

Birth and Rise of Management Science Power and Knowledge Nexus

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Abstract

In this paper I contest the conviction that the sciences derive from the desire to know. I argue that the sciences, especially management sciences, are born and developed within certain relations of power. Thereby these sciences foster those networks of power from which they originate. The sciences are not open to aims external to their birth and growth. They are not adaptable and stretchable to the extent that they may serve external aims. My argument proceeds as follows. In the first part I argue that knowledge and power imply each other. In doing so I contest the claim that knowledge derives from a pure desire to know. In the second part I would explore the nature of the power providing foundation to management sciences. In the third I argue that from a certain representation of power management sciences arise. In the final part of my argument I will conclude that management sciences produce truths and discourses that may not be stretched to serve the aims that run parallel to them.

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Knowledge and Power Nexus

Foucault believes that knowledge and its various forms derive from different representations of power. Different types of power produce different forms of knowledge. To Foucault, power is something that brings about change or transformation in the conduct and thought of individuals. When individuals are in the relations of power they freely change themselves. Foucault gives the example of a teacher to elaborate the relations of power. A teacher is within the relations of power when he changes the conducts and perceptions of his/her students. Foucault considers that freedom is a precondition of power. The teacher exercises his/her power on the condition of freedom in the sense that students and teacher are engaged in discussion out of their free will. As long as

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freedom governs a contract there is no problem in the relations of power. Power turns into domination when it blocks or suspends the exercise of free will, when the transformation of conduct or perception is at the issue. Foucault makes an important distinction between power and domination. When one is forced to change his/her conduct he is in the state of domination. The teacher dominates when he changes the conduct of students by physical threat. The absence of freedom in the relations of power turns power into domination. Additionally and necessarily, the teacher holds power on the precondition of knowledge. However, historically the precondition of knowledge was not a necessary component of the relations of power. Power may be exercised without presupposing knowledge. In contrast to modern societies, the operation of power in archaic societies does not heavily rest upon knowledge. In modern society power is almost necessarily linked with knowledge. In the context of modern society's formation and structure, sciences, disciplines of knowledge, are turning up as major stake holders of power. Foucault is interested in the nexus between knowledge and power. The central thesis of Foucault regarding the relationship between power and knowledge is to question the tradition that is insisting on the development and attainment of knowledge with the suspension of power relations. He contests the claim that knowledge is attained by means of experience and reason. He writes that,

“Perhaps, too, we should abandon a whole tradition that allows us to imagine that knowledge can exist only where the power relations are suspended and that knowledge can develop only outside its injunctions, its demands and its interests.”¹

The connection between knowledge and power can be explored in various ways. For example, Plato considers knowledge as a guide to power. According to Plato, only the philosopher king can be a true ruler of the state as *he* is the *only* individual equipped with such a form of knowledge that is required to properly run the state. Power, in Platonic philosophy, needs the *eyes* of a philosopher.² Power must be subordinate to knowledge. When a philosopher gains knowledge by the dialectical use of reason knowledge turns him into a perfect man. By virtue of knowledge, the philosopher cannot act against reason and morality. To Plato, there is a necessary connection between knowledge and rational and just action. Francis Bacon contests the presupposed Platonic necessity between knowledge and rational or moral action. Instead, he finds the instrumental relationship between knowledge and power.³ From Bacon's point of view the possession of knowledge does not guarantee

the rational and moral action. Bacon explores the instrumental use of knowledge. In contrast to Plato and Bacon, Nietzsche denies the category of knowledge itself. According to Nietzsche, knowledge is the result of conflict among desires. In the perspective of Nietzsche the desire to control produces knowledge. Knowledge by its deep essence is strategically political in the sense that it, on the surface, turns up as a liberating force but, at the bottom, conditions the conduct of individuals.⁴ Foucault contests the positions of Plato, Bacon and Nietzsche. He does not appreciate the approach of reducing knowledge to power or power to knowledge.

Foucault explores the relationship between knowledge and power that is only possible when power or knowledge cannot be reduced to one another. When Foucault is charged for reducing knowledge to power, he clarifies,

*“I know it has been attributed to me – the thesis, ‘knowledge is power’, or ‘power is knowledge’ ‘I begin to laugh, since studying their relation is precisely my problem. If they are identical, I would not have to study them...”*⁵

According to Foucault, there is neither instrumental nor guiding connection between knowledge and power. Instead, knowledge and power imply each other. For example, the problems of mendicancy and idleness in the days of crisis created a need for the establishment of general hospital in France. Hospital confined mendacious and idle men in order to avoid deepening the crisis. The establishment of the hospital in 1656 was made possible with the accumulation of data indicating the level of threat to the order of society. Without the accumulation of such data, mendicancy and idleness may not appear as a threat to society. Knowledge built up the case for the establishment of the general hospital. Knowledge implies power or power entails knowledge. The hospital, in the process of development, gathered information, appropriated and distributed it in order to handle mendicancy and idleness in an effective way. It simply did not confine them. It subsequently gave birth to new techniques, means, and organization. The establishment of the hospital demonstrates that knowledge and power empirically and historically do not exist on opposite sides. They do not run parallel but supplement and cross over. As Foucault puts it,

“power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge

that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations.”⁶

Foucault considers disciplines such as psychology, psychiatry or medicine or management sciences as fields of knowledge. According to Foucault, institutions like hospitals, management schools or clinics in which these fields of knowledge are practiced have transformed into instruments of social control. The schools of management do not simply transmit knowledge but change the conducts and the perceptions of students and its employees as well. And management institutions work and occupy space within certain network of power relations. According to Edward Said, the epistemic worth of Foucault’s claim is very much limited to European continent or better to say that to those regions where power and knowledge are historically appeared in connection with each other. We cannot claim that it is a universal fact.

There is a strong connection between knowledge and truth. Knowledge is always about the truth of something. Truth is the property of knowledge. In the context of management sciences something that develops managerial skills is considered to be true and it is worthy to be acquired. So truth is not outside the relations of (managerial) power. The issue of knowledge and truth becomes more complex when power is not a homogeneous entity. Being heterogeneous power promotes various forms of knowledge and truths supplementing and contradicting one another. Foucault gives an example from historical development of sciences:

“There is no question that the appearance in nineteenth century psychiatry, jurisprudence, and literature, of a whole series of discourse on the species and subspecies of homosexuality, inversion, pederasty, and ‘psychic hermaphroditism’ made possible a strong advance of social controls into the area of ‘perversity’ but it also made possible the formation of a ‘reverse’ discourse: homosexuality began to speak in its own behalf, to demand that its legitimacy or ‘naturalness’ be acknowledged, often in the same vocabulary, using the same categories by which it was medically disqualified. There is not, on the one side, a discourse of power, and on the opposite, another discourse that runs counter to it. Discourses are tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of forces relations, there can exist different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy: they can, on the contrary, circulate without changing

their form from one strategy to another, opposing strategy.”⁷

Power constitutes various forms of knowledge and truths. However, it is homogenous in its strategy (control of conduct) but heterogeneous in its manifestation and forms.

“As always with the relations of power, one is faced with complex phenomena which do not obey the Hegelian form of the dialectic...Power after investing itself in the body, finds itself exposed to a counterattack in the same body.”⁸

Foucault argues that:

“If I tell the truth about myself, as I am now doing, it is in part that I am constituted as a subject across a number of power relations which are exerted over me and which I exert over others.”⁹

By consequence the change of power and knowledge structure would constitute different regimes of truth. As Foucault puts it:

“Each society has its own regime of truth, its ‘general politics’ of truth- that is, the types of discourse it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances that enable one to distinguish true and false statements; the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of who are charged with saying what counts as true.”¹⁰

The general politics of truth signifies that truth is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produces and sustains it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it.¹¹ The truth is inseparable from politics [power] and vice versa. The production of truth therefore responds not only to the epistemological requirements of a given period but subject to political, social and economical process of that society. He argues

“I have tried to make appear, a perpetual articulation of power on knowledge and of knowledge on power. It is not sufficient to say that power needs this discovery or that form of knowledge; the exercise of power creates objects of knowledge, makes them emerge, accumulates information, uses it...The exercise of power perpetually

creates knowledge, and inversely knowledge entails effects of power... Modern humanism is therefore wrong to separate knowledge and power. Knowledge and power are internal to each other and it is pointless to dream of a day where knowledge would cease to depend on power. It is not possible that power can be exercised without knowledge; it is not possible that knowledge can be created without power.”¹²

Unavoidable connection of knowledge with power, according to Foucault, neither questions the validity of, nor supports, knowledge.¹³ The fact that power produces truth does not turn truth into power. Truth and power remain two distinct entities. Foucault clarifies his position that:

“When I talk about power relations and games of truth, I am absolutely not saying that games of truth are just concealed power relations- that would be a horrible exaggeration.”¹⁴

Although power and knowledge, no doubt, produce and reinforce each other; truth/power never turns into power/truth. In view of Foucault there is no truth independent of power. Truth is neither concealed nor is repressed by power; truth is itself constituted inside power relations, and it is a thing of this world. The critique has to expose the effects of truth, not the truth itself. Truth and knowledge derive from the perspective of power. Foucault explains it in the following manner:

“The essential political problem for the intellectual is not to criticize the ideological contents supposedly linked to science, or to ensure that his own scientific practice is accompanied by a correct ideology, but that of ascertaining the possibility of constituting a new politics of truth. The problem is not changing people’s consciousness- or what’s in their heads- but the political, economic, institutional regime of the production of truth.”¹⁵

As the truth is constituted through power/knowledge framework, the truth, therefore, cannot separate itself from power. Power structures as strategic relations are the central points through which the modern system of governance emerges and survives. Therefore, trying to conceive, or to build up, a system of government without power network is nothing but an illusion and a dream. The intellectual has to work out the effects of truth and overcome those effects that come up in the forms

of hegemony. And it is not a matter of emancipating truth from every system of power (which would be a chimera, for truth is already power) but of detaching the power of truth from the forms of hegemony within which it operates at the present time. When truth cannot exist apart from power and when every truth is ‘constituted truth’ then there is no possibility of *absolute* objectivity. Foucault in this connection argues:

“When I see you trying to establish the scientificity of Marxism I do not really think that you are demonstrating once and for all that Marxism has a rational structure and therefore its prepositions are the outcome of verifiable procedures for me, you are doing something altogether different, you are investing Marxist discourse and those who uphold them with the effects of power which the West since Medieval times has attributed to science and has reserved for those engaged in scientific discourse.”¹⁶

Because of power’s linkage with knowledge Foucault characterizes it as productive rather than repressive. For him, power does not always make things disappear or forces them to silence. Instead, it produces sciences and discourses. Especially nineteenth century onwards the productive aspect of power has become predominant in Western political history.¹⁷

Nature of Power: Disciplinary and Bio-Power

Disciplinary Power: Structural, Indifferent and Impersonal

In this part of the argument I would explore the shifting nature of power. This exploration would provide us a platform for better understanding the connection and role of management sciences with and in the promotion of modern power. According to Foucault, the fundamental task of modern power is to maximize utility and docility. Foucault does not draw the conception of utility or docility upon the Marxist perspective. By consequence the scope of the meaning of utility and docility is not limited to capital accumulation. It has meanings including the meaning of capital accumulation. However, Foucault does not deny the fact that the predominant representation of utility and docility in modern society is considered from the perspective of capitalism. Under these conditions something that has potential to accumulate capital (utility) is considered to be docile. Utility and docility are defined in relation to one another.

In the Western tradition there have been two forms of power (disciplinary and bio power). However the objective of disciplinary and

bio power is to maximize utility and docility, the procedures and mechanisms they adopt are different. Disciplinary power is structural, abstract, formal and impersonal in orientation, whereas bio-power is relatively personal, informal and specific. Disciplinary power considers man as the unity of innumerable parts and multiplies them to get maximum utility. Man is divided in terms of tasks or professions he performs. For example, a manager of a firm has various jobs to perform. He is in charge of administrative affairs. He is supposed to maintain discipline, supervise the lower staff and is supposed to be lenient to customers, strict to employees and responsible to higher authorities. All these micro tasks of the manager are governed by the principle of utility. Disciplinary power predominantly operates through a structure based enclosure. It occupies a space, so is visible to us. It takes many forms such as schools, banks, firms, educational institutes, hospitals, clinics and prisons. Each spatial enclosure multiplies itself into many, corresponding to professions and jobs descriptions. A university has a library, departments, institutes, hostels, clinics, computer labs, examination or faculty rooms etc. And each micro set up of university is further divided into parts and sections. Besides spatial dimension of disciplinary mechanism it occupies time. Each micro or macro enclosure and its occupier adhere to a strict time table. Shifts, periods, jobs, allowances, increments, or research are governed on the grounds of experience and time-utilization. Disciplinary power controls almost each and every movement of the individual. But surprisingly, to Foucault the strength of disciplinary power is yet to be discussed. Foucault argues that the strength of disciplinary power lies in its nature of observation and normalizing judgment. It creates a hierarchical set up of observation and judgment. A hierarchical set up is structured in such a form that it does not have a center. In the true sense, there is no one *in charge* of disciplinary surveillance. Everyone is under constant surveillance. Ideally, the operators and members of disciplinary mechanism are circularly connected with one another. The second factor that contributes to the strength of the disciplinary set up is its normalizing or juridical judgment. According to Foucault, in every disciplinary set up there is a micro penal institution, punishing and normalizing the behaviors of individuals. The workshop, the school, the army are subject to a whole micro-penalty of time (lateness, absences, interruptions of tasks), of activity (inattention, negligence, lack of zeal), of behavior (impoliteness, disobedience), of speech (idle chatter, insolence), of the body (incorrect attitudes, irregular gestures, lack of cleanness), of sexuality (impurity, indecency).¹⁸ Therefore, we find judges of normality everywhere. We find ourselves in the society where almost everyone is entitled with

normalizing power, the society of the teacher-judge, educator-judge, social worker-judge, family-judge, doctor-judge, psychologist-judge and even to the minute parts of the body we find ourselves in the carceral network¹⁹

Foucault believes that Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon ideally meets all requirements of disciplinary mechanism. Bentham designed a building in the late eighteenth century in which the inmates of panopticon were visible to someone who was invisible to them. It comprises a circular form of structure in which the center stays unobservable. Foucault considers it a dream building. From the eighteenth century onwards, schools, hospitals, universities, institutes and prisons are built upon the ideals and structures of the Panopticon. The Panopticon ideally built upon disciplinary power is a highly impersonal, rigid and indifferent set up. In the period of over one hundred years, people in the Western tradition started feeling discomfort with various forms of disciplinary mechanism. He explains:

“Well, it was a matter of emphasizing themes as the basis of a possible discussion; indeed, it seems to me that through the current economic crisis and the great oppositions and conflicts that are marked out between rich and poor nations (between industrialized and non-industrialized countries), it may clearly be seen how in the more developed nations a crisis of ‘government’, I mean the set of institutions and practices by which people are led from administration to education etc. It is this set of procedures, techniques, and methods that guarantee the ‘government’ of people, which seems to me to be in crisis today. This is true for the Western world as well as for the socialist world: I think people in both worlds are feeling more and more discomfort, difficulty, and impatience with the way they are led.”²⁰

Bio Power: Informal, Personal and Local

The crisis of disciplinary power initiates structural changes in the procedures of power in Western society. From the twentieth century, power tends to be informal, particular and personal, what Foucault calls bio-power. Foucault develops the concept of Bio-power in his first four lectures delivered at *College de France* from 1975 to 1976. The lectures are published as *Society Must Be Defended*. By bio-power Foucault means power based upon the category of *life*. Foucault interprets *life* in broader terms. Bio-power designates:

*“what brought life and its mechanisms into the realm of explicit calculations and made knowledge-power an agent of transformation of human life. Bio-power refers to various technologies through which just not the behavior of individuals is regulated, but through which life itself, in all its dimensions, is subject to the exercise of power”.*²¹

Bio-power targets life *per se*. When the mechanisms of power control life, they do not turn up as external, indifferent and exploitative. They involve the technologies of self over self. According to Foucault, the aim of bio-power is to produce docile bodies. The body is considered to be docile as long as it enhances productivity and power. In the course of the twentieth century bio power gradually takes the form of anatomo-politics of the body and bio politics of population.²² The anatomical form focuses upon body “*as a machine, its disciplining, optimization of its capabilities, extortion of its forces, the parallel increase of its usefulness and its docility and its integration into systems of efficient and economic controls*” whereas the bio politics of population centers upon species body, upon its birth and mortality rates, health, life expectancy etc. But Foucault also anticipates that bio power would turn into disciplinary power.²³

In the context of bio power Foucault introduces the term ‘governmentality’ to explore the newly developing mechanisms of power. By governmentality or government, Foucault means “the ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analysis, and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power which has as its target population, as its principal form of knowledge political economy, and its essential technical means apparatuses of security”.²⁴ By the notion of governmentality Foucault wants to emphasize the local, personal and informal orientation of power. It explores the singular or molecular ways of governing. However, he does not deny the importance of molar entities such as state, judiciary or executive.

We can notice that the fundamental thesis of disciplinary, bio-power or governmentality is to contest or to problematize the belief that the state occupies the central stage in the relations of power in the modern world. Modern power, whether in its structural or informal form, has cut through deep channels of modern society.

The Birth of Management Science

By management sciences I mean the sciences that heavily rely upon mathematics and calculation to solve the problems of decision making in

business..²⁵ It is considered to be a model or standard for decision making. For, it gives precision, accuracy and certainty. Various courses in the field of business management are theoretically constructed in light of the standards of management science. All courses are designed to make decision making accurate and precise. Courses such as Information Management, Principles of Management, Business Communication, Organizational Behavior, Production and Operations Management, Management Theory and Practice, Small Business Management, Comparative Management, Marketing, Managerial Policy, Corporate Strategy, Entrepreneurial Management, Operations and Supply Chain Management, Change and Innovation Management, Strategic Management, Human Resource Management, Industrial Relations Management, Foundations of Human Resource Development, Conflict Management, Team Management, Performance and Compensation Management etc. clearly show their reliance upon management science. If we take a close look at the course outlines of the courses above, we can notice that these courses involve rigorous mathematical, logical and statistical calculations and reasoning. They idealize mathematical precision in the decisions and management of business. We can understand the obsession of business management sciences with mathematics. Business managers, in the Foucauldian terms, die to maximize utility and minimize the chances of loss. The notions such as utility or loss provide basic epistemological and operative framework to business managers to cope with and to understand the world. From the perspective of utility and loss the world discloses itself. It is not the manager or CEO who assigns this task to the firm. The firm and his CEO are the elements that are disclosed by the world of profit and loss. From the point of view of loss and profit business calculations must have the highest degree of precision, accuracy, and certainty. Under these conditions mathematics, statistics and logic turn up as the best tool to enhance the level of accuracy in business calculations. The notions of accuracy and precision are considered to be true properties of a genuine decision making in business. That is why I believe that business management presupposes the norms and standards of management science. It becomes clear that from the perspective of utility and loss the courses are designed and taught in the institutes of management sciences. Course instructors are supposed to make sure that teaching must enhance the capability of their students to make right decisions. That is to say the teacher is supposed to change the conduct, thinking and perception of students in such a manner that students when they become the part of entrepreneurs, rightly understand and manipulate the business

environment. In the business environment power explicitly implies knowledge and truths.

Power governing the sciences of management is heavily informed by disciplinary power. However, I cannot deny the role of bio-power. The birth and the development of human and management science cannot be understood without taking into account disciplinary power. For, the development of human and management science such as medicine, psychology, psychiatry, criminology, sociology, and business studies can in no way be dissociated from the exercise of power. Human and management sciences cannot be separated from certain mechanisms of power because for human and management science, society or an individual become the object of study only with respect to a certain perspective that is essentially bound with the mechanism of power.²⁶

Regarding the relationship between power and human and management science Foucault claims that the examination which is the unity of observation. Normalization plays an extremely important role.²⁷ He explains that the heart of the procedures of discipline and examination manifest the subjection of those who are perceived as objects and the objectification of those who are subjected.²⁸ By the concept of examination Foucault wants to establish that disciplinary power at the same time subjectifies and objectifies the individual. For him, subjectification and objectification are interdependent. Foucault defines 'subject' as an individual who becomes subject when someone else controls the conduct of that individual or even when the individual through knowledge determines his own conduct. Both meanings of subjects suggest a form of power that subjugates and makes subjects.²⁹ In the process of subjugation the individual objectifies either himself or the other members of society as an object of knowledge. In contemporary business the subjugation takes various forms such as open space offices that are visible to customers, colleagues and officers, jobs are susceptible to bonuses or increments based upon performance, adherence to strict time table, internalized sense of professionalism and self responsibility, sense of wages in return of labor, constant surveillance, development of strong connections between income and needs and enjoyment and satisfaction, permanent job insecurity, installation of punching card or thumb machines, time table or attendance registrars, intense competitive environment etc. These mechanisms and procedures show the level of penetration of disciplinary mechanism into contemporary business studies and practices. Foucault puts that a "constant supervision of individuals by someone who exercised power over them – school teacher, foreman, physician, psychiatrist, prison warden – and who so long as he exercised power, had the possibility of both supervising and

constituting a knowledge concerning those he supervised.”³⁰ The examination firstly constitutes knowledge by turning each and every individual into the field of documentation such as within the institutions files are maintained for all things. Every school, college, industry, camp, prison, hospitals and clinics have a record book where everything from their arrival to their departure have been documented and strictly registered.

*“The examination that places individuals in a field of surveillance also situates them in the network of writing; it engages them in a whole mass of documents that capture and fix them.”*³¹

Because of extensive filing structure, individuals, employees, teachers and students appear to be describable, analyzable and deeply controllable. This system of control appears to be less severe and more refined in which *just* documentation rather than any form of force governs individuals. Exploring life from the spectacles of documentation shows different authoritarian systems working in the institutions.

According to Foucault, this file maintaining system not only gives refined control but furnishes us with bundle of information to set up the foundation of human and management sciences well. He writes that,

*“These small techniques of notation, of registration, of constituting files, of arranges facts in columns and tables...were of decisive importance in the epistemological thaw of the sciences of the individual.”*³²

The knowledge that has been extracted while subjecting the individuals is not just about to determine whether or not something had occurred or the individual is performing and working in accordance with the given rules and requirements. But the examination collects data “*in terms of what was normal or not, correct or not, in terms of what one must do or not do*”.³³ According to Foucault, the extraction of knowledge, in brief, occurs in two different ways. First, the supervision extracts the technical knowledge. For example, in a factory the supervision makes possible the accumulation of knowledge about labor and it manages to collect data regarding the development of skills. The immediate recording of this knowledge gradually develops the discipline of technical knowledge.³⁴ Second, the examination from the similar fields like school, prison, hospitals etc. develops the fields of observational knowledge. The observational knowledge stems from the observation and classification of those individuals, from the recording and analyses of their actions, [and]

from their comparison.³⁵ On the grounds of observational procedures, the skills and techniques with the passage of time have been transformed into sciences like sociology, psychology, criminology and psychiatry. As Foucault writes:

“The carceral texture of society assures both the real capture of the body and its perpetual observation: it is, by its very nature, the apparatus of punishment that confirms most completely to the new economy of power and the instrument for the formation of knowledge that this very economy needs...If, after the age of ‘inquisitorial’ justice, we have entered the age of ‘exemplary’ justice, if, in an even more general way, the method of examination has been able to spread so widely throughout society, and to give rise in part to the sciences of man, one of the great instruments for this has been the multiplicity and close overlapping of the various mechanisms of incarceration. I am not saying that the human (and management) science emerged from the prison. But, if they have been able to be formed and to produce so many profound changes in the episteme, it is because they have been conveyed by a specific and new modality of power: a certain policy of the body, a certain way of rendering the group of men docile and useful. This policy required the involvement of definite relations of knowledge in relations to power; it called for a technique of overlapping subjection and objectification; it brought with it new procedures of individualizations. The carceral network constituted one of the armatures of this power-knowledge that has made the human (and management) science historically possible. Knowable man (soul, individuality, consciousness, and conduct, whatever it is called) is the object-effect of this analytical investment, of this domination-observation.”³⁶

Foucault does not want to establish that disciplinary power exclusively and completely constitutes the formation of human or management studies. He wants to demonstrate the role of disciplinary power in the formation of human and management science which he thinks is overlooked in Western tradition. For Foucault, power in itself is not the necessary and sufficient condition of the human sciences; the human and management sciences do not exclusively sustain and promote power

relations. There is no doubt that the power has played a central role in the development of the human and management sciences and possibly these sciences could not have been developed in the existing form and scope without the birth of modern power relations. It does not establish that human and management science are nothing but a means to promote those power relations. Foucault explains the role of these sciences in promoting the modern system of governance with reference to techniques developing out of the fields of health, business, nutrition, housing and medicine. These sciences with their newly acquired vocabulary that is insanity, criminality, sickness, health, normality etc. plays an important role in sustaining modern power.³⁷ Regarding the political (power/controlling) role of these sciences Foucault relatively gives more importance to medicine in the modern government of individuals. According to Foucault, in the contemporary world the domain and the scope of medicine does not just seem to be restricted to physical, psychopathological or neurological analysis of human bodies, but medicine with the development of its technology and sophisticated analysis is playing a juridical role. Similar to the dominant role of religion during seventeenth century, medicine in the present world not only defines normality or abnormality but also explains legitimate and illegitimate, criminal and not criminal, debauchery and harmful practices. From the perspective of medicine's juridical and political role Foucault claims that medicine has taken up where religion has left off. Modern power relations seem to have penetrated into social relations not from *above*, but from *below*. Through the way of education, nutrition, health and by the conceptions of diseases, normal, abnormal, debauchery, criminal, utility and through the structure of welfare system, rights, and liberties. Modern power relations have not only made their way into social relations but it are multiplying themselves self through them.³⁸

Seeing the political and juridical role of knowledge Foucault maintains that power and knowledge reinforce each other in the modern world.³⁹ There is no point where one can only find the rule of knowledge without power, or that of power without knowledge.

Foucault also takes up the issue of population sciences in the context of knowledge and power. He argues that population sciences similar to management science derive from certain representation of power. However, it is different from disciplinary procedures. In *The History of Sexuality* he discusses such networks of power, bio-power, in which 'sex' emerges as an object of discourse during the eighteenth century. According to Foucault, in the late eighteenth century when capitalism was rising, the people, for the first time, encountered the

phenomena of population. From the perspective of capitalist power relations, population is not the sum total of people living in a fixed geographical area, but these people as manpower might either disrupt or encourage growth and political stability. This new perception of 'population' gives rise to different techniques, procedures and methods which are designed to effectively administrate and efficiently manage the phenomena of population. The sum total of these procedures and techniques are called 'population studies'. Foucault introduces the term 'bio-power' for those techniques that are concerned with the issue of 'population'.⁴⁰ Foucault claims that at the heart of this economic and political problem of population was *sex*. It was necessary to analyze the birth rate, the age of marriage, legitimate and illegitimate births, the precocity and frequency of sexual relations, the ways of making them fertile or sterile, the effects of unmarried life or of the prohibitions, the impact of contraceptive practices. The management of *sex* appeared to be the sole target of the studies concerned with the phenomena of population.⁴¹ Although, every society considers the importance of population in the development of society, according to Foucault, it was the first time in Western history that the management of sex as an object of investigation and intervention comes into being. "Between the state and the individual, sex became an issue, and a public issue no less; a whole web of discourses, special knowledge, analysis, and injunctions settled upon it".⁴² For, sex was the central point through which bio-power entered into social relations. It turned out to be an object of study not simply because the people wanted to know the truth about sex but they want to manage it. For Foucault, the power relations through which 'sex' appears to be an object of study establishes that there are no Archimedean points from where the individual disinterestedly observes what is conventionally known as facts. To Foucault, sex is a modern construction. Before the birth of bio-power in the eighteenth century power relations informed by Christianity constituted what he calls 'flesh'. During the seventeenth and earlier eighteenth centuries there was no sex but flesh. Foucault argues that the capitalist power constituted a new object of study i.e. sex, which gave birth to population sciences. Population sciences are born within capitalist relations of power. Sex is not the discovery of disinterested observation. Instead, it is the invention of capitalism. So are the management sciences. For Foucault, sexuality is the correlative of modern power practices in which it turns up to be such an issue which has to be addressed. Under these conditions sexuality becomes an object of the sciences. Foucault argues,

"In actual fact, what was involved, rather, was the very production of sexuality. Sexuality must not be thought of

as a kind of natural given which power tries to hold in check, or as an obscure domain which knowledge tries to gradually to uncover. It is a name that can be given to a historical construct: not a furtive reality that is difficult to grasp, but a great surface network in which the stimulation of bodies, the intensification of pleasures, the incitement to discourse, the formation of special knowledge, the strengthening of controls and resistances are linked to one another, in accordance with a few major strategies of knowledge and power.”⁴³

In order to make an effective use of population, sex becomes the target of management. The management of sex produces various truths such as means of family planning, sexual transmitted disease, abortion, mother care, therapeutic procedures, clinics, maternity homes etc.⁴⁴ The science of population (knowledge) is turning into the science of social control (power). There is no clear line of demarcation between knowledge and power. Knowledge and power are inevitably connected with one another. The sciences, being the result of power, produce such forms of truth that promote them. Truths are not outside the relations of power.⁴⁵ Truth is “produced only by virtue of multiple forms of *constraint* and it *induces* regular effects of power”.⁴⁶ It cannot absolutely be determined and judged purely on epistemological grounds. Statements within the sciences are true or false as long as they satisfy epistemic as well as utilitarian criterion.

He puts that “all these negative elements – defenses, censorship, denials – which the repressive hypothesis groups together in one great central mechanism destined to say no, are doubtless only component parts that have a *local* and *tactical role* to play in a transformation into discourse, a technology of power, and a will to knowledge that are *far from being reducible* to the former”.⁴⁷ Foucault does not reject *repression* per se, what he rejects the idea of repression for the sake of repression. The objective of repression was not the repression as such but repression for the sake of management of sex. Repression must be located in the network of power of which it is a *local* part of it. Foucault does not deny the existence of repression but wants to demonstrate that repression is always a part of a much more complex political strategy regarding sexuality.⁴⁸

Conclusion

Management sciences emphasize utility and docility. They teach and deepen the mechanism and procedures of attaining them. When the

world is disclosed from the perspective of utility and docility such a disclosure necessarily excludes various possible worlds. Among possible worlds there may be a few that cannot be adaptable to the compulsions of modern power. Modern power's love of utility and docility orients it towards impersonal and mechanical set ups and procedures that gradually penetrate into society. Human societies somehow structurally orient towards markets. Specifically, in our societies modern power gradually breaks up the bonds of traditional tribal societies, cultural norms, old family values and race-based economic and political structures. Our society is in the process of giving away traditional bonds. In the context of modern power management science internalizes the principles of utility and docility. These principles by virtue of their economical orientation do not give significant importance to factors such as race, culture, caste, class, religion etc. contributing to the foundation of traditional society.

Notes & References

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- ³ Walter Arnold Kaufmann, *Philosophic Classics: Bacon to Kant*, (New York: Prentice-Hal, 1968), 9-25.
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- ⁵ Michel Foucault, *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writing* (London: Routledge, 1988) 43.
- ⁶ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, *op.cit.*, 27.
- ⁷ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (United States: Vintage Books, 1999), 101-102
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- ⁹ Michel Foucault, *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writing*, *op.cit.*, 39.
- ¹⁰ Michel Foucault, *Essential Works of Foucault*, Vol. 3: Power, ed. James D. Faubion (New York: The New Press, 2000), 131.
- ¹¹ Michel Foucault, *Power / Knowledge: Selected Interview and Other Writings*, *op.cit.*, 133
- ¹² David Macey, *The lives of Michel Foucault* (New York: Hutchinson, 1993), 142-143.
- ¹³ Michel Foucault, *Essential Works of Foucault*, Vol.1 ed. Paul Rainbow: Ethics, Subjectivity and Truth (New York: The New Press, 1997) 296.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 132-133.
- ¹⁶ Michel Foucault, *Power / Knowledge: Selected Interview and Other Writings*, *op.cit.*, 85.
- ¹⁷ Michel Foucault, *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writing*, *op.cit.*, 118.
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- ¹⁹ *Ibid.* 304.
- ²⁰ Michel Foucault, *Remarks on Marx* (New York: Semiotext, 1991) 175-176.
- ²¹ Alan Milchman and Alan Rosenberg, "Michel Foucault Crises and Problemizations", *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 67, No. 2, (2005): 336.
- ²² *Ibid.*, 337.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, 337-338.
- ²⁴ Michel Foucault, *Essential Works of Foucault*, Vol. 3. *op.cit.* 220
- ²⁵ *Introduction to Management Science*, (India: Pearson Education, 2008), 13.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, 106
- ²⁷ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, *op.cit.*, 184-194 & 224
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- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 59.
- ³¹ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, *op.cit.*, 189.
- ³² *Ibid.*, 191.
- ³³ Michel Foucault, *Essential Works of Foucault*, Vol. 3. *op.cit.*, 59.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.* 84.
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- ⁴⁰ Michel Foucault, *Essential Works of Foucault*, Vol.2: Aesthetics, Method, and Methodology, ed. James D. Faubion (New York: The New Press, 1999) 141.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 25-26.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, 26.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, 105-6.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 68.
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- ⁴⁸ Michel Foucault, *Essential Works of Foucault*, Vol.1, *op.cit.*, 126