioning by the constancy of a given set of rules. While the structure in ethnology derived from the existing relations between a set of unconscious forms, forms that conditioned the appearance of elements of culture, the discursive elements indicated in *Archaeology* (objects, concepts, enunciative modalities, themes) have their existence made possible by a system organized

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based on relations fixed between varied components of the social universe.

This *system of formation,* which gives cause to the regular formation of the elements of discourse, comprise different types of relations between elements pertinent to the various levels of cultural reality: "institutions, techniques, social groups, perceptual organizations, relations between diverse discourses" (FOUCAULT, 2000, p. 79). We use the word *culture* here, because the character and heterogeneity of the various instances admitted by Foucault suggest that the space where the multiple relations are organized within the systems of formation corresponds to a modified representation of the field of investigation of ethnographers, having its elements selected according to their interest related to the project of a description of discursive events. And, insofar as that the complex group of relations with which this system is organized is preserved in the composition of time and social space, the stability of its functioning results in the set of rules according to which the elements of discourse are going to be further formed. The elements which constitute the discourse are, therefore, the result of a constant exercise, of a practice that establishes determined relationships between the multiple components offered by the thick and heteroclitic universe of culture.

In this aspect of the reflection elaborated in *Archaeology,* a problem of definition arises. Although its theoretical project has struggled to define its own field of analysis, compressing it to a singular level referred to as the "discourse space in general" or the "order of discourse", it was also necessary to admit a subdivision of the set of phenomena to be examined. On the one hand, it was necessary to be said that the systems of formation

> (...) reside in discourse itself; or rather (since we are concerned not with its interiority and what it may contain, but with its specific

existence and with its conditions) on its frontier, at that limit at which the specific rules that enable it to exist as such are defined. (FOUCAULT, 2000, p. 81-82)

On the other hand, it was admitted that, in addition to a "terminal stage" in which the ultimate forms of discourse appear arranged in the thin weft of textual surfaces, with all its syntactic, rhetorical arrangement, its phrasal chaining, its logical order, etc., there was still a previous level to that of this finished construcion. The "systems that make possible the ultimate systematic forms" (FOUCAULT, 2000, p. 85) remain below the manifest extract, which is why they should be recognized as pre-terminal regularities of discourse. Eventually, this bipartite analysis work had to be justified: "They [the relations that configure the systems of formation] can certainly be qualified as 'pre-discursive', but only if one admits that this prediscursive is still discursive" (FOUCAULT, 2000, p. 84).

To sum up, the theoretical model that is drawn in the archaeological project repeats, in its own way, a fundamental and defining trait of the work performed in ethnology. In the way he explored the method of structural analysis, Lévi-Strauss admitted the communication between two distinct levels: a permanent structure, consisting of fixed relation between a certain set of unconscious forms, and a layer where the cultural practices of a society are organized that actualizes this structure in a particular time and space. In the work of the archaeologist, what is taken into account in the analysis are "*pre-terminal regularities* in relation to which the final state, far from constituting the place of birth of the system, is defined, rather, by its variants" (FOUCAULT, 2000, p. 84).

Another mark confirming the parallel with the ethnological orientation of research should also be added. In *Archaeology,* despite the diligent effort and vigilant attention with

which it is tried to avoid the presence of a psychological causality at the level of discursive phenomena, it can be seen chaining point by point the central components of the gear that made the unconscious phenomenon emerge as a principle of analysis. Although not made explicit, the resumption of the psychoanalytic strategy which operates in the archaeological project is noted without difficulties in an answer with which the author exposes the purpose of his work during an interview published in the journal *La Quinzaine Littéraire* in 1968.

> My work (...), very schematically, is this: to try to find in the history of science, of knowledge, and of human knowledge something that would be like the unconscious. If you want, the hypothesis of work is, in short, the following: the history of science, of knowledge, does not simply obey the general law of the progress of reason, it is not human consciousness, it is not the human reason that is somehow holder of the laws of its history. Beneath of what science knows about itself, there is something it does not know; and its history, its becoming, its episodes, its accidents obey a certain number of laws and determinations. It's these laws and those determinations that I've tried to bring to light. I sought to liberate an autonomous domain which would be that of the unconscious of knowledge, which would have its own rules, just as the unconscious of the human individual also has its rules and its determinations. (FOUCAULT, 1994, p. 665-666)

Taking this excerpt within the limits of its extension, it seems possible to affirm that the position in which its discursive subject is inscribed is precisely that of the psychoanalytic field, which, undoubtedly, was the same that made possible in the social sciences the approximation between unconscious and structure. This is also the opinion of Paul Veyne, who dedicated one of his works to the intellectual biography of the philosopher.

> Using or abusing a Freudian analogy,

Foucault says he "tried to liberate an autonomous domain which would be that of the unconscious of knowledge", "to refind in the history of science, knowledge and human knowledge something that would be like his unconscious". "Consciousness is never present in such a description" of discourses; discourses "remained invisible", are "The unconscious, not of the talking subject, but of the said thing" (I am the one who underlines it), "A positive unconscious of knowledge, a level that escaped the consciousness" of the agents, which they used "without being aware of it". (VEYNE, 2009, p. 22)

It should be emphasized, however, that it is not the problem of psychological causality that arises here. Indeed, the duality of the psychoanalytic premise is maintained: two dimensions are articulated within the same level of analysis. One is known and the other is not. One lies in the space where one can see it, the surface of the statement; the other is beneath this manifest level. It occurs, however, that Foucaultian discursive theory is based on a domain whose structurality and function had not been introduced before. Defining it as an "immense density of systematicities, a tight group of multiple relations" (FOUCAULT, 2000, p. 84), the autonomous dimension of which Foucault speaks is the depository of the rules which determine the existence and appearance of elements that are displayed in the enunciative plane.

The life and development of the whole enunciative interplay; its work, its inconstancy are determined by this system which is implicit, a system that acts on the statements from another dimension in which the formation of discourse is autonomously prepared. This layer is unknown from the discourse itself. It is not about it the discourse pronounces itself. But it is because of its functioning that discourse becomes able to say something.

The relations that configure the system of formation of discourse are not found in

the manifest textual surface, do not connect words or syntactic forms, do not articulate arguments, do not confront propositions. Instead, they are preserved in an earlier plan which the said has no right to resort, a space to which the discourse only turns in the exceptionality of a metadiscursive condition – if we can assume so, given the possibility that archeology itself establishes with its analytical project.

However, if this atrium remains a kind of silent antechamber for the discourse that is formed, something like a blind spot in the extension of the field to which the discourse casts its gaze; for the archaeologist, on the contrary, it remains a concrete and immediately identifiable reality within the culture. As a "purely empirical figure" (FOUCAULT, 2000, p. 147), a field constituted by so-called non-discursive elements – that is, prior to the terminal stage of discourse – the pre-discursive level can be referred to as a historical *a priori* of the things said, "an *a priori* that is not a condition of validity for judgments, but a condition of reality for statements" (FOUCAULT, 2000, p. 146). Thus, it is evident the precedence of the system of formation in this divided relation in which the discursive level is organized.

The "non-discursive" must be here understood as the sum of techniques, processes, behaviors, organizational apparatus, procedures, and criteria adopted in different instances of social reality; in summary, the most diverse types of institutionality with which the fabric of culture is coordinated (FOUCAULT, 2000). One can describe this set as the positive conditions that define the field from which the elements of discourse develop. Thus, the appearance of a psychiatric discipline (that is, a psychiatric discourse) in the early nineteenth century, as commented in *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique,* is justified as follows.

> (...) what made it possible at the time it appeared (...), was a whole set of relations between hospitalization, internment, the conditions and procedures of social exclusion, the rules of jurisprudence, the norms of industrial labour and bourgeois morality, in short a whole group of relations that characterized for this discursive practice the formation of its statements (FOUCAULT, 2000, p. 202)

It is possible, however, to present fragments in which the effort for a more exhaustive description of these conditions offers surprisingly lavish and thorough characterization. It can be compared, for example, the excerpt below, with a long breath and eloquent articulation, with the summary enumeration presented just before.

> If, in a particular period in the history of our society, the delinquent was psychologized and pathologized, if criminal behaviour could give rise to a whole series of objects of knowledge, this was because a group of particular relations was adopted for use in psychiatric discourse. The relation between planes of specification like penal categories and degrees of diminished responsibility, and planes of psychological characterization (faculties, aptitudes, degrees of development or involution, different ways of reacting to the environment, character types, whether acquired, innate, or hereditary). The relation between the authority of medical decision and the authority of judicial decision (a really complex relation since medical decision recognizes absolutely the authority of the judiciary to define crime, to determine the circumstances in which it is committed, and the punishment that it deserves; but reserves the right to analyse its origin and to determine the degree of responsibility involved). The relation between the filter formed by judicial interrogation, police information, investigation, and the whole machinery of judicial information, and the filter formed by the medical questionnaire, clinical examinations, the search for antecedents, and biographical accounts. The relation between the family, sexual and penal norms of the behaviour of individuals,

and the table of pathological symptoms and diseases of which they are the signs. The relation between therapeutic confinement in hospital (with its own thresholds, its criteria of cure, its way of distinguishing the normal from the pathological) and punitive confinement in prison (with its system of punishment and pedagogy, its criteria of good conduct, improvement, and freedom). These are the relations that, operating in psychiatric discourse, have made possible the formation of a whole group of various objects. (FOUCAULT, 2000, p. 49-50)

Another important aspect to be pointed out is the fact that the system of formation, whose rules are constituted by this complex group of relations, is not indifferent to the course of time. In the temporal limits of discursive formations, Foucault dealt with the dispersion of elements of discourse, which immediately presupposes the presence of two chronological levels. A broader dimension, within which discourse operates its transformations, and another intermediate dimension in which these elements are provisionally sustained until the moment of their modification. In addition to these, a temporal band of a more instantaneous reality was added – that of the eruption of events that give rise to the effective emergence of statements in their singular existence. This articulation between different temporalities repeats the procedure of historians, who, within a long duration, structure of secular amplitude, organized successional conjunctures separated by intervals of crisis; and, in the extension of these conjunctures, they set up series of events.

Thus, the *a priori* of the statements actually formulated, unlike the structure considered in the ethnological analysis, "does not escape historicity: it does not constitute, above events, and in an unalterable universe, an atemporal structure" (FOUCAULT, 2000, p. 147). The phenomena of appearance, transformation, displacement, importation, which are due to the regularity of their scheme, are temporal processes and are inserted in a series of events. It should be noted, however, that, at certain decisive thresholds, the great system which incorporates all these changes that occur on the rails of long duration is also transformed.

In conclusion, it should be added that the dialectic of duration, a thesis that is incorporated into the investigation of historians from the efforts of Gaston Bachelard, had to be separated from its psychological assumptions to finally be introduced into the archaeological work. From Bachelard's point of view, it is psychological causality that is the foundation of social duration. The events are organized in memory in order to constitute the image of the individual biography by the exclusion of its empty moments. By our past, Bachelard says, "we understand at most, according to the meaning specified by Pierre Janet, what we had triggered in time or what, in time, had hurt us" (BACHELARD, 1988, p. 39). Personal history is then founded by stitching together moments which, in the timeline, are far apart. If this explanatory model were applied to the larger picture of social organization, the effect would have been the supposition of something like a macro-consciousness whose presence all the important events would be referred to. In the theoretical framework of *Archaeology*, however, the effects of historical discontinuity have their foundation in the method of documental serialization. The juxtaposition of documents which are organized according to their order in time brings to the analyst's eyes discursive events that, breaking with the provisional stability of knowledge, present themselves as discontinuous occurrences in relation to previous events of the same system of formation.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The analysis we have carried out throughout this article have led us to perceive

some traces of structuralist reason in the textual body of *Archaeology of Knowledge.* In particular, it seemed to us that some considerations of this order were transferred to a theoretical aspect defined as the *system of formation.* This system, through which discourse can be formed, maintains, in relation to the plane where the statements can emerge, a singular relationship which we will now briefly attempt to describe.

Initially, it should be said that the region on whose surface the statements are established and in which the relations they maintain with each other, their groupings, their discontinuities can be described presupposes an underlying level, a layer in which the most diverse elements of social reality establish relations which configure a complex set of systematicities. The way in which the relations that stabilize the contact between these elements are arranged is what serves as condition of existence for the events given in the enunciative plane. In this sense, the bidimensionality that marks the application of the structural method in the social sciences is repeated in *Archeology.* In Lévi-Strauss's work, for example, this division is presented in the presupposed relationship between a *lived order*, which the anthropologists know directly in field research, and a *conceived order*, achieved from the former, with the help of which they can infer the social structure that serves the first order as its foundation. The existing relations between the elements which constitute each of these levels are formal in nature, and are therefore relations susceptible to mathematization and with which a firmly regular and enclosed system can be defined. Organizing this system and explaining the differences in its interior, the anthropologists believe to offer their peers rigorous and universal knowledge about the studied culture.

From the point of view of *Archaeology*,

the system from which statements are formed is not organized through the articulation between elements whose relationships can be formally established or mathematically arranged, nor should it be assumed between it and the plane of statements a simple causal relationship, as if the statement were a necessary effect triggered by the system of formation. In fact, the system that forms the statements contains in its interior regular relations between the elements from which it is composed. It is, however, a system open to contingencies and transformations, susceptible to the action of time, so that it does not enable the mathematical rigor of closed structures. In it we find not the simple causes of the statements which are formed on another level, but different conditions that make possible the existence of these same statements.

Another important issue to be pointed out is the fact that the *system of formation* seems to be one of the most challenging aspects of *Archaeology* for discourse analysts who modernly venture to use this work as theoretical basis of their analysis exercises. The difficulty seems to arise from two problems in particular. One of them concerns the fact that the system which forms the statements demands a descriptive work of the relations that articulate the most diverse elements arranged in the space from which the discourse can emerge. The task is therefore not especially familiar to the linguist. It seems better adjusted to the sensitivity of the ethnographer (or even the sociologist), who is already used to going through the entire amplitude of a culture, recording its instances, its components, its varied functionings. The second problem, which is related to the first one, concerns the research strategy normally adopted by linguists who practice discourse analysis: having privileged the language sciences in their investigative practices, such analysts

wanted to focus on the study of the relations between statements, on the identification of their groupings, on the description of the points of contact which articulate different discourses, exclusion procedures under which enunciative production is regulated, etc. Thus, the field research has been aimed at exploring the possibilities of analysis offered in the plane of statements, considering, as a rule, the way in which the enunciative function and the textual structure that can exist through it are combined. The archeological analysis, however, is not concluded after having carried out this stage. Since then, the archaeologist must excavate the ground on which the said could be found in order to locate and describe below it the set of conditions from which the existence of the statement could be prepared. In an interview with Gerard Raulet in 1983, Foucault summarizes this aspect of the analysis which even justifies the choice of the word archaeology:

> If I used this term archeology, ... it was to say that the kind of analysis I was doing was displaced, not in time, but by the level at which it is situated. My problem is not to study the history of ideas in their evolution, but mainly to see under the ideas how such or such objects could emerge as possible objects of knowledge. (FOUCAULT; RAULET, 2005, p. 319/320)

If, therefore, linguists want to approach this dimension which conditions the appearance of statements, so they can directly work with it, organizing their components, describing their intrinsic relations, mapping the complex and irregular disposition of its physiognomy, it will probably be necessary to make use of other resources besides the traditional tools already available in the field of language sciences. In the description of the system of formation, what is at stake is an analysis of the positivities which serve as condition of existence to the statements. The indication of such elements and of the relations they maintain with each

other demands instruments of analysis which apply to a reality that, in *Archaeology*, is supposed to be of a non-textual nature. In this respect, the approximation and the dialogue with other divisions within the human and social sciences seems to be imposed as a condition for linguists who wish to venture into the bidimensional research to which Foucault's work invites us.

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