The Future of Cultural Studies: Foucault and the Diachronic Nature of Power

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I

One of the notable features of the new historicism is its openness to criticism. John Bender has remarked that the new historicism cannot hold an invulnerable position among literary studies because it is "a discourse produced by a discipline in crisis".[1] I understand this to mean that the new historicism can exist only within multiple relations of power. Equally obvious, on this understanding, is that any cultural studies after the movement should be regarded as discursive production of power relations.[2] Only when we go beyond a partial positioning of criticism can we make a more fruitful analysis of literary discourse. If, like Bender, we regard the new historicism as a process for the finding a new ground, the next step is to examine the multiple relations of power represented in

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[1] John Bender, "Eighteenth-Century Studies," in *Redrawing the Boundaries*, eds. Stephen Greenblatt and Giles Gunn (New York: MLA, 1992) 93. See the various essays collected in *The New Historicism*, ed. H. Aram Veeser (New York: Routledge, 1989).

[2] For a survey, from a contemporary theoretical perspective, of cultural studies, see Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula A. Treichler eds. *Cultural Studies* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 1-22.

works of art.

Although many contemporary studies of English literature have applied Michel Foucault's concept of power to the construction of their arguments, they have paid little attention to the unique historicity of power which he suggests in *Discipline and Punish*.[3] Foucault rectifies a traditional notion concerning power: power is not a property won by the authorities, but a set of reciprocal relations among forces that passes through the dominant authorities as well as the dominated. He presents this well-known postulate by writing "a correlative history of the modern soul and of a new power to judge".[4] In what sense, then, does he use the word "history" here? It is clear that he describes, above all, the modern history of power relations in which the West has changed attitudes toward punishment and discipline. In the early part of *Discipline and Punish*, he demonstrates how criminals were physically attacked in sovereign societies: the blundered torture of Robert François Damiens. A great part of the book, however, is given to the analysis of the new form of punishment proposed by the humanist reformers and the later disciplinary technology in modern societies. In addition, in only a few pages, he mentions present-day struggles concerning the prison. Thus, what Foucault intends by using the term "history" seems to be an analysis of the synchronic structure of power in the modern era. As we shall see later, Fredric Jameson has taken up a position which is opposed to this

[3] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1979). See Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1982) 143-67.

[4] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 23.

synchronicity.[5] Yet in spite of Foucault's seemingly explicit usage of the term, we can develop his concept of power a little more fully in a diachronic way. I think it is worth contemplating the unique historicity of power in order to find a new basis for English studies after new historicism. A reconsideration of Foucault's analysis of power in response to Jameson's criticism can shape the future of cultural studies, ranging from new historicism to post-colonial and queer theory.[6]

The early parts of this essay review Bender's *Imagining the Penitentiary*, which clarifies the reciprocal relations between the English eighteenth-century novel and the development of disciplinary prisons.[7] Along the way, I examine how Bender defines the role of literary discourse in modern relations of power. Here I will show that Bender's historical approach to novelistic discourse tends to view power as a synchronic structure. I think there is room for further investigation in this area. Then, I focus on an episode from Henry Fielding's *Jonathan Wild*: Mrs. Heartfree's adventurous story. I would like to indicate that Mrs. Heartfree's episode allows us to move beyond a binary opposition between synchrony and diachrony. Next comes the heart of my paper. I shall concentrate on an examination of the unique historicity of power in *Discipline and Punish*. This speculation about the general nature of power offers us some clues for the consideration of present critical

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[5] See Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1981) 17-102.

[6] See, for example, Peter Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean*, 1492-1797 (New York: Routledge, 1986) 1-12, and David M. Halperin, *Saint Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography* (New York: Oxford UP, 1995) 104-06, 119-20.

[7] Bender, *Imagining the Penitentiary: Fiction and the Architecture of Mind in Eighteenth-Century England* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1987).

theories. In brief, the following argument aims to give a wider perspective to cultural studies from the viewpoint of the diachronic nature of power. This is the subject of my paper.

II

In considering the historicity of power, it is useful to focus on two studies that challenge the criticism of Foucault: Bender's *Imagining the Penitentiary* and Jameson's *The Political Unconscious*. Although they differ widely in both subject matter and critical stance, they raise the objections against Foucault's notion of power. More specifically, against his historical approach to the modern structure of power. As a starting point, I would like to make it clear how they criticize Foucault's history of power.

Imagining the Penitentiary begins with a noticeable departure from Foucault. In the preface to the book, Bender remarks that he attempts to clear up the question of how literary discourse is related to cultural formations. According to Bender, Foucault's history of power leaves this serious problem untouched. While referring to a major change in the modern episteme that Foucault outlines in *The Order of Things*, Bender pays attention to the active role of literary production.[8] Certainly, he recognizes that literary discourse no longer appears as a perfect medium for defining the world in the modern period. As literary activity has shown the tendency toward its separateness or autonomy since the Enlightenment, it cannot have direct access to the construction of the outside world. Yet, Bender says, we miss the point if we keep literature

[8] Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage, 1973).

in indefinite confinement. As we shall see later, he demonstrates that literary discourse, along with other forms of knowledge, is essentially concerned with the future of our society. In sum, *Imagining the Penitentiary*, while criticizing Foucault's negative attitude toward literature, explores the relation of discursive practice and social formation, within which literature loses its autonomy.

Another criticism of Foucault's history of power is *The Political Unconscious*, in which Jameson insists on the importance of going beyond a binary opposition between synchrony and diachrony in respect to dialectical power relations. As briefly mentioned, Foucault demonstrates the modern structure of power concerning the prison in *Discipline and Punish*. Although Foucault presents us with three distinct types of power to punish, he seems to neglect the diachronic relations of these categories. This is because he dwells on the exceptional development of panoptic apparatuses.[9] For Jameson, therefore, Foucault's notion of power as well as all anti-dialectical frameworks of critique is to be sharply attacked:

> Weber's dramatic notion of the "iron cage" of an increasingly bureaucratic society, Foucault's image of the gridwork of an ever more pervasive "political technology of the body," but also more traditional "*synchronic*" accounts of the cultural programming of a given historical "moment," such as those that have variously been proposed from Vico and Hegel to Spengler and Deleuze — all such monolithic models of the cultural unity of a given historical period have tended to confirm the suspicions of a dialectical tradition about the dangers of an emergent "*synchronic*" thought, in which change and development are relegated to

[9] See Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 195-228.

> the marginalized category of the merely "diachronic," the contingent or the rigorously nonmeaningful. . . . (emphasis added)[10]

Thus Jameson reduces Foucault's work to a totalizing project which presents us with a homogeneous structure of power. From this point of view, Foucault appears simply as one of the totalitarian philosophers who attribute various changes or contradictions to transitional periods. Here we may recall Jameson's slogan of *The Political Unconscious*: "Always historicize!"[11] Under this slogan, he attempts to interpret History itself which cannot be subsumed into any "monolithic models" of total system. Therefore, Foucault's notion of power, because of its synchronicity, is denounced as an obstacle to Jameson's dialectical work. Yet Jameson makes a pervasive interpretation of Foucault's historicity of power. I would like to show that Foucault, as well as Jameson, firmly denies a synchrony/diachrony dichotomy: we will return to this point later in this paper.

In any event, it will be clear from these observations that the two critical studies should be combined to understand what power relations develop around literary discourse. Bender puts stress on the dynamic role of literary discourse in the construction of social institutions. Jameson, on the other hand, proposes the necessity of opening literary production to the historical moment in which the coexistence of synchrony and diachrony becomes visible. Therefore, we need to consider the *historical* role of literary discourse with these points in mind. Let us, then, examine further *Imagining the Penitentiary*, which illustrates

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[10] Jameson 90-91.
[11] Jameson 9.

the historical relations of power between eighteenth-century discourse and the later development of disciplinary institutions.

III

Bender's general position on the historical role of literary discourse is stated in the first two paragraphs of his book:

> I consider literature and the visual arts as advanced forms of knowledge, as cognitive instruments that anticipate and contribute to institutional formation. Novels as I describe them are primary historical and ideological documents; the vehicles, not the reflections, of social change.
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> I shall argue that attitudes toward prison which were formulated between 1719 and 1779 in narrative literature and art — especially in prose fiction — sustained and, on my reconstruction, enabled the conception and construction of actual penitentiary prisons later in the eighteenth century.[12]

What the passage makes clear at once is that Bender avoids the image of reflection. Certainly, we may say that there is an intimate, analogous relationship between social institutions and literary discourse. It is useful to compare the contemporary penal system with its novelistic discourse so as to understand the synchronic structure of the power to punish. In fact, Bender also makes such a comparison of these different types of cultural production. But he never considers modern literary activity to be the effect of social institutions. For Bender, analysis of the two kinds of social discourse — both the novel and the prison are regarded as "comparable social texts" — throws light on the particular role of

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[12] Bender, *Imagining the Penitentiary* 1.

literary discourse.[13] The "attitudes toward prison" represented in fictional narratives thrust forward the construction of a new system of imprisonment. Thus, Bender's denial of the theory of reflection can be viewed as an attempt to open the synchronic structure of power in a new historical way.

It is necessary, then, to see how this new contextual dimension of Bender's argument is applied to the study of Fielding.[14] The two chapters of *Imagining the Penitentiary*, closely analyzing Fielding's novelistic discourse and his juridical career, demonstrate how Fielding makes an important contribution to the birth of new prisons. As already mentioned, Bender's denial of the reflection theory recognizes the necessity of explaining those new ideas which are inconsistent with contemporary prisons. What new elements can be found in Fielding's novels? Most important is the gradual, but immense changes in his approach to narrative construction: the disappearance of an obtrusive narrator. Having observed the formal changes of narration from *Shamela* to *Amelia*, Bender concludes that we can "find significant movement toward the transparency of the later realist novel" in Fielding's works.[15] Why, then, is this transparent narration inconsistent with the traditional form of imprisonment? This is because the missing presence of narrative authority is not relevant to the old prisons as a space of detention, but to

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[13] Bender, *Imagining the Penitentiary* 4.

[14] See, among numerous others, Michael McKeon, *The Origins of the English Novel, 1600-1740* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1987); Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (New York: Oxford UP, 1987); Marshall Brown, *Preromanticism* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1991); Terry Castle, *The Female Thermometer: Eighteenth-Century Culture and the Invention of the Uncanny* (New York: Oxford UP, 1995).

[15] Bender, *Imagining the Penitentiary* 181.

the new penitentiary prisons as disciplinary instruments. Jeremy Bentham's idea of Panopticon might be a notable example of this new prison.[16] It is a kind of "fictional" project to make the most of transparent inspections in the prison where the inmates discipline themselves by taking a hidden authority into their minds. In sum, Fielding's narrative changes from obtrusiveness to transparency anticipate the emergence of the new power to punish.

Indeed, the shift to transparent narration in Fielding's novels gives an important clue to clarifying the historicity of power. Following Bender's account of panoptic vision in *Amelia*, one can correlate eighteenth-century novels to the later emergence of penitentiary prisons. Therefore, Bender makes a meaningful contribution to the theory of power: he reveals the positive role of literary discourse in the formation of power. Yet there seems to be a troubling limitation to Bender's argument at the very moment he draws a comparison between *Amelia* and other novels. For such comparisons are implicitly associated with a value judgment concerning Fielding's works of art. That is, whereas *Amelia* is an important novel that partakes greatly of the nature of penitentiary prisons, other novels like *Jonathan Wild* or *Tom Jones*, as a result, cannot be much esteemed in terms of transparent narration. According to Bender, the whole world of *Jonathan Wild* is created by an omniscient narrator whose authority is widely recognized in the old prisons.

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[16] On this subject, see D. A. Miller, *The Novel and the Police* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1988) 1-32, and Mary Schmelzer, "Panopticism and Postmodern Pedagogy," in *Foucault and the Critique of Institutions*, eds. John Caputo and Mark Yount (University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 1993) 127-36.

> The rather different, sardonic narrator of *Jonathan Wild* (1743) entirely dominates the novel with a demonstrative rhetoric resembling that of Swift's personifications.... The narrator's all-seeing and all-knowing posture emphasizes contrivance and control. Even the major characters lack particularity, and lesser ones like the "good magistrate" live specialized, insubstantial lives as creatures of plot.[17]

What positive role, then, does *Jonathan Wild* play in the process of constructing the new type of power? To answer this question Bender examines the novel from another important perspective of realism: the means for representing reformist content in a fictional world. At the *thematic* level, we can locate *Jonathan Wild* in the history of the new power to punish. So, following Bender's argument, I will focus on the most reformative and realistic part of *Jonathan Wild*.

IV

The episode of Mrs. Heartfree's adventure is one of the most realistic narratives in *Jonathan Wild*. Although her travelogue is in itself filled with many romantic events and devices, Fielding manages to transform the romantic story into a highly plausible narrative. First, we can find in this episode a significant movement toward the transparency of narration. By transferring omniscient authority onto a character in the novel, Fielding realizes, if only for a small space, a rather more neutral stance of narration. Second, along with the shift toward transparency, the episode shows the mutual relationship between law and literature, which enables us to imagine the construction of new penitentiary prisons.

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[17] Bender, *Imagining the Penitentiary* 180.

It is true that the first-person narrator of *Jonathan Wild* frequently breaks into the plot in order to explain his "too far-fetched" use of simile (BK. I, ch. xiv); to "open a truth, which we ask our reader's pardon for having concealed from him so long" (BK. II, ch. iii); to put forward a pretext for his digression (BK. III, ch. iv); or to insist on the natural ending of the story:

> But here, though I am convinced my good-natured reader may almost want the surgeon's assistance also, and that there is no passage in this whole story which can afford him equal delight, yet, lest our reprieve should seem to resemble that in the *Beggar's Opera*, I shall endeavor to shew him that this incident, which is indoubtedly true, is at least as natural as delightful; for we assure him we would rather have suffered half mankind to be hanged, than have saved one contrary to the strictest rules of writing and probability. (BK. IV, ch. vi)[18]

Yet, soon after declaring "the strictest rules of writing and probability", the narrator recedes from the foreground of the narrative. Then, Mrs. Heartfree returns from her travels and exposes Wild's villainy against Heartfree. We notice here a significant change in the narrative voice from obtrusive narrator toward the characters in the novel: Mrs. Heartfree and the good-natured magistrate. This movement toward the transparency of narration is all the more important because this episode, unlike other interpolated digressions, provides a "indoubtedly true" evidence of Wild's criminality.

Despite this realistic use of the narration, subsequent narrative

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[18] Henry Fielding, *Jonathan Wild*, ed. David Nokes (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982) 181. Subsequent references to this edition appear parenthetically.

invented by Mrs. Heartfree is very romantic. Mrs. Heartfree, deceived by Wild, boarded a ship for Rotterdam. On her adventurous voyage, she experienced a shipwreck, capture by pirates, some attempted rapes, and was cast away on the African coast. In the African jungle, she was in unceasing danger: the Count la Ruse tried to ravish her; the old hermit, who prevented the Count's villainy, made an attempt on her chastity. Ultimately, she managed to defend herself against a succession of threats. She preserved her virtue during her travels, so that she could not only recover the jewels that had been stolen from her husband but also be granted a diamond by an African chief for her chastity. However, even if her jewelry were a conclusive proof of Wild's guilt, we cannot readily believe her monologue to be a natural account based on factual probability. For, when Mrs. Heartfree escapes from mortal danger, we read many times of such remarks as "Heaven was now graciously pleased to relieve me" (188; BK. IV, ch. vii) or "THAT PROVIDENCE WILL SOONER OR LATER PROCURE THE FELICITY OF THE VIRTUOUS AND INNOCENT" (203; BK. IV, ch. xi). In brief, Mrs. Heartfree's romantic story goes against a narrative of the material world. Judging from her repetition of religious and supernatural insinuation, we cannot say that her story is truly constructed on the basis of the actual facts of the matter. Also these observations show us that the shift to transparent narration does not lead directly to literary realism. To understand Fielding's novelistic innovation in this episode, we should notice another figure who embodies the "rules of writing and probability", taking on the role of authoritative narrator.

The presence of the good magistrate relocates this romantic story within the realistic framework of the narrative. In other words, the judicial character in the plot serves to transform Mrs. Heartfree's private

tale into a more general narrative whose reliability as material evidence finally sends Wild to the gallows. Why can this magistrate reach beyond the obvious shortcomings of the romance, and move instead, with high probability, into realism? The question can be answered by considering his neutral and impartial attitude toward the case. The objectivity of the magistrate's investigation is shown as follows:

> This magistrate, who did indeed no small honour to the commission he bore, duly considered the weighty charge committed to him, by which he was entrusted with decisions affecting the lives, liberties, and properties of his countrymen. He, therefore, examined always with the utmost diligence and caution into every minute circumstance . . . as he was much staggered on finding that, of the two persons on whose evidence alone Heartfree had been committed, and had since been convicted, one was in Newgate for a felony, and the other was now brought before him for a robbery, he thought proper to put the matter very home to Fireblood at this time. (181-82; BK. IV, ch. vi)

The point is that the magistrate always endeavors to construct a plausible narrative by making a thorough examination of "every minute circumstance." We see a different version of the same description of the magistrate in the scene of Blueskin's attack on Wild. (168; BK. IV, ch. i) And, as mentioned above, here Bender underlines the role of the magistrate in constructing a realistic discourse in the novel. According to Bender, the magistrate, putting the "rules of writing and probability" into practice, adds a touch of reality to what is narrated by Mrs. Heartfree:

> Mrs. Heartfree's chronicle of her voyage completes the true account begun by the magistrate, fully cancels the indictment for fraud that might potentially be brought against her, and, because "the good magistrate was sensibly touched at her narrative," gains the promise of an "absolute

> pardon" for her husband (p.188). This is why her protracted story needs to be heard by the magistrate, whose presence seems awkward when considered in other lights.[19]

Thus the romantic story is finally transformed into an undoubtedly true narrative. In parallel with the transparency of narration, Fielding shows the importance of representing factual content according to the principles of evidence and proof. Thus, we realize that the episode of Mrs. Heartfree's adventure is the most realistic narrative in two senses: as transparent narration and objective narrative.

Probably, it is necessary for us to extend this kind of observation to other episodes or novels. If we continue to detect such realistic aspects in many works, we can understand more clearly how Fielding's novelistic innovation has developed in relation to the later penitentiary prisons. Then, at the same time, we can efface a value judgement on Fielding's novels to a large extent. Nevertheless, this is essentially problematic. For, as a natural consequence, it follows that the old romantic elements should be assigned to a secondary and nondeterminant position under the new dominance of the power to punish. It is true that Bender's main purpose is to show the historical relationship between the new realistic narrative and the later penitentiary prisons. This is why Bender lays emphasis on what he calls the penitentiary. But his attitude toward literary works falls into another synchronic structure of power: the totalizing project of realism. If we follow Jameson's famous slogan, we should pay more attention to the seemingly insubstantial constituents

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[19] Bender, *Imagining the Penitentiary* 160.

of the novel in order to open this new synchronic structure of power in a diachronic way.

V

The practice of going beyond a synchrony/diachrony opposition can, however, be observed in Foucault's work. We shall now look more carefully into the historicity of power relations in *Discipline and Punish.* As I have mentioned before, Jameson tells us that Foucault's analysis of the relations of power results in a linear project of totalization, where we cannot find true historicity beyond a binary opposition between synchrony and diachrony. Nevertheless, in my reconstruction, Foucault presents us with a way of undoing such a dichotomy of historicity. If so, Foucault's historicity of power is crucial for any cultural studies which seek to avoid ever-recurring binary model of power relations in literary works.

It is true that *Discipline and Punish* limits the scope of its investigation to a specific period of time: the modern. The main aim of the book is to make it clear how the new subjectivity of individuals can be constituted by the modern interplay of power and knowledge. As I mentioned at the outset, Foucault uses the word "history" in a specific sense:

> This book is intended as a correlative history of the modern soul and of a new power to judge; a genealogy of the present scientifico-legal complex from which the power to punish derives its basis, justifications and rules, from which it extends its effects and by which it masks its exorbitant singularity.[20]

[20] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 23.

In fact, a large part of this book is devoted to the discussion of the new interpretation of punishment in the late eighteenth century and the spread of disciplinary technology in schools, hospitals, and other institutions since the birth of panoptic prisons. Judging from the period to which the book has reference, it seems reasonable to say, as Jameson supposes, that Foucault's argument is narrowly concerned with the synchronic structure of power in a given historical time.

Then, in what sense may we regard Foucault's concept of power as a linear project of totalization? Where can we find in this book the totalization to which Jameson objects from his Marxism viewpoint? Relevant to these questions are the following remarks of Foucault's in the last part of the book:

> The carceral network constituted one of the armatures of this power-knowledge that has made the human sciences historically possible.... This no doubt explains the extreme solidity of the prison, that slight invention that was nevertheless decried from the outset. If it had been no more than an instrument of rejection or repression in the service of a state apparatus, it would have been easier to alter its more overt forms or to find a more acceptable substitute for it. But, rooted as it was in mechanisms and strategies of power, it could meet any attempt to transform it with a great force of inertia.[21]

The point is that "the carceral network" no longer refers to the old apparatus of confinement. Rather, unlike traditional incarceration, this new system has a great flexibility of operations: the principle functions of discipline and surveillance, from which the "power-knowledge" has the

[21] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 305.

greatest effect on modern subjectivization, can be applied widely to schools, hospitals, and other institutions. Yet, in spite of the softness of the network, Foucault emphasizes "the extreme solidity of the prison". Probably we might find a possibility here for interpreting his genealogy of the power to punish as a totalitarian project. While illustrating the contemporary movement from prisons to other institutions, from the most visible forms of subjection to the subtle effects of normalization, Foucault in the end reduces the historical movement to the very solidity of the prison. Therefore, one may say that Foucault's concept of power shows the linearity of all historical changes to the totalization of prison.

The results of these observations may justify Jameson in his argument that Foucault's concept of power is one of the "monolithic models of the cultural unity of a given historical period". In fact, Jameson's interpretation of the "political technology of the body" as a synchronic structure serves to give a theoretical significance to his own approach: the dialectical vision of history beyond a binary opposition between synchrony and diachrony. Yet two questions then arise about the very target of his criticism. First, what is the "political" aspect of Foucault's concept of power in *Discipline and Punish*? Second, why does Foucault overemphasize the "body", while examining the correlation of the soul and the power to punish? The following attempt to answer these questions will lead to a deeper understanding of Foucault's historicity of power.

Now let us take up the second problem of the relationship between body and soul discussed in *Discipline and Punish*. The book begins with the story of Damiens's cruel execution, at the center of which we see the superiority of sovereign power displayed through the confrontation of two bodies. Although this ceremonial execution took place in the mid-

eighteenth century, it represents rather the pre-modern power to punish. For, as Foucault puts it, punishment as spectacle belongs to the old relationship between sovereign and subject.

> Kantorowitz gives a remarkable analysis of '*The King's Body*': a double body according to the juridical theology of the Middle Ages, since it involves not only the transitory element that is born and dies, but another that remains unchanged by time and is maintained as the physical yet intangible support of the kingdom; around this duality, which was originally close to the Christological model, are organized an iconography, a political theory of monarchy, legal mechanisms that distinguish between as well as link the person of the king and the demands of the Crown, and a whole ritual that reaches its height in the coronation, the funeral and the ceremonies of submission. At the opposite pole one might imagine placing *the body of the condemned man*; he, too, has his legal status; he gives rise to his own ceremonial and he calls forth a whole theoretical discourse, not in order to ground the '*surplus power*' possessed by the person of the sovereign, but in order to code the '*lack of power*' with which those subjected to punishment are marked. In the darkest region of the political field the condemned man represents the symmetrical, inverted figure of the king. We should analyse what might be called, in homage to Kantorowitz, 'the least body of the condemned man' (emphasis added).[22]

Referring to Ernst H. Kantorowitz's thesis concerning "the juridical theology of the Middle Ages," Foucault here explains the duality of the sovereign body: the king is thought to have a "transitory" body and an "unchanged" body. The latter is an important element supporting the legitimacy of punishment. Although the criminal also has these two

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[22] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 28-29.

elements, only the "transitory" one is displayed at the scaffold: the criminal body is always beaten down in public execution. Therefore, there is "surplus power" on the side of the king, and a "lack of power" on the side of the criminal. We should not reduce these terms of quantity to the simple fact that one has power and the other doesn't. Here, from the start, is expressed power relations based on the mutual supplement of two forces. At any rate, the point is that the old power relations are made up not of the soul but of the body. In other words, there is no binary opposition between body and soul in the pre-modern period. The soul, as Foucault calls "the prison of the body", belongs to modern relations of power.

In the modern period, however, the confrontation of two bodies disappeared. Instead of relying on the absolute and personal power of the sovereign, the humanist reformers who insist on the abolition of cruel punishment formulate a new comprehensive principle of punishment. Of this principle, Foucault says:

> If the penality in its most severe forms no longer addresses itself to the body, on what does it lay hold? The answer of the theoreticians — those who, about 1760, opened up a new period that is not yet at an end — is simple, almost obvious. It seems to be contained in the question itself: since it is no longer the body, it must be the soul. The expiation that once rained down upon the body must be replaced by a punishment that acts in depth on the heart, the thoughts, the will, the inclinations. Mably formulated the principle once and for all: 'Punishment, if I may so put it, should strike the soul rather than the body' (Mably, 326).[23]

[23] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 16.

What the passage makes clear at once is that the significant but "simple, almost obvious" change of punitive object occurred in the latter half of the eighteenth century, when the soul tended to be the main target of punishment. Here, for the first time, we see the binary opposition between body and soul. And, from that very moment, punitive history may be described as a process of the substitution of soul for body over two centuries. Yet the two elements, for all their apparent distinction in meaning, are two aspects of the same fundamental relations of power. In general, one is tempted to draw more attention to the new factor in order to describe a struggle for power historically. Foucault shows that, on the contrary, power does not come about through such a separation of body and soul, even when the humanist reformers are greatly concerned with the soul as a new element of punishment. Foucault, discussing Mably's notion of the soul, puts the matter precisely:

> If the surplus power possessed by the king gives rise to the duplication of his body, has not the surplus power exercised on the subjected body of the condemned man given rise to another type of duplication? That of a 'non-corporal', a "soul', as Mably called it. The history of this 'micro-physics' of the punitive power would then be a genealogy or an element in a genealogy of the modern 'soul'. Rather than seeing this soul as the reactivated remnants of an ideology, one would see it as the present correlative of a certain technology of power over the body.[24]

The radical separation of soul from body derives from the old relations between sovereign and subject in the pre-modern period. Of course, the

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[24] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 29.

referential meaning of the soul is "non-corporal". But it is difficult to regard the soul simply as a counterpart of the body. For here is expressed the fact that the soul is "another type of duplication" of the body. The soul leads back to the old relations of power based on the mutual supplement of two forces. Therefore, we should think of this soul as something like a "non-corporal" body. As we have seen, the legitimacy of pre-modern punishment is guaranteed by the "surplus power" of the king. This time, legitimacy is supported by altering the "lack of power" on the side of the criminal into another permanent entity called soul which belongs to everybody. Viewed in this light, we cannot reduce the relations of body and soul in the modern period to a simple binary opposition. Instead of separation, division, or dichotomy, we find a new potential continuity of power relations in *Discipline and Punish.* In short, Foucault shows the possibility of undermining the synchronic structure of power to punish by connecting it to the relations between the two bodies which constitute power in pre-modern conditions.

We are now able to understand why Foucault overemphasizes the "body" through his book. It is true that every age has its own synchronic structure of power: it creates radical discontinuities. The emergence of the soul as a new target of punishment, therefore, appears to be a characteristic of the modern period. However, if we remain within synchronicity, we can never find the possibility of resistance against the totalization of the modern prison. For, as we have seen, the modern power to punish can always "meet any attempt to transform it with a great force of inertia." Then, by regarding the soul as a residual element of the criminal body, Foucault suggests the historical or diachronic moment of a way out within the synchronic structure of power. If we were to rewrite this modern power from the viewpoint of opposition, it

would be the relation between "a certain technology over the body" and the "body". A soul/body opposition, which seemed to construct a synchronic and totalizing system has now been deconstructed at the level of body. As a consequence, the binary model that was characteristic of the modern period is bound to be shaken.

The main aim of this deconstruction of the classical soul/body scheme becomes clear in the following passages, which contains what Foucault has to say on the subject matter of *Discipline and Punish.*

> That punishment in general and the prison in particular belong to a political technology of the body is a lesson that I have learnt not so much from history as from the present. In recent years, prison revolts have occurred throughout the world.... Were they revolts whose aims were merely material? Or contradictory revolts: against the obsolete, but also against comfort; against the warders, but also against the psychiatrists? ... One may, if one is so disposed, see them as no more than blind demands or suspect the existence behind them of alien strategies. In fact, they were revolts, at the level of the body, against *the very body of the prison.* What was at issue was not whether the prison environment was too harsh or too aseptic, too primitive or too efficient, but its very materiality as an instrument and vector of power; it is this whole technology of power over the body that the technology of the 'soul' — that of the educationalists, psychologists and psychiatrists — fails either to conceal or to compensate, for the simple reason that it is one of its tools. I would like to write the history of *this prison,* with all the political investments of the body that it gathers together in its closed architecture. Why? Simply because I am interested in the past? No, if one means by that writing a history of the past in terms of the present. Yes, if one means writing the history of the present (emphasis added).[25]

[25] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 30-31.

Here, we notice that Foucault suggests a possibility of resistance at the level of the body against specific forms of social domination, from which the "power-knowledge" derives its effect on modern subjectivization. According to Foucault, the prison struggles in the early 1970s did not aim for the amelioration of physical conditions.[26] Central to the revolts is the problem of "the very body of the prison", but he uses the terms "body" or "materiality" in a quite new sense. In order to avoid the binary opposition between physical body and incorporeal soul, Foucault defines the chief target of the revolts as the "whole technology of power over the body." The word "whole" is important in this context, because we find here that the "materiality" of the prison contains, at the same time, both physical and mental aspects of the power to punish. This is why he establishes the body as a rallying point for resistance. We may note, in passing, that he insists on the multiplicity of the body in *The History of Sexuality*.

> So we must not refer a history of sexuality to the agency of sex; but rather show how "sex" is historically subordinate to sexuality. We must not place sex on the side of reality, and sexuality on that of confused ideas and illusions; sexuality is a very real historical formation; it is what gave rise to the notion of sex, as a speculative element necessary to its operation. We must not think that by saying yes to sex, one says no to power; on the contrary, one tracks along the course laid out by the general deployment of sexuality. It is the agency of sex that we must break away from, if we aim — through a tactical reversal of the various mechanisms of sexuality — to counter the grips of power with the claims of bodies, pleasures, and knowledges, in their multiplicity and their

[26] On this point, see Halperin 52-56.

> possibility of resistance. The rallying point for the counterattack against the deployment of sexuality ought not to be sex-desire, but bodies and pleasures.[27]

Foucault here offers us a more detailed explanation of the resistance to disciplinary power in the guise of sexuality. In this book, like the soul in *Discipline and Punish*, sexuality is regarded as "a very real historical formation" of power. And, in order to attack sexuality itself, he strongly advocates bodily pleasures as a means of resistance.

While there can be no doubt that Foucault suggests a possible means of resistance to the modern power to punish at the level of the body, we cannot find any specific proposals in *Discipline and Punish.* These would probably be his political strategies or tactics toward particular activities of resistance.[28] But further inquiry into Foucault's political attitudes and practices would take us beyond the scope of this paper. For the present, we shall confine our attention to the more general significance of the present revolts around the prison. Indeed, Foucault develops a particular analysis of the modern prison, that is "the very body of the prison", into a general argument about power relations in the present world. We can find here the very political aspect of Foucault's work.

We must now return to the first problem: what is the political aspect of Foucault's concept of power? He was concerned with the

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[27] Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume I: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1980) 157.

[28] See Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. Seán Hand (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1988) 23-25.

reform of the prison system, but his purpose was not to alter or abolish the institution itself. At the end of *Discipline and Punish,* Foucault shows us that, in the continuity of this penal institution, two large movements are now "exercising considerable restraint on its use" and "transforming its internal functioning."[29] Concerning internal changes to the prison, Foucault writes:

> The second process is the growth of the disciplinary networks, the multiplication of their exchanges with the penal apparatus, the ever more important powers that are given them, the ever more massive transference to them of judicial functions; now, as medicine, psychology, education, public assistance, 'social work' assume an ever greater share of the powers of supervision and assessment, the penal apparatus will be able, in turn, to become medicalized, psychologized, educationalized; and by the same token that turning-point represented by the prison becomes less useful when, through the gap between its penitentiary discourse and its effect of consolidating delinquency, *it articulates the penal power and the disciplinary power*. In the midst of all these mechanisms of normalization, which are becoming ever more rigorous in their application, the specificity of the prison and its role as link are losing something of their purpose (emphasis added).[30]

As "the disciplinary networks" prevail over the entire social body, prison loses its original function as a connecting link between penal punishment and extra-judicial discipline. Today the punitive role of the prison is less important than it was for the subjection of criminals. Here we see the reciprocity of "power-knowledge" deprives the prison of its previous status. Now that the power to punish is increasingly "medicalized,

[29] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 306.
[30] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 306.

psychologized, educationalized" within the prison, we need no longer take up the problem of whether we should leave a prison alone or find a substitute for it. What matters rather is that punishment in general, along with the articulation of "the penal power and the disciplinary power", becomes less dominant around the prison. In short, as the disciplinary mechanism prevails through the interchange of penitentiary and scientific "discipline", penal punishment grows more useless or unconscious.

Then, what other movement is occurring at the same time? Foucault has pointed out that "the growth of great national or international illegalities" coincides with the internal change of the prison:

> The first is that which reduces the utility (or increases its inconveniences) of a delinquency accommodated as a specific illegality, locked up and supervised; thus the growth of great national or international illegalities directly linked to the political and economic apparatuses (financial illegalities, information services, arms and drugs trafficking, property speculation) makes it clear that the somewhat rustic and conspicuous work force of delinquency is proving ineffective. . . .[31]

That is, the global emergence of multinational capitalism, which is now more indirectly "linked to the political and economic apparatuses", reduces the effectiveness of the prison.[32] At present, we see many transgressions are organized on a world-wide scale, and that effective punishment for these illegal activities cannot be carried out within the localized

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[31] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 306.

[32] See Masao Miyoshi, "A Borderless World? From Colonialism to Transnationalism and the Decline of the Nation-State," *Critical Inquiry* 19 (Summer 1993): 726-51.

penal institution. As for the relationship between traditional illegalities and new delinquency, Foucault writes:

> It seems that, in France, it was around the Revolution of 1848 and Louis Napoleon's seizure of power that these practices reached their height (Marx, *Eighteenth Brumaire*. . ., 63-5). Delinquency, solidified by a penal system centred upon the prison, thus represents a diversion of illegality for the illicit circuits of profit and power of the dominant class.[33]

In brief, Foucault, while explaining the present mechanism of power, refers to the Revolution of 1848. The triangular mechanism of power, that is "police—prison—delinquency", was completed after the worker's movement for the period 1830-50.[34] Thus, Foucault, like Jameson, attempts to show the very political *unconscious* in the present world by putting the specific revolts of prison into historical relations of power. We can find here the diachronic nature of power that is undoing the binarism of synchrony/diachrony or local/global. How can we apply this unique historicity of power to literary studies?

VI

Now, in conclusion, I would like to suggest one way to give a wider range to cultural studies. My observation on the complex relations of power in *Discipline and Punish* is a preliminary but, I hope, indispensable step to a new ground of literary studies. First of all, *Discipline and Punish*, as Foucault writes, serves as "a historical background to various studies of the power of normalization and the formation of knowledge in

[33] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 280.
[34] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 282.

modern society."[35] Of course, this does not necessarily mean that we should pursue his theoretical project in the literary field. Bender's criticism of Foucault is fairly decisive in this sense. In fact, *Imagining the Penitentiary* explores the positive role of literary practices for future social formations. In other words, Bender pursues his own work which clarifies an important power-relation lurking behind in the background. Nevertheless, Foucault's work, especially his concept of power, cannot be regarded as a mere historical background, because the new historicism provides a new perspective on such a *historical* context. This movement allows us to open the historicity of the discursive background in a multiple way. Thus, we must rethink how to historicize the new historical approach to literary works in relation to Foucault's notion of power. This is what I have argued in the essay.[36]

Finally, let us return to Mrs. Heartfree's episode, in which we have already observed how the romantic story is transformed into a highly plausible narrative. Focusing on a minor but authoritative character like the good magistrate, we may put Fielding's novelistic innovation in the line of the later reform movements. It is obvious that there is a romance/realism opposition in this episode, the latter containing almost all the elements of the former. Almost, because, as Foucault points out, such a binary model is always bound to be shaken. That is, we can also discover a possibility for undermining the synchronic mode of realism. Most relevant to this point is the following quotation.

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[35] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 308.

[36] See my "The Historical Context of Foucault's Power: Boys and Girls in the Classroom," *The Review of Liberal Arts* 89 (1995): 255-76.

> However, as I was happily unknown to him, the least suspicion on his side was altogether impossible. He imputed, therefore, the eagerness with which I gazed on the jewels to a very wrong cause, and endeavoured to put as much additional softness into his countenance as he was able. My fears were a little quieted, and I was resolved to be very liberal of promises, and hoped so thoroughly to persuade him of my venality that he might, without any doubt, be drawn in to wait the captain and crew's return, who would, I was very certain, not only preserve me from his violence, but secure the restoration of what you had been so cruelly robbed of. (193; BK. IV, ch. ix)

Through the novel, Fielding manages to present Mrs. Heartfree is a good-natured, generous, and virtuous woman in contrast to licentious Wild. The retrieved jewelry is, therefore, a mark of her chastity as well as material evidence for Wild's guilt. Yet we glimpse here a significant flaw. As accustomed to handling rough fellows, Mrs. Heartfree partakes of Wild's character. Taking advantage of "the least suspicion on his [the Count la Ruse's] side," she employs the technique of imposture to recover the jewels stolen from her husband. At this moment, we can find a continuous struggle between two forces. Surely, the episode ends with the triumph of the "good" magistrate. Soon we see Wild on the scaffold. Nevertheless, despite the seemingly total suppression of illegality, a certain type of injustice still silently remains. How can we explain the silent continuity of illegal practices? Here again, Foucault gives us a clue to the problem: we can find, at the triumphant moment of realism, the emergent sexuality of female, which is deployed by the mechanism of delinquency. Probably we should look more carefully into this new arrangement of illegalities and delinquency. It is in any case impossible to reduce these historically permanent practices to the synchronic structure of power represented by realistic narrative.

Still, we need to say a little more about the diachronic nature of the episode. As we have seen, Foucault shows us that the synchronic account of a given social "text" like prison consisted in the coexistence of various networks of power. And, focusing on this concurrence of heterogeneous elements, we can open up the synchronicity of power in a diachronic way. Where can we detect such a distinct historical moment in this episode?

> I was now introduced to the chief magistrate of this country, who was desirous of seeing me. I will give you a short description of him. He was chosen (as is the custom there) for his superior bravery and wisdom. His power is entirely absolute during its continuance; but, on the first deviation from equity and justice, he is liable to be deposed and punished by the people, the elders of whom, once a year, assemble to examine into his conduct . . . lest it should elevate him too much in his own opinion, in order to his humiliation he receives every evening in private, from a kind of beadle, a gentle kick on his posteriors. . . . (201; BK. IV, ch. xi)

At the end of Mrs. Heartfree's travelogue, we see another "magistrate" who gives her a diamond as a token of respect for her chastity. It should be recalled that "the chief magistrate" is *African*. In short, the exotic magistrate provides reliable evidence for the realistic narrative constructed by the good magistrate. Here we can find the coexistence of divergent elements in this episode. One important point is that the description of the African chief shows an alternative to the contemporaneous illegal society. In a quite exotic setting is represented a utopian vision that may lead to the reform movements. However, in our perspective, the most important is that the African chief is described, like the pre-modern king, as having "entirely absolute" power. That suggests a possibility to open the synchronic framework of the realistic narrative: the residual king, the

dominant magistrate, and emergent female sexuality. Thus, the very diachronic nature of power can be articulated and coordinated in the final resolution of the romance/realism opposition.

Now it is possible to begin a new discussion about this episode from the various viewpoints of race, class, or gender. In this paper, I have simply mentioned a possible way to extend the concept of power to cultural studies. Yet one point is clear. If we are to examine the multiple relations in literary works, we should pay attention to Foucault's unique historicity of power. Instead of reducing the heterogeneous elements to the synchronic structure of power, we need to hear the varied voices at long distance, each of which has its own dynamic and historical power. Then, we can picture the future of cultural studies.