

School as a Space of Power: A Foucauldian Critique

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Abstract : The attempt to make thought school-like by fitting it into various frameworks with the institutionalization of it is almost simultaneous with philosophy itself. What once sprouted in the “academia” of old has institutionalized under the enlightenment's light, becoming the fundamental space reflecting the spirit of its age. However, the shift from the thinking temple where truth's knowledge was sought to functional spaces where power/power relations are constructed indicates a significant rupture in the meaning of school. Therefore, a genealogical inquiry into the meaning of the school can provide us with a path toward understanding how it should be approached in contemporary times. From this perspective, it is essential to highlight how power/power relations operate in the school in terms of disciplinary practices, temporal management, and spatial organization to construct a distinct subjectivation. Recognizing that the changing and evolving nature of education is related to the structure of space can be understood by revealing how disciplinary power and bio-power, two fundamental aspects of genealogical research, operate. In disciplinary power, the relationship of the subject with discipline, temporal management, and space is about improvement and normalization, while in biopower, it manifests in maximizing utility, increasing free time, and constructing spaces that seem more vital. These indicators not only facilitate the formation of students as a subjectivation but also enable the condition of the possibility of power/power relations. Because power is not applied to subjects but used by them for passage, and behind this lies the idea that the individual is already one of the components of power. As one of the components of power, in terms of subjectivation type, the student is one of the primary targets of power relations. Therefore, conducting a genealogical inquiry of the student as a type of subjectivation and the school as its living area from the philosophical foundations of education may offer a new opportunity for thinking about the contemporary crisis of thought. Within the framework of this possibility, our investigation will consider which aspects of the school and the student, brought together for educational purposes, can be thought of within and beyond power/power relations.

Keywords : power, education, space, school, student, discipline

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