

# Heterotopic Horizons: Social Movements Rupturing the Order of Things.

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## Introduction

In this paper we explore the potential utility of Michel Foucault's theorization of power and resistance and his notion of heterotopia, or counter-sites, for social movement studies. We offer a new reading of Foucault's notion of heterotopia, exploring its origins and influence. We situate Foucault's writing on heterotopia within *Different Spaces* (1998), at a pivotal moment in his intellectual career, when his interests in knowledge were broadening to include a concern with power, resistance and the body. We seek to 'renovate' Foucault's notion of heterotopia by employing his wider theorizing on the relationship between power and resistance and the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987; 1988) and Amin and Thrift (2013). By revisiting Foucault's *Different Spaces* in this way, we suggest that it is possible to develop the concept of heterotopia in a way that allows a 'spatial' understanding of resistance, complimenting Foucault's cartographies of power. We then explore the potential application of such an understanding of heterotopia for analyzing the transformative aspects of protest and resistance, in particular, how members of social movements through their resistance-practices make visible alternative horizons in the fabric of the present, introducing rupture into the order of things.

The influence of the writings of Michel Foucault across the arts, humanities and social sciences is without question. His work has revolutionized the way that we conceive non-state, adversarial politics (Death 2010). Surprisingly, however, Social Movement Studies (SMS) has had a rather quiet encounter/engagement with Foucault. This is particularly noteworthy since Foucault's writings are known to have been influential on a range of social movements and activists (see Halperin [1995] vis-à-vis the influence of Foucault's thinking on gay activism or Macey [1995] vis-a-vis his influence on the anti-psychiatry movement). Foucault himself was also involved in a social movement: *Groupe de la Information la Prisons* (GIP). His method – genealogy – was designed to augment resistance, allowing for description of that which needs to be resisted. His work has accordingly been interpreted as his own act of resistance (Hoy 2004; Miller 1993) and indeed he commented that he believed that he lead a 'militant life', 'consisting of combative and thus perilous relations with self and others' (Hoffman 2014, 2). The idea that 'Foucault...swerves away from politics entirely' (Said 1993, 278) is thus, in our view, problematic.

That is not, of course, to say that authors in SMS have overlooked Foucault entirely. References to Foucault appear in the work of a number of authors associated with SMS. For example, Offe (1985, 845) makes an approving reference to Foucault's 'radical' theorization of the dispersed nature of power 'that can no longer be attributed to any central or fundamental causal mechanism' and states that he considers this conceptualization 'plausible'. For Offe (1985, 845), such an understanding of power allows for a 'diagnosis of the simultaneous *broadening, deepening, and increasing irreversibility* of forms of domination and deprivation'.

Later, Bagguley (1994, 89) explored the potential of Foucault's concept of disciplinary power for the analysis of resistance to the poll-tax in the UK, suggesting that in 'Foucauldian terms the poll-tax produced...a rebellious body of the poor'. He expressed some reservations, however, regarding the utility of Foucault's theorizing on resistance, suggesting that Foucault neglected to analyse *how* people resist.

Crossley (2002, 140) makes a brief reference to Foucault when describing how social movements in their struggles have to 'contend with the power of dominant paradigms or "regimes of truth" and their expert systems'. Crossley and Roberts (2004) subsequently elaborate on the potential of a Foucauldian analysis for SMS within their critique of Habermas's theory of the public sphere. They relate Foucault's work to that of Ewald (1990) stating that they share an understanding of how social groups (we believe they have in mind groups such as social movements) establish their own 'norm' according to which they might judge reality and how this process allows the social group to publicly think about the normalizing procedures that establish the dominant norms they oppose.

Many other references to Foucault have no doubt been made by authors in SMS. Tracing the subtle influence of Foucault upon SMS would be an interesting and worthwhile project, but is beyond the remit of this paper. What is clear, from our initial 'audit' of SMS literature, is that references to and engagement with Foucault have tended to be fleeting. It is only very recently that attempts have started to be made to develop a Foucauldian approach to the analysis of social movements, most notably in the work of Death (2010), Baumgarten and Ullrich (2012) and Ullrich and Keller (2014). Work in this area, however, remains embryonic and a fully-fledged Foucauldian approach has yet to emerge.

### *What form might such an approach take?*

For Death (2010) a Foucauldian approach to SMS would need to adapt the concept of counter-conducts, described by Foucault as 'the will not to be governed thusly, like that, by these people, at this price' (Foucault, 2007: 75). The idea of the counter-conduct was developed by Foucault in the context of his work on governmentality and captures the close interrelationship between protests and the forms of government they oppose. As such the concept of counter-conduct elaborates a fundamental Foucauldian insight: that power is *relational* - a relation of forces (Foucault, 2000). Death (2010, 236) recommends that SMS avoids approaching protest and contentious politics from an actor-centric perspective, and instead focus upon describing the 'specific practices and rationalities of protest, which themselves work to constitute particular identities and subjectivities through the performance of dissent'. Death (2010, 236) also argues that by destabilizing conventional binaries between power and resistance, a Foucauldian approach would allow SMS to show how 'protest and government are mutually constitutive, and thus how forms of resistance have the potential to reinforce and bolster, as well as and at the same time as, undermining and challenging dominant forms of global governance'. A Foucauldian approach would also allow for an understanding of how protesters invoke 'alternative; subaltern or marginalized forms of knowledge' i.e. alternative rationalities (Death 2010, 241).

Baumgarten and Ullrich (2012, 17) in a discussion paper, argue that Foucault's '(g)overnmentality studies are especially helpful in investigating the relation between discourse/societal practices and the formation of subjects and thus the very conditions for the possibility of protest'. They seek to develop an alternative to 'frame analysis' within SMS, drawing upon Foucault's concept of discourse. More recently still, Ullrich and Keller (2014, 115) have sought to develop a:

'theoretical framework for analyzing movement specificities across cultures. Such cultures are considered here as *discursive fields* – as social arenas where discourses unfold in a never ending struggle for meaning. Such discursive fields are largely produced and reproduced by discursive practices and are constituted as internally connected sets of statements and rules for their production.'

To achieve this they blend the 'social constructionist sociology of knowledge' with the 'Foucauldian perspective on discourse and power-knowledge regimes' (Ullrich and Keller 2014: 114). Theirs is an intervention into the 'ideas in social movements' debate (Hosseini 2010) and they offer insights into 'the enabling and restricting social (discursive) structures of the sayable, thinkable, and legitimately utterable, or the *ideational and institutional context structures* of social movement ideas' (Ullrich and Keller 2014, 114).

The goal of these authors appears to be to demonstrate how, whilst not necessarily replacing more traditional approaches, a Foucauldian approach, or one that draws heavily upon his work, might provide an alternative, and perhaps complementary approach to the study of protest. We share these authors' optimism regarding the possibilities presented by his work for SMS. We suggest that a Foucauldian analysis of social movements might usefully employ a number of his concepts, remembering that Foucault himself commented that he would like his books to be 'a kind of tool-box which others can rummage through to find a tool which they can use however they wish in their own area' (Foucault in O'Farrell 2005).

A more in-depth engagement with Foucault's ideas would provide SMS with an additional framework for understanding the various practices of invention, collaboration and resistance deployed by members of movements against disciplining practices of subjectivation, to make themselves anew. A Foucauldian approach to SMS might follow the general character of Foucault's work, concerned as it is with a history of the present. It might focus upon the practices by which movements diagnose the present and their role in the 'history of problems' – i.e. how they unsettle 'practices which were accepted without question' making things 'a problem' that were not previously considered so, raising discussion and debate, inciting new reactions, inducing a sense of critique in previously silent behaviour, habits, practices and institutions (Foucault 2001, 74). Such an approach might allow us to understand how social movements problematize that which was previously perceived to be 'unproblematic' and create new responses. It might allow us to consider whether/how the political activities of social movements intensify thought (Foucault in Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). It might allow us to consider the extent to which/how movements 'develop action, thought and desires by proliferation, juxtaposition, and disjunction, and not by subdivision and pyramidal hierarchization' and how they seek to connect desire to reality (Foucault in Deleuze and Guattari 1987: xiii). It might offer us an analytical framework for understanding how activism relates to the distinct rationalities of government operating in different contexts, how specific practices and procedures are inserted into regimes of truth (of both governed and government), specific oppositional devices operate to produce transformative experiences for activists and how activists resist articulation into the activity of government by redefining an issue, their bodies and their subjectivity.

A Foucauldian approach might allow us to consider the techniques, discursive, ethical practices, and practices of freedom, of social movements. It might focus our attention upon the 'technologies of the self' (Foucault 2001, 2005) through which activists seek to transform themselves. It would also allow for a new framework for the study of collective identity and social movements. It might enable us to identify and understand a dilemma faced by identity-based movements. If, as Foucault suggests, identity is a form of subjugation - a way of

exercising power over people and preventing them from moving outside fixed boundaries – then is organising around identity liberating for members of these movements, or might it in fact be constraining? There are no doubt many other possibilities for a Foucauldian approach to SMS.

Of course, not everyone is likely to share our optimism regarding such an approach. Foucault's work has not gone uncontested. Most relevant here is that line of critique that suggests that he 'fails to theorise resistance' (Bagguley 1994, 89), underemphasizes resistance within his work or even denies the possibility of resistance. Feminist authors have been particularly vociferous in the latter regard. For many feminist authors, whilst Foucault provides a useful description of the role of 'biopower's normalizing strategies' in the production and regulation of 'docile bodies', 'in Foucault, deliberate resistance, struggle and change seem impossible' (Sveinung and Sandberg 2006 in Death 2010, 237). As one author comments: Foucault is 'inspiring yet disappointing for feminists' (Mills 1991, 13). The other versions of this critique can be found in many places, including within the newly emerging field of 'resistance studies', despite the acknowledged debt that this field owes to Foucault's theorizing (Vinthagen 2007). Resistance Studies takes from Foucault the idea that power is not only a centre of sovereignty, forbidding and punishing, but also a productive force. A number of authors in this field perceive Foucault to have promoted a paradigmatic shift in our conceptualization of power/resistance. Yet they also claim that Foucault tends to bracket resistance, giving it less attention than power, and always looking at it from the perspective of power (Vinthagen 2007).

The idea that Foucault denies our capacity to resist is clearly erroneous. As he states, he did not intend his work to imply that 'we are always trapped', but instead 'that we are always free – well, anyway, that there is always the possibility of changing' (Foucault 1989, 386). Certainly, Foucault does not believe complete 'liberation' is possible, since it is not possible to be 'outside' power relations. Yet resistance most definitely remains possible, in his view. 'Resistances' as he terms points of resistance, are not only a 'reaction or rebound...an underside that is...doomed to perpetual defeat' (Foucault 1990, 96), they can also be subversive, we can '*work* the power relations by which we are worked' (Butler 1997, 100). We agree with Death's (2010, 238) comment that in this regard Foucault captures the 'messiness and complexity of modern politics' rather better than accounts that rest upon an idealised binary between complete domination and complete freedom.

This line of critique – that Foucault denies our capacity to resist - is, we suggest, the result of an incomplete reading of his work. When the sole focus is Foucault's historical analyses, characterised as they are by a focus upon disciplinary practices, implications of his insistence that power is a productive and not repressive force, one that defines the boundaries of regimes of truth and produces objects, tend not to be given due emphasis. In our reading, Foucault not only illuminates the effects of *disciplinary* practices, allowing for an understanding of the ways in which the body becomes a docile target of power, his ontology of power also allows us to understand how such disciplinary practices are *resisted*, and how power not only produces *docile* bodies, but also *resistant* bodies (Beckett and Campbell *forthcoming*; Campbell 2013).

With regard to the claim that Foucault underemphasises resistance in his theorisation of power/resistance, or fails to theorise resistance adequately, we would again contest this on the basis that Foucault makes clear that resistance is ontologically *prior* to power (Deleuze 1999). This is both a theorisation of resistance and one that emphasises that without resistance there would be no relation/s of power. Revel (2008), following Foucault (1997a, b),

makes it clear that resistance should be understood as both *ontologically* and *chronologically* prior to power. We understand this to mean that to be able to state with certainty that what is present is a 'power relation' rather than domination, it is necessary to recognise the prior existence of the capacity to resist in a given situation. Resistance is a transgenerational, creative force, arising from the collective character of human existence, allowing for the present to be overcome and the world to be remade. The concept of resistance is therefore key to the Foucauldian theory of power. For sure, there are conflicting evaluative *emphases* within Foucault's work (Beckett and Campbell *forthcoming*), between his treatment of power 'as the central principle of evil in the world' and his treatment of power as the 'central principle of good' – a conflict Carroll (1995, 435) views as stemming from his guises as 'leftist liberationist' and 'Nietzschean voluptuary' – but this is reconciled by his comprehensive treatment of power as 'all that exists' and a reminder to us that 'nothing' is 'either good or bad', rather 'everything is dangerous' (Foucault 1997c).

It is our argument here, therefore, that if SMS is to 'take up' Foucault, it must begin by engaging in a more subtle analysis of his concept of resistance. According to Foucault (1990, 94) power 'is exercised from innumerable points', but so too is resistance. Resistances are

'spread over time and space at varying densities, at times mobilizing groups or individuals in a definitive way (...) It is doubtless the strategic codification of these points of resistance that make revolution possible, somewhat similar to the way in which the state relies on the institutionalised integration of power relationships' (Foucault 1990, 96).

That is not to say that for Foucault (1990, 96) there are no 'great radical ruptures' (he clearly has in mind a concept of 'revolution' here). Sometimes revolution happens. 'But more often one is dealing with mobile and transitory points of resistance' and these points of resistance 'swarm', 'fracturing unities and effecting regroupings' (Foucault 1990, 96). This process also impacts upon individuals, 'cutting them up and remolding them' – in effect it involves subjects themselves harnessing the same/similar mechanisms of power that are employed against them by the state or other forms of governance, to engage in the production of new subjectivities through resistance-practices (Proust 2000).

This paper forms part of a program of work that we are undertaking (e.g. see Beckett and Campbell *forthcoming*) to consider the ways in which a more subtle analysis of Foucault's concept of resistance might inform the analysis of social movements. Our approach differs from other Foucauldian approaches in SMS in that we are working not only *with*, but also *on* Foucault's concepts, re-engineering and/or renovating them when required to fashion them as instruments suitable for the analysis of the resistance-practices of social movements. This re-engineering /renovation of concepts involves two processes: first, in-depth exploration of certain of Foucault's concepts in order to understand their position within his wider oeuvre. This, for example, allows us to understand when particular concepts contain both residues of previous positions and signposts towards later theorising. Second, this re-engineering sometimes involves supplementing or extending Foucault's own theorizing with reference to the work of a number of theorists sympathetic to his work.

In this paper we focus on one of Foucault's concepts in particular – that of *heterotopia* – and consider its potential utility as part of social movement analysis. Applying our methodology, we begin by considering from where Foucault derived the concept, how he defined it and how it relates to his wider theorising. We then utilize the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 1988), Amin and Thrift (2013) to supplement Foucault's own theorisation of heterotopia and

to develop the concept. In the final section of this paper we consider the manner in which the concept of heterotopia might be employed within SMS and to do this we develop a typology of heterotopias – at this stage ‘hypothetical’. We plan to progress and refine this typology, beyond our initial conceptualization via later empirical work.

Heterotopia is a concept that plays a fairly minor role in Foucault’s oeuvre when compared to more prominent concepts such as ‘episteme’, ‘power and resistance’, ‘discursive formation’, ‘technology’, ‘history of the present’ and so on. It is, however, a concept that has caught the imagination of writers across a number of disciplines, particularly within Fine Art and Geography. It is at risk of being applied in a somewhat ‘modish’ fashion in both fields. Conscious of this, we wish to be clear about why we find it an intriguing and potentially useful concept: Foucault’s concept of heterotopia was fashioned at a transitional point in his writing, at the juncture between what many commentators view as two distinct periods in his work: an *archaeological period* concerned with analysing the formation of knowledge in various scientific fields and a *genealogical period* concerned with describing the strategic operations of power in a variety of specific situations.

Foucault’s lengthiest consideration of heterotopia is to be found in *Different Spaces*. This is one of a number of works that we suggest might be read to understand the transition between archaeology and genealogy<sup>1</sup>. At this point in his career, Foucault moves from studying systems of thought to studying how systems of thought operate in the social world – a world inhabited by institutions and bodies. This is a move that Deleuze (1999) describes as Foucault’s development from an archivist to a cartographer. The clearest example of this transition at the level of a single concept is the move in the *Archaeology of Knowledge* from studying discourse to discursive formations (Foucault 2002). At this point, Foucault’s work gains an understanding of materiality - it becomes, in a sense, three dimensional. This turn is a move towards an analytics of power that attempts to diagram how power flows across particular social arrangements. The innovation of Foucault’s position here is that he begins to focus upon the spatial character of power. Heterotopia is a concept that emerges at the point at which this shift in his writing occurs. This means that the concept contains residues of the archaeological period whilst anticipating themes that become more apparent in the genealogical period, most notably a spatial analysis of power. Since both periods of his work provide useful avenues for the analysis of the resistance practices of social movements, this makes consideration of ‘heterotopia’ particularly interesting and potentially useful.

### ***Heterotopia: introducing the concept***

Heterotopia is a term originating in the field of Evolutionary Science and Medicine. In Medicine it refers to the displacement of an organ or tissue from its normal position either as a result of natural processes or grafting/transplanting procedures. This matter ‘out of place’, co-exists with the same tissue-type in its ‘normal’ physiological position. It is therefore matter *out of place*, co-existing with matter *in its place*.

Foucault appears to have adopted the concept from Medicine. We suspect that that he was drawing upon Haeckel’s (1905) ‘Evolution of Man’, or similar source/s. Haeckel (1905) was a famous proponent of Darwin’s theory of evolution. Following Darwin he distinguishes between two forms of evolution: inherited (Heredity) and vitiated (Adaptation). Inherited

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<sup>1</sup> Other such texts include Foucault’s interview with the Cercle de la Epistemologie; the *Archaeology of Knowledge*; Foucault’s important review of Deleuze’s *Difference and Repetition* – *Theatrum Philosophicum*; and his inaugural lecture at the College de France – *The Order of Discourse*.

evolution describes a process of 'complete', unchanging reproduction over time. Vitiating evolution involves adaptation - the gradual displacement of phenomena. 'This displacement' according to Haeckel (1905, 12), 'may effect either the place or the time of the phenomena. If the former, it is called Heterotopy; if the latter, Heterochrony'. Heterotopy refers to the gradual displacement of organs or tissue from their original position. Heterochrony refers to a displacement in time, in the sequence in which organs appear such that there is an acceleration or slowing in their appearance. In his understanding of 'heterotopia', Foucault (1998, 178) blends these two concepts in order to describe places that are connected to the rest of space, and yet 'are at variance somehow', being outside known space and disruptive of conventional time.

Heterotopia appears twice in Foucault's writing (and once in a radio recording) in the preface to *The Order of Things* ([1966] 1970) and in a lecture later published as *Different Spaces* ([1967] 1998). It is important to note that Foucault only ever provided a short sketch of the concept - his most detailed exposition being in *Different Spaces*. It is reported that he was reluctant to publish this lecture and never revised the text for publication, agreeing to its publication only shortly before his death. According to Topinka (2010: 55) the 'conceptions of heterotopias that these texts provide do not reduce to one succinct, unproblematic definition of the term, making scholarly attention to the topic difficult'. We do not see this as a 'difficulty', however, and instead as an opportunity to adopt and adapt the most useful aspects of the concept and to extend his theorizing where appropriate.

Foucault (1998: 178) defines heterotopias thus as:

... real places, actual places, places that are designed into the very institution of society, which are sorts of actually realized utopias in which the real emplacements, all the other real emplacements that can be found within the culture are, at the same time, represented, contested, and reversed, sorts of places that are outside all places, although they are actually localizable.

So, for Foucault, unlike utopias which reside only in a spatial and temporal 'no place' or fictional 'somewhere', heterotopias are situated in reality. Foucault was of course critical of utopias, insisting that we would be better to replace utopian dreaming with real experiments lived in the present and it seems likely that his conceptualization of heterotopia reflects this line of critique. His definition also makes clear that heterotopias are 'designed into the very institution of society' (Foucault 1998: 178). This implies an agency of design and intentionality - heterotopias have an intended *purpose*. Adapting the concept of heterotopy, what Foucault appears to be arguing is that heterotopias are counter-sites, real sites where other sites are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted. They are localizable (we read this as locatable), relate to all other emplacements within a given culture but are utterly unlike any of the other emplacements that they reflect or to which they relate. Some have interpreted Foucault's concept of heterotopia as 'counter-hegemonic' sites (Hetherington 1997). For us, the term 'counter-hegemonic' is not the most appropriate term here, however, and prefer the concept of counter-rationalities. Heterotopias, we suggest, might be viewed as intermediary spaces between that which is and that which is not, or at least 'not yet', but could be.

As the lecture *Different Spaces* progresses, Foucault elaborates the concept. He suggests that, amongst other characteristics: a single heterotopia might juxtapose several incompatible emplacements in a single real location; they might entail temporal discontinuity; they are simultaneously closed and isolated yet open and penetrable. Initially he distinguishes 'crisis

heterotopias' from 'heterotopias of deviation' as different forms of heterotopia. The former are for individuals undergoing a state of crisis in relation to wider society, for which sacred spaces are required for the management or resolution of the crisis. He sees these as characteristic of 'primitive societies' and rapidly disappearing. The latter are locations for individuals: '... whose behaviour is deviant with respect to the mean or required norm' (Foucault 1998: 180). It is perhaps the latter definition that best captures his sense of heterotopia.

According to Foucault, heterotopias are spaces that operate to make existing orders legible. They do so by collapsing or blurring the space between objects previously separated as discrete entities by some system of classification. By so doing they unsettle received knowledge – i.e. common sense – both revealing and destabilizing the foundations of knowledge. This destabilization renders knowledge open to critique. It introduces contingency into the present. If the order of things is socially produced, then it can be made differently – it could be otherwise.

Reading this lecture and *The Order of Things* from the vantage point of Foucault's later work on knowledge production and power relations can extend our understanding of the concept of heterotopia. Of particular importance are Foucault's cartographies of power produced via genealogies of punishment (*Discipline and Punish* [1975] 1995) and sexuality (*The History of Sexuality, vol. 1 The Will to Knowledge* [1976] 1990). During his work of the 1970s Foucault describes the disciplinary elements of the processes of subjectivation – how our bodies are disciplined and made 'docile'. 'Disciplines' such as penology, criminology (see *Discipline and Punish*), sexology, psychiatry and psychoanalysis (see *Will to Knowledge*) provide a discursive regularity - an ordering of things - that allows for the process of subjectivation that we all undergo to be animated by particular rationalities of government. These disciplines are therefore an essential part of the machinery of government that makes subjects into objects of knowledge. The concept of heterotopia then becomes a useful tool for understanding how a tear, or a rupture in this *order of things* emerges, how resistance towards the normalizing rationales of these structures occurs.

Foucault provides us with a series of illustrations of heterotopia or heterotopic spaces. For us, these illustrations are of less utility (in fact, they are the least coherent aspect of this lecture) than his repurposing of the definition of the medical concept of heterotopia to mean spaces where normal social structuring is contested. Such spaces are heterotopic because they make possible alternative discursive formations and the establishment of alternative regimes of truth. They are sites that refuse the norm of the normal. They provide 'ways out' - escape routes from the norm.

### *Heterotopia: renovating the concept*

To develop this idea further we now turn to the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987; 1988) and Amin and Thrift (2013). These authors are, in one way or another, 'sympathetic' to Foucault's work. Deleuze and Guattari were of course influenced by and influenced Foucault and there are many parallels between their works. Amin and Thrift (2013) are, in turn, much influenced by Deleuze and yet, at least in the case of Thrift, the influence of Foucault on his ideas is also evident. He has commented upon his 'on-off' relationship with Foucault, but concluded that his intellectual trajectory/project is at least partly Foucauldian (Thrift 2007: 56).

We see connections between Foucault's theorising of heterotopia and Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) spatial logics. In *A Thousand Plateaus* the latter distinguish between smooth and



striated spaces. At risk of over-simplification, striated spaces are defined by general rules which act to capture and direct energy towards an instrumental end. They are partitioned fields of movement preventing free motion, whereas smooth spaces are environments, landscapes, in which a subject operates.

Smooth space is filled by events or haecceities, far more than by formed and perceived things. It is a space of affects, more than one of properties (...) Whereas in the striated forms organize a matter, in the smooth materials signal forces and serve as symptoms for them. It is an intensive rather than extensive space, one of distances, not of measures and properties. Intense Spatium instead of Extensio. A Body without Organs instead of an organism and organization. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 479)

In other words, smooth space consists of disorganized matter and tends to provoke a sensual or tactical response rather than a starkly rational method of operation or a planned trajectory.

Deleuze and Guattari argue that state space is 'striated' and homogeneous, whereas nomad spaces are 'smooth' and heterogeneous. Smooth space is potentially a place where State 'striation' might be resisted. Such spaces are conducive to rhizomatic growth and nomadic movement, allowing difference to be related in new and creative ways. We perceive this smooth or nomad space to be akin to heterotopic space. The concepts of heterotopia and smooth or nomadic space allow us to analyse 'difference' as it emerges in actually existing spaces and allow us to describe the transformative effects of these spaces (heterotopias).

We also see connections to the work of Amin and Thrift (2013) on the *Arts of the Political*. The formation of heterotopias would appear to be an example of what Amin and Thrift (2013: xii) term the political art of 'world making'. But these are not total worlds 'in which everything runs lock-step, but rather...worlds that act as glimpses of a better future, worlds that are worth fighting for, and that strongly resonate with actual and real concerns and needs' (Amin and Thrift 2013: 5). Many social movements of the past and present have, in some way, created heterotopias, worlds of possibility and hope whose practical import is that they result in 'multiple interventions in the economic, social, and cultural, as well as the political sphere (Amin and Thrift 2013: 9).

Importantly, however, by 'making worlds' Amin and Thrift (2013: 11) do not imply that this is restricted to the 'construction of spatially bounded communities', but rather they suggest that it involves:

'the ability to bring together often only half-intuited explanations of the world in such a way as to produce atmospheres of momentum and commitment. This stance can be seen as in line with a more general move away from conceptualizing space as bounded toward understanding space as a set of multiple overlapping territories, each of which represents a different political opportunity and a different form of political agency and subject position and a different kind of opening on to dreamed of futures.'

They advocate the 'design of particular spaces that act as arenas for managing disagreement, as partial models of process, and even as glimpses of a hopeful future' (Amin and Thrift 2013: 13). New organizational forms are needed that have latitude, redundancy (dead-ends), and creativity. Such spaces are fluid, not static, they help 'keep the doors and windows open' of politics (Amin and Thrift 2013: xii). Even when their physical location might be relatively

'fixed', the social interactions taking place there are not static, they are dynamic, plural and diverse. Amin and Thrift's definition of these 'particular spaces' that allow for glimpses of hopeful futures is clearly influenced by their reading of Deleuze and Guattari and their concept of 'smooth spaces', yet is also compatible with our reading of Foucault's concept of heterotopia, or more precisely, what we should perhaps term heterotopias of resistance.

Taken together, what Foucault, Deleuze & Guattari, Amin and Thrift point to is a type of space of transgression where it is possible to think differently, be differently and thus realize our freedom. Such spaces are 'dangerous to the order of things, even as they are necessary for the establishment of an order' (Dunn 1995: 43). They are necessary for the establishment of a *new* order. Such an approach highlights how social movements exercise resistance by 'breaking the rules', and it is the utility of the concept of heterotopia for the analysis of resistance that we now turn.

### *Heterotopia: employing the concept*

In their critique of resource mobilization theory Piven and Cloward (1992) suggest that this approach 'normalises' protest by eliding the distinction between 'normative' and 'non-normative' protest. In short they suggest that RMT treats such things as peaceful election rallies as not being fundamentally any different from collective violence. In contrast, they suggest that the imposition of norms on protest, and the efforts to break norms by some forms of protest are quite distinct from organised 'normal politics'. They insist that what is distinctive about protest is the way in which it is both 'outside' and 'against' routine politics. Whilst there is much to admire in Piven and Cloward's analysis we feel that it rests upon something of a false equation between collective violence and non-normative or rule breaking protest and between non-violence and normative protest, what Tilly (2004) later dubbed 'worthiness, unity, numbers and commitment' (WUNC) display or movements.

On the contrary, building upon our argument so far, we suggest that there is a 'third space' of protest that is non-violent *and* non-normative (*refusing of the norm*), and that this can best be approached through Foucault's discussion of heterotopia. It is, following Piven and Cloward (1992), both outside and against normative politics, but more often eschews the use of violence. The use of violent tactics is not entirely excluded, here, but rather is seen as requiring its own distinct analysis of how and when it appears and with what purpose. Violence against heterotopias, however, is frequent and for us this is a sign of the challenge this type of space presents to the dominant norms of society. In being non-normative they are routinely subject to sanction and repression e.g. legal sanction and repressive policing. They are different from 'misbehaviour' or 'hidden transcripts' – other forms of non-normative protest – by being alternative public spaces, however temporary. They are also more collectively *reflexive* (Bagguley, 1999). Whilst they may not think of themselves as 'heterotopias', such spaces facilitate acts of resistance and transgression - they have a sense of organising and coordinating actions that are rule-breaking and that seek to 'rupture' the current 'order of things'. They are counter-normative in a number of ways, as viewed from the perspective of the state and capital:

- (1) They are in the '*wrong*' place;
- (2) They *move in the 'wrong' way*;
- (3) They are characterized by the '*wrong*' type of connection;
- (4) They are characterized by the '*wrong*' type of affinity (*kinship*);
- (5) They are characterized by the '*wrong*' type of organization.

From this we might imagine a number of different types of social movement heterotopia:

- (1) **'Contained' heterotopias** – containers of physical co-presence, that are relatively enduring in particular strategic locations for the operation of power and resistance to it. The classic examples of this that have recently attracted attention are protest camps. Such heterotopias are normatively 'in the wrong place' both figuratively and literally. That is what characterizes their challenge to power, and that is why they are typically subject to repression. Whilst the recent examples of Tahrir Square in Cairo and the wave of 'Occupy' protests have attracted most attention there are important earlier examples such as student occupations, squats, occupations of road construction sites and the Greenham Common women's peace camp. We should emphasize here that whilst many see the protest camp as a tactic used by movements, conceptualizing it as a form of heterotopia reveals more of its social character as a non-normative challenge to power. Seeing it as a tactic risks equating it to a short term protest event of limited duration, rather than acknowledging it as an ongoing and evolving sequence of interactions. That is not to say, however, that such heterotopias 'are' social movements, rather, they are social movement heterotopias. The anti-roads protests in the UK during the 1990s saw a sequence of camps that were part of a wider environmental movement; Greenham Common women's peace camp was part of both a wider peace movement and a wider feminist movement. Again, we see how heterotopia opens up for investigation a third space of action, in this case between a protest event and a wider social movement. The concept of heterotopia also allows us to conceptualize that which is between a movement and a protest. Both its form of elective association and the substance of what it communicates breach the dominant imposed norms of society producing experiences of liberation from those norms for the participants.
- (2) **Mobile heterotopias** – physically mobile social aggregations - long distance marches, hunger marches, CND marches from Aldermaston to London. Their mobility is partly what makes them heterotopic – nomadism is incompatible with the settlement of modernity. Their form of resistance resides in their mobility. They travel from one symbolically significant location to another. This entails the presence of people 'out of place' and 'moving in the wrong way' - hence they are often repressively policed. The Hunger Marches in the UK in the 1930s were so repressively policed that the National Council for Civil Liberties was formed as a result; the famous initial Selma to Montgomery march was broken up by police. It is their very mobility that is often subject to policing – preventing or channelling their mobility. As aggregations of individuals that may endure for days and weeks, they begin to take on some of the character of the protest camps or more permanent heterotopias, and thus often generate intense experiences of liberation from normative routines amongst participants.
- (3) **Cloud heterotopias** – networks of weak ties without co-presence - multiple encounters with physically and often temporally absent 'strangers who may be of a like mind'. These are of course technologically dependent on the corporate infrastructure of the internet, Twitter, Facebook, etc. We are avoiding the term 'virtual' heterotopia here because that suggests a binary opposition between virtual and real, but in cloud heterotopias people log in and log out, whilst the heterotopia continues. This type of heterotopia involves 'connective action' (Bennett and Segerberg 2013). Here the non-normative challenge is emergent through the form of the many communicating with the many. It is the 'wrong type of connection'. Each individual may form their response to an issue and communicate it to the many, whilst

simultaneously receiving communications from the many. This challenges hierarchical forms of organization within social movements – which effectively become leaderless, with processes of interaction which have the character of a complex, fluid, ever changing dance (Gerbaudo 2012).

(4) **'Flash' heterotopias** – protest events – physical co-presence, brief encounters with 'strangers who may be of like-mind'. This might be traditional demonstrations and marches in strategic locations for a day or an afternoon, but as these have in the West at least become increasingly 'civilised' by police management practices some movements have resisted this by not collaborating with the police in order to create more disruptive events. During the 1990s the UK saw a wave of 'Reclaim the Streets' protests where parties were organized in major urban centres or on motorways without police cooperation, so producing more disruption. Flash mobs, smart mobs – these might also be examples of this type of heterotopia. In the days after the U.S. presidential election of 2000, online activist Zack Exley anonymously created a website allowing people to propose locations for gatherings at which people called for a full recount of the votes in Florida (Stewart et al 2012). More than 100 significant protests took place—many with thousands of participants—without any traditional approach to organizing. Exley wrote in December 2000 that the self-organized protests 'demonstrated that a fundamental change is taking place in our national political life. It's not the Internet per se, but the emerging potential for any individual to communicate -- for free and anonymously if necessary -- with any other individual' ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smart\\_mob](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smart_mob)). This temporary, and 'anonymous' interaction is the 'wrong type of affinity' – whilst participants may share a certain kinship of spirit and/or shared interests or other interpersonal commonalities, their engagement with each other does not involve the high levels of intimacy (knowledge of each other), usually associated with affinity groups.

(5) **Rhizomic heterotopias** – random and discontinuous in their spreading (Chesters and Welsh, 2005). Heterotopias that spread horizontally, upwards, downwards and discontinuously as parts break off and reform elsewhere. They are the 'wrong type of organization', characterized by latitude, redundancy (cul-de-sacs and dead-ends) and creativity (Amin and Thrift 2013). They are a 'body without organs', a body with no underlying organizational principles (Deleuze and Guattari 1988). Such protest does not spread in a linear fashion but is characterized by 'convoluted, unpredictable dispersion...involve[ing] rhizomic, non-linear, vibrating patterns of dispersion resembling sound waves' (Gordillo 2011). Holloway (2005 in Roos and Oikonomakis 2014: 119) has described this phenomenon in his analysis of the influence of Mexico's Zapatistas on the Global Justice Movement: 'It is not the spread of an organization that we are speaking of...It is rather a question of resonance'. The metaphor of the rhizome also emphasizes the principle of 'asignifying rupture', this 'holds that a rhizome may be broken in any part by still has the power to continue growing in previous or new directions' (Roos and Oikonomakis 2014, 119).

In an increasingly mediatized society, such heterotopias are both more possible and more likely as media extends interactions in time and space and restructures (reorders) interpersonal and public time. Increasingly, technological intermediaries have 'been interposed to transcend the limitations of time and space...Social and technological changes are transforming the dual centerpiece of the communication field – mass communication and interpersonal (or face-to-face) communication – resulting in diversifying and hybridizing

processes of mediated communication (Livingstone 2009: 3). These technologies overcome, or transform 'distance, both physical and symbolic, time and space, and so connect otherwise separated parties (...) an enterprise that has ethical as well as political significance (Livingstone 2009: 3).

Our proposed typology, whilst as yet under-developed, might provide a new avenue for exploring the way in which the resistance-practices of those engaged either in protests or social movements incur transformative effects, transforming the individuals involved, making alternative values visible, changing spaces or illustrating that other spaces could exist.

For sure, we are not the first to note the potential of the concept of heterotopia for SMS. Hetherington (1997, 1998), in his writing on modernity, identity politics and alternative lifestyles has employed the concept to 'think new social movements otherwise' (Hetherington 1998: 32). He identifies 3 main ways of understanding heterotopias:

- (1) Spaces of/for socially transgressive practices;
- (2) Ambivalent sites having a multiplicity of meanings attached to them;
- (3) Places on the margin of the dominant social specialisation.

Whilst Hetherington does not rule out these conceptualisations, he sees them as effects rather than definitions of these spaces. He defines heterotopias as 'spaces of alternate ordering', that 'organize a bit of the social in a way different to that which surround them. That alternate ordering marks them out as Other and allows them to be seen as an example of an alternative way of doing things.' (Hetherington 1997: viii).

We do not embrace all of Hetherington's theorizing around identity politics, but we find his understanding of heterotopia persuasive. It neatly summarises the argument we have been seeking to make. The key expression here for us is 'alternative ordering'. Hetherington (1997, 47) also draws upon Genocchio's (1995) reading of the concept of heterotopia to argue:

'that the radical incommensurable difference and Otherness of heterotopia [...] can still be implied if attention is turned to heterotopia as an idea about space rather than actual place; an idea, or perhaps a practice that challenges the functional ordering of space while refusing to become part of that order, even in difference'.

The key conceptual move here requires us to think of heterotopias as systems of interaction, of sociality, 'lifted' out of specific time and space. Heterotopias entail different intersections of space and time. Their key characteristic is their social, cultural and political liminality. It is this characteristic that makes them so threatening of 'State striation'. Their social form is what characterizes their mode of resistance.

## **Conclusion**

In this paper we have explored the potentialities of Foucault's work for the analysis of social movements. We have explored the concept of heterotopia in detail and considered the potentiality of this concept for understanding non- or counter-normative protest. We have presented a new interpretation of his concept and its location within Foucault's wider overall intellectual project. We have described how it is situated at that point in Foucault's intellectual development when he was beginning a new analysis of power, resistance and the body.

We have then examined the potential for developing and elaborating the concept for the analysis of certain social movement practices. In doing so we have reviewed critically other attempts to use Foucault's work for the analysis of social movements, noting that they have tended to neglect the concept of heterotopia. We have introduced the idea of different types of heterotopia which focus upon different ways or forms of breaking norms. We have suggested that heterotopias may: be in the wrong place; move in the wrong way; be characterized by the wrong of type of connection; be characterized by the wrong type of affinity or characterized by the wrong type of organization.

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