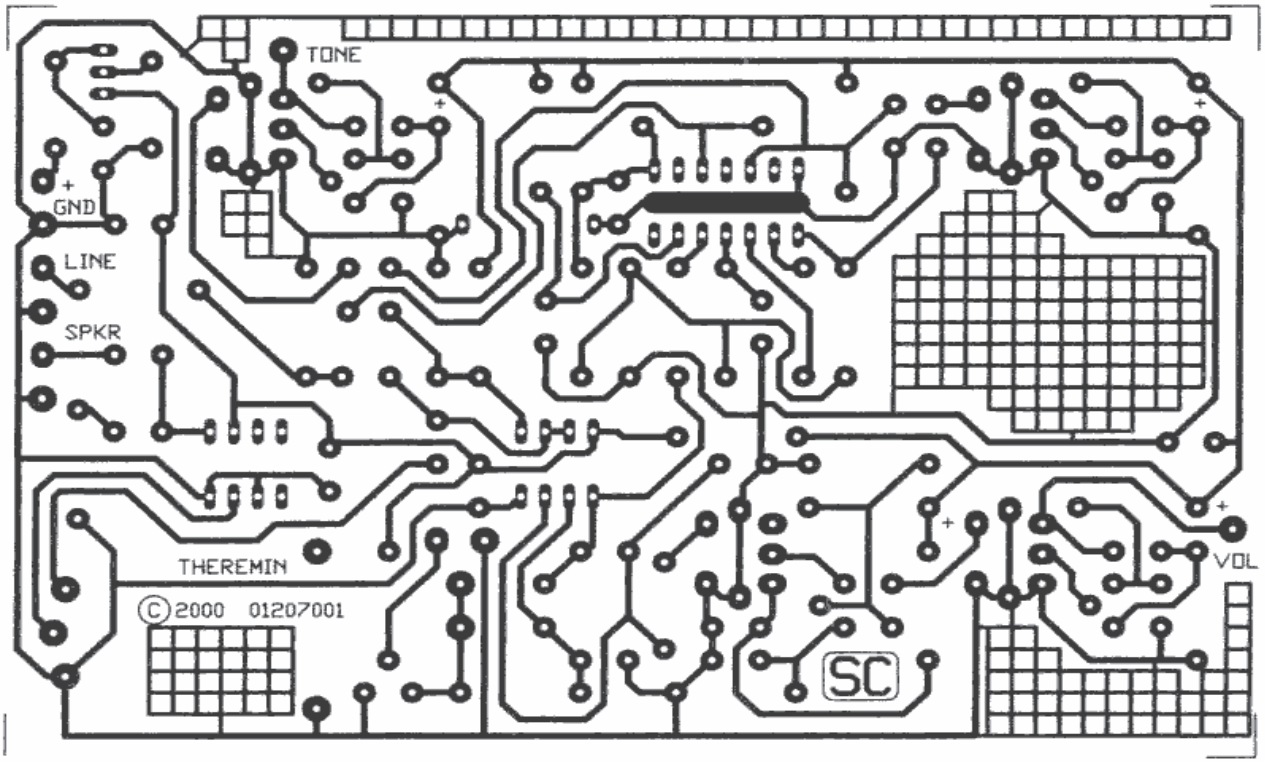
# *To* *Do*

# Media Archaeology




*by* *SAMUEL ZWAAN*

*If we take eternity to mean not infinite temporal duration but timelessness, then eternal life belongs to those who live in the present. Our life has no end in the way which our visual field has no limits.*

*Ludwig Wittgenstein, Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*

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CHAPTER I

# Exploring the Issue

# Introduction

The question of methodology remains a central point of focus in the humanities; how to produce and legitimate disciplinary knowledge is a fundamental aspect of any research and field. The field of media studies is no exception when it comes to such a question. Within media studies a range of methods from other academic fields have been appropriated. Images are subjected to semiotic analysis and texts are analyzed using content analysis and discourse analysis, whilst audiences are studied using both qualitative and quantitative methods, from ethnographic observation, open-questionnaires and interviews to more formal, structured questionnaires and interviews. Such appropriation raises methodological and epistemological issues, specifically on accountability and validation of ones work.

An approach that has been coming more to the foreground in recent years is media archaeology. I do not want to argue media archaeology is a new field trying to get its bearing. Rather I would refer to Dutch ethologist Nikolaas Tinbergen who faced a partly similar situation with regards to ethology. Tinbergen stated in 1965 that ethology was often perceived as being a new science, in need of catching up with other sciences. However, he argued that it should be considered as a re-emergence of an old science which after a dormant period is trying to awaken, trying to snap out of a "hovering between the arts and the sciences, … now trying to make up for lost ground and find its place among the modern life sciences".[1] Ironically the idea of re-emergence will prove to be fundamental for media archaeology.

Although not a new field it is the case that, similar to Bourdieu's critique on cultural studies, media studies' appropriation of a variety of methods can lead to a somewhat unstructured appearance as an academic field where it is difficult to hold researchers accountable for their claims because agreement on the methods and validity is difficult.[2] Hovering between arts and sciences, media archaeology too is struggling to wake up. More recently however media archaeology and approaches closely related to media archaeology such as platform studies and software studies have been gaining momentum.

Platform studies for instance "investigates the relationships between the hardware and software design of computing systems and the creative works produced on those systems".[3] These approaches seem to draw from at least in part similar intellectual backgrounds, ideas and methods as media archaeology. Still, Jussi Parikka notes that summaries of theoretical works or mappings of debates within media

1 Niko Tinbergen, *The Animal in Its World (Explorations of an Ethologist, 1932-1972): Field Studies* (Harvard University Press, 1972): 87.

2 Richard Harker, *An Introduction to the Work of Pierre Bourdieu: The Practice of Theory* (Macmillan, 1990): 68-71.

3 Ian Bogost and Nick Montfort, "Platform Studies : Frequently Questioned Answers", *Digital Arts and Culture* (2009).
http://www.platformstudies.com last visited on September 16th.

archaeology are missing.[4] **Therefore the main question and focus within this research project will be discussing media archaeological theories and mappings to discover what the position of media archaeology is within media studies. This endavour is closely tied with the question whether or not it can become clear how one 'does' media archaeology.** Hence the title of this project "to do media archaeology".

I position these questions as a continuation of the afterword of the book *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications and Implications* by Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka published in 2011, a tremendous step forward for media archaeology. This book contains a collection of articles by a variety of authors on topics related to or on media archaeology. In the afterword Vivian Sobchack writes about the concept of presence and its relevance to "the task of making sense of "media archaeology", however heterogeneous and literally unruly this undisciplined discipline might be".[5] Two aspects are of interest in Sobchacks statements. One, media archaeology is an undisciplined, heterogeneous and unstructured discipline i.e. not the ideal candidate in a quest for a method on which academics might find agreement and validity in research. Second, the relevance of presence Sobchack is referring to is that this diversified discipline of media archaeology is grounded in a belief in and desire for the possibility of historical presence, at least on a metalevel.[6]

Thus, the exploration of media archaeology's position within media studies lies not only in the question why media archaeology should be employed but also in whether or not it is possible to create a more structured and workable method or approach i.e. how to employ it.[7] Without more coherence it would still prove difficult to find agreement, to hold researchers accountable on methods and validity. Indeed there would be epistemological issues within a methodology itself.

Blatantly put epistemology is also referred to as theory of knowledge, what is knowledge, how can it be attained and to what extent knowledge can be acquired. Within media archaeology there is so much diversity resulting in paradoxical and sometimes contradicting approaches and research; the ideas on how knowledge can be attained and what knowledge should be attained differ. Peculiar not only because of Sobchack's theorizing on how the concept of presence provides common ground for a still diversified field, but also because the especially foregrounded media archaeologies (sometimes referred to as schools or traditions) can to a great extent be explained because of different readings of Foucault. Commonalities such as the

4 Jussi Parikka, *What Is Media Archaeology* (Polity, 2012): 5.

5 Vivian Sobchack, "Afterword, Media Archaeology and Re-Presencing the Past," in *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications*, ed. Jussi Parikka and Ekkri Huhtamo (Berkely, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2011): 323–334, 323.

6 Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka, *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications* (University of California Press, 2011): 327.

7 Let it be clear that it is difficult to establish what to call media archaeology. Is it a method, approach, discipline, field or something else? One of the goals in this research is also to get a clearer picture on this, however I apologize in advance for the varied uses. Several scholars use different terms and I do not want to change their wording in this context.

prevelance of Foucault or the focus on temporality (such as presence) between different media archaeologies form a starting point in the exploration of the position of media archaeology for media studies and how to actually do media archaeology.

Such an attempt at clarification of issues on vagueness of terms is not uncommon in media studies. Professor in Film Studies Frank Kessler worked on describing the concept of *dispositif*, sometimes referred to as apparatus or device. Kessler notes that the term has been used and described in different ways by different scholars (also Foucault as will be shown in this research project). Kessler shows how different understandings of such a concept will have implications for the outcome of research.[8] As such it is always crucial to gain clarity on such understandings as is also the case in this research project on media archaeology with terms such as discourse, materiality, media or archaeology.

Coincidentally such an endeavor coincides with closing remarks made by Jussi Parikka in his insightful book *What is Media Archaeology* and Timothy Druckrey in his article "Imaginary Futures…". Druckrey states that "what is most necessary for the field of 'media archaeology' is to both distinguish it as a nascent discipline and to set some boundaries in order to avoid its subjectivication".[9] Parikka states how media archaeology has the potential to be an innovative 21st century arts and humanities discipline, but it needs to be "clear and up-front about its special positions at the crossroads of art, science and technology and show the longer lineages in such border-crossings".[10] The next step forward for media archaeology has been recognized, but has yet to be taken. Already in 2010 Parikka and Hertz state in an interview how there is a need for a stronger articulation of media archaeology not only as a textual method, but also as an artistic methodology.[11]

Although I agree in part with Parikka and Hertz that a stronger articulation also as an artistic methodology can be useful, assuming that art is at the forefront and can help expand and ground media archaeology, the textual method should not be underestimated. What the purpose of this research is, is especially to explore the possibility of using media archaeology or doing media archaeology in the context of media studies, thus it is imperative to investigate the usefulness within academia.

To give a concrete example, can media archaeology be approached in such a way that a Professor at a University can teach a course in media archaeology and let students undertake media archaeological research? Perhaps this seems almost bas-

8 Frank Kessler, "Notes on *Dispositif*" (Utrecht University November 2007). http://www.frankkessler.nl/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/Dispositif-Notes.pdf.

9 Timothy Druckrey, "Imaginary Media," in *The Book of Imaginary Media: Excavating the Dream of the Ultimate Communication Medium*, ed. Eric Kluitenberg, Siegfried Zielinski, and Bruce Sterling (Amsterdam: NAi Publishers, 2007), 240–253.

10 Jussi Parikka, *What Is Media Archaeology* (Polity, 2012): 160, 161, 167.

11 Jussi Parikka and Garnet Hertz, "Archaeologies of Media Art" Ctheory Interview with Jussi Parikka *Ctheory* (April 2010) www.ctheory.net.
The word methodology is used in this interview although it should be method. Methodology is the systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study, or the theoretical analysis of the body of methods and principles associated with a branch of knowledge. A method is the set of tools or instrument, which is what is meant in this interview/article.

tardizing and blasphemous, to pursue something as heterogeneous and complex as media archaeology only to mutilate it, making it graspable for a student. However, there is nothing more useless than having unusable ways of working. The university classroom is a perfect place to discover media archaeology, to hold each other accountable for claims based on a way of working, to establish validity and come in to agreement or at least discussion over the episteme of media archaeology. Let this research project be a first step in a guide to doing media archaeological research.

In the first section the problem addressed in this research project will be explored in more detail. As stated, media studies itself at times appears unruly, clarity with regards to media archaeology can also be constructive in limiting such appearences media studies. This section will present an overview of the present diversity and also consider why media studies is in need of more stability.

Following the problem statement is a short section on methodology. This research project will rely on existing literature as well as interviews. Thus, in this section the key publications will be mentioned and the interview procedure will be explained. In discussing the literature a combination of discourse analysis and critical literature review will be used. Interviews are an important part of this research seeing that coming to terms over something such as media archaeology requires dissemination of information and discussion amongst peers.

As will become clear from the problem statement section, part of the media archaeological diversity comes from different readings and misreading of Foucault. Thus, a discussion will follow on Foucault's archaeological method on which he explicitly writes in his 1969 publication *The Archaeology of Knowledge*; a method he used not only in *The Order of Things* but also (at least implicitly) in *History of Madness* and *Birth of a Clinic*. Media archaeology has been heavily influenced by Foucault's ideas on archaeology, on systems of thought and knowledge governed by rules beyond those of grammar and logic, on the boundaries of thought in a given time.[12] Not only Foucault's ideas on archaeology but also concepts such as genealogy, discourse, the archive and others prove to be useful in an understanding of media archaeology.

An understanding of the aforementioned Foucauldean concepts provide a solid basis to discuss the different media archaeologies. In this next section on media archaeologies, questions will be raised on why there is diversity, what is this diversity but also the peculiarity that different approaches still seem to be called media archaeology or at least be connected to media archaeology. There will be a discussion on different media archaeologies using 3 guiding questions which will flow from the previous section on Foucauldean archaeology and related concepts. These questions are: What is discourse in media archaeology, what is archaeology in media archaeology and what is materiality in media archaeology? Besides discussing approaches explicitly mentioning media archaeology there will also be a focus on related ap-

12 Stanford Dictionary paragraph 4.3, "From Archaeology to Genealogy". http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/foucault/#4.3 last visited on September 17th 2013.

proaches such as platform studies.

After an extensive look into Foucauldean archaeology, the diverse field of media archaeology and related approaches it becomes possible to start exploring possible ways of clarifying and doing media archaeological research. A brief starting point will be Vivian Sobchack's article in which a first recommendation is made in the form of the concept of presence. Sobchack however just made a first relatively small step, also literally seeing that the article is only a couple of pages. Her perspective on presence and media archaeology will be taken into account but further steps will also be taken. It is not only about the concept of presence. It is not coincidental that approaches are influenced by the same source, Foucault, read differently but that there is a self-identification as media archaeology. On top of that, related approaches are popping up. Answers must and can be found on clarifying and doing media archaeology. Part of the answer, as will be argued, is directly related to the main issue of this research project; it is that media archaeology has the potential to rise up within media studies (but as will become clear, also other fields), creating a possible way of working within media studies leading to accountability for ones work and claims on validity.

To strengthen the research project overall, interviews with key scholars in the media archaeological field will be held and used. If there is talk about a media studies specific approach i.e. doing media archaeology, it is important to have the perspectives of key scholars in that field. Naturally it can be hard to interview everybody in this field or closely related to it; within the scope of this research project 9 interviews with key scholars will be held. Truth be told, it is not the easiest task for a student to set up interviews with key scholars in a field. Who has the time, right? However, interviews with Jussi parikka, Ian Bogost, Eric Kluitenberg, Imar de Vries, Jay Bolter, Erkki Huhtamo, Noah Wardrip-Fruin, Siegfried Zielinski and Wolfgang Ernst have been held.

Lastly, after re-visiting Foucault and the exploration into the diverse media archaeologies there is a specific section on doing media archaeology. As stated earlier in the introduction, what use is a way of working when employing it becomes too complex of an aspiration? Complexity meaning either making your way through a field that is too dense or having several traditions under the same umbrella claiming different epistemological boundaries. Again, there is a return to Nikolaas Tinbergen. In his endeavors to legitimize a science or branch of a science, he stressed on the importance of dissemination. One has to sell one's ideas and approaches to others. Tinbergen states how there are three 'others' he tries to reach: peers, students and the public.[13] Although these groups require different types of sales talks Tinbergen is convinced that these differences have often been exaggerated:

> In speaking to one's fellow scientists one can often do with a much smaller number of technical terms than is usual; and when speaking to the young and

13 Tinbergen, *The Animal in Its World (Explorations of an Ethologist, 1932-1972): Field Studies*, 87.

> the non-scientist one need not, indeed must not, 'talk down'; to the contrary, most of them like to be taken seriously, and to be 'stretched'.[14]

This final section brings together all the information gained on archaeologies, diversity, possibilities of clarification, present perspectives and poses concrete steps on how to position media archaeology in such a way a Professor could teach a course in it and have students create media archaeological works that can in an agreeable manner be validated and/or where students can hold their work accountable. Hopefully this leads to next steps in the possibility of dissemination under peers, students and the public.

Although the goal of having something as complex as media archaeology in such a functional context might seem daft, it is necessary from time to time to find balance between highly philosophical and theoretical debates and pratice. As Parikka clearly states at the end of *What is Media Archaeology* and remarkably enough voicing similar thoughts as Tinbergen: "[Media Archaeology] needs to be clear and upfront about its special position at the crossroads of art, science and technology- and show the longer lineages in such border-crossings".[15]

14 Ibid.

15 Parikka, *What Is Media Archaeology, 167*.

# Problem Statement

Parikka and Huhtamo mention early on in *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications and Implications* that "no effort will be made to nail down "correct" principles or methodological guidelines or to mark fixed boundaries for a new discipline".[16] Rather they want to start an open forum and trigger discussion on the problems and prospects of an emerging field. However, this continued avoiding of guidelines and principles results in a contested position for media archaeology. Agreement on research questions and projects becomes problematic i.e. the validity can be at stake. What one media archaeologist might accept as good research practice the other would not even recognize as media archaeological (or academic research for that matter). This is also one of the reasons media archaeology receives critique from various other disciplines questioning what it actually is and why it is different from for instance historical research as done in a history department.

On top of that, the field of media studies lacks methods specific to its field. Methods from other academic fields are usually appropriated; this is constructive as well as destructive. Kristoffer Gansing, in his dissertation *Transversal Media Practices*, suggest that "a more productive exchange between different theories and methods is needed, going beyond institutional territory-making within media studies".[17] As stated, although unavoidable such appropriation is also destructive. It results in a similar situation as in cultural studies where critique is expressed on logical consistency between research, validity and agreement on way of working; not to mention the critique from other fields on how they differ if they appropriate what's already being done.

Bourdieu's critique on cultural studies, "Postmodern Cultural Studies: A Critique" by Adam Katz, or even more popular articles in the Chronicle are examples of the critique on the sometimes contradictory nature of cultural studies and its loss of bearing.[18] Although media studies is a relatively new field of studies, which implies there still is a need for bearing, it is necessary to avoid going down a similar path as cultural studies. Thus, there seems to be a two-fold problem which could potentially be solved by connecting them. Media archaeology needs grounding and media studies could benefit from a grounded way of working.

However, grounding is not an easy task. One of the strenghts of media archaeology, as stated by several scholars in articles and interviews I held, is its heterogeneity. At the same time there is also recognition that this creates a tension between 'usabil-

16 Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka, *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications*, 2.

17 Kristoffer Gansing, "Transversal Media Practices" (Malmo University, 2013), http://dspace.mah.se/bitstream/handle/2043/15246/Gansing KS muep_ny.pdf, 36.

18 Harker, *An Introduction to the Work of Pierre Bourdieu: The Practice of Theory*.
Adam Katz, "Postmodern Cultural Studies: A Critique," *The Alternative Orange* 5, no. 1 (1995).
Michael Berube, "What's the Matter With Cultural Studies?," 2009, http://chronicle.com/article/Whats-the-Matter-With/48334/ last visited on September 23 2013.

ity' and at the same time not trying to dumb down or unify media archaeology i.e. staying true to its heterogeneity and complexity. Although recently attempts have been made to pin down a media archaeological method, this resulted in a simplification of media archaeology by ignoring the extensive range of the field.

Gansing for instance, in his dissertation, tries out the potential of media archaeology as an experimental methodological approach to case studies. However, he argues that media archaeology has developed as a "bastard discipline in between Foucault's focus on the discourses arising from the archive, i.e. the archive understood as a discursive site, and the German media theory tradition of emphasizing the technically determined and operational, or even actively intervening aspects of archives as material entities".[19] This, however, undermines the extent to which Foucault has influenced media archaeological thought as wel as Foucault's complexity and the heterogeneity of the media archaeological field. It makes it seem as if German media theory tradition is opposed to Foucault's focus, which is too simplistic.

There seems to be a tendency with regards to media archaeology to cherish the heterogeneous and avoid being pinned down as a method into an academic textbook. Some voice this more than others. Siegfried Zielinski for instance specifically states that media archaeology is an act of resistance. He proclaims not to succumb to the uniformity of mainstream media culture or hardening into the normalcy of contemporary media studies;[20] a line of thought which has been questioned by other scholars as well with regards to productivity.[21]

Besides actively proclaiming resistance and heterogeneity, the effort not to nail down principles or methodological guidelines stems from a multitude of publications. These publications either show the multitude of traditions and interpretations of media archaeology or do not go into the activity of pinpointing the procedures and techniques characteristic of a particular way of working. An example of the first would be *The Book of Imaginary Media* which contains articles by Siegfried Zielinski, Erkki Huhtamo, Bruce Sterling, Eric Kluitenberg, Timothy Druckrey, Zoe Beloff and others; a similar set up is seen in *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications and Implications*. An example of the latter is Parikka's publication *What is Media Archaeology* in which one would perhaps expect a definition or set of principles, this is not the case. The book focuses on "elaborating the potentials of the media-archaeological method in digital culture research".[22] Although Parikka's book is a definite step forward to understanding what media archaeology is, to call it a method has certain implications and remains questionable.

A method implies that you need guidelines on how to do something specific. The analogy in the book *Understanding Research: Coping with the Quantitative-Qualitative Divide* works well: "The point of knowing which recipe you are following and to make what sort of dish, to extend this analogy, is a first-base distinction in terms

19 Gansing, "Transversal Media Practices", 67.
20 Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka, *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications*, 10.
21 Ibid.
22 Jussi Parikka, *What Is Media Archaeology* (Polity, 2012): 2.

of method/s."[23] The second aspect is that by learning how to do things a certain way you are also learning to know things a certain way. There are few publications on media archaeology which provide such a recipe, exceptions are there such as Erkki Huhtamo's attempt to apply the idea of topos to the field of media studies as will be discussed in a section on topoi specifically.

Perhaps it comes off as a non-humanities statement to say there is a need for media archaeological principles or rules of procedure; that this way of working needs to have an element of replicability and transparency. But if one wants validity, discussion on agreement and also valorization, it is necessary. Whether or not a 'hardcore method' should be developed however remains to be seen.

> Research methods are rules and procedures that researchers working within a disciplinary framework employ to improve the validity of their inferences… [R]esearchers who abide by good research methods may more reliably produce valid inferences. … *There are always exceptions but the point seems to hold generally*.[24]

This explanation of a method at first sight seems a perfect goal for media archaeology. However, this research will also argue that the need for heterogeneity in media archaeology is so great that a compromise should be found between heterogeneity and creating a method.

The heterogeneity becomes visible on many levels. There is mentioning of a German tradition or school of media archaeology, an Amsterdam and Anglo-American one, Zielinski's variantology, Huhtamo's topos studies and more. On top of that other notions such as remediation, developed by Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin, platform studies and software studies also get affiliated with media archaeology. It is easy to see the difficulty arising of understanding what a scholar is even saying when referring to media archaeology. One could question the affiliation of all these notions, fields and concepts with media archaeology. It seems to encompass more and more, even contradictory standpoints.

Still, there is this common denominator of media archaeology. To explore whether or not there can be guidelines to strengthen a media archaeological method, to find more commonalities than just the name, it is first necessary to understand its diversity. Michael Foucault's writing has been a formative experience for many media archaeologists. Part of the diversity can be explained by different readings of Foucault but possibly also misreading Foucault. Therefore, after a short section on methodology, the focus will be on Foucauldean archaeology to start understanding the different readings contributing to different media archaeologies.

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23 M.I. Franklin, *Understanding Research: Coping with the Quantitative - Qualitative Divide* (Routledge, 2012): 45.

24 Michael Oakes and Jay Kaufman, *Methods in Social Epidemiology (Public Health/Epidemiology and Biostatistics)* (Jossey-Bass, 2006): 5.

# Method

From the introduction it might already have become clear that for a large part this research project is dependent on existing literature. To question diverse media archaeologies and epistemological issues is to investigate what has been written on media archaeology. It is to discover what perspectives are, have been and came to be. Thus, key publications and examples will be discussed by means of discourse analysis and critical literature review. The second part of this section will be devoted to explain the procedure of interviewing scholars affiliated with media archaeology or related approaches, I will refer back to Tinbergen to explain why having these interviews is crucial for this research.

## SCIENTIFIC DISCOURSE & CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

The terms discourse and discourse analysis are widespread. It is defined in several ways depending on the field one is working in or the theoretical orientation of the researcher. R. Keith Sawyer gives examples on how it can differ in his article "A Discourse on Discourse: An Archaeological History of an Intellectual Concept". In "post-colonial theory: discourse is a system of domination (...) Anthropology: discourse is a culture or ideology (...) Sociolinguistics: discourse is a speech style or register (...) Psychology: discourse is a physical or bodily practice (...) Feminist theory: discourse is a type of subject".[25] Therefore it is necessary to specifically go into how I understand discourse analysis as a method in this research.

I will primarily focus on the *scientific discourse* of media archaeology. In a discourse analysis one is searching for the cues or clues in language that guide us. The analysis focusses on the thread of language used in a situation network. To understand this situation network it is necessary to understand situated meanings and cultural models, which are tools of inquiry. Both situated meanings and cultural models provide insights on how for instance a scholar gives language specific meanings within specific situations. "A situated meaning … is an image or pattern we assemble "on the spot" as we communicate in a given context, based on the construal of that context and on our past experiences".[26]

James Paul Gee gives the example of spilling coffee on the floor. If one says 'the coffee spilled, get a broom' instead of 'the coffee spilled, get a mop', you assemble a different situated meaning. The first being grounded and dry coffee, the latter liquid

25 R. Keith Sawyer, "a Discourse on Discourse: An Archeological History of an Intellectual Concept," *Cultural Studies* 16, no. 3 (May 2002): 433–456: 434.

26 James Paul Gee, *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method* (Routledge, 2010): 80.

coffee.[27] Situated meaning are often negotiated through social interaction and are not merely individual. A cultural model "explains", relative to the standards of a group, "why words have the various situated meanings they do and fuel their ability to grow more".[28]

In both situated meanings and cultural models, the word situation is of importance. But what is meant by situation? According to Gee a situation, when it involves a communicative social interaction, always follows connected aspects: A semiotic aspect, an activity aspect, a material aspect, a political aspect and a sociocultural aspect. Together these aspects form a system in which the aspects give meaning to all others and get meaning from them (language simultaneously reflects and constructs the situation in which it is used).[29] This system is called a situation network.

As stated, a discourse analysis focuses on the thread of language used in a situation network. Thus, and this is closely related to what a situation is, we need to understand the situation network which according to Gee is constructed through five buildings tasks, and I quote:

1. *Semiotic building*, that is, using cues or clues to assemble situated meanings about what semiotic (communicative) systems, systems of knowledge and ways of knowing, are here and now relevant and activated.
2. *Word building*, that is, using cues or clues to assemble situated meanings about what is here and now (taken as) 'reality', what is here and now (taken as) present and absent, concrete and abstract, 'real' and 'unreal', probable, possible and impossible.
3. *Activity building*, that is, using cues or clues to assemble situated meanings about what activity or activities are going on, composed of what specific actions. Socioculturally-situated identity and relationship building that is, using cues or clues to assemble situated meanings about what identities and relationships are relevant to the interaction, with their concomitant attitudes, values, ways of feelings, ways of knowing and believing, as well as ways of acting and interacting.
4. *Political building*, that is, using the cues or clues to construct the nature and relevance of various 'social goods' such as status and power and anything else taken as a 'social good' here and now (e.g. beauty, humor, verbalness, specialist knowledge, etc.).
5. *Connection building* that is using the cues or clues to make assumptions about how the past and future of an interaction, verbally and non-verbally, are connected to the present moment and to each other after all, interactions always have some degree of continuous coherence.[30]

27 Ibid.
28 Ibid., 81.
29 Ibid., 81-82.
30 Ibid., 85-86.

According to Gee a discourse analysis involves asking questions about these buildings tasks. He provides 18 questions which, if answered, would be an 'ideal' discourse analysis. At the same time Gee acknowledges that an actual analysis usually develops in detail only a small part of the full picture. Still, at least some consideration of the full picture is necessary. The 18 questions can be found in appendix A.

Now it is not my intention to write down the answers to the 18 questions for every publication on media archaeology which will be discussed in this research. For one, this would make reading this very tedious. Secondly, just answering these questions still does not provide valuable insights. And lastly, sometimes there just isn't an answer to one of the questions. As mentioned by Gee, he provides tools. These questions and the building tasks help in analyzing the discourse. Thus, they provide the researcher with terminology, tools and perspectives for a discourse analysis.

Gee provides 'an extra step' in a paper he published on his website on *critical discourse analysis*. He states that some forms of discourse analysis add a third task on top of either analyzing utterance-type meaning or situated meaning (the latter being the focus in this research). This third task studies in which way the situated meanings are associated with social practices. Critical discourse analysis treats "social practices, not just in term of social relationships, but, also, in terms of their implications for things like status, solidarity, the distribution of social goods, and power", moreover "critical discourse analysis argues that language-in-use is always part and parcel of, and partially constitutive of, specific social practices and that social practices always have implications for inherently political things like status, solidarity, the distribution of social goods, and power".[31]

The third task, the critical dimension, is crucial to this research. Questions being asked are focusing on where certain terminology comes from, such as the word archaeology. Thus, questions are being raised on the situated meaning of certain utterances. However, it is not just about the situated meaning, it is also about what this means for media archaeology. How come there is a German tradition, or an Anglo-American tradition? Why even use the word tradition? These are questions that go beyond situated meaning, they are question on power relations.[32] To link critical discourse analysis to what will be done in this research on media archaeology a brief overview on scholars and publications that will be discussed is useful.

Michael Foucault is crucial within the scientific discourse on media archaeology. Ironically Foucault is also one of the scholars popularizing the concept of discourse and on top of that the usage of discourse will be questioned in this research. However, this critique will focus on the misinterpretation of the concept of discourse by media archaeologists (and consequently stand apart from the method of critical discourse analyses used in this research; these are 2 separate matters). Foucault's work

31 James Paul Gee, "Discourse Analysis: What Makes It Critical?", n.d., http://www.jamespaulgee.com/sites/default/files/pub/CriticalDiscourse.pdf, 23.

32 James Paul Gee even goes so far as stating that all language-in-interaction is inherently political and, thus, that all discourse analysis, if it is to be true to its subject matter (i.e., language-in-use) and in that sense "scientific", must be critical discourse analysis.

is crucial because the majority of media archaeologists refer in one way or another to Foucault, specifically to his understanding of discourse, archaeology, genealogy and the archive.

Walter Benjamin and Marshall McLuhan could also be seen as fore runners of media archaeology, together with Foucault. McLuhan's influence on media archaeologists came due to his emphasis on temporal connections, translations and mergers between media. His understanding of media was broad and his ideas on media as extensions especially influenced the German tradition of media archaeology. Benjamin put emphasis on discursive layers of culture to think about 'anonymous histories'.[33]

Other authors that are of interest are Siegfried Zielinski with his version of media archaeology as resistance i.e. variantology; Jussi Parikka who has published extensively on media archaeology and clearly wants to see it develop; Erkki Huhtamo, who worked together with Parikka on several occasions, and published on topos study; Friedrich Kittler who is seen by many as a great influence on the German tradition of media archaeology; A Kittler expert and researching materiality of communication, Geoffrey Winthrop-Young; Wolfgang Ernst who more recently even turned into a 'techno-mathematical' direction;[34] Ian Bogost and Nick Montfort who focus on the relationship between platforms and creative expression i.e. platform studies; Along similar lines, Lev Manovich, who argues that the focus of research needs to be software and how it redefines how we interact with each other and our objects, represent ourselves to others, and understand the world; Eric Kluitenberg who writes on 'imaginary media' and media archaeology.

In later sections of this research the afterword by Vivian Sobchack in *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications and Implications* will play a role seeing she provides commonalities between different media archaeological traditions, specifically the notion of presence. Besides these authors there are others that are part of the discourse such as Geert Lovink, Timothy Druckrey, Claus Pias, Thomas Elsaesser or Noah Wardrip-Fruin. That this is not an exhaustive list becomes clear from just looking at some syllabi on media archaeology courses offered by different Universities. Professor Alexander Galloway teaches a course where besides reading Zielinski or Kittler, scholars such as Lisa Gitelman, Vilem Flusser, Cornelia Vismann, Jonathan Crary and others are discussed.[35] At Amherst college articles by Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, Tom Gunning, Katherine Hayles, Mathhew Kirschenbaum and others are studied.[36] However, to discuss every author affiliated with media archaeology is too much, choices have to be made in every discourse analysis on what to discuss

33 Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka, *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications*, 5.
34 J. Parikka, "Operative Media Archaeology: Wolfgang Ernst's Materialist Media Diagrammatics," *Theory, Culture & Society* 28, no. 5 (September 21, 2011): 52–74, 53.
35 Syllabus NYU, http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/scmsAdmin/media/users/sr99/syllabi/graduate/E58_2134_Media_Archaeology_07.pdf last visited on September 19th 2013.
36 Syllabus Amherst College, https://www.amherst.edu/academiclife/departments/courses/1213S/ENGL/ENGL-486-1213S last visited on September 19th 2013.

and what not.

In an analysis of the scientific discourse it is useful to make a distinction between three kinds of sources: constructive, elaborative and reflexive. All contribute to the formation of discourse, but they perform different important functions. These different types of sources follow each other logically and more or less chronologically, since there must first be a discourse upon which can be elaborated, before one can reflect on it in a meaningful way. Nevertheless, there remains a high degree of overlap between the three types of sources.[37]

The constructive sources or publications are those that provide a large amount to the construction of the original discourse. These are often written by scholars, philosophers and theorists who create a potential discourse with the introduction of important concepts and original ideas. First and foremost Michael Foucault has to be mentioned, popularizing the concept of discourse. Besides Foucault also Benjamin and McLuhan fall under the constructive resources.

Then a whole range of authors follow Foucault, Benjamin and McLuhan but also expand on their ideas. The long list of names mentioned above such as Zielinski, Kittler, Lovink, Huhtamo etc. use the notions from constructive sources for their own research or expand/adjust the ideas. Some authors border between elaborating on notions from constructive sources and being reflective. It is difficult to place for instance Vivian Sobchack who goes into the notion of presence to theorize on commonalities between media archaeologies. Is this elaborative or reflexive? One author that is clearly reflexive is Jussi Parikka who critically reflects on the discourse in his *What is Media Archaeology?*. Similarly, Wolfgang Ernst has certain lectures and publications in which he specifically reflects on what media archaeology is by critically analyzing the discourse shaped and elaborated by previously mentioned authors.

The discourse analysis will show misreading and different readings of constructive sources which influence the elaborative and reflexive sources, and thus the entire discourse. So besides a genealogical analysis of a part of the scientific discourse on media archaeology this research will discuss these different readings/misreading to consequently take a next step and use that analysis to theorize on possibilities of a more stable media archaeology and question whether it could be shaped into media studies specific method. I deliberately state part of the scientific discourse because, as Gee also stated, a discourse is not a unit with clear boundaries, there is a problem of framing. The discourse itself is indefinitely large, this is also true for any aspect in a given context. Thus, a discourse analysis is always open to further revision.[38]

The next step of theorizing will partly be possible due to insights gained from the discourse analysis but it goes further. The goal in this research is not only to analyze the discourse but eventually to also critique or build upon existing media archaeological perspectives. Therefore this research is also a critical analysis of existing publications on media archaeology. It is necessary to make this distinction

37 Rob Grinsven, "Het Netwerk Imaginaire" (Utrecht University, 2010): 13.

38 Gee, "Discourse Analysis: What Makes It Critical?" last visited on September 28th 2013.

because theorizing on the possibilities of guidelines for media archaeology within media studies surpasses the goal of a discourse analysis. Although, it has to be said that both discourse analysis and critical (literature) analysis go well together due to some overlap. Both deal with an understanding of a text, yet in slightly different ways. Several Universities give guidelines on how to do a critical analysis. The most characteristic features of a critical analysis are:

- A clear and confident refusal to accept the conclusions of other writers without evaluating the arguments and evidence that they provide;
- A balanced presentation of reasons why the conclusions of other writers may be accepted or may need to be treated with caution;
- A clear presentation of your own evidence and argument, leading to your conclusion;
- A recognition of the limitations in your own evidence, argument, and conclusion.[39]

Lastly, a discourse analysis often has the implicit claim to exist outside the discourse of a subject to be able to give a critical analysis. However, this research is also part of the discourse that it studies. Moreover, the texts of the authors do not speak for themselves, but they have to be interpreted by me. These complications, however, do not mean that the conclusions of a discourse analysis are meaningless. The critical study of the discourse of media archaeology can expose assumptions, inconsistencies, ambiguities and fallacies. In this way, there can be a useful contribution to the discourse it is investigating. This is also one of the goals of this study.[40]

## INTERVIEW PROCEDURE

To gain consideration and the possibility of agreement within media archaeology it is necessary to initiate discussion with peers, as Tinbergen also argues.[41] Many of the authors discussed in this research are very much alive and can thus be asked their opinion and interpretation. Thus I have tried my best to contact some of the authors mentioned on the previous pages and was pleased to see several were able to make some time. Interviews will be held with Jussi parikka, Ian Bogost, Eric Kluitenberg, Imar de Vries, Jay Bolter, Erkki Huhtamo, Noah Wardrip-Fruin, Siegfried Zielinski and Wolfgang Ernst.

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39 Guidelines on critical analysis/critical writing from the University of Leicester, http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ld/resources/writing/writing-resources/critical-writing last visited on October 1st 2013.
Guidelines on critical analysis from Southeastern Louisiana University, http://www2.southeastern.edu/Academics/Faculty/elejeune/critique.htm last visited on October 1st 2013.

40 Grinsven, "Het Netwerk Imaginaire", 14.

41 Tinbergen, *The Animal in Its World (Explorations of an Ethologist, 1932-1972): Field Studies*, 87.

The structure of these interviews will be based on James P. Spardley's description of an ethnographic interview in the similarly named book *The Ethnographic Interview*. Although this project is not labeled as an ethnographic research, when considering it amusingly shows some resemblance.[42] The book is from 1979, which might seem outdated; still the content proves to be valuable and exactly what is needed for an interview in the context of this research.

Spradley approaches the ethnographic interview as a speech event and argues that it shares many features with the friendly conversation.[43] He gives an example of two people who have known each other since college having a friendly conversation. He lays out a conversation and after that describes how at least some element can be spotted namely: Greeting, lack of explicit purpose, avoiding repetition, asking questions, expressing interest, expressing ignorance, taking turns, abbreviating, pausing and leave taking. According to Spradley it is best to think of ethnographic interviews "as a series of friendly conversations into which researchers slowly introduce new elements to assist informants to respond as informants".[44] Introducing the new ethnographic elements too fast or using them exclusively will turn the interview into a formal interrogation, which should be avoided.

The author goes on stating the three most important ethnographic elements are its *explicit purpose*, *ethnographic explanations* and *ethnographic questions*. The first, *the explicit purpose*, is the realization that the talking is supposed to go somewhere. The interview is there for a purpose, namely to get certain information. The second, *ethnographic explanations*, are about the explanations that need to be given to the informant; explanations on what the project is about, if it is alright to record, explaining how an informant should take the same way as he or she would talk to others. The third one, *the ethnographic questions*, are about what kind of questions will be asked; descriptive, structural and/or contrast.

Another example is given, however this time on an ethnographic interview. Although close to a friendly conversation, there are some differences. The turn taking is less balanced, repeating replaces the normal rule of avoiding repetition, expressing interest and ignorance occur more often but only on the part of the ethnographer and lastly, in place of the normal practice of abbreviating, the ethnographer encourages expanding on what each person says.[45]

Considering these perspectives given by Spradley and the information I have on

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42 Ethnography is a qualitative research design aimed at exploring cultural phenomena. The resulting field study or a case report reflects the knowledge and the system of meanings in the lives of a cultural group. An ethnography is a means to represent graphically and in writing, the culture of a people. It could be argued that perhaps this research is investigating the culture of media archaeology.
Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation Of Cultures (Basic Books Classics)* (Basic Books, 1977).
Gerry Philipsen, *Speaking Culturally: Explorations in Social Communication (Google eBook)* (SUNY Press, 1992).
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnography last visited on September 21st 2013.

43 James P. Spradley, *The Ethnographic Interview* (Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1979): 464.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid., 473-474.

the possibility of interviewing selected media archaeologists, the interviews will be close to the ethnographic interview or friendly conversation. There are however a few comments that should be made. First of all, as has been mentioned, selecting scholars to be interviewed can be difficult. Ideally interviews with 15 or 20 scholars would provide more information and a more robust picture. As a student it is sadly not always possible to get through to a scholar and/or some scholars just have a full agenda every week. Thus, it is mostly a question of who is willing to be interviewed.

Secondly, once a scholar accepts to be interviewed they have to find a time slot for the interview. From the first email contact it becomes apparent that this is not an easy task. Most of the informants could find a 30 minute slot but no more. As a result it is up to the interviewer to make the most of these 30 minutes and gain as much information as possible which is useable for the research. Therefore it makes sense to limit the amount of descriptive questions and mostly focus on structural and contrast questions. Structural questions allow the interviewer to discover information about domains and about how they organize their knowledge. Contrast questions find out what informants mean by the various terms they use.

Seeing the main questions of this research project revolve around the position of media archaeology for media studies, and how to do media archaeology, the questions in the interview should be constructive towards that goal. To do that the interview will revolve around 4 questions/topics:

- Is media archaeology divided, if yes/no how so?
- Can media archaeology be more stable, if yes/no how so?
- Could methodological guidelines for media archaeology be construed?
- What is the position of Foucault with regards to media archaeology?

These questions provide the interview with its explicit purpose and specific questions, but leaving enough room for a friendly conversation. Before the interview the informants have been explained why they are being interviewed and how we will do the interview (minimum of 30 minutes via Skype).[46] Although these questions give the interview a purpose, the intention is to keep close to the friendly conversation format. This gives room to the informant to move towards certain related topics or areas that might prove valuable. On top of that it stays away from being too formal.

Depending on the informant the focus of the interview can differ. An as example, Ian Bogost together with Nick Montfort developed ideas around platform studies. An interview with Bogost is therefore a good opportunity to learn more about platform studies and his ideas on the affiliation with media archaeology. Bolter will of course be asked question on remediation and so on.

46 The why being the main question(s) posed in this research, but also that this research is being written as a thesis for my graduation.

## CHAPTER II

# A Visit to Foucault

# Foucauldean Archaeology

There are several scholars associated with being influential to the beginning of media archaeology such as Walter Benjamin, Marshall McLuhan or Michael Foucault. Especially the latter is mentioned as a possible reason for the diversity in media archaeology. However, few publications go into explaining the division within media archaeology, between the different schools or traditions such as the German one or Anglo-American, by actually re-reading and re-visiting Foucault's work in a deep and critical manner. If they do, it does not go much further than stating that Foucault has been read differently.[47] To understand the diversity it is necessary to dig deeper into *what* exactly is being interpreted differently and what that means for media archaeological traditions. It is necessary to understand the situated meaning(s) of terminology used by Foucault, but also other scholars, now employed by media archaeologists.

There are two exceptions, the first is the 2009 dissertation *Methodologies of Reuse in the Media Arts: Exploring Black Boxes , Tactics and Media Archaeologies* by Garnet Hertz, which does pay some attention to specifically diversity in media archaeology. To understand media archaeology, Hertz starts with an extensive analysis of Foucault's concept of archaeology. Thus, his dissertation proves to be a valuable source for this research. At the same time Hertz's approach is slightly different. First of all it is not his intention to unravel the diversity within media archaeology.[48]

His approach is also different because, although admitting the field of media archaeology is broad, he limits his discussion to mostly Zielinski, Huhtamo and Ernst. Hertz is interested in operationalizing media archaeology to use as an approach in his dissertation. Therefore, it makes sense that there is not an extensive discussion focused on media archaeological diversity, I do focus on this as to show where this research project can add and elaborate how an deeper understanding of theory can lead to a deeper understanding on how to do media archaeology. Still, Hertz operationalizing media archaeology is also valuable for this research because it does contribute to exactly this exploration of a deeper understandding on how to do media archaeology.[49]

Another exception is Wanda Strauven's 2013 article "Media Archaeology: Where Film History, Media Art, and New Media (Can) Meet". Strauven wonders if media archaeology can be called a methodology and if yes, how so? She argues there are 4 dominant approaches to media archaeology being the *old in the new*, *the new in the*

47 Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka, *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications*, 8. Parikka, *What Is Media Archaeology*, 67.

48 Garnet Hertz, "Methodologies of Reuse in the Media Arts: Exploring Black Boxes , Tactics and Media Archaeologies" (University of California Irvine, 2009).

49 Ibid.

*old*, *recurring topoi*, and *ruptures/discontinuities*.[50] Strauven's article will be discussed in more detail in the section on media archaeolgy, where the basics of her article provide structure in this project, simultaneously critiqueing her approach. Still, as stated earlier, the article provides an overview of media archaeology which can *initially* be most useful to getting a grip of what media archaeology means.

Similarly, *What is Media Archaeology?* is an example of an excellent overview of media archaeology however not with the purpose of unraveling Foucault and the question of diversity in media archaeology. Parikka does go into the subject but leaves several questions unanswered. He emphasizes for instance how Friedrich Kittler, seen as one of the most influential scholars within the German tradition (although not identifying himself as a media archaeologist), builds upon Foucault's work.[51] However, the discussion on the Anglo-American tradition and the distinction between the two traditions, specifically how this distinction came to be, needs more clarification. A first step to understand the diversity is a discussion that will revolve around 3 issues that have been underexposed in the context of media archaeology:

1. *Misusing Discourse:* There is a widespread consensus that the current usage of the term discourse originated with Foucault. There are however scholars stating that the current usage of discourse did not originate with Foucault, and in some ways contradicts his own limited technical usage. Anglo-American scholars increasingly began to attribute the concept to Foucault, this has contributed to a misreading of Foucault;
2. *The Complexity of Foucault:* Foucault's writing is not always consistent or easy to understand. Concepts such as the archive, archaeology or genealogy, fundamental to media archaeology, are not easily described or differentiated; not even by Foucault himself. Attention needs to be placed to the explanation of certain concepts but also acknowledge where explaining is problematic;
3. *Foucault and Materiality:* What has been called 'The German media archaeological tradition' extends Foucault by placing focus on materiality. Following the discussion on late Foucault, it becomes important to retrace Foucault's ideas on materiality and issues surrounding this.

Focusing the discussion around these 3 points will not only explain Foucauldean archaeology but also form a starting point to the understanding of media archaeology and the diversity of media archaeology. It opens up the possibility to then go deeper into other influential scholars such as Benjamin and McLuhan whilst digging deeper into the media archaeological traditions. Specifically why there is such a diversity, which will follow after the discussion on Foucault. **These 3 points/issues**

50 Wanda Strauven, "Media Archaeology: Where Film History, Media Art, and New Media (Can) Meet," in *Preserving and Exhibiting Media Art: Challenges and Perspectives*, ed. Julia Noordegraaf et al. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2013): 59–80.

51 Parikka, *What Is Media Archaeology*, 63-89.

**will in turn results in 3 questions that will guide the section on diversity in media archaeology**.

Although I will dig into the texts written by Foucault himself, there is also a range of publications specifically focused on understanding Foucault. I believe that the combination of returning to the source and using secondary literature will result in a detailed understanding of Foucault's ideas on discourse, archaeology, genealogy and the archive. Before diving into the three discussion points, there will be a short introduction to Foucault, specifically *Archaeology of Knowledge*, to understand the context in which this was written and some key concepts followed by a brief discussion on Foucault's description of discourse.

## INTRO TO ARCHAEOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE

One of the concepts so crucial in media archaeology is discourse. Seeing concepts such as archaeology and genealogy require an understanding of what Foucault meant by discourse it is useful to start there. Especially in *Archaeology of Knowledge* Foucault elaborates on discourse. That Foucault himself already admits the term is used rather ambiguously, he literally states that he has used and abused it in many different senses, does not make it easier to get a grip on what discourse means.[52] Before diving into the meaning of discourse it is useful to explain why Foucault wrote *Archaeology of Knowledge*. After this introduction to *Archaeology of Knowledge* the focus will shift to the concept of discourse and some of the terms used in Foucault's explanation on the 'equivocal meaning' of discourse such as 'a group of sequences of signs', 'statements' and 'a particular modality of existence'.

Foucault begins by describing trends in two branches of historical method. Firstly, historians have preferred to turn their attention to long periods, "as if, beneath the shifts and changes of political events, they were trying to reveal the stable, almost indestructible system of checks and balances, the irreversible processes, the contact readjustment … the great silent, motionless bases that traditional history has covered with a thick layer of events".[53] Examples given by Foucault are works on the history of sea routes, the history of drought and irrigation or for instance the history of the balance achieved by the human species between hunger and abundance. These analyses are concerned with 'the old questions' which focus on causality, totality and continuity.

According to Foucault a second trend, in disciplines such as the history of ideas, is replacing these questions with another type; away from causality and vast unities like 'periods' towards disruptions and discontinuity.[54] There are the epistemological

52 Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)* (Vintage, 1982).

53 Ibid., 3.

54 Foucault mentions the history of ideas, history of science, history of philosophy and the history of literature.

acts and thresholds that "direct historical analysis away from the search for silent beginnings, and the never-endings tracing-back to the original precursors towards the search for a new type of rationality and its various effects".[55] And, there are the displacements and transformations of concepts, which show that history of a concept is not simply the sum of its "progressive refinement" or "increasing rationality". Histories have different scales and therefore it is not a question of tracing back one line, because there are multitudes or what Foucault calls recurrent redistributions. Moreover, historical descriptions are always ordered by the present state of knowledge, constantly changing.

So rather than seeking causal or progressive relationships amongst phenomena "there are internal coherences, connections, cohesions, and compatibilities among them, the operations of which Foucault calls "architectonic unities"".[56] In short, " … rather than constituting the linear, modernist "methodology", [there] are ways of examining the modalities through which phenomena function—discontinuous modes and discontinuous phenomena" vis-à-vis understanding the epistemological acts and thresholds, displacements and transformations, taking into account the scales, recurrent redistributions and the architectonic unities.[57] As a result Foucault pinpoints the exact difficulty: How should one specify concepts enabling to conceive of discontinuity?

The issues posed so far, in both trends, of either unrightfully adhering to continuity and long periods or on the other hand understanding discontinuity and transformation are being linked to "the questioning of the *document*".[58] The first trend, a more traditional history focused on continuity, approaches the document as a possibility to find the truth and to a reconstitution of the past. The second trend however, is not focused on finding out whether or not the document is telling the truth or a reconstitution but works from within the document to develop it.

"History is now trying to define within the documentary material itself unities, totalities, series [and] relations."[59] The document should not be seen as a tool of history that functions as *memory*. Instead history is one of multiple ways in which a society "recognizes and develops a mass of documentation with which it is inextricably linked."[60] Traditional history tried to 'memorize' the past by transforming *monument* into documents. Foucault does not explicitly go into what he means by monument but it can be inferred from the text; "documents are conveyors of external reference; monuments are contemplated for themselves."[61]

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55 Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)* (Vintage, 1982): 4.

56 Rosemarie Bank, "The Theatre Historian in the Mirror : Transformation in the Space of Representation" (1989): 219–228: 224.

Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)*: 5.

57 Bank, "The Theatre Historian in the Mirror : Transformation in the Space of Representation."

58 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)*: 5.

59 Ibid., 6.

60 Ibid.

61 José Guilherme Merquior, *Foucault* (University of California Press, 1985): 78.

On Archaeology of Knowledge, http://www.icosilune.com/2009/02/michel-foucault-archaeology-of-knowl-

The new history Foucault discusses, one of emphasizing discontinuity, seeks to turn documents into monuments. This has 4 consequences:

1. The constitution of series, to fix its boundaries, becomes a central challenge for the historian.
2. The notion of discontinuity becomes a focus of historical analysis.
3. The aim of describing a total history is replaced with that of describing a general history. Foucault explains, "A total description draws all phenomena around a single central principle, a meaning, a spirit, a world-view, and overall shape; a general history, on the contrary, would deploy the space of a dispersion".
4. Methodological problems emerge. In identifying these problems, Foucault notes a similarity to structuralism, but he contends that the problems do not "authorize us to speak of a structuralism of history".[62]

It becomes clear that Foucault is discussing an epistemological mutation of history, which did not simply start with the observations he has made thus far. He then mentions the relationship between continuous or traditional history and human consciousness. According to Foucault, continuous history provides for the "sovereignty of consciousness", asserting that such history is "the indispensable correlative of the founding function of the subject".[63]

Foucault observes that continuous history has opposed a number of attempts to decenter the subject, including the projects of Marxist analysis, Nietzchean genealogy, and psychoanalysis. The notion of the decentering of the subject is one that will linger on in certain parts of media archaeology. Wolfgang Ernst for instance states that "media archaeology looks in a non-anthropo-centric way at memory culture".[64]

After the discussion of the subject Foucault ends the introduction with an explanation of what he intends to do, by stating that his previous works, such as *The Order of Things, Madness and Civilization* and *Naissance de la Clinique,* were rather disorganized and never clearly defined. Thus, *Archaeology of Knowledge* is also the attempt to give greater coherence. His aim: "to define a method of historical analysis freed from the anthropological theme … to formulate … the tools that these [his earlier studies] have used or forged for themselves in the course of their work".[65]

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edge/ last visited on October 3rd 2013.
One has to consider that Foucault choose this metaphor on purpose. Literally a monument is a permanent formation that has a geographic and temporal presence; it also has a boundary and territory. It makes sense because that permanence is something that cannot be placed in documents.

62 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)*: 7-11.
Kristine Bruss and Greg Schneider, "The Archaeology of Knowledge : Communication Studies : University of Minnesota," http://www.comm.umn.edu/Foucault/ak.html last visited on October 3rd 2014.

63 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)*: 12.
Bruss and Schneider, "The Archaeology of Knowledge : Communication Studies : University of Minnesota."

64 Wolfgang Ernst, "The Archive as Metaphor," *Open 2004* Memory, no. 7 (2004): 46.

65 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)*: 16.

With this aim Foucault ends the introduction and moves on to what these tools are and what is necessary to do. Part 2, "The Discursive Regularities", of *Archaeology of Knowledge* specifically goes into the concept of discourse, which is also a fundamental part of media archaeology. Here it already becomes clear how much of Foucault's thoughts linger on in media archaeology. A steering away from continuities and unities, questioning the accepted, questioning the anthropocentric, a multitude of traces and origins and more will become apparent in the next section when diving deeper into discourse.

## MISUSING DISCOURSE

A brief introduction to Foucault's description of discourse is used to then initiate a discussion on the possible misuse of the concept of discourse specifically by, according to R. Keith Sawyer, Anglo-American scholars. In the following sections the misuses and unclarities surrounding a concept such as discourse will be linked to different media archaeologies; also to media archaeologies that at times have been coined Anglo-American.

### *Foucault on Discourse*

Thus far, Foucault has cautioned for traditional concepts associated with continuity, evolution, permanence, the reduction of difference and search for origin. On top of that there must also be a questioning of that which has become familiar such as literature, philosophy, history or fiction. These unities are in need of suspension, most of all the book and the oeuvre are in need of suspension. Foucault states that: "The frontiers of a book are never clear-cut: beyond the title, the first lines, and the last full stop, beyond its internal configuration and its autonomous form, it is caught up in a system of references to other books, other texts, other sentences: it is a node within a network."[66]

Foucault asserts that suspension is needed, not necessarily rejection. It must be acknowledged that these unities "do not come about of themselves, but are always the result of a construction, the rules of which must be known, and the justification of which must be scrutinized".[67] So what must a scholar do then to avoid these continuities, to suspend and to question unities? "One is led therefore to the project of a pure description of discursive events as the horizon for the search for the unities

66 Ibid., 23.
This quote of course also refers to the notion of the boundlessness of the discourse(s). A discourse has no clear boundaries.
67 Ibid., 25.

that form within it" where the description of events of discourse poses the question "how is it that one particular statement appeared rather than another".[68] At this point the inevitable confrontation with the vaguely described statement is here.

A statement is the basic unit of discourse; this is a set of signs or symbols to which a status of knowledge can be ascribed.[69] The statement is not a sentence due to the sentence being governed by grammatical rules; it is governed by logic rules and epistemological rules. The statement is:

> relative and oscillates according to the use that is made of the statement and the way in which it is handled… the constancy of the statement, the preservation of its identity through the unique events of the enunciations, its duplications through the identity of the forms is constituted by the functioning of the field of use in which it is placed.[70]

There are those scholars claiming that a statement "is a type of utterance that, because it follows particular rules or has passed the appropriate test, is understood to be true in a culture".[71] However, there is some controversy around the interpretation of this description of the statement which particularly stems from a variety of scholarly work.

Foucault himself explicitly states in *Archaeology of Knowledge* that the statement is not an utterance although it comes close; the statement comes close to what Anglo-Americans called speech act. John Rogers Searle and John Langshaw Austin, both philosophers of language, assume that a "speaker acts of the world in a way that is made possible by the rules of language and other pre-existing institutional conventions".[72] Initially Foucault merely observes that statements and speech acts are remarkably similar. However, Foucault and Searle sent each other letters in which Foucault stated as a response to Searle: "As to the analysis of speech acts, I am in complete agreement with your remarks. I was wrong in saying that statements were not speech acts, but in doing so I wanted to underline the fact that I saw them under a different angle than yours".[73]

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68 Ibid., 27.
Bruss and Schneider, "The Archaeology of Knowledge : Communication Studies : University of Minnesota."

69 A series of signs will become a statement on condition that it possesses 'something else' (which may be strangely similar to it, and almost identical as in the example chosen), a specific relation that concerns itself- and not its cause, or its elements.
Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)*: 89.

70 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)*: 104.

71 Ye Qi, *Megashift from Plot to Character In American Short Fiction (1900-1941): A Critical Study* (Muse International Press, 2013): 20.

72 Angela Esterhammer, *The Romantic Performative: Language and Action in British and German Romanticism* (Stanford University Press, 2000): 11.
Anglo-American speech act theory is essentially a theory of the way utterances act on the hearer and the world – on those elements of the context that are external to the speaking subject, who is conceived of as a fully formed, independent, responsible agent, in possession of (according to Searle) a pre-existing Intentional state.

73 Hubert Dreyfus, Paul Rabinow, and Michel Foucault, *Michel Foucault : Beyond Structuralism · and Herme-*

In light of these letters it becomes understandable to accept the claim that a statement is a type of utterance that, because it follows particular rules or has passed the appropriate test, is understood to be true in a culture. Still, there are scholars who argue differently such as Professor of philosophy Martin Kusch. In his article "Discursive formation and possible worlds- A reconstruction of Foucault's Archaeology", he claims that a Foucauldean statement is an ordered quintuple. Kusch takes seriously the notion that dealing with statements means dealing with an enunciative function that relates signs to a field of objects, to a number of possible subjective positions, to a domain of coordination and coexistence, to a space in which they are used and repeated. Kusch sees this as a mathematical situation.[74]

This becomes important when realizing that Foucault sees discourse as the plural of the statement.[75] Thus, on the level of the elementary unit of discourse i.e. the statement, there is already discussion that goes into several directions. When looking at this from a media archaeological point of view part of the complexity and diversity already becomes apparent. At the one hand the statement gets pulled into the domain of language due to the association with speech act theory, on the other into a more mathematical realm. Similar situations are visible with regards to media archaeology. Wolfgang Ernst leans towards Kusch's interpretation whilst Huhtamo or Kluitenberg would steer towards an interpretation of the statement as utterance similar to a speech act (a closer look on these media archaeological interpretations of Foucault follow in The Woes of Taxonomizing Media Archaeology).[76]

Understanding the statement, which Foucault strangely deals with explicitly in his book after discussing discourse, it is possible to go deeper into the concept of discourse. Foucault explains the equivocal meaning of the term discourse as follows: "Discourse is constituted by a group of sequences of signs, in so far as they are statements, that is, in so far as they can be assigned particular modalities of existence".[77] The first part, that a discourse is constituted by a group of sequences of signs in so far as they are statement, should now be clear; the statement being the elementary unit of discourse.[78] The second part, on modalities of existence, needs explaining.

Foucault wants to show that *discursive formation* is the principle of dispersion

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*neutics* (University of Chicago Press, 1982): 46.
In Foucault's letter to Searle sent on May 15th 1979, it becomes clear that speech acts and statement are the same but that Foucault's perspective differed. Searle wants to know how the hearer understands a speech act. Foucault is interested in speech acts which are divorced from the local situation of assertion and from the shared everyday background so as to constitute a relatively autonomous realm.

74 Martin Kusch, "Discursive Formation and Possible Worlds- A Reconstruction of Foucault's Archaeology," *Science Studies* 1 (1989): 17-18.

75 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)*: 32. Discourse being the plural of statement can be inferred at different places in *Archaeology of Knowledge* for instance on page 32.

76 Wolfgang Ernst, "Media Archaeography: Method and Machine Versus History and Narrative of Media," in *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications*, ed. Jussi Parikka and Ekkri Huhtamo (Berkely, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2011): 239–255, 253.

77 Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)* (Vintage, 1982): 107.

78 Do not be fooled by the word sign and references to de Saussure in *Archaeology of Knowledge*. Foucault sees de Saussure's theories of the signifier and the signified as one of the problems in the methodological field of history.

and redistribution of statements and that when there is a form of regularity one can talk about discourse. The discursive formation is a grouping of statements that can be delimited and individualized, and that must satisfy four criteria. "The statements refer to the same object, are made in the same enunciative modality, share a system of conceptual organization and share similar themes and theories, which Foucault calls strategies".[79] This results in the ability to define discourse as the group of statements that belong to the same discursive formation such as a clinical discourse or economic discourse. To do this there needs to be an analysis of statements, but a statement cannot simply be analyzed on its own i.e. the sum is more than the addition of its parts.

One needs to "define the conditions in which the function that gave a series of signs an existence, and a specific existence, can operate. An existence that reveals such a series as more than a mere trace, but rather a relation to a domain of objects … as a set of possible positions for subject … as an element in a field of coexistence … a repeatable materiality".[80] It is not a question of finding the 'truth' vis-à-vis what really had been said, it is the description of the meaning of the formation of the occurrence of statements in a particular time at a particular place (mode of existence).

In laymen's terms once could say that the subject and the world are discourse or at least that discourse is how to know or experience the world, although Foucault also notes certainly not the only way.[81] Thus, we step into a most crucial part of research in for instance a media archaeological way. How to know the world, learn about it or experience it is a fundamental part of how you can even do research. The problem however with regards to media archaeology is that the concept of discourse, though prominent, receives little explanatory attention.

### *Misusing Discourse*

This section on the misuse of discourse will lead to a question that will be one of the guiding questions in a deeper discussion on media archaeology and diversity. As scholars such as R. Keith Sawyer or I. Janssen state, discourse is often attributed to Foucault without critical reflection. Authors often refer to Foucault without reference to the work and pages consulted or even without any reference to a specific article or book. Looking at media archaeological work today, one can see similar situations where discourse is embedded without reference or by merely mentioning Foucault.

Of course exceptions are there, Eric Kluitenberg in "On the Archaeology of Imag-

79 Sawyer, "a Discourse on Discourse: An Archeological History of an Intellectual Concept", 436.
80 Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)* (Vintage, 1982): 108-109.
81 Clare O'Farrell, *O'farrell: Michel Foucault (paper)* (SAGE, 2005): 80.
Michel Foucault, La vérité et les formes juridiques. In DE II. (pp. 538–646). DE#139 http://1libertaire.free.fr/MFoucault194.html last visit on November 20th 2013.

inary Media" goes back to Foucault's work and critically positions his own work in relation to Foucault's. From there he explains his media archaeological approach. Similarly Wolfgang Ernst in "Media Archaeography: Method and Machine versus History and Narrative of Media" positions his work critically in relation to Foucault and also goes into possible misunderstanding of Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge*. Lastly, Jussi Parikka, especially when discussing Kittler, pays attention to Foucault in *What is Media Archaeology*.[82]

Now it is not necessarily important to critically position ones work in relation to Foucault. However, if one is to accept that discourse is part of the research (or explicitly oppose this) it is necessary to clarify what is meant by discourse in the context of that specific research even more so because it does not have to be attributed to Foucault. And if it is attributed to Foucault it becomes necessary to show how it will be used; where are the differences, where are the similarities. Such actions are needed as also Timothy Druckrey has noticed and wondered whether the explorations presented under the label of media archaeology could legitimately be called an archaeology in the sense of Foucault's understanding of it.[83]

So the problem exists on 2 levels. Firstly, there is a general acceptance of just using Foucault, which could be understood as a lack of understanding of Foucault. Secondly, on a media archaeological level, as Kluitenberg, Ernst and Druckrey also notice, these misunderstandings or lack of references live on. In this section on the misuse of discourse the discussion focuses on the general level which leads to the question that will guide the discussion in the section on media archaeology specifically (where Kluitenberg, Ernst and Druckrey will be discussed on more detail). The earlier mentioned R. Keith Sawyer portrays this issue of specifically the vagueness surrounding discourse in a detailed way in "A Discourse on Discourse: An Archaeological History of an Intellectual Concept".[84]

Sawyer has 3 goals in his article: Firstly, to show that the current usage of discourse did not originate with Foucault, and in some ways contradicts Foucault's technical usage of discourse; secondly, to show an intellectual history that explains where the term did originate from and thirdly, to show how Anglo-American scholars began to attribute the concept to Foucault and how this contributed to 2 important misreadings of Foucault.

He starts by explaining how there is a failure of understanding the influence of structuralism on Foucaults's *Archaeology of Knowledge*. Foucault's more technical definition of discourse emerged at what Paul Veyne called "the height of structuralist and linguistic frenzy".[85] In a 1968 interview, Foucault described archaeology of

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82 Eric Kluitenberg, "On the Archaeology of Imaginary Media," in *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications*, ed. Jussi Parikka and Ekkri Huhtamo (Berkely, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2011), 48–69.
Ernst, "Media Archaeography: Method and Machine Versus History and Narrative of Media".
Parikka, *What Is Media Archaeology*, 2012: 63-89.

83 Druckrey, "Imaginary Media".

84 Sawyer, "a Discourse on Discourse: An Archeological History of an Intellectual Concept".

85 Paul Veyne, "Foucault Revolutionizes History," in *Foucault and His Interlocutors*, ed. A.I. Davidson (Uni-

knowledge as a transformation grammar of knowledge:

> What one is essentially looking for are the forms, the system, that is to say that one tries to bring out the logical correlations that can exist among a great number of elements belonging to a language, to an ideology (as in the analyses of Althusser), to a society (as in Levi-Strauss), or to different fields of knowledge, which is what I myself have studied. One could describe structuralism roughly as the search for logical structures everywhere that they could occur.[86]

At the same time Foucault vigorously argues he is not a structuralist.[87] Now Foucault's descriptions and perspectives perhaps don't equate to Chomskian or Levi-Straussian structuralist notions but there is still a critique possible when for example stating you are looking for "the principle according to which only the 'signifying' groups that were enunciated could appear".[88] And although Foucault is right in stating that he is not using methods, concepts or key terms that characterize or have been associated with structural analysis, this does not necessarily mean that no structuralist notion is present. It is this structuralist notion in *Archaeology of Knowledge* that leads to several critiques on his earlier work.[89]

A second and related issue to misinterpreting discourse is actually Foucault's shift away from discourse towards a focus on non-discursive practices. Non-discursive practices include the rules and processes of appropriation of discourse and the concept gets interpreted as leaning towards the material or as will be argued by some media archaeologists as associated with the techno-mathematical. Examples are pedagogic practice, political decisions of government, a sequence of economic events, and institutional field etc. Foucault is clear in stating that: "There is nothing to be gained from describing this autonomous layer of discourses unless one can relate it to other layers, practices, institutions, social relations, political relations, and so on. It is that relationship which has always intrigued me."[90]

Still, in *Archaeology of Knowledge* the focus is on discursive practices and not so much non-discursive practices. The emphasis is on the relationships internal to a discursive formation: the non-discursive is taken to be assimilated in a manner which preserves these relationships.[91] At that time Foucault still "considered that the analysis of the external authorities which delimit choice must show that neither the

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versity of Chicago Press Journals, 1998): 146–182.

86 A.I. Davidson, "Structures and Strategies of Discourse" in A.I. Davidson, *Foucault and His Interlocutors* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press Journals, 1998): 7.

87 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)*: 16-17.

88 Ibid., 118.

89 Even on popular webpages such as Wikipedia this association with structuralism is made despite Foucault's attempts to distance himself from it.

90 O'Farrell, *O'farrell: Michel Foucault (paper)*: 80.
Michel Foucault, *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology* (The New Press, 1998): 279-295.

91 Peter Armstrong, "The Discourse of Michel Foucault : a Sociological Encounter with the Archaeology of Knowledge," 2012, 1–18: 4.

processes of discourse's appropriation, nor its role among non-discursive practices is extrinsic to its unity, its characterization and the laws of its formation" (which can be read as a structuralist argument on autonomous rules governing reality).[92] However, as scholars such as Dreyfus and Rainbow note, after the political events of 1968 (occurring after the completion of Archaeology of Knowledge) Foucault's interest shifted away from discourse and more into the direction of these non-discursive practices.[93]

In Foucault's later works such as *Discipline and Punish* published in 1975 or *History of Sexuality Volume 1* published in 1976, the avoidance of the concept of discourse or archaeology is noticeable. If he does mention discourse it is carefully done by stating that it is always embedded within non-discursive practices and thus needs to be analyzed as such.[94] In History of Sexuality Foucault is clear about the role of discourse in his work. Discourse is used only to describe specific instances of talking or writing about sexuality, particularly in the widely-cited chapter titled 'The incitement to discourse'; sexuality itself – as a concept, or as a set of socially constructed practices – is never described as 'a discourse'.[95]

The problem is that non-discursive concepts from later works get conflated with more structuralist and linguistic notions from for instance *Archaeology of Knowledge*. As a result concepts such as discursive formation or the archive (which we will get to) get conflated with non-discursive concepts from later works such as power-knowledge relations, technologies of power, semio-techniques, apparatuses and the 'politics of the body'.[96] An example would be Edward Said's 1978 publication *Orientalism* in which he referenced *Archaeology of Knowledge* and *Discipline and Punish* when accounting for "Foucault's theory of discourse".[97] In *Discipline and Punish* however Foucault does not elaborate on a theory of discourse.

Besides the conflation of early and late Foucault, Sawyer goes on with his second point on the origins of discourse. Sawyer sees theories of discourse derive from a range of directions and scholars such as Althusser, Lacan, Gramsci, Henry, Pêcheux, the Language Group at the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Culture and more. Although some of these scholars or groups have descriptions of discourse that might be of interest to media archaeologists, I do not want to go to deep into each of them. Firstly because this would quickly turn into a research project on tracing discourse. Although this would be most welcome, it is not my intent here and would take up too much space. Secondly, because in media archaeology it seems the primary reference for discourse (and archaeology) is Foucault.

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92 I. AL AMOUDI, "The Economy of Power, an Analytical Reading of Michael Foucault" (n.d.): 12.

93 Dreyfus, Rabinow, and Foucault, *Michel Foucault : Beyond Structuralism · and Hermeneutics*, 104.
Sawyer, "a Discourse on Discourse: An Archeological History of an Intellectual Concept.", 441.

94 Frank Mort and Roy Peters, "FOUCAULT RECALLED : INTERVIEW WITH MICHEL FOUCAULT" 3, no. May 1979 (1990): 9–22, 16-17.

95 Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction* (Vintage, 1990): 12.
Sawyer, "a Discourse on Discourse: An Archeological History of an Intellectual Concept", 441.

96 Ibid.

97 Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (Vintage, 1979): 3.

Still a look at for instance Gramsci, Althusser or Lacan invokes curiosity and imagination with regards to associating it with media archaeology. Althusser for instance states that ideologies are always material, because they exist in 'an apparatus and its practice'. Interesting seeing his definition of ideology comes close to some broad usages of discourse.[98] Another example is Lacan who puts emphasis on the unconscious, psychoanalysis and the dependency of subjectivity on discourse. However, I realize and understand the structuralist and also critiques of universalist status these scholars have received. This is exactly the reason why Sawyer argues Foucault became so popular, his theory of discourse was seen not as one with a universalist status but a historical one.[99]

The steering away from a universalist status or structuralist one is also what media archaeology tries to achieve. One can imagine however that this kind of critique is a reality. As an example, when reading Errki Huhtamo's ideas on topoi and cyclically recurring phenomena, there is a danger of interpreting these phenomena as something structural. Similarly for other media archaeologies it is about finding continuities or breaks, similarities and differences, which can be interpreted as structuralist notions if one is not careful (critique Foucault also receives). Wolfgang Ernst critically notes how the claim to perform media-archaeological analysis itself sometimes slips back into telling media stories. It is an easy trap to just state you are doing ahistorical, non-teleological research because it is easy to give into certain narrative structures for instance.[100]

Sawyer concludes his article on discourse with a notion also applicable to and present in media archaeology. He writes on the interpretation of culture and how in some interpretations there is a strict separation of material realities and concrete social practices. Now media archaeology is not an approach focused on this general concept of culture, it is focused on media. Still, in media archaeology this question of the relation (and tension) between the material and the social remains and is one of the distinguishing factors in the diversity of media archaeology. Thus, this observation needs attention. One of the leading questions resulting from this section, which will guide the section on media archaeology, is therefore: **What is discourse in media archaeology** (a specific question on the material is constructed in the section *Foucault and Materiality*)?

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98 *Practical ideologies* are complex formations which shape notions-representations-images into behaviors-conducts-attitudes-gestures .The ensemble functions as practical norms that govern the attitude and the concrete positions men adopt towards the real objects and real problems of their social and individual existence, and towards their history.
Louis Althusser, *Philosophy and the Spontaneous Philosophy of the Scientists (Radical Thinkers)* (Verso, 2012): 83.

99 Sawyer, "a Discourse on Discourse: An Archeological History of an Intellectual Concept", 445

100 Ernst, "Media Archaeography: Method and Machine Versus History and Narrative of Media", 239.

## THE COMPLEXITY OF FOUCAULT – ARCHAEOLOGY, THE ARCHIVE AND GENEALOGY

Now that there is an understanding on discourse it is possible to keep digging in Foucault with regards to his concepts of the archive, archaeology and genealogy, simultaneously getting introduced further into media archaeology. Discussing these concepts also reveals that Foucault's line of argumentation and his ideas can be complex and sometimes even contradictory (which already was visible when discussing the statement).To go back to the source and critically position ones work in relation to concepts and theories from a source is an essential part of research. When looking at Foucault, the range of his ideas into academia is wide but the critically positioning oneself can be lacking.

### *Archaeology*

An example which struck me personally, in an article in a journal on nursing science it is stated how Foucault often gets misinterpreted because of a lack of understanding of its theoretical background.[101] This showed to me the depth of dissemination of Foucault's ideas, even in nursing science he is prominent. Secondly, the article portrays issues such as a lack of understanding of Foucault's ideas and how authors often refer to Foucault without reference to the work and pages consulted and sometimes even without any reference to a certain article or book.[102]

Within media archaeology similar issues can be found. As an example, *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications and Implications* and *The Book of Imaginary Media* together contain 25 articles on or closely related to media archaeology. The number of articles digging into Foucault is limited. There are publications in which concepts such as discourse, materiality or archaeology are just used without critical reflection on those concepts. An example would be Thomas Elsaesser's text "Freud and the Technical Media". The article is placed in a bundle on media archaeology and Elsaesser also mentions media archaeology in the text, but what makes it media archaeological is not clearly stated.[103] As can be seen in the previous section on discourse, such a concept is not easily defined and/or used in a uniform way when looking closely. It becomes difficult to grasp when different media archaeologies all refer to a concept such as discourse but don't explain what is meant by discourse.

Now, as has been mentioned before, this does not necessarily mean every author

101 I. Jansen, "Discourse Analysis and Foucault ' s ' Archaeology of Knowledge '" 1, no. 3 (2008): 107–111.
102 R. Keith Sawyer, "a Discourse on Discourse: An Archeological History of an Intellectual Concept," *Cultural Studies* 16, no. 3 (May 2002): 433–456.
103 Thomas Elsaesser, "Freud and the Technical Media" in Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka, *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications* (University of California Press, 2011): 95-118 .

has to return to Foucault; there are multitudes of ways in which one could elaborate on concepts used (the previous section for instance mentioned Lacanian discourse or Althusser's ideology). Still, Foucault's presence is noticeable when so much of his terminology is used and of course acknowledged. Hertz in his dissertation also notices this "continual slippage in concepts of archaeology".[104] Another piece of the issue, which has to be mentioned, is that many texts get associated with media archaeology although the text retains no explicit reference to media archaeology. Such an association can potentially be fruitful; however it is the task of the appropriator to critically explain why it is a media archaeological text which should include critically examining the role of for instance discourse, materiality and archaeology.

I have shown one side of the coin now, there are articles that do show deep and critical analyses of Foucault's work to then formulate a media archaeology (in which of course some ideas of Foucault stay alive and others get rejected). Examples would be Wolfgang Ernst's article "Media Archaeography", (to a lesser extent) Wanda Strauven's "Media Archaeology: Where Film History, Media Art, and New Media (Can) Meet", or Eric Kluitenberg, in his article "On the Archaeology of Imaginary Media". The latter goes back to Foucault and argues how his own archaeology of imaginary media, "in its emphasis on technological imaginaries and discursive practices, would seem to remain closer to Foucault's original archaeological project".[105] Still, Kluitenberg does see issues when looking at Foucauldean Archaeology and his media archaeology. To understand scholars such as Kluitenberg better in the (later) section on specifically media archaeology, a description of Foucault's archaeology is necessary. Foucault states that:

> This term [of archaeology] does not imply the search for a beginning; it does not relate analysis to geological excavation. It designates the general theme of a description that questions the already-said at the level of its existence: of the enunciative function that operates within it, of the discursive formation, and the general archive system to which it belongs. Archaeology describes discourses as practices specified in the element of the archive.[106]

Foucault is resisting the totalizing history of ideas and proposes archaeological analysis, not focusing on continuities and linearity but on **discontinuities** and **ruptures**.[107] There are 4 main points of divergence between archaeological analysis and

104 Hertz, "Methodologies of Reuse in the Media Arts: Exploring Black Boxes , Tactics and Media Archaeologies.", 58.

105 Kluitenberg, "On the Archaeology of Imaginary Media".

106 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)*.

107 Archaeology is much more willing than the history of ideas to speak of discontinuities, ruptures, gaps, entirely new forms of positivity, and of sudden redistributions.
Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)*: 169.
It is worth mentioning that in a 1983 lecture on Berkeley Foucault speaks up about perhaps not being clear enough about discontinuity and that he is surprised nobody has critiqued him on his ideas on discontinuity. His reply seems to be more focused on change instead of discontinuity. http://www.generation-online.

the history of ideas, that concern: the attribution of innovation, the analysis of contradiction, comparative descriptions, and the mapping of transformations. Before diving deeper into these points Foucault lays out principles for archaeology:

1. Archaeology tries to define not the thoughts, representations, images, themes, preoccupations that are concealed or revealed in discourses; but those discourses themselves, those discourses as practices obeying certain rules …
2. Archaeology does not seek to rediscover the continuous, insensible transition that relates discourse, on a gentle slope, to what precedes them, surrounds them or follows them … on the contrary its problem is to define discourses in their specificity; to show what set of rules that they put into operation is irreducible to any other …
3. Archaeology … does not wish to rediscover the enigmatic point the individual and the social are inverted into one another. It is neither a psychology, nor a sociology, nor more generally an anthropology of creation … it defines types of rules for discursive practices …
4. … archaeology does not try to restore what has been thought, wished, aimed at, experienced, desired by men in the very moment at which they expressed it in discourse … it is the systematic description of a discourse-object.[108]

The 4 points of divergence are a more detailed voice of what Foucault has been arguing all along in *Archaeology of Knowledge*. Foucault is only interested in how to describe nothing but discourse itself. If one is to search for an origin (as in the history of ideas), one is attributing value to statements in a hierarchical way (valuating original statements higher than new ones). An archaeological approach, if a statement is indeed 'new', describes the way in which the statement is regulated by the discursive field. Discourse is to be described only on the level of its basic, operative existence, its existence as a set of emerging, transforming and interrelated statements (describing the positivity of discourse).[109]

Similarly Foucault goes into contradiction, comparison and change. He wants to maintain discourse in all its irregularities and is thus very cautious when it comes to historical continuity. He rejects continuity, but also contradiction and change. In the history of ideas contradiction is perceived as a single principle i.e. to analyze discourse is to hide and reveal contradictions. Archaeological analysis takes contradiction as objects to be described in their specificity.[110] As can be seen, these arguments diverging archaeological analysis from the history of ideas are exactly in line with

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org/p/fpfoucault4.htm last visited on November 21st 2013.

108 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)*: 138-139.
In Bruss and Schneider, "TheArchaeology of Knowledge : Communication Studies : University of Minnesota" they give a shorter version of this description in more simplified terms, but with the explanation the preceded this description here a reference to the source seems fitting.

109 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)*: 125.

110 Ibid., 135-166.
http://www.sparknotes.com/philosophy/arch/section13.rhtml

Foucault's statements in the introduction of *Archaeology of Knowledge*.

### *The Archive*

The concept of the archive is central for understanding what archaeology means. Archaeology describes discourses as practices specified in the element of the archive. As touched upon briefly on the previous page the positivity of discourse is a kind of "historical a priori", the "specific form of [the] mode of being" of a set of statements, "it defines a limited space of communication".[111] However, the a priori that is the positivity of discourse is not a separate structure or law, it is interrelated along with specific discourses.

Understanding Foucault's interpretation of the a priori, it is now possible to understand how to surpass merely the 'surface of discourse': "the domain of statements [is] thus articulated in accordance with historical a prioris, characterized by different types of positivity, and divided up by distinct discursive formation".[112] And, in this density of discursive practices there are systems on the formulation and transformation of statements, together forming discourse. The archive is "the system that governs the appearance of statements… grouped together in distinct figures, composed together in accordance with multiple relations… with specific regularities".[113]

Now this is certainly not the easiest concept to grasp, which will in turn have its impact on media archaeology where arguments are used to for instance have a more material interpretation of the archive. To understand Foucault's description of the archive better it might be useful to look at Thomas Kuhn's concept of the paradigm. A number of critics have been quick to point out the resemblance of Foucault's description of the archive as a historically contingent system of enunciability to Kuhn's concept of the paradigm: "Men whose research is based on shared paradigms are committed to the same rules and standards for scientific practice. That commitment and the apparent consensus it produces are prerequisites for normal science, i.e., for the genesis and continuation of a particular research tradition".[114]

Indeed, the archive bears close resemblance to the paradigm, although Foucault does seem to emphasize the state of flux the archive (and discourse for that matter)

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111 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)*: 126.

112 Ibid., 128.

113 Ibid., 126-131.

114 Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, 3rd Edition* (The University of Chicago Press, 1996): 11.
George Steiner, "The Order of Things: Review of Michel Foucault's An Archaeology of the Human Sciences," in *Michel Foucault, Volume 1*, ed. Barry Smart (London: Routledge, 1994): 402.
Edward W. Said, "An Ethics of Language: Review of Michel Foucault's The Archaeology of Knowledge and The Discourse on Language," in *Barry Smart, Michel Foucault: Critical Assessments, Volume 2*, ed. Barry Smart (London: Routledge, 1994): 75-76.
Jean Piaget, *Structuralism* (Harper & Row, 1971): 131.

is in. Similar to Kuhn's description of the paradigm, the archive can never be known in its totality and the current archive cannot be known; It is from within the current rules of the archive we speak, distance is necessary. It is discontinuity (or distance) that lets us analyze discourses and describe the archive. This also results in Foucault's choice for the word archaeology:

> The never completed, never wholly achieved uncovering of the archive forms the general horizon to which the description of discursive formations, the analysis of positivities, the mapping of the enunciative field belong. The right of words - which is not that of the philologists - authorizes, therefore, the use of the term archaeology to describe all these searches.[115]

Thus, we arrive at an understanding of archaeology as describing discourses as practices specified in the element of the archive. Archaeology is indeed not a search for beginnings or a return to past events, to put it bluntly (as Foucault also does himself) it is "nothing more than a re-writing", re-presenting the archive, "a systematic description of a discourse-object".[116]

### *Genealogy*

It is understandable that the notion of beginnings or origins is problematic when arguing that history should not be perceived as linear and teleological. Foucault undermines the belief in the existence of unchanging essences and truths (such as an origin). These notions are also visible in Foucault's discussion on genealogy. In *Archaeology of Knowledge* first steps towards Foucault's ideas on genealogy can be seen (though limited). However it is not until 1971 that Foucault writes "Nietzsche, la genealogie, l'histoire" in which he places focus on the concept. This is also where one of the complexities of Foucault becomes clear: What is actually the difference between archaeology and genealogy? This is a difficult question and certainly has its consequences for media archaeology.

In media archaeology references can be found to both archaeology and genealogy without clear description of what is meant by these concepts. It is perhaps as Noah Wardrip-Fruin stated in an interview I conducted when asked about the relationship between his work on media archaeology and Foucault: "I feel like the influence of something like Foucault has become so widespread it's to be almost invisible. You sort of form your arguments, taking a lot of that not just for granted but it is four levels down in the foundation and it's hard to think without it or outside of it".[117]

115 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)*: 131.
116 Ibid., 140.
117 Interview with Noah Wardrip-Fruin, Appendix B.

Another example of the complexity surrounding genealogy would be when asking Siegfried Zielinski in an interview on the position of genealogy in relation to his work. Zielinski stated "there are very different concepts of genealogy" and what he is referring to:

> Is the classical approach, and this is linear, hierarchical, phenomena developing from a simple beginning/origin to a more and more complex construction of reality... what Stephen Jay Gould criticizes as the CONE- or TREE-form of genealogy. Within the last 10 years or so I discovered more and more the theoretical and practical relevance of Nietzsche's and Foucault's concept of genealogical thinking for myself.[118]

One can understand that in being confronted with a plethora of links to Foucauldean terminology and ideas it can be confusing to be confronted with a more classical interpretation of genealogy (without explicitly stating this in *Deep Time of the Media*). This is not necessarily a critique on Zielinski, far from it, it is merely to point out that in a multitude of publications on media archaeology, or in the field of media archaeology, the term genealogy has become problematic in several ways. One of these ways being not clearly explaining the term (others are on a different level, for instance what Zielinski is stating, which is that a classical approach is too simplistic and should be avoided). So what does Foucault say about genealogy?

In "Nietzsche, la genealogie, l'histoire" Foucault writes that:

> Genealogy is gray, meticulous and patiently documentary … it must record the singularity of events outside any monotonous finality; it must seek them in the most unpromising places, in what we tend to feel is without history – in sentiments, love, conscience, instincts; it must be sensitive to their recurrence, not in order to trace the gradual curve of their evolution but to isolate the different scenes … genealogy requires patience and a knowledge of details, and it depends on a vast accumulation of source material.[119]

This description, however poetic, does not tell us much about what genealogy is or entails. The information this citation does provide seems to be close to the now familiar notions on archaeology such as avoiding monotonous finality and evolutionary perspectives. It is opposing itself to the search of origins. Thus, there is still no apparent aspect which differentiates archaeology and genealogy.

Kendall and Wickham in their 1999 publication *Using Foucault's methods* specifically go into explaining archaeology followed by genealogy as to locate (possible) differences between the two concepts. The authors explain that genealogy also de-

118 Interview with Siegfried Zielinski, Appendix B.

119 Michel Foucault, *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology* (The New Press, 1998): 369.
Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, La Génealogie, L'histoire," *Hommage à Jean Hyppolite* (1971): 145–172.

scribes statements but with an emphasis on power:

> It introduces power through a 'history of the present', concerned with 'disreputable origins and unpalatable functions' … describes statements as an ongoing process, rather than as a snapshot of the web of discourse; concentrates on the strategic use of archaeology to answer problems about the present.[120]

Two aspects are striking about this reference. One, the notion of introducing power through a history of the present; this seems to touch upon similar observations made by Vivian Sobchack in the afterword of *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications and Implications* when she writes about the importance of presence for media archaeology. This article will be discussed in more detail in the section on how to do media archaeology, but one can already sense the importance of a concept such as presence which focusses on temporal relations.

Secondly, here the word power comes into play; when hearing or reading about discourse the word power is easily associated with it. However, as has been mentioned in the section *Misusing Discourse* and in detail in Sawyer's article "Discourse on Discourse": "non-discursive concepts from Foucault's later work are often conflated with the more structuralist and linguistic notions found in *The Order of Things* and in *AK*".[121] Sawyer is aiming here at concepts such as discursive formation or the archive getting conflated with concepts from later works such as power-knowledge relations, technologies of power, semio-techniques, apparatuses and the 'politics of the body'.

Although there is some discussion in *Archaeology of Knowledge* on power, it is true that this becomes more prevalent in Foucault's later work (as does genealogy). This leaves scholars with a problematic situation; there are a number of concepts such as archaeology, genealogy, power and discourse but the relationships between these concepts are complex. Luckily, Foucault (and scholars who've studied Foucault) do not leave the audience without any answer.

For one, Foucault answers a question from a student during a lecture at Berkeley's History Department in 1983. The student asked whether or not Foucault has ever stopped doing archaeology, to which Foucault answered: "No. And I never stopped doing genealogy. Genealogy defined the target and aim of the work. Archaeology indicates the field in order to do genealogy".[122]

Furthermore, in the publication *Power/knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writing, 1972-1977* two lectures by Foucault have been published in which archaeol-

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120 Gavin Kendall and Gary Wickham, *Using Foucault's Methods (Google eBook)* (SAGE, 1999): 34.

121 Sawyer, "a Discourse on Discourse: An Archeological History of an Intellectual Concept", 441.
AK meaning Archaeology of Knowledge.
Dreyfus and Rabinow in *Michael Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* have a different perspective and claim that in *Archaeology of Knowledge* and the *Order of Things* Foucault lost his way a bit giving discourse priority over the material.

122 Lecture Foucault at Berkeley History Department 1983, http://www.generation-online.org/p/fpfoucault4.htm last visited on November 21st 2013.

ogy is characterized as "the appropriate methodology of the analysis of local discursivities, and 'genealogy' would be the tactics whereby, on the basis of the descriptions of these local discursivities, the subjected knowledges which were released would be brought into play".[123] It is implied that archaeology is Foucault's method whereas genealogy puts archaeology to work and links it to present concerns; "genealogy as the strategic development of archaeological research".[124]

Still, this section has shown that it is not a simple task to understand what archaeology is especially seeing all the closely related concepts such a genealogy the archive or the previously discussed concept of discourse. At times Foucault himself is unclear about the meaning of these concepts and willingly admits his vagueness. On top of that, in media archaeology terminology such as archaeology, genealogy or the archive is also used but not always in a Foucauldean way, not always clearly explained or re-interpreted. This leads to the second question that will guide the section specifically on media archaeology: **What is archaeology in media archaeology?**

## FOUCAULT AND MATERIALITY

This section on Foucault and materiality will conclude the first part of this research on specifically Foucauldean archaeology and provide the 3rd question which will be used to guide the section on media archaeology. The reason that it is necessary to focus on materiality is that within several strands of media archaeology the material is the main point of focus. Especially, though not only, in what has been called German media theory or the German tradition of media archaeology. Again, it will become clear that Foucault's ideas on materiality are not always straight forward, but are certainly there.

For one, and this is crucial to realize up front, scholars do not always refer to the term or concept of materiality directly. As can be read in this section words such as practices, reality or materiality are sometimes used interchangeably (or at least lie close together). Besides going back to Foucault's work, there is secondary literature providing insightful analyses such as an article by Susan Hekman. Her analysis of Bruno Latour and Foucault with regards to materiality in her article "We have never been postmodern: Latour, Foucault and the material of knowledge" places Foucault and possibly media archaeology in a bigger picture of finding a place between modernism and post-modernism.[125]

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123 Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977* (Vintage, 1980): 85.

124 Kendall and Wickham, *Using Foucault's Methods (Google eBook)*: 31.
Phil Bevis, Michele Cohen, and Gavin Kendall, "Archaeologizing Genealogy," in *Foucault's New Domains*, ed. Mike Gane and Terry Johnson (London: Routledge, 1993): 193–215.

125 Susan Hekman, "We Have Never Been Postmodern: Latour, Foucault and the Material of Knowledge,"

The link made to Latour, Michel Callon, John Law and Actor Network Theory might not come as a surprise. ANT shows several links to French post-structuralists, although more firmly embedded in English-language academic traditions than most post-structuralist-influenced approaches. Foucault (whether interpreted as post-structuralist or structuralist) talks about discourse and statements as relational, meaning is there because of its place in what could be called a network. Approaching this from a somewhat simplified and abstract perspective it could be argued that ANT shows similar traits (or vice versa of course). However, to understand Foucault and materiality the focus should initially not be on ANT but on Latour's 1993 *We Have Never Been Modern*.[126]

In *We Have Never Been Modern* Latour challenges the intellectual community to find an alternative to modernism that does not privilege either side in a dichotomy such as the discursive or the material in the construction of knowledge. Separations such as nature/culture or language/reality which are fundamental to modernism are unworkable according to Latour. The notion that these separations are problematic is nothing new; Hegel, Nietzsche and Heidegger, among others, offered approaches to the material/discursive dichotomy that challenged modernism (scholars that have influenced Foucault greatly). However, Latour goes on by stating that the alternatives to modernism such as linguistic constructionism or postmodernism are not adequate.

Hekman agrees with Latour in that if postmodernism is understood as linguistic constructionism, with a primary focus on language and thus not the material, it is not a solution to the problems of modernism. What Hekman is arguing though is that Foucault is perhaps the new settlement Latour has been looking for. She argues that "Foucault, far from emphasizing discourse to the exclusion of the material or 'reality' is always acutely aware of the interaction between discourse and reality".[127] At the roots of media archaeology similar struggles are visible; questions about the relationship between discourse and materiality. Seen from this perspective it is understandable that media archaeology is also trying to find a way to deal with this delicate balance and this partly explains the strong connections to Foucault.

The difficulty however is, and this was also the case in the previous two sections on discourse and archaeology, that Foucault's work often gets conflated or misinterpreted. It has already been mentioned and established by scholars such as Dreyfus and Rabinow that Foucault deviated from several principles in *The Order of Things* and *Archaeology of Knowledge* by giving priority to discourse over practice, whereas over-all the emphasis is on the unity of discourse and practice in Foucault's work.[128] In the end Dreyfus and Rabinow explain how Foucault understands discourse as

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*Contemporary Political Theory* 8, no. 4 (November 2009): 435–454.

126 Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (Harvard University Press, 1993).

127 Hekman, "We Have Never Been Postmodern: Latour, Foucault and the Material of Knowledge", 438. This is also the reason why Hekman argues that Michel Foucault, is not postmodern at all in the commonly accepted meaning of that term, and thus, at least in the case of Foucault, 'we have never been postmodern'.

128 Dreyfus, Rabinow, and Foucault, *Michel Foucault : Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, xxv.

both dependent on yet feeding back and influencing discursive practices.[129]

Still, I will argue that in *Archaeology of Knowledge* Foucault does lay his basis for thinking about the relation between language and materiality or the discursive and non-discursive. For instance, when looking back at the statement as discussed in the section on misusing discourse, Foucault explains that the statement "is always endowed with a certain materiality," but is "neither entirely linguistic, nor exclusively material".[130] Thus, the analysis of the statement is not only linguistic; it is the analysis of the interaction between language and materiality or perhaps in a more Latourian sense one could even go as far as stating there is no division between language and materiality because they were always one.

Foucault is not claiming that the statement is the only way to view language: "The analysis of statements corresponds to a specific level of description"; it "does not claim to be a total, exhaustive description of 'language'".[131] Moreover, at the end of *Archaeology of Knowledge* Foucault plays with the idea of approaching discourse as event (also discussed in his 1970 inaugural address). He does not mean event in the more general meaning of the word, he means:

> The event is neither a substance, nor an accident, nor quality nor process; the event is not of the corporeal order. And yet it is definitely not immaterial; it's always at the level of materiality that it takes effect, and that it is an effect; it has its place and consists in the relation, the coexistence, the dispersion, the cross-checking, the accumulation, and the selection of material elements; it is definitely neither the act nor the property of a body; it occurs as the effect of and within a material dispersion. Let's say that the philosophy of the event would have to advance in the at-first-sight paradoxical direction of a materialism of the incorporeal.[132]

In his inaugural speech Foucault uses a similar approach as in *Archaeology of Knowledge* with regards to discourse as event in that he introduces terminology and concepts which, as he argues, oppose term by term the notions of creation, unity, originality, and signification which have dominated the traditional history of ideas and thus rendered discourse invisible.[133] For example, he states that events happen by chance, are discontinuous and occur at the level of materiality.[134]

Still, "A materialism of the incorporeal" seems problematic because from an on-

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129 Ibid., 67.

130 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)*, 97.

131 Ibid., 108.
Mark G.E. Kelly, *The Political Philosophy of Michel Foucault (Routledge Studies in Social and Political Thought)* (Routledge, 2008): 13.

132 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)*, 231.

133 John Johnston, "Discourse as Event : Foucault , and Literature Writing ," *MLN* 105, no. 4 (2013): 800–818, 805.

134 Interestingly this brings Foucault close to Althussarian notions of materialism, although Foucault would never agree with Althusser's notion of ideology.

tological point of view the material is primary and the incorporeal inherently lacks the material (no body). However, Foucault states that the incorporeal typified by the event is not necessarily immaterial for it can occur in a material world.[135]

Similar to the event, Foucault argues that the statement too has a material aspect. The statement is language taken as event and as such takes place at the level of materiality although the statement itself is neither completely material nor linguistic. The statement is understood as an interface between matter and language. Thus, in *Archaeology of Knowledge* language is grounded in the materiality of the event, resulting in a perhaps at the time unconventional perspective on materiality, moving away from a formal interpretation of material as the quality of being material. This of course seriously takes into question accusations thrown at Foucault of over-emphasizing linguistics "… in which language becomes self-sufficient, for while the statement is not the only legitimate way to view language, an account of language which overlooks its engagement with material reality can conversely never be complete in itself".[136]

The interpretation of Foucault as a theorist who emphasizes the interaction between the discursive and non-discursive (i.e. language and materiality) becomes even more prevalent in late Foucault and his ideas on power.[137] Before going into this I want to emphasize once more the difficulty of early Foucault and late Foucault especially in the context of media archaeology. To approach Foucault and materiality by linking this to his notion of power also means discussing work of a more 'late Foucault', thus moving away from *Archaeology of Knowledge*. One of the issues within media archaeology is precisely that aspects such as materiality play a crucial role but the main reference is confined to a publication such as *Archaeology of Knowledge* or materiality is not linked to Foucault at all. Keep in mind that this section on materiality is dealing with a variety of Foucault's work which, as has been proven, can be problematic.

Although in earlier works of Foucault it already became apparent that one can't merely study discourse linguistically alone, it is about the interaction between the discursive and non-discursive, it is in works such as *Discipline and Power* that he links this to the body (which in turn is linked to power). This exemplifies another possible shift in Foucault's thinking; where in *Archaeology of Knowledge* he explicitly stated "to define a method of historical analysis freed from the anthropological theme …" there is now a focus on the body.[138] The word possible is used here because in scholarly work interpretations still differ wildly. In a paper titled "Beyond Anthropocentrism: life, law and questions of the animal" Foucault is referenced as being anthropocentric whilst in a paper titled "Critical Animal Studies Beyond An-

135 Mark Kelly, *The Political Philosophy of Michel Foucault*, 13.

136 Ibid., 13.

137 Hekman, "We Have Never Been Postmodern: Latour, Foucault and the Material of Knowledge".
Kapoor Nitasha, "Discuss the Role of the Material with Reference to Foucault," 2009, https://www.academia.edu/4570835/The_role_of_material_with_reference_to_Foucault.

138 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)*: 16.

thropocentrism and Humanism" Foucault is mentioned as a non-anthropocentrist thinker.[139]

Derek Hook explains how in *Discipline and Punish* Foucault shows how non-discursive elements need to be included in analyses to understand meaning and the mechanisms of power: "Each facet of discursive commentary is led and substantiated by the minutia of various corporeal rituals of bodily discipline, which, in their impact, would seem clearly irreducible to an exclusively textual focus".[140] An example of Foucault himself which makes this clear can be found in his discussion on crime: "…'crime', the object with which penal practice is concerned, has profoundly altered: the quality, the nature, in a sense the substance of which the punishable element is made, rather than its formal definition".[141]

Foucault goes on in *Discipline and Punish* by explaining how, and here he refers to Marx, material conditions are used to support power structures in place. This does not necessarily refer to the power of the state, it is also located in the body, in social interactions and individuals i.e. the role of the subject. Individuals are always simultaneously in the position of undergoing power and exercising it. Here another shift in Foucault's thinking is visible. Where initially Foucault sees the subject mostly as a function of discourse, when it comes to power the subject is both exercising and undergoing it. Now power and discourse certainly are not the same thing, but it is striking that Foucault does attribute some agency to the subject in later work.

Throughout the discussion in *Discipline and Punish*, bodies are both genuine and fabricated; a product of discourse and material truth: "The individual is no doubt the fictitious atom of an "ideological" representation of society; but he is also a reality fabricated by this specific technology of power that I have called 'discipline'".[142] Disciplinary power reaches bodies through what Foucault calls the 'apparatus'. For Foucault the apparatus is a heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, laws etc. i.e. the discursive as well as the non-discursive. The apparatus, for Foucault, is strategic; it is the system of relations established between the heterogeneous elements: "The apparatus is thus always inscribed in a play of power, but it is also always linked to certain coordinates of knowledge which issue from it but, to an equal degree, condition it".[143]

Foucault's use of the phrase strategic needs elaboration. For Foucault there are tactics and strategies which in themselves are a form of materiality – a material sys-

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139 Simona Rentea, "Beyond Anthropocentrism: Life, Law and the Question of the Animal," in *Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Theory Vs. Policy? Connecting Scholars and Practitioners, New Orleans Hilton Riverside Hotel, The Loews New Orleans Hotel, New Orleans*, 2010, http://citation.allacademic.com/meta/p415246_index.html.
Craig McFarlane, "Critical Animal Studies Beyond Anthropocentrism and Humanism," in *Thinking About Animals*, 2011, http://www.theoria.ca/research/files/CASAnthropocentrismHumanism.pdf.

140 Derek Hook, "Discourse, Knowledge, Materiality, History: Foucault and Discourse Analysis," *Theory & Psychology* (August 01, 2001): 521-547, 535.

141 Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Vintage Books, 1995): 17.

142 Ibid., 194.

143 Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*, 196.

tem of arranging and organizing bodies how to act and that has an effect on the body in the form of power. While not 'material' in themselves, or even intentionally produced, they exist in the material world and have the same effect as 'material' objects in terms of the power they are responsible for (a materialism of the incorporeal!).

Foucault states that making a distinction between the discursive and non-discursive in the apparatus is not useful. As an example he discusses the architectural plan of a military school and wonders how one could make a distinction between the discursive and non-discursive there. He emphasizes by stating: "But I don't think it is very important to be able to make that distinction, given that my problem is not a linguistic one".[144] Although he does not draw the conclusion here, it is clear: his problem is the interaction of  at the very least the linguistic and the material.

It is in the practices of power that knowledge and power are connected: "The exercise of power perpetually creates knowledge and, conversely, knowledge constantly induces effects of power".[145] The practices of power join the discursive and the non-discursive into an indistinguishable whole. Power is always already material. But it is also constituted by knowledge: "Knowledge and power are integrated with one another and there is no point of dreaming of a time when knowledge will cease to depend on power".[146]

To exemplify the above highly theoretical discussion it is helpful to look into the well-known idea of the panopticon. Jeremy Bentham's panopticon became the archetypal structure in Foucault's work exemplifying ideas on discipline, the body and materiality. The panopticon structure allows surveillance from an invisible observation point, never truly knowing if you are being observed. Consequently it produces a control that is self-regulatory. Without knowing if you are being observed, you will behave as if you are being observed. Thus, individuals develop "an impersonal and anonymous relationship with power" – a far more effective means to control a population.[147] However far from surveillance being confined to jails or even schools and factories, Foucault shows how "the perfect disciplinary apparatus would make it possible for a single gaze to see everything constantly".[148] Foucault's discussion on strategies and tactics show how power can be pervasive like the spreading of capil-

144 Ibid., 198.

145 Ibid., 52.
In an interview Foucault explains that power is a set of relations, one exercises power, and practices power. As an example he uses a tape recorder: "Power is a set of relations. What does it mean to exercise power? It does not mean picking up this tape recorder and throwing it on the ground. I have the capacity to do so—materially, physically, sportively. But I would not be exercising power if I did that. However, if I take this tape recorder and throw it on the ground in order to make you mad, or so that you can't repeat what I've said, or to put pressure on you so that you'll behave in such and such a way, or to intimidate you—well, what I've done, by shaping your behavior through certain means, *that* is power." The interview was conducted by Michael Bess on November 3rd 1980 at the University of Berkeley, http://sitemason.vanderbilt.edu/historydept/michaelbess/Foucault%20Interview last visit on December 1st 2013.

146 Ibid.

147 Lisa Downing, *The Cambridge Introduction to Michel Foucault (Cambridge Introductions to Literature)* (Cambridge University Press, 2008): 82.

148 Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 173.

laries, reaching "into the very grain of individuals".[149]

Especially this last example on the panopticon can give some points to grasp Foucault's ideas on materiality and link this to media archaeology. The discursive and non-discursive elements of the panopticon are recognizable, or at least some of them. Still, it has become clear that Foucault's ideas and interpretation of materiality are far from obvious. Foucault uses words such as materiality, non-discursive elements, practices, power and events to discuss aspects closely related to one another. However, the exact position and relation of these concepts to each other remains vague.

The statement has a certain materiality but also immateriality, if one were to approach discourse as event then a similar complex relation between discursive and non-discursive elements is argued and I am sure that if one were to spend an entire research project on Foucault and materiality more can be discovered. Articles referenced in this section such as "We have never been postmodern: Latour, Foucault and the material of knowledge", "Discourse as Event : Foucault, and Literature Writing" or "Discourse, Knowledge, Materiality, History: Foucault and Discourse Analysis" already show that much can be said about Foucault and materiality and none of it is clear cut.

Two points however have become crystal clear from this section. The first is that the assumption that Foucault concerns himself with (just) linguistics, with language, is false. Secondly, it shows that Foucault struggled with similar challenges as media archaeology; a moving away from structuralism, away from modernism but also avoiding the extreme relativistic or linguistic constructionist notions associated with postmodernism. Indeed, a quest for understanding the complex interaction between discursive and non-discursive elements, between the language and material. Thus a 3rd question that will guide the section on media archaeology specifically is: **What is materiality in media archaeology?**

This 3rd question leads to the end of the section on Foucauldean archaeology. The section started by explaining the current problematic position of Foucault in media archaeological work. Thus, detailed investigation of Foucault was necessary so it becomes possible to link his ideas and concepts to different media archaeologies; it becomes possible to discuss concepts such as discourse, archaeology, the archive, materiality etc. with reference to Foucault. This is important because many media archaeologists acknowledge the influence of Foucault, mention Foucault, but often do not explicitely elaborate on why and how Foucault's concepts will be used, on how these concepts inform a specific media archaeology.[150]

A first step to understand the diversity in media archaeology and understand Foucault's role was a discussion that revolved around 3 issues that have been under-

149 Ibid., 39.

150 Which authors and their depiction of Foucault has been discussed in earlier sections such as the introduction of the Foucauldean Archaeology section.

exposed in the context of media archaeology:

1. Misusing Discourse;
2. The Complexity of Foucault;
3. Foucault and Materiality.[151]

Each of the issues represented a section in which concepts such as discourse, archaeology, genealogy, the archive, the statement and materiality were discussed. It became clear that often there is no clear cut definition of concepts and that Foucault's work is surrounded by misinterpretations and unjustified conflation.

Resulting from each of these issues/sections however is at least some understanding of these concepts and directions that can be taken to reduce the issues. A first step which was a result from the previous sections is the creation of questions which will function as a guide throughout a discussion on media archaeologies. These questions are: **What is discourse in media archaeology, what is archaeology in media archaeology and what is materiality in media archaeology?** The next section will be on media archaeology specifically and depend heavily on the basis created now by having focused on Foucauldean archaeology.

151 As mentioned in more detail on page 20.

CHAPTER III

# The Woes of Media Archaeology Taxonomy

# The Pitfalls

The questions **what is discourse in media archaeology, what is archaeology in media archaeology and what is materiality in media archaeology** are not the only guidance and structure to this section on media archaeology specifically. The difficulty with discussing a variety of media archaeologies is where to start. To give this section more structure and at the same time show the pitfalls of taxonomizing media archaeologies it is useful to return to Wanda Strauven's article "Media Archaeology: Where Film History, Media Art, and New Media (Can) Meet". As stated earlier, she argues there are 4 dominant approaches to media archaeology being the *old in the new*, *the new in the old*, *recurring topoi*, and *ruptures/discontinuities*. In discussing these 4 approaches she also wants to highlight the possible and relevant connections to Foucault's work.

Rhetorically this approach can work well for this section. It provides a structure and argument on why media archaeology will be discussed in a particular order in this research; the reason being that when placing Foucaldian archaeology next to the taxonomy created by Strauven flaws will become visible in such a taxonomy. At the same time diversities between media archaeologies will become apparent as well as connections to Foucault. In short, using Strauven's way of taxonomizing media archaeologies as a rhetoric it becomes possible to show exactly why such a taxonomy should not be created. Consequently it contributes to the overarching question in this research whether or not media archaeology could be at least one of the methods which leads media studies to a more structured field with field specific methods and whether or not media archaeology can be 'stabilized'. Lastly, it has to be mentioned that although the creation of a taxonomy in media archaeolgy will prove to be destructive, the attempt is understandable; to create a more structured and clearer approach, approaches or field, a taxonomy seems evident.

## THE OLD IN THE NEW

The first dominant approach according to Strauven is *the old in the new* and is directly inherited from Marshall Mcluhan's notion of the law of obsolescence. Basically the law of obsolescence is about the idea of old media becoming the content of new media, losing their novelty and effectiveness but not being eliminated. McLuhan illustrates this law by giving examples such as the electric light being pure information:

> It is a medium without a message, as it were, unless it is used to spell out

> some verbal ad or name. This fact, characteristic of all media, means that the "content" of any medium is always another medium. The content of writing is speech, just as the written word is the content of print, and print is the content of the telegraph.[152]

The idea of a medium always being the content of another medium without being eliminated of course brings with it thoughts on temporality and possible associations with media archaeology. However, one can question whether or not this is media archaeology. McLuhan's name is not only mentioned by Strauven but also by Parikka and Huhtamo in the introduction of *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications and Implications*.[153] The difference between Strauven's work and that of Parikka and Huhtamo is that the latter do not necessarily perceive McLuhan as a media archaeologist or his ideas as a media archaeology, whereas Strauven places McLuhan's ideas under the dominant media archaeological approach of *the old in the new*.

Parikka and Huhtamo's perspective seems more in place. They perceive McLuhan's work to be influential for media archaeology. Specifically his ideas on materiality, his "idiosyncratic" way of writing and speaking about topics (instead of linear) and the idea that a certain distance is necessary to be able to study media (similar to the distance necessary to study discourse). The focus however is on McLuhan as a 'material thinker'. It is important to note that McLuhan's interpretation of materiality is not clear cut and does not necessarily avoid or deny immaterial sides of media; recall here Foucault's notion of materialism of the incorporeal. Here, there is a difference from scholars such as Hegel, or Marx, which is not surprising for Foucault seeing his distaste for their theories. Scholars such as Hegel, or Marx approach the material in the expected and sometimes more literal way of physicality.[154] In the second half of the 20th century however notions of material that is immaterial arose.

There is a difference here in that materiality can be defined as "that which constitutes the 'matter' of something" opposed to formality which can be defined as "the quality of being material; material aspect or character; mere outwardness or externality".[155] Already in 1960's media discourse the importance of approaching the quality of being material whilst being non-material was recognized, for instance in *Archaeology of Knowledge*. As stated, for McLuhan this area of (im)materiality

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152 Marshall McLuhan and Lewis H. Lapham, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (The MIT Press, 1994): 8.

153 Strauven, "Media Archaeology: Where Film History, Media Art, and New Media (Can) Meet", 69.
Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka, *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications*, 2.

154 G. W. F. Hegel, *Hegel's Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art, Vol. I* (Oxford University Press, 1998): 69-90.
Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy (Penguin Classics)* (Penguin Classics, 1993): 109-111.
Jeehee Hong, "Material, Materiality" (University of Chicago, 2003). http://csmt.uchicago.edu/glossary2004/material.htm#_ftnref5 last visited on December 4th 2013.

155 Hong.
Oxford Dictionaries, *Oxford Dictionary of English* (OUP Oxford, 2010).

can be quite messy. Yes, materiality plays a fundamental role in his understanding of media and this can lead to a deterministic understanding of McLuhan's theories. However, this is not completely justified.

For McLuhan the medium is the message and the content of a medium only blinds to what really matters. The focus should be on the medium, on the properties of the medium and the understanding of media as always containing other media. The medium, in this sense, functions as a habitat rather than just a specific material means of communication.[156] McLuhan provides many examples, one of his 'favorites' being print. In discussing the medium of print it also becomes clear that materiality does not necessarily refer to tangible objects or physicality. There are several forms of print, one being print on demand. Although printing on demand certainly has material aspects it also makes use of the culture of print, printing on the demand contains the medium of print. It is crucial to understand that for McLuhan all of this, the culture of print, printing on demand, the material aspects of this, it is all media.

Thus, immateriality is not necessarily a problem for McLuhan, he easily discusses things such as traffic or speed and approaches these as media. The places of focus can be messy and these places are actually most interesting (a notion that lives on in media archaeology). In the end though McLuhan at times refuses to settle on concepts and is not definitive on where the focus is, consequently it is also not always clear cut on why he should be perceived as technologically deterministic (some of his discussions and focus is very much on cultural phenomena). One should consider that actually these questions on determinism are not really constructive. What is constructive is the possibility to make certain statements, regardless whether they are more on a social or technological side. McLuhan provides media studies with tools, approaches and ideas on how to do this. Lastly, similar issues as with Foucault arise. The relation between material and immaterial remind of the vagueness of the relation between the discursive and non-discursive, both imply the distance that is necessary to understand the research object and try to avoid (in different manner) linearity.

One can understand the attraction of McLuhan for media archaeologists. In an interview with Ian Bogost, when asking him about the connection between McLuhan and media archaeology, he also sees a 'natural similarity'. "McLuhan is approaching the question from a similar direction which is to say one of the properties of media systems and media objects and how do they influence people's actions and behaviors rather than asking how can we interpret the works produced by media systems".[157] However, Bogost also sees differences, a big one being that McLuhan does not talk about anything in great detail: "He has a very high level, very metaphorical, makes connections without really connecting the dots, doesn't really do the material analysis that someone like me would like".[158]

156 McLuhan and Lapham, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, 9.
157 Interview with Ian Bogost, Appendix B.
158 Ibid.

Another more specific issue is that McLuhan (and here a similar issue as with Foucault is visible) is of course more than his much cited work *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. Thus Bogost argues that by only focusing on one or two of his publications, scholars miss a lot of the most relevant material that McLuhan provided. Still, Bogost does acknowledge this is a controversial perspective because there is somewhat of a McLuhan canon problem, but that at the same time this is mostly for "media ecology obsessives".[159]

McLuhan's work has influenced many scholars, two of these are Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin. Bolter and Grusin are mentioned because their study on remediation has appeared in several works focused on media archaeology such as the previous mentioned article by Strauven, Parikka and Huhtamo's book on media archaeology but also Kristoffer Gansing's dissertation *Transversal Media Practices* and the dissertation *Methodologies of Reuse in the Media Arts: Exploring Black Boxes, Tactics and Media Archaeologies* by Garnet Hertz. However, the discussion on the links between remediation and media archaeology can at times be limited. On the other hand, Gansing and Hertz provide extensive and deep analyses, however contradictions arise between the aforementioned works when placed next to each other, which deserves attention.

In short, the status of remediation in general with regards to media archaeology is in need of critical questioning and on top of that one can wonder if labeling remediation as an *old in the new* media archaeological approach is appropriate. Strauven mentions that Bolter and Grusin base their interpretation of remediation, which they define as "the formal logic by which new media refashion prior media forms", on Foucauldean genealogy and of course McLuhan's law of obsolescence. The analysis of remediation in the context of media archaeology does not go much further than that. Her last comment on it is that "one might have reservations about Bolter and Grusin's method, as it inevitably implies a historical linearity, resulting in an equally inevitable media convergence".[160]

However, this last comment in which she decided to more or less position remediation in a problematic position in the context of media archaeology is not supported by any argument. Why is it that remediation inevitably leads to historical linearity and convergence? Moreover, when placing this perspective next to for instance Gansing's dissertation, contradictions appear. Gansing argues that Bolter and Grusin "deal with technological development, not as a linear progression but rather as a process where old and new media forms co-exist and continuously re-shape each other".[161] The latter perspective is supported by Bolter himself in an interview:

> We reject a simple linear progression of media because obviously that isn't the case. You don't eliminate old media necessarily when you introduce new

159 Ibid.
160 Strauven, "Media Archaeology: Where Film History, Media Art, and New Media (Can) Meet", 69.
161 Gansing, "Transversal Media Practices", 60.

> media. In any given time, you have a media ecology, a media environment that includes different media in different media forms and some of them get labeled or positioned as traditional in that context and some of them become new media or our new media for a while. In that context, therefore, the most obvious thing you would look for would be ways in which these media forms are trying to assert their status over older established media forms, which are still there, which can be still there, which are always still there because if they're not still there, they wouldn't be worried about them.[162]

It becomes clear that Gansing's perspective on remediation is similar to Bolter's in that it is non-linear, constantly re-shaping and co-existing. Hertz, although not in such an extensive way as Gansing, also notes how remediation turns away from linearity.[163] This position directly contradicts the position of Strauven and also problematizes a taxonomy in which remediation is seen as a media archaeological approach within *the old in the new*.

All in all it can be stated that McLuhan, Bolter and Grusin are influential for media archaeology but their concepts and ideas should not be understood as media archaeologies and certainly not taxonomized as media archaeological approaches within the category *the old in the new*. Bolter himself even questions what media archaeology is and therefore also wonders what the positions of remediation would be with regards to media archaeology. In the interview he explains that in the case of interpreting media archaeology as a field perhaps remediation could be an approach within this field. Most of all however, remediation can be seen as an approach to understand the relationships of media and media form both synchronically and diachronically.[164]

In the publications discussed so far that mentioned remediation or McLuhan, focus has been placed on the temporal aspect or on the material; the question remains however in what way is this different from the already influential Foucault? As has been mentioned, these complex temporal nonlinear perspectives, the questioning of origins or the material as being immaterial can also be found in Foucault's work. At least 2 reasons can be mentioned in this respect. The first being that both McLuhan and Bolter and Grusin focus on media specifically whereas Foucault has a more undefined area of focus. Now of course how media is interpreted makes a difference here but the fact remains that McLuhan, Bolter and Grusin mention their focus on media explicitly

Secondly, McLuhan, Bolter and Grusin can at times be very concrete about what they mean especially when using examples. McLuhan's example of materiality and electricity or Bolter and Grusin's example of remediation in the case of television or writing make it possible to comprehend their concepts relatively easy. Foucault

162 Interview with Jay Bolter, Appendix B.
163 Jussi Parikka and Garnet Hertz, "Archaeologies of Media Art" (2010), http://www.ctheory.net/articles.aspx?id=631 last visit on December 9th 2013.
164 Interview with Jay Bolter, Appendix B.

on the other hand can be quite abstract in his description of concepts as has been shown in previous sections. This is not to say that McLuhan does not do this from time to time but on his laws of media or ideas of materiality, he is quite concrete.

To conclude this section titled *the old in the new* it is safe to state that placing McLuhan, Bolter and Grusin under this 'approach' is problematic. The whole notion of the old in the new being a media archaeological approach is problematic in itself seeing it implies a simplistic interpretation of time which McLuhan, Bolter and Grusin obviously do not uphold. The argument that these scholars are media archaeologists does not prove to be robust, they  arehowever most influential. Placing the discussion in this section on the old in the new next to the earlier derived questions, **what is discourse in media archaeology, what is archaeology in media archaeology and what is materiality in media archaeology**, also provides insights on why McLuhan, Bolter and Grusin are influential yet should not be taxonimized as media archaeological approaches.

For one, McLuhan, Bolter and Grusin do not really go into aspects of discourse. The influences of Foucault that can be derived from literature on media archaeology and the discussion of Foucault in the previous section already shows the importance of discourse for media archaeology. Scholars such as Parikka, Huhtamo, Ernst, Kluitenberg, de Vries, Zielinski and others all show, sometimes in different ways, the importance of discourse (or questioning discourse). As stated, for Bolter and Grusin (but also McLuhan) it is about the relationships of media and media form both synchronically and diachronically.

This is not to say they do not care about it. Bolter justly states that remediation is part of an explanation, similar to Foucault he states that there a more than one way to discover something, to do research and understand things such as media. Thus, the emphasis in for instance remediation is not a prevalent as in Foucauldean archaeology, but this is not necessarily a problem. Claiming to do it all results in a somewhat universal method or approach, which is to be avoided (similar to structuralism).

As has been shown now the other 2 questions, on materiality and archaeology, do benefit from McLuhan, Bolter and Grusin's ideas. As has been stated, it opened up coneretely the doorway of an interpretation of the material as immaterial. It does not necessarily refer to concrete physicality, to the tangible object. The concept of archaeology is influenced by a rethinking of temporalities. McLuhan, Bolter and Grusin offered means to think about media and relationships between media in non-linear ways, partly derived from Foucault. That these concepts are important does not only stem from the discussion held in this section but also by the wide and varied use of the concepts in a multitude of academic fields.

It has been sown that Strauven's 1st approach in her taxonomy and use of McLuhan,Bolter and Grusin was problematic. Still, it became clear what the influences where from McLuhan, Bolter and Grusin and these were placed next to Foucault or retraced where possible; Staruven's second approach is titled *the new in the*

*old*.

## THE NEW IN THE OLD

In this section on Strauven's 2nd dominant approach of media archaeology she only really discusses one author, Siegfried Zielinski. The subtitle of the section in her article is *anarchaeology or variantology* which is one of the major contributions Zielinski made to media archaeology. There remains discussion on who coined the term media archaeology, but it can be said with certainty that Zielinski's 1996 article "Media Archaeology" was a big step putting media archaeology on the map.[165]

In this article Zielinski discusses a variety of examples or probes from media history such as a story from Western Judeo-Christian culture that imagines an intensive temporal process: the dream of Jacob's ladder. Other examples are works of Giovanni Battista Della Porta or the 1671 Amsterdam edition of his *Ars magna lucis et umbrae* by Athanasius Kircher. Only after the discussion of these probes and examples does Zielinski explicitly state what his intentions are. In stating those reasons now familiar notions of temporal complexity become apparent.

Zielinski explains how he wants to move away from coherent praxis, universalization and standardization of aesthetic expression. He does not want to homogenize the historic development of media. This of course has similarities with Foucault's ambition of moving away from the history of ideas, moving away from grand narratives and linear progression. However, Zielinski does not explicitly refer to Foucault, also not in other publications. In an interview held with Zielinski this also became clear; as can be read in the section on genealogy in this research, he explained his non-Foucauldean interpretation of genealogy and that only recently he began to discover the use of Nietzsche's and Foucault's theories. Thus, although Zielinski has not explicitly based his theories on works of Foucault, he does recognize the importance of Foucault for media archaeology (Eric Kluitenberg mentions this too when briefly discussing Zielinski).[166]

Zielinski goes on and uses specific terminology in explaining why he choose "wild juxtapositions of heterogeneous phenomena from media history, and particularly with regard to the presence of the digital media and their start into the next century".[167] He states that "thinking further along the lines traced by others, Georges Bataille for example, I attempt to think and write about the previous technical and aesthetic and theoretical richness of the development of artefacts of media articula-

165 Siegfried Zielinski, "Media Archaeology" (1996), http://www.ctheory.net/articles.aspx?id=42 last visit on December 9th 2013.
166 Interview with Siegfried Zielinski, Appendix B.
Interview with Eric Kluitenberg, Appendix B.
167 Siegfried Zielinski, "Media Archaeology" (1996), http://www.ctheory.net/articles.aspx?id=42 last visit on December 17th 2013.

tion hetero-logically." The term hetero-logically jumps out, according to Zielinski both re-construction and conceptions of possible future development rub together. Here it becomes clear why Foucauldean genealogy and archaeology would make sense in this context.

In thinking hetero-logically one is disreputing origins or (grand) narratives of origins. Thus, by combining archaeology and genealogy (as Foucault always claims has to be done) one can re-construct and conceptualize possible *times*.[168] True, this is combining Zielinski's terminology with Foucault's, but there seems to be a clear overlap. Zielinski goes deeper into his notion of heterogeneity by explaining that going against this trend of universalizing and homogenizing means strengthening "local forms of expression and differentiation of artistic action, that will create vigorously heterogeneous energy fields with individual and specific intentions, operations, and access in going beyond the limits that we term mediatization".[169]

Having focused on the notion of hetero-logic it is possible to understand Zielinski's explanation of what media archaeology is. In having these diverse probes and examples of what is being conceived as the history of media, perhaps it is possible to pick up signals, to gain new insights, in a few localities, on both a hardware and software level of the audiovisual; discovering secret paths in history, from which it is possible to learn about the future, this *Tätigkeit* could be called media archaeology. In referring to media archaeology as *Tätigkeit* emphasis is put on executing media archaeology and not on constructing it as narrative. This provides a useful insight in media archaeology seeing the creation of a narrative has the risk of falling into the same old media narrative as before (a risk explicitly recognized by Wolfgang Ernst).

In Zielinski's 2006 book *Deep Time of the Media* (German version was published in 2002) he pushes his claim for the hetero-logical even further in what he calls anarchaeology or variantology. In this book ideas are also placed in relation to Foucault. What is difficult however is that the latter mostly happens in the foreword in the book which is written by Timothy Druckrey. He makes explicit claims about media archaeology that prove useful to discuss. What remains unclear is the relation of Druckrey's foreword to the rest of Zielinski's book. Because it is in the book does not necessarily mean that Zielinski also adheres to the notions made by Druckrey. Despite the fact that Strauven does not place Druckrey in any of the dominant approaches, the foreword written by Druckrey will also be discussed seeing it is an integral part of *Deep Time of the Media*.

Druckrey, in giving a brief description of Foucault's archaeology, states that archaeology is not a replacement for 'the history of ideas'. Druckrey gives a common description and cited part of Foucault's archaeology as also has been discussed in this research in the section on archaeology; it is the systematic description of a discourse-object, tries to establish the system of transformations that constitute change,

168 I use the word times here because in thinking hetero-logically one can wonder what is being re-constructed; is it the past, present or perhaps also future?

169 Siegfried Zielinski, "Media Archaeology" (1996), http://www.ctheory.net/articles.aspx?id=42 last visit on December 19th 2013.

does not have a unifying but diversifying effect and is not supposed to carry any suggestion of anticipation.[170]

After this brief description he cites Foucault on the concept of archaeology:

> It is the analysis of silent births, or distant correspondences, of permanences that persist […] of slow formations that profit from the innumerable blind complicities […] Genesis, continuity, totalization: these are the themes of the history of ideas.
>
> But archaeological description is precisely such an abandonment of the history of ideas, a systematic rejection of its postulates and procedures […].

What follows however is unclear. From this citation Druckrey argues that archaeology is not a substitute for the history of ideas, and not "an alternative for eccentric discovery, not a surrogate for rigorous research".[171] Perhaps Druckrey here is arguing that despite Foucault's attempt to move away from the history of ideas he still ends up there. Foucault is not ignorant to this possibility and this is exactly why he explicitly positions his archaeology in opposition to the history of ideas in section IV of *Archaeology of Knowledge*. Foucault too is afraid that what he is describing on all these pages in his book will end up similar to something such as the history of ideas.

This critique has been proclaimed more often with regards to Foucault's archaeology. However, as can be seen here with Druckrey, the basis for a claim such as archaeology is similar to the history of ideas does not seem robust let alone constructive. On top of that, it has become clear through the section on Foucauldean archaeology but also through the varied use of Foucault in media archaeology that his ideas and terminology are crucial for media archaeology; despite a possible interpretation of Foucault as still falling into the traps of the history of ideas.

Still, it is important to keep in mind that Zielinski's references to Foucault are limited and that he does not necessarily agree with Druckrey. Zielinski's main point of focus, as has been mentioned briefly, is the hetero-logical and variantology. Strauven explains this as "a study of singularities, which tries to capture the event "in the exact specificity of its occurrence," as Foucault prescribes in his *Archaeology of Knowledge*".[172] Although I agree with Strauven that this interpretation of Zielinski is appropriate, another more critical side needs to be mentioned. Explicating Zielinski along the lines of Foucault becomes problematic when placed next to Druckrey's arguments in the foreword with regards to Foucault's archaeology. Perhaps the best answer is given by Zielinski himself in an interview:

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170 Siegfried Zielinski, *Deep Time of the Media: Toward an Archaeology of Hearing and Seeing by Technical Means (Electronic Culture: History, Theory, and Practice)* (The MIT Press, 2008): viii.
Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge (Vintage)*: 139, 173, 206.

171 Zielinski, *Deep Time of the Media: Toward an Archaeology of Hearing and Seeing by Technical Means (Electronic Culture: History, Theory, and Practice)*: viii.

172 Strauven, "Media Archaeology: Where Film History, Media Art, and New Media (Can) Meet", 70.

> Michel Foucault is very relevant to my research, but it is not necessary to refer permanently and explicitly to him. As you might know, I started to work with the concept of archaeology and even already anarchaeology some twenty years ago. When I taught and researched in Austria I made series of lectures on those subjects and published (mainly in German language) quite a few texts in which Foucault was an important reference. But I also wanted to develop him critically further. He himself was quite unsatisfied with his early concept of Archaeology. I tried to prevent the trap of thinking the past in the perspective of increasing power. Linearity is also wrong, when you use it in a political correct way. This is how my concept of anarchaeology came into the game and the extended concept of genealogy (Nietzsche & Foucault).[173]

Zielinski does not see the necessity to depend so heavily on Foucault. His eventual goal is to create a "large body of individual anarchaeological studies" which would constitute a "variantology of the media" with innumerable possible paths and variations.[174]

Besides this, the answer given in the interview provides 2 comments most useful to possible understandings of media archaeology. Firstly, Zielinski states that it is his intention to develop Foucault further critically. It could be argued that therefore media archaeology is a step further than the one Foucault took when writing *Archaeology of Knowledge* and creating his archaeology. This would justify even more so the dependency on Foucault, even besides his already prevalent appearance in media archaeological literature. Secondly, Zielinski on a side note pushed on a crucial practical issue in media archaeology, that of language. Zielinski states he mainly wrote in German, which can make dissemination of ideas difficult. Such issues have also been noticed by Ian Bogost and Jussi Parikka and luckily great steps have been taken to tackle this issue. Parikka for instance is one of the people working on translating works (right now for instance on translating works by Claus Pias).

Still, Zielinski has been published in many languages and is without a doubt highly influential with regards to media archaeology. It is therefore peculiar that Strauven positions Zielinski's anarchaeology as a dominant approach within media archaeology because Zielinski would not appreciate anarchaeology or media archaeology to be reduced to an approach or method in academia, or as Parikka and Huhtamo write: "Considering media archaeology a "method" pinned down into an academic textbook would no doubt be a horror for Zielinski, who also calls his "activity" *(Tätigkeit)* by other names, such as "anarchaeology" and "variantology," expressing an uneasiness toward permanent categories and doctrines".[175] On top of that, simply stating Zielinski's perspective is *the new in the old* cuts the complexity of his work short.

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173 Interview with Siegfried Zielinski, Appendix B.

174 Zielinski, *Deep Time of the Media: Toward an Archaeology of Hearing and Seeing by Technical Means (Electronic Culture: History, Theory, and Practice)*: 7.

175 Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka, *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications*, 10.

If not an approach or a method, then what does Zielinski provide for media archaeology? Keeping in mind the 3 guiding questions on discourse, archaeology and materiality posed in previous sections, several observations can be made. First of all, Zielinski is clear on what he means by archaeology. For Zielinski archaeology is actually anarchaeology, he is looking to deviate, to have heterogeneous examples and probes, think hetero-logically, avoid linearity, prevent the trap of thinking the past in the perspective of increasing power; it is a collection of Foucauldean genealogies. Thus, Zielinski is also explicit on his object of research, in that they can be many, and very different from one another (again, heterogeneous and perhaps similar to McLuhanesque interpretations of media). Zielinski makes a plea to keep the concept of media as wide open as possible.[176]

Despite his complex relation of depending and not depending on Foucault, when discussing the object of research it can be argued that Zielinski does adhere to a Foucauldean line of thought. An anarchaeological approach has to take into account the specific character of media with regards to time, this has two consequences. First, Zielinski moves away from ideas of totality with regards to the object of study. It is impossible to research the entire process of development for a medium. Zielinski searches for attractive foci in different historical epochs, crossroads with possible directions and paradigm shifts to allow a clear emergence of a possible developmental process of media. Zielinski calls these moments of focus windows or cuts.[177]

The second consequence involves "a heightened alertness to ideas, concepts and events that can potentially enrich our notions for developing the time arts. Such ideas do not appear frequently, they appear in the guise of shifts".[178] It becomes clear that Foucauldean ruptures, discontinuities, shifts and other terminology relate to the terminology and ideas explained here by Zielinski.

Still, in Zielinski's openness there is also a vagueness on matters such as discourse and materiality (or on non-discursive elements). It is necessary to look at earlier works by Zielinski to get an understanding of his interpretation of discourse. In his book *Audiovision: cinema and television as entr'actes in History* he explains what he calls the audiovisual discourse:

> In a condensed form and without evoking the intellectual ancestors that have all shared in influencing it, my conceptual starting point is: over the past hundred and fifty years, in the history of industrially advanced countries, a specialized, tending to become ever more standardized, institutionalized area of expression and activity has become established. I call it *the audiovisual discourse*. It encompasses the entire range of praxes in which, with the aid of technical systems and artefacts, the illusion of the perception of movements – as a rule, accompanied by sound – is planned, produced, commented on, and

176 Zielinski, *Deep Time of the Media: Toward an Archaeology of Hearing and Seeing by Technical Means (Electronic Culture: History, Theory, and Practice)*: 33.
177 Ibid., 31.
178 Ibid., 32.

appreciated.[179]

Although *Audiovisions* does not explicitly mention media archaeology, this publication does entail many of the previous perspectives and ideas Zielinski advocates (such as non-linearity, hetero-logical thinking etc.). "According to Zielinski, this special discourse is both embedded in and defined by the superordinate process of an ongoing attempt at culture-industrial modelling and subjugation of subjects – those who are (supposed) to use the artefacts and the messages appropriated by these".[180]

Although it is difficult to establish in what way such an interpretation of (audiovisual) discourse relates to Foucault's description of discourse, some interpretation is possible. As a reminder, Foucault stated that discourse is constituted by a group of sequences of signs, in so far as they are statements, that is, in so far as they can be assigned particular modalities of existence. Thus, Zielinski is arguing that there are statements referring to the same object, are made in the same enunciative modality, share a system of conceptual organization and share similar themes and theories, which Foucault calls strategies; resulting in an audiovisual discourse. Furthermore, Zielinski defines the conditions in which the function that gave a series of signs an existence, and a specific existence, can operate. An existence that reveals such a series as more than a mere trace, but rather a relation to a domain of objects … as a set of possible positions for subject … as an element in a field of coexistence … a repeatable materiality.

In a way what Zielinski did with *Audiovisions* is similar to books by Foucault such as *The Birth of a Clinic, Madness and Civilization* or *Discipline and Punish*. As has been argued now, this gives an idea of how Zielinski approaches discourse although not explicitly linking this to media archaeology. It has also been argued that an interpretation of what archaeology is has been given. What remains unclear, and this is partly due to the openness of Zielinski's object of study and process of study, is an interpretation of materiality and how discourse, materiality and archaeology relate to one another.

True, Zielinski does show that he acknowledges a certain value to materiality or physicality in that he stresses the importance of context. An example would be that for his anarchaeologies and variantologies, he travels to specific locations. As has been shown, he advocates the importance of the local and thus also of a being at the physical place. Such a perspective gives a slightly different idea on materiality than has been given by Foucault or McLuhan. Here an interpretation of materiality as physicality seems much more in order.

To conclude this section, it becomes clear that Zielinski has offered several key el-

179 Siegfried Zielinski, *Audiovisions: Cinema and Television as Entr'actes in History (Amsterdam University Press - Film Culture in Transition)* (Amsterdam University Press, 1999): 18.

180 Taisto Hujanen, "The Discursive Transformation of Television and the Paradox of Audiovisualisation," *Intermediality and Media Change* (2012): 93–117, 106.
This statement of course can be associated with Adorno and Horkheimer's notion of the culture industry.

ements to media archaeology especially in his promotion of deviating, resisting and heterogeneity. Still, in all this openness, resisting and thinking hetero-logically, the question remains how to do an anarchaeology or variantology? How can a scholar legitimize in a paper that he or she is doing an anarchaeological research (or form of media archaeology related to Zielinski)? Simply having a wide variety of probes and examples can't be enough. In the end the questions posed at the start of this research project remain. If you were to place 10 different anarchaeological research projects next to each other, what is it that makes them all specifically anarchaeological research? This question was on my mind and in an interview I asked Zielinski himself about his thoughts on this. His answer reflects the experimental and perhaps avant-gardist nature of Zielinski's work. He responded as follows:

> We are all working in the realm of illusion. The true sense of this term includes, that one has to take risks. To change the world, even if it is only for a millimeter, demands for taking risks... many of my former students are professors now, artists, publishers, band-leaders, musicians, writers... It did not hurt them to think differently, just the opposite. But, of course, anarchaeological praxis is not a ticket for arriving in the center of power finally...[181]

## RECURRING TOPOI

In the previous 2 dominant approaches constructed by Strauven, it has already become clear there are serious issues when taxonomizing media archaeology as she does. McLuhan, Bolter and Grusin's work proved to be more complex than portrayed in Strauven's argument. Similarly, Zielinski's work rises above the simple *new in the old* notion and on top of that Zielinski opposes action such as pinning down and categorizing anarchaeology. A third dominant approach mentioned by Strauven is that of the recurring topoi proposed and practiced by Erkki Huhtamo.

One noticeable difference between Huhtamo and other media archaeologists such as Zielinski or Ernst is that Huhtamo concerns himself foremost with the *practice* of media archaeology. He is less interested in highly theoretical discussion but more on doing media archaeology. In an interview with Huhtamo his first comment to my questions was that it: "Seems like you are occupied with 'theory cultures' while I operate with concrete research of history and culture".[182] Huhtamo goes on by stating that:

> As a principle: I don't really do abstract theorizing, especially in an a-historical sense. I am a historian by formation, and my approach(es) are primarily prac-

181 Interview with Siegfried Zielinski, Appendix B.
182 Interview with Erkki Huhtamo, Appendix B.

> tical. My theory is therefore instrumental rather than theory for the sake of theory. Others are free to engage in the latter if they wish. It seems my influences are quite far from your current interests.[183]

Although Huhtamo's advocating of a primarily practical approach is meaningful and will provide useful insights into media archaeology, it can be problematic to downplay the theoretical side of media archaeology or a media archaeological approach. To come back to Tinbergen, to legitimize a science or branch of a science, he stressed on the importance of dissemination. One has to sell one's ideas and approaches to others. Tinbergen states how there are three 'others' he tries to reach: peers, students and the public. Thus, as a scholar your work does not stand alone, it stands in relation to works of others. The case being made in this research project is for instance that Foucault is of the utmost importance to an understanding of media archaeology. Consequently, a theoretical discussion on Foucault and/or related scholars, other works or media archaeologies is necessary.

Of course Huhtamo does not deny the theoretical part completely; in his works he does build up a case, refers to other scholarly work and argues for a specific media archaeology (one of recurring topoi). The point being made is that in emphasizing the practical side in the way Huhtamo does, the theoretical is downplayed too much. Still, it has to be mentioned that this focus on the practical can be of tremendous help to media archaeology. One can imagine it is difficult to work with a concept such as variantology that is based upon the idea of continuing to resist, vary, differ and modify. In theory this sounds nice, but it is not very practical and makes one wonder if it is feasible. Amidst a variety of approaches "there is a need to define approaches and perhaps crystallize them into methods, at least in a local and tactical sense".[184]

In 1997 Huhtamo wrote the article "From Kaleidoscomaniac to Cybernerd: Notes Toward an Archaeology of the Media" in which an attempt to crystallize is being made.[185] Besides an explanation of Huhtamo's perspective on media archaeology another aspect regarding media archaeology becomes clear from the article, it's relation to film studies. The interest film studies has in media archaeology and vice versa has also been observed by Parikka and Huhtamo in the introduction of their book *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications and Implications*. Besides Gunning, also Strauven and Elsaesser are mentioned in this context (and more could be added).

Huhtamo refers to Gunning, who wrote in the article "Heard over the phone:

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183 Ibid.
With 'your interest' Huhtamo is referring to the research I am conducting here.
184 Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka, *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications*, 14.
Samuel Zwaan, "Manipulating for Money" (Utrecht, 2013): 9.
Besides Huhtamo and Parikka mentioning this, Timothy Druckrey argues for similar action.
185 Ekkri Huhtamo, "From Kaleidoscomaniac to Cybernerd. Towards an Archeology of the Media," *Leonardo* 30, no. 3 (1997): 221–224.

The Lonely Villa and the de Lorde tradition of the terrors of technology" about a sense of déjà vu "when looking back from the present reactions into the ways in which people have experienced technology in earlier periods".[186] Huhtamo, inspired by Gunning, sees it as the aim of media archaeology to explain the sense of déjà vu. Huhtamo does this by using the work of Ernst Robert Curtius who tried to explain the internal life of literary traditions by means of the concept of topos.[187] A topos is a convention or commonplace, thus Huhtamo explains media archaeology as the "way of studying the typical and commonplace in media history – the phenomena that (re)appear and disappear and reappear over and over again and somehow transcend specific historical context".[188]

Huhtamo deviates from Curtius when it comes to the interpretation of topoi. Curtius states that the (re)appearance of specific topoi is related to Jungian archetypes. For Huhtamo the topoi (or commonplaces) are "always cultural, and thus ideological, constructs" which also leads to the possibility of these topoi to be "consciously activated and ideologically and commercially exploited" especially in times of (extreme) commercial and industrial media culture.[189] At the heart of Huhtamo's media archaeological work is thus a questioning of these topoi, of the optimistic or pessimistic commonplaces. Strauven gives an example in her article when discussing how Huhtamo and Gunning are thinking along the same lines with regards to recurrences or a sense of déjà vu. Gunning's concept of the cinema of attractions was dominant in the early days of cinema; it then disappeared into the background for some time to then reappear again in the form of "Spielberg-Lucas-Coppola cinema of effects".[190]

Strauven's analysis of Huhtamo's interpretation of media archaeology is well written and she also notices the links to Foucault when discussing Huhtamo. Besides studying forgotten or neglected media, there is a focus on the discourse in which media emerge. Still, Huhtamo does not aim to do a Foucauldean study of discursive formations. As Strauven justly notes, Huhtamo approaches discursive formations more in the sense of imaginary media. Kluitenberg wrote on imaginary media extensively and is well known within media archaeology (and to Strauven and Huhtamo), it is therefore strange a link to Kluitenberg is not made here. In an interview with Kluitenberg he explains why he has this focus on imaginary media:

> The question with media machines is always ultimately: how important is culturally speaking the physical manifestation of those machines and what effects do they produce, more or less immediately, for instance perceptually.

186 T. Gunning, "Heard over the Phone: The Lonely Villa and the de Lorde Tradition of the Terrors of Technology," *Screen* 32, no. 2 (June 01, 1991): 184–196: 185.
187 Ernst Robert Curtius, *Europäische Literatur Und Lateinisches Mittelalter.* (Francke, 1993).
188 Huhtamo, "From Kaleidoscomaniac to Cybernerd. Towards an Archeology of the Media".
189 Ibid.
190 T. Gunning, "The Cinema of Attractions. Early Film, Its Spectators and the Avant-Garde," in *Early Cinema: Space, Frame, Narrative*, ed. Thomas Elsaesser (British Film Institute, 2008).
Strauven, "Media Archaeology: Where Film History, Media Art, and New Media (Can) Meet", 71.

> And what of this manifestation is a kind of cultural construction which is related to all kinds of processes? Constructions which partly result from a certain cultural tradition and things you are born into. And on the other hand of psychological mechanisms that become associated with that technology by simply our interaction with these devices and the perception it evokes and the interaction of all it on different levels; but what happens in it, of course, is that the concept of the media machine is just very dematerialized and so the discursive dimension as part of this becomes very prominent in my case. And I found a very interesting tension, and that's why I felt it important to re-visit Foucault.[191]

In an interview with Huhtamo when answering questions on the role of discourse and materiality the resemblance to Kluitenberg is striking:

> Obviously my approach differs quite clearly from the techno-materialism of Kittler and Ernst, for example. Still, although my emphasis may be on the discursive side, I always try to balance it with materialist perspectives. I do believe that discourses can manifest themselves in "symptomatic" material artifacts (so does Ernst), such as the products of industrial and graphic design and even machine architecture. I do recognize the importance of gaining a "hands-on" understanding of the gadgets of the past; that is why I collect them. But they really gain their meanings within discursive contexts / frameworks. I don't believe in technological determinism, although I don't want to strictly claim that material factors could not sometimes have an effect on the discourses surrounding them. They do - the influences point to both directions. Each case is unique in terms of its historical determinants, as all historians know.[192]

It becomes clear there is a strong emphasis on the discursive, on the culturally constructed and less so on the material or materiality. Kluitenberg will be discussed in more detail later on; the focus right now is on Huhtamo. Moreover, Kluitenberg does not adhere to the idea of topoi. Huhtamo sees these discursive objects or imaginary media destined to return as topos. Strauven mentions the example of the imaginary medium called the observiscope destined to return as topos in the form of the webcam, video chatting etc.

Thus, Huhtamo is clear on his interpretation of discourse and discursive elements, he also explicates his ideas on archaeology and why he is somewhat less interested in materiality. Still, some difficulties remain when looking closely at Huhtamo's interpretation of archaeology especially with regards to temporal relation. Huhtamo

191 Interview with Eric Kluitenberg, Appendix B.

192 Interview with Erkki Huhtamo, Appendix B.
For a spectacular look at Huhtamo's collection take a look at the video clip at this website, http://www.the-crankiefactory.com/115034655.

pleads for a cyclical rather than chronological development i.e. reoccurring topoi. Strauven argues that this inevitably leads to a linear reconstitution of media history, but this too can be questioned. Here it becomes important to wonder how linearity is being defined. If it pertains to constant progression, surely a more cyclical view does not necessarily adhere to that. And obviously, a cyclical movement does not necessarily adhere to the notion of being arranged in or extending along a straight line. True, as Strauven states, there is a notion of continuity to be found in adhering to a cyclical view, but this is not necessarily linear or progressive.

In an interview with Imar de Vries, he also goes into this question of Huhtamo and a cyclical view. De Vries also does not necessarily see a linear perspective here, but he does note that there is a hint of structuralism. Then again, and De Vries mentions this too, could it be that nowadays academia has become a little too disgusted of any form of structure? Still, during this interview Huhtamo's paradoxical use of Foucault came to light (Strauven observed this too). As explained, Foucault in his *Archaeology of Knowledge* was very much opposed to the history of ideas. Huhtamo, being aware of his anti-Foucauldean stance, states that his media archaeological approach is "actually closer to the field characterized by Foucault somewhat contemptuously as the history of ideas" which perhaps goes well with Huhtamo's distaste for theory cultures.[193] That such a stance does not go without critique becomes clear in what is the 4th and last dominant approach Strauven discusses.

## RUPTURES AND DISCONTINUITIES

Although Huhtamo's media archaeological approach might seem most practical and useful, as was his aim, the previous section does bring to light issues with regards to his use of Foucault and at the same time anti-Foucauldean stance and his views on a cyclical development with regards to media. The 4th dominant approach Strauven constructs revolves around her colleague at Amsterdam University Thomas Elsaesser. The section titled "Ruptures and Discontinuities: Foucault's Legacy" opens with a critique from Elsaesser on Huhtamo's media archaeology. When suggesting a cyclical development in for instance the cinema of attractions, Elsaesser warns us for "too easy an analogy between 'early' and 'postclassical' cinema" since it might "sacrifice historical distinctions in favor of polemical intent"; when the attraction element is overemphasized in contemporary film in terms of return to origin, other aspects such as the importance of television's commercial break might be underexposed.[194]

Imar de Vries notices a similar risk whilst teaching media archaeological classes at Utrecht University. He states that in several cases students create polemical and

193 Huhtamo, "From Kaleidoscomaniac to Cybernerd. Towards an Archeology of the Media".
194 Thomas Elsaesser, "The New Film History as Media Archaeology," *Cinémas: Revue D'études Cinématographiques* 14, no. 2–3 (2004): 101.

heterogeneous possible histories but when looking closely there appears to be no real connection between the chosen media. Students fell into the trap and risk noted by Elsaesser. Thus, there seems to be a tension between not falling into the old media narratives media archaeology tries to avoid, but at the same time not falling into a tunnel vision of creating a polemical and heterogeneous media history where actually there is none.

Elsaesser's media archaeology is most concerned with temporal relations and (dis)placement; he is interested in overcoming oppositions such as old and new media and the place a media archaeologists should occupy when doing so.[195] Using Foucauldean terminology, Elsaesser looks at digital media and what he calls the digital revolution and sees this as a rupture. He approaches digital media as the chance to rethink the idea of historical change itself and what is meant by "inclusion and exclusion, horizons and boundaries, but also by emergence, transformation, appropriation, i.e. the opposite of rupture".[196] Consequently, it becomes possible to think beyond chronological-linear models and the idea of origin. The Foucauldean base in this line of thought is all too clear by now and has been seen in the works of several media archaeologists that have been discussed in previous sections. The next step formulated by Elsaesser is also recognizable, instead of the linear and origins, one has to trace paths, lay tracks, and acknowledge different pasts and possibilities.[197]

Still, Elsaesser does want to move away from Foucault for certain parts of his media archaeology. He suggests a two stage media archaeology, one part historiographic and one part ontological. In the historiographic stage the difference lies in the idea that Elsaesser's media archaeology does not hold the histories (of media) in "a purely conceptual space, ready to be re-arranged by the different discourses of power and knowledge" and does not re-integrate "the disparate parts from the point of view of the present".[198] Genealogies may register similarities between media and media histories but they do not give an explanation, there is a limited discussion on relations. Thus, although different from Huhtamo's hint of structuralism, there does seem to be a notion of more than just conceptual, just a tad of structure, a search for robustness but breaking with causality.

In Elsaesser's explanation of how to do this archaeology or how this is possible, similarities to Zielinski are noticeable (though not explicitly mentioned). Elsaesser explains how the challenge of media archaeology is to find a place where it becomes possible to discuss the past but more importantly to discuss the present on equal terms. Consequently, the place that needs to be found cannot be fixed to specific positions (past, present or future) or direction. This is similar to Zielinski's notion of understanding the past in terms of the present, and the present in terms of the past. Moreover, Elsaesser also seems to search for attractive foci and realizes that only a presumption of discontinuity and fragmentation can give the present access

195 Ibid.
196 Ibid., 78.
197 Ibid., 99.
198 Ibid., 105.

to different pasts.

However, Elsaesser's explanation of this place can be difficult to comprehend. This place is an enunciative one, its meaning constituted in discourse. Morevoer, he refers to Emile Benveniste's description of discourse, whereas the rest of the article revolves around Foucault which might cause some confusion as to the meaning of terminology used. Although Benveniste's understanding of discourse may lead to the Foucauldean understanding of discourse (there is a high degree of overlap) it is not completely the same.

Benveniste is not interested in notions of power as is the case with late Foucault. Furthermore, for Benveniste discourse is language in action where man is subject in and through the discourse (so there is almost no focus on non-discursive elements). In other words, subjectivity emerges "as a fundamental property of language"… [and] the foundation of 'subjectivity' is determined by the linguistic status of 'person'".[199] Elsaesser uses this approach to discourse to emphasize the importance of context:

> The enunciative act, in other words, is always a function of making explicit the implicit reference points, the self-reference (deictics), the data or evidence, on which the speaking position, and thus the meaning of an utterance, depend. But such an enunciative position within discourse identifies an "empty" place, activated only when filled by a presence.[200]

Why he needs to refer to Benveniste specifically remains vague, it seems the Foucauldean description of discourse would fulfill Elsaesser's purpose of emphasizing the importance of context perfectly. One reason could be Elsaesser's pointing out of the pivotal yet complex position and role of memory, both individual and collective, and its relation to history and data. Media archaeology, with its root in discourse, lends itself perfectly to take seriously a variety of sources. With the acknowledgment that the past is constructed, fragmented and can be traced in a multitude of ways it can become less a question of what 'really' happened, it a question about what do the sources say, what can be found in discourse and how. Elsaesser is aiming for a similar argument, and expands on it by explaining the second stage media archaeology should take.

This second stage concerns a question of ontology. What Elsaesser is arguing is that when faced with questions and issues such as collective memory, individual memory, history, data and the value such sources should have in a media archaeological analysis, there is a need to rethink a medium's ontology. Going even further at the end of his article, he suggests that narrative is not the only organizing principle in these analyses and tracing of different paths. Here links to Wolfgang Ernst can be drawn when Elsaesser states that the archive could lend itself to the logics of

199 Pierluigi Barrotta and Marcelo Dascal, *Controversies and Subjectivity* (John Benjamins Publishing, 2005): 174.

200 Elsaesser, "The New Film History as Media Archaeology", 105.

memories and history vis-à-vis a multitude of sources.

To conclude the discussion on Elsaesser's media archaeology and placing this next to the 3 guiding questions on discourse, archaeology and materiality; it can be stated that he is clear on his interpretation of discourse. Furthermore, when it comes to an interpretation of archaeology he is clear on how to approach temporal complexities (quite similar to Zielinski) and emphasizes the caution one should take when finding or analyzing polemic and heterogeneous media (phenomena). What remains unclear is a perspective on materiality, or the non-discursive. Strauven's analysis on Elsaesser is somewhat limited but she is right in noting that Elsaesser's approach perhaps comes closer to what can be seen as general critique on film history as linear development.[201] This also stems from Elsaesser's final comment on media archaeology and conclusion in his article "The New Film History as Media Archaeolgy":

> Media archaeology is therefore perhaps nothing but the name for the placeless place and timeless time the film historian needs to occupy when trying to articulate, rather than merely accommodate, these several alternative, counterfactual or parallax histories around which any study of the audio-visual multi-media moving image culture now unfolds. Next to an *aesthetics* of astonishment for which Tom Gunning once pleaded, there should also be room for a *hermeneutics* of astonishment, where besides curiosity and skepticism, wonder and sheer disbelief also serve as the impulses behind historical research, concerning the past as well as the present. Perhaps it is advisable in the case of the cinema and its encounters with television and the digital media to speak not only of a past, a present and a future, but also of an archaeology of possible futures and of the perpetual presence of several pasts?[202]

## TASTING MEDIA ARCHAEOLOGIES OUTSIDE OF THE TAXONOMY

In the previous sections the different dominant approaches Strauven described were discussed. It became apparent that the dominant approaches or this taxonomy is not as straight forward as it may seem in Strauven's article. Approaches were coined media archaeological where it would be more precise to acknowledge them as influential for media archaeology (McLuhan, Bolter and Grusin); approaches were coined as a dominant approach where the scholar in question would fully oppose such a pinning down of his theories (Zielinski); some very practical approaches proved to have inner inconsistencies (Huhtamo) and lastly, an approach perceived as a general critique on film history as linear development is suddenly a dominant approach in

201 Strauven, "Media Archaeology: Where Film History, Media Art, and New Media (Can) Meet", 73.
202 Elsaesser, "The New Film History as Media Archaeology", 113.

media archaeology.

The issues that became visible in the previous section are prototypical for media archaeology; vaguely defined terminology, different readings of Foucault and unanswered elements in an approach. Another part of the issues is the consequence of placing different theories and ways of doing research in categories i.e. creating a taxonomy. The result is the possibility of elements fading to the background, leaving out scholars or other factors resulting in a questionable taxonomy, as mentioned in the article "Methodological Problems in Taxonomy".[203]

Moreover, Strauven mentions that media archaeology should be perceived as a traveling theory or concept. Parikka mentions a similar perspective in an interview: "It's kind of an endless seething out and it depends on the institutional settings because as I said in some of my writings, I intend to use the term traveling theory or traveling set of concepts, which actually refers also to the multiplicity, which has to do with the institutional settings."[204] However, in Strauven's case, it is seemingly contradicting to pin down dominant approaches whilst at the same time claiming it is a traveling set of concepts. The latter implies change and (only) coming to fruition when understanding the context.

Despite all the critique on a taxonomy of media archaeology, it did provide a structure to discuss some of the most prominent perspectives on media archaeology, to show issues with regards to these archaeologies and show why a taxonomy should not be created. It also has to be mentioned that despite the critique on Strauven, she provides useful insights and stimulates the discussion on media archaeology. I cannot deny that creating media archaeological categories or a taxonomy has never crossed my mind.

Still, as has been mentioned, several scholars remain unnamed in her work or receive too little attention; there are media archaeological works, approaches close to media archaeology and media archaeologists that have not been or have barely been mentioned. Still. These scholars such as Wolfgang Ernst, Imar de Vries, Eric Kluitenberg, Timothy Druckrey, Garnet Hertz, Jussi Parikka, Friedrich Kittler, Ian Bogost, Kristoffer Gansing, Lisa Gitelman, Vilem Flusser, Cornelia Vismann, Jonathan Crary, Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, Tom Gunning, Katherine Hayles, Mathhew Kirschenbaum or Noah Wardrip-Fruin provide valuable insights and approaches to media archaeology. Moreover, these perspectives can be more contemporary instead of the more known names in media archaeology such as Huhtamo and Zielinski. Of course it is impossible to implement all works and scholars, a line has to be drawn.

To show what sort of perspectives are missing, several of the aforementioned scholars will be discussed. As has become clear, this list is not finite and choices

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203 Rolf Sattler, "Methodological Problems in Taxonomy," *Systematic Zoology* 13, no. 1 (2014): 19–27.
S L Einfeld and M Aman, "Issues in the Taxonomy of Psychopathology in Mental Retardation.," *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders* 25, no. 2 (May 1995): 143–67.
Although these articles concern different fields, they also show general issues with regards to creating a taxonomy. An example would be issues revolving around definitions.

204 Interview with Jussi Parikka, Appendix B.

have to be made. The choice here falls mostly on scholars who were available for interviews. Having the opportunity to ask direct questions will provide an updated view on media archaeological matters and also provides some stimulus for dissemination. Besides this, several of these scholars have already been mentioned during this research project; most notably Jussi Parikka whose work often is about different media archaeologies and therefore proved to be a useful voice of reflection in statements made in this research project.

### *A Taste of Media Archaeological Perspectives – Wolfgang Ernst*

There is a prominent media archaeologist who has received some attention up until now, but not enough. Wolfgang Ernst makes concrete statements on media archaeology and his more material interpretation of it. Moreover, an interview with Ernst provided invaluable answers on his perspective and interpretation on media archaeology, specific terminology and links to Foucault (and the observation of misreadings of Foucault!). Besides showing a deep knowledge of media theory and history, he is also very much aware of the diversity and issues with regards to media archaeology. He opens his article "Media Archaeography *Method and Machine Versus History and Narrative of Media*" with the acknowledgement that "media archaeology is generally associated with the rediscovery of cultural and technological layers of previous media – an approach that remains on the familiar side of historical discourse".[205] This much has also been shown in the dominant approaches described by Strauven. However, Ernst wants to show that a different approach is also possible.

Similar to previously discussed approaches, Ernst sees the media archaeological method as an alternative to media-historical narratives, to dominant traditional histories. However for Ernst media archaeology is:

> Equally close to disciplines that analyze material (hardware) culture and to the Foucauldean notion of the "archive" as the set of rules governing the range of what can be verbally, audiovisually, or alphanumerically expressed at all, media archaeology is both a method and an aesthetics of practicing media criticism, a kind of epistemological reverse engineering, and an awareness of moments when media themselves, not exclusively humans anymore, become active "archaeologists" of knowledge.[206]

What is striking is that according to Ernst, when interpreting media archaeology as such, it becomes less about order in temporality or moments than "the techno-epistemological configurations underlying the discursive surface (literally, the mon-

205 Ernst, "Media Archaeography: Method and Machine versus History and Narrative of Media", 239.
206 Ibid.

itors and interfaces) of mass media".[207]

As such Ernst, and Parikka noticed this as well, stumbles upon a truth that is hard to escape, however hard media archaeologists try to avoid writing chronological, linear, or dominant histories, the textual end result is still a structured chronological and narrative ordering of events. It is difficult to avoid such ways of making sense of data. Ernst sees machines as having the capabilities to overcome these 'shortcomings', in doing so referring to Martin Heidegger who states that technology transcends the human.[208] It is in the operations of technological media that what has been stored, that the past can be in the present.[209]

Furthermore, understanding media archaeology as techno-epistemological configurations is also not necessarily focused on dead or forgotten media. It becomes clear that Ernst is positioning himself quite differently from other media archaeologists of whom several note the importance of discourse or the discursive and forgotten media (such as Huhtamo and Kluitenberg). In another article by Ernst titled "*Let There* Be *Irony*: *Cultural History* and *Media Archaeology in Parallel Lines*" he clearly exemplifies the importance of epistemological configurations for media archaeology in discussing the difference between painting and photography.[210] According to Ernst photography did what Foucault was after when writing Archaeology of Knowledge: "it liberated the past from historical discourse (which is always anthropomorphic), in order to make source data accessible to different configurations".[211]

For Ernst there is a difference between *histoire* and *discourse* and he uses photography to explain this.[212] Where a historical discourse can simulate the effect of real(ness) at least linguistically (he refers to Roland Barthes here), the photograph is an inscription of the real; it is a light falling on a light-sensitive surface and involving physical or chemical processes. Consequently photography can be the object of study but at the same time a technique of tracing paths different from the more discourse oriented media archaeologies described in previous sections. The medium becomes a media archaeologist, thus "all of a sudden, the historian's desire to preserve the original sources of the past comes true - at the sacrifice of the discursive".[213] With this position of a medium as the media archaeologist it can be said that this goes beyond Marshall McLuhan, media are not merely the "extensions of man".

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207 Ibid.

208 Martin Heidegger, *Überlieferte Sprache Und Technische Sprache [Broschiert]* (Erker, 1989), 19.

209 According to Ernst it belongs to the specificity of technical media that they reveal their essence only in their operation, recalling Martin Heidegger's definition of "the thing" (German *Zeug*) in *Sein und Zeit.* "Historic" media objects are radically present when they still function, even if their outside world has vanished.

210 Wolfgang Ernst, "LET THERE BE IRONY : CULTURAL HISTORY AND MEDIA ARCHAEOLOGY IN PARALLEL LINES," *Art History* 28, no. November (2005): 582–602.
Parikka, "Operative Media Archaeology: Wolfgang Ernst's Materialist Media Diagrammatics".

211 Ernst, "LET THERE BE IRONY : CULTURAL HISTORY AND MEDIA ARCHAEOLOGY IN PARALLEL LINES", 593.

212 What he is aiming when using terminology such as histoire or discourse, is for one to honor links to the strong French background of media archaeology (in for instance Foucault), but more importantly to discuss different histories similar to what Foucault does in Archaeology of Knowledge when discussing the history of ideas and the history of knowledge.

213 Ernst, "LET THERE BE IRONY : CULTURAL HISTORY AND MEDIA ARCHAEOLOGY IN PARALLEL LINES", 595.

What these technical media show is that one can no longer subject media processes to a literary narrative without fundamentally misreading and misrepresenting what they are, which only can become visible in their operation. A similar observation was made by Walter Benjamin in his 1936 essay "Der Erzähler," where he stated that experience, when cut off from epic tradition, could not be communicated in a narrative way anymore.[214] This also explains Ernst's choice for the title of media archaeography which describes modes of writing that are not literary narratives or "human textual products but rather expressions of the machines themselves, functions of their very mediatic logic".[215] Consequently, in thinking about an example such as radio, the period before radio was not simply a technological prehistory of radio but an alternate mode of existence. "The media-archaeological level is structural rather than historical, making it possible (in this case) to think about the radio in terms of the electromagnetic field instead of limiting it to the semantics of cultural voices".[216]

It becomes clear that for Ernst media archaeology adds to culture by focusing on machines and technology or the more non-cultural; a clear material perspective, a move away from discourse yet rooted in Foucauldean theory (perhaps even excluding the human presence).[217] Still, during an interview Geert Lovink held with Ernst, he is clear on his interpretation of Foucault and how one can have such a focus on the material. "Media archaeology describes the non-discursive practices specified in the elements of the techno-cultural archive. Media archaeology is confronted with Cartesian objects, which are mathematisable things".[218]

In an interview I held with Ernst, he explicates this confrontation with Cartesian objects further. Referring to Descartes' method of Analytic Geometry which enables *numerical* processing of what used to be geometric diagrams, there is the possibility of a new kind of mathematization. "More principally: "Media archaeology" is not just insisting on the materiality of media, but as well revealing the power which drives them [and conditions discourses] nowadays - which is algorithms, mathematical tools".[219] One wonders what this means with respect to Foucault, when emphasizing the non-discursive and downplaying the discursive.

In asking Ernst this question he first responds by referring to an article by Martin Kusch already briefly mentioned in the section Foucault on Discourse; Kusch emphasizes a more mathematical reading of Foucault which clearly appeals to Ernst. Foucault is read in its methodical rigor and emphasis with regards to terms like

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214 Walter Benjamin, "Der Erzähler : Betrachtungen Zum Werk Nikolai Lesskows," *Orient Und Occident*. -- (1936).

215 Ernst, "Media Archaeography: Method and Machine versus History and Narrative of Media", 242.

216 Ibid., 246.

217 At times Ernst is cautious in his emphasis on the technological and material by stating that media archaeology also moves through cultural aspects not purely technical but also not purely human; it is in between (referring to a literal meaning of medium).

218 Ernst, "Media Archaeography: Method and Machine versus History and Narrative of Media", 242. http://www.nettime.org/Lists-Archives/nettime-l-0302/msg00132.html Lovink and Ernst interview

219 Interview with Wolfgang Ernst, Appendix B.

"enunciation" as rooted in mathematical logics (besides Kusch he also mentions the links to Heidegger and Kittler). Here Ernst makes one of his strongest points, Foucault is unclear on the difference (and relation) between the discursive and non-discursive, something Ernst is not.

Although it is clear discourse cannot be reduced to simply textual negotiation of things, Ernst is much more concrete in his views. For Ernst it is clear we are living in a techno-mathematical world of media (encompassing both hardware and mathematics); In this environment there are "non-negotiable laws at work, both physically and logically, which are not culturally or historically relative but time-invariantly insist across diverse epistemological époque's, allowing for time-tunneling in non-historist ways".[220] Here again there is an indication of robustness or a hint of structure as could be seen with Huhtamo or advocated by de Vries; a position which is contested within media archaeology to say the least but undeniably there. It is remarkably similar to Foucault in advocating his archaeology as a move away from the history of ideas and structuralism but at the same time cannot avoid to maintain some form of structure or a hint of robustness.

One can agree or disagree with Ernst's media archaeology, this is however not the point that has to be made here. What is crucial is that Ernst is precise, open and clear in his description of media archaeology. Though he might receive 'friendly critique' as he calls it himself due to neglecting the social aspect of media archaeology a great lot, he deals with fundamental elements of media archaeology related to the 3 guiding questions. Indeed, for Ernst it is clear what he means by discourse, archaeology and materiality but moreover how these elements relate to one another; a focus on the non-discursive, the assumption of a techno-mathematical world, non-negotiable laws and media as media archaeologists to repeat a few of the elements Ernst explicates to clarify his media archaeology.

With Ernst, his material-mathematical perspective comes to the foreground. Often his name is therefore mentioned in combination with Friedrich Kittler (and as has been shown McLuhan). In the next section on platform studies (which also has this emphasis on the material) I will briefly discuss Kittler but mostly focus on Bogost and Montfort who coined the term platform studies. The reason for only briefly mentioning Kittler is that he has been extensively described in several media archaeological works. Moreover, Kittler himself insisted that he was in fact not a media archaeologist. Still, he was undeniably influential to media archaeology.

### *A Taste of Media Archaeological Perspectives – Platform Studies*

Guess what I'm thinking... Ah! I got you! I am not thinking! Oh wait, except I am...
*- Ian Bogost on Media Archaeology*

220 Ibid.

As the quote above shows, Professor Bogost can provide amusing discussion that when looking deeper is quite meaningful. The above for instance portrays his perspective on media archaeology, it tries to stay away from pinning down, from actually touching upon that what is being researched. If you come to close, according to Bogost, you actually are going against the media archaeological train of thought.

Before diving into platform studies, a term coined by Ian Bogost and Nick Montfort, I want to express my gratitude to have interviewed Ian Bogost on the topic of platform studies and media archaeology but also recently taken a seminar taught by Bogost. In this seminar Friedrich Kittler was on the reading list, more specifically his perhaps most read work *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter* published in German in 1986, translated in 1999. The opportunity to have taken a seminar with Bogost and interviewing him lead to the choice of spending more time on platform studies than software studies due to valuable insights gained from these personal experiences.

Secondly therefore, I would like to apologize for mostly mentioning Bogost when it comes to platforms studies and placing little focus on software studies. Although on an abstract level it could be argued that there are similar tendencies within platform studies and software studies it is not my intention to reduce the differences between the two. Publications by scholars such as Lev Manovich such as *Software Takes Command* or Matthew Fuller's *Software Studies* are undeniably influential with regards to media theory (and media archaeology) in their own way.[221] Still, one of the main arguments from this section will be that it is questionable whether or not platform studies and software studies should be considered media archaeologies, an argument which will find enough ground by focusing mainly on platform studies.

Bogost's work is very much inspired by McLuhan, however he proclaims that when he teaches (and discusses archaeology): "I like this kind of holy milkshake of Kittler and McLuhan but I don't know if anyone else does, because those are kind of oil and water".[222] The latter also partially refers to the different schools of media archaeology (or even media theory for that matter); McLuhan associated with the Anglo-American school, Kittler with the German school of media theory.[223] True, there are differences in for instance their understanding of media. For Kittler one cannot understand media because media form the infrastructural condition of possibility for understanding itself. For Kittler, media determine our situation.

On top of that, Kittler will remain forever the historicist and detailed in his writing whereas McLuhan did not shy away from writing in a more predictive manner and at times stay quite abstract (accompanied by all the risks involved when discussing the future). Parikka recognizes these associations with different schools in his book *What is Media Archaeology?*.[224] In some reviews it is claimed that Parikka

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221 Lev Manovich, *Software Takes Command (International Texts in Critical Media Aesthetics)* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2013).
Matthew Fuller, *Software Studies: A Lexicon (Leonardo Book Series)* (The MIT Press, 2008).

222 Interview with Ian Bogost, Appendix B.

223 As mentioned earlier, Strauven also mentions the Amsterdam school of media theory.

224 In several reviews Parikka received critique on his writing on the different schools, claiming that in his

acknowledges the issues that come with categorizing 'different schools', but that his analysis seems no less intent on relying on such normalizing frameworks.[225] However, Parikka does not only acknowledge these problems but in a later publication explicitly states that to speak of German media theory or a Berlin school is, Parikka concedes, to rely on "a catch-all term that does not account for the variety of disciplinary perspectives that fit the category".[226] He goes on by stating it might be useful, but such broad generalizations risk ignoring theoretical or methodological differences.[227] A different reason for the 'difference' in these schools might simply be language (and thus unfamiliarity with certain untranslated work). Even now scholars such as Parikka spend a lot of time in translating German scholarly work.

Bogost tends to think in a similar direction as Parikka on the risks of 'catch-all terms' but wants to emphasize another argument. Yes, in some areas Kittler and McLuhan are different but one could also claim there are similarities (which Kittler at times acknowledged). One of the clearest examples can be found in the preface of *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter* where after condoning McLuhan's notion of a possibility to understand media, Kittler does acknowledge that it is indeed not the messages or content of media that count (and in strict accordance with McLuhan) it is "their circuits, the very schematism of perceptibility" i.e. media properties and specificities.[228]

Consequently, this is exactly the focus Kittler has in *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*. Ideas and perspectives from Kittler's *Discourse Networks* (perhaps the most difficult read in Kittler's oevre) live on in this book, which so heavily leans on Foucault's work. In a way Kittler goes on where Foucault stopped. The latter concerned himself, according to Kittler, with writing, with what ended up in libraries. Thus, Foucault's analyses end when other media start entering these libraries because "discourse analysis cannot be applied to sound archives or towers of film rolls".[229] Kittler however, does exactly this. He studies the gramophone, discusses the sound waves, the Fourier transform and other techno-mathematical or material aspects. He studies where ruptures were brought about by the differentiation of media and communication technologies.[230]

Therefore, it becomes less about 'discourses' for Kittler but more about 'discourse

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specific writing style he actually enforces such categorization to strengthen the field of media archaeology. An example would be a review by Benjamin Nicoll. Parikka however is explicitly opposed to such categorization.

Benjamin Nicoll, "Review : Jussi Parikka's What Is Media Archaeology ?" 5, no. 2 (2013): 127–131, 130.

225 Parikka, *What Is Media Archaeology*, 66.

226 Wolfgang Ernst, *Digital Memory and the Archive (Electronic Mediations)* (Univ Of Minnesota Press, 2012): 3.

227 Kurt Cavender, "The Temporal Logic of Digital Media Technologies," *Postmodern Culture* 22, no. 3 (2012). In several lectures Parikka even goes as far as saying that the idea of 'German media theory', school or tradition is non-existent. One of these lectures can be found here https://archive.org/details/JussiParikka--MediaArchaeology last visit on February 5th 2014.

228 Friedrich Kittler, Geoffrey Winthrop-Young, and Michael Wutz, *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter (Writing Science)* (Stanford University Press, 1999): xl.

229 Ibid., 5.

230 Ibid., xxvii.

networks'; "the network of technologies and institutions that allow a given culture to select, store, and produce relevant data".[231] Geoffrey Winthrop-Young (somewhat of a specialist in Kittler) and Michael Wutz explain that the term attempts to link physical, technological, discursive, and social systems in order to provide epistemic snapshots of a culture's administration of power and knowledge. The aim is to combine an understanding of the Foucaldean archive with the examination of equally contingent physical and mental training programs and the analysis of the contemporary media technologies that link the two.

The exact difference between Foucaldean archaeology and the aforementioned discourse networks is perhaps not easily distilled from this explanation. However, thinking back on the section on Foucault and discourse for now it might suffice to say that Kittler definitely has a focus on the non-discursive elements in discourse and sees human influence as negligible. In Kittler's own words: "discourse analysis ignores the fact that the factual condition is no simple methodological example but is in each case a techno-historical event".[232] Still, he does not deny the role of for instance institutions in these discourse networks (and thus scholars should tread lightly when quickly disregarding someone like Kittler as a technological determinist pur sang).

Where does this leave Bogost with regards to platform studies? As stated earlier, he is interested in a 'holy milkshake' of Kittler and McLuhan. Still, it might be that platform studies is too 'presentist' for the likes of media archaeologists, although Bogost immediately acknowledges that within media archaeology there is plenty of room for this kind of thought and differentiation.[233] And although platform studies could be many things Bogost and Montfort share a perspective on what it is:

> The connection between the architecture of beginning systems and their kind of cultural impact specifically on computational creativity … so you could take computer platforms as one focus and you could take this sort of platforms plus creativity; that's sort of another focus and that would not be something that would necessarily be true over the media archaeological project.[234] [235]

Thus, Bogost and Montfort are interested in how particular aspects of a platform's design influences the work done on that platform but also look at how social, economic, cultural and other factors led platform designers to put together systems in

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231 Friedrich A. Kittler and Michael Metteer, *Discourse Networks, 1800/1900* (Stanford University Press, 1992): 369.

232 Kittler, Winthrop-Young, and Wutz, *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter (Writing Science)*, 229.

233 Interview with Ian Bogost, Appendix B.

234 Ibid.

His description here is in line with the more formal description on Bogost and Montfort's website where they state that platform studies is a new focus for the study of digital media, a set of approaches which investigates the underlying computer systems that support creative work.

235 Ian Bogost and Nick Montfort, "Platform Studies : Frequently Questioned Answers," *Digital Arts and Culture* (2009): 1.

particular ways. In a short survey Parikka established by looking at such approaches such as platform studies that themes such as processuality, materiality and close reading of processes of material inscription in digital culture are also central to the more focused on discursivity, Anglo-American research agenda too.[236] He explains how authors such as Wardrip-Fruin, Bogost and Montfort broaden perspectives on digital systems by not only studying code essentialism but also the processes and operations between the use of a machine and the machine itself. "The platform approach focuses on computer architectures as the necessary diagrammatics for mapping the specificities of digital culture". [237] Moreover, platform studies can be seen as archaeological in that there is a digging into abstractions (i.e. diagrams) but also due to the analysis of more historic platforms; a combination which perhaps comes closest to understanding Bogost's statement on the holy milkshake of McLuhan and Kittler.

However, is this comparing of platform studies with media archaeologies perhaps a little too forced? Simply because Bogost refers back to McLuhan and Kittler does not make it media archaeology. Is it media archaeology because he deals with material aspects of platforms but also the social, economic and political factors leading to a platform's design? What this research is showing, is that dealing with some of the aspects or questions does not necessarily mean one is 'doing media archaeology'. Yes, platform studies does seem to correspond easily to media archaeological ideas; Bogost noticed that when he started talking about platform studies in Germany where the response was "this is not a big deal".[238]

A helpful tool right now is to think about the 3 guiding questions on discourse, archaeology and materiality. As Bogost explains in the interview, platforms studies is quite ambivalent about discourse. If you want to 'bring it to the table, then that's fine' but there mainly needs to be a technical material analysis.[239] Thus, on a concrete level discourse seems to fade into the background for platform studies. Sure, one can argue that it is actually quite important when reading between the lines. However, media archaeology is in need of clarity. Not every piece is media archaeological and not everywhere is a need to read between the lines. A solid basis is more useful than vague expansions.

Furthermore, the question of what position the concept of archaeology would have in platform studies is also unclear. Historic research is definitely important, but there is no elaboration on temporal complexities, ruptures, breaks or other aspects as discussed in the section on Foucaldean Archaeology. This is in no way a critique on platform studies, it is a most valuable approach in for instance media studies. It is a critique on to easily associating platform studies (or software studies for that matter) with media archaeology.

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236 J. Parikka, "Operative Media Archaeology: Wolfgang Ernst's Materialist Media Diagrammatics," *Theory, Culture & Society* 28, no. 5 (September 21, 2011): 52–74, 68.

237 Ibid., 69.

238 Interview with Ian Bogost, Appendix B.

239 Ibid.

Lastly, the question on what materiality means for platform studies. Bogost and Montfort are quite clear on this and the importance of technical material analysis, on the aspects of the platform, on its materiality whilst not forgetting links to culture. The argument made now is perhaps somewhat insipid but material analysis and explaining it does not immediately make something media archaeological. Thus, the question of platform studies as media archaeology remains open for now and is in need of further investigation. Still, the differences between these so called schools of media theory seem to be smaller than imagined. Now that more and more works are being translated, perhaps the gap will show itself baseless to begin with. Where does this leave platform studies? It leaves it at the outskirts of media archaeology where it is not alone.

### *A Taste of Media Archaeological Perspectives – On the Outskirts of Media Archaeology*

As one might taste already, the 3 guiding questions posed on discourse, archaeology and materiality have gained importance throughout the discussion on media archaeologies. Their initial importance followed from a return to Foucaldean archaeology, followed by guiding us throughout a deep dive in media archaeologies. Much more than just guiding, they can function as a way to think about media archaeologies, where possible gaps lie in a media archaeological approach, where difficulty arises or where perhaps an approach should not be perceived as media archaeological. The last section ended with platform studies as positioned at the outskirts of media archaeology, what about other approaches, methods or scholars?

Throughout this research scholars such as Kristoffer Gansing, Garnet Hertz, Noah Wardrip-Fruin, Imar de Vries or Eric Kluitenberg have been mentioned with regards to media archaeology. These scholars might not hold a foregrounded position within the field of media archaeology (yet) when compared to Zielinski or Huhtamo but certainly bring valuable insights to the table. Scholars such as Gansing, Hertz or de Vries might even be considered as a second generation of media archaeologists, reflecting upon earlier media archaeological work, incorporating into their own and adjusting it. For instance, de Vries in his book *Tantalisingly Close* incorporates an interdisciplinary approach leaning heavily on Huhtamo's perspective on topoi.

However, de Vries wants to take this a step further. Realizing the bold claim he is making in an interview he states that by understanding discourses, by revealing them and these cyclical movements Huhtamo describes, an educated guess about the future is possible.[240] It is not his intention to think deterministically here, the word determinism has almost become a curse word in media studies. Still, he sees this recurrences similar to how Huhtamo's sees them and wants to extend this to

240 Interview with Imar de Vries, Appendix B.

discuss possible futures. Such claims might seem radical, but can be found in one of media archaeologies influencers, McLuhan, as well.[241]

Besides de Vries, Kluitenberg has been mentioned on several occasion during this research project. Interestingly enough, in an interview Kluitenberg mentions he does not recognize himself as a media archaeologist.[242] Still, Kluitenberg has a keen eye for the Foucaldean background of media archaeology and also raises questions on what the similarities and differences are between Foucaldean archaeology and media archaeology. Similar to the position taken in this research project, Kluitenberg also claims that Foucaldean archaeology has gained such as central position within the humanities that one cannot avoid to explicitly position oneself to Foucault when discussing archaeological matters.[243] Furthermore, he observes the same tensions in media archaeology which flow from Foucaldean archaeology, namely this complex relation between the discursive and non-discursive. This results in scholars dealing with it (or not at all) in different manners leading to various media archaeologies. What Kluitenberg stated he misses, is a critical attitude towards Foucault and his ideas on discourse analysis, the emptiness of the historical object and the degree material embeddedness. According to Kluitenberg, and this has been shown in the sections on Foucault in this research project too, the interpretation of these concepts is not necessarily clear and can lead to contradictory or paradoxical situations; hence Kluitenberg's call for a more critical attitude towards Foucaldean concepts which he misses in media archaeology.

Kluitenberg is another example of how at the outskirts of media archaeology valuable insights can be found. The insights gained by reading Hertz are revealing yet problematic, especially when looking at the position of (media) art. Similar arguments have been made by Parikka and Strauven, the argument that there is a 'special position' for media art with regards to media archaeology. Strauven for one argues that the artistic approach allows for "multilayered excavation into time and space more easily than scholarly writing", furthermore the artist has the capability to operate directly with a mediums physicality, its materiality. The media artist is free from conventions, or academic boundaries and operate more easily with their environment.[244] Though somewhat less explicit, Parikka and Hertz certainly place the focus on the media arts when it comes to media archaeology.

To state that media archaeology is nomadic, to see it as a traveling approach, method or discipline makes it problematic to then place it more in the field of media arts. Yes it can travel and depending on the context media archaeology will come to its situational fruition, but actually it should move towards media arts; such a perspective does not have a solid base and is built upon assumptions. A similar situation is visible in McLuhan's *Understanding Media*: "The artist is the only person able to en-

241 Marshall McLuhan and Eric McLuhan, *Laws of Media: The New Science* (University of Toronto Press, Scholarly Publishing Division, 1992): 8.
242 Interview with Eric Kluitenberg, Appendix B.
243 Interview with Eric Kluitenberg, Appendix B.
244 Strauven, "Media Archaeology: Where Film History, Media Art, and New Media (Can) Meet", 73-74.

counter technology with impunity, just because he is an expert aware of the changes in sense perception".[245] Well, artists and McLuhan himself too of course… This however raises the artist, whatever that may be, to some heightened level without solid reasoning and moreover it lowers other areas of interest to media archaeology.

Certainly media art is not the only area in which materiality or physical contact with a medium is important. Noah Wardrip-Fruin is a Professor in a computer science department and sees the benefits of media archaeology also for such an area. Or what about electrical engineering, why not also move towards such areas? Bogost mentions that technical understanding can lead to new sorts of insights, but that this does not mean every scholar should all of a sudden become a coder or break open machines. Although I agree with Bogost that this is not necessary, it can certainly be an eye opener. If media archaeology is approached as traveling, there should be no hierarchy between the places where it can travel.

These questions about hierarchy, about where media archaeology should or should not go lead to a discussion on how one 'does media archaeology'. Before moving to that section it is vital to make clear that not every perspective has been discussed, or has been discussed with the depth it deserves. The methods chosen to do this research (Gee's discourse analysis, critical literature review and interviews) have their limitations. One cannot discuss every publication out there and not everything discusses can receive the same amount of attention. It would have been constructive for example to incorporate Timothy Druckrey's perspective, or write more on Thomas Elsaesser but I could not find the time for interviews with them or incorporate more of their work. It will no doubt be critique on this research, which in the long run strengthens media archaeology.

245 Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (London and New York: Routledge Classics, 2001): 33.

CHAPTER IV

# To Do Media Archaeology

# Doing Media Archaeology

Whether media archaeology can be, as Parikka stated, an innovative 21st century discipline, or a method, an approach or perspective, depends first and foremost on whether it can become clear how one does media archaeology. As was argued at the beginning of this research project, there are several issues surrounding media archaeology such as the different readings of Foucault, different foci, all resulting in various media archaeologies sometimes even contesting one another but still all self-identifying as media archaeology. The re-visiting of Foucault as has been done in this research provided an understanding of crucial terminology which served as guidance in discussing media archaeologies and other influential origins for media archaeology. This section is concerned with the question on how to do media archaeology, which can be constructed now precesily because of an understanding of Foucault, the discussed media archaeologies and terminology.

One of the first issues is at the same time a virtue, the broad usage and interpretation of Foucault. As has been shown, several concepts that have been introduced or re-defined by Foucault such as discourse, archaeology, genealogy or the archive do not have a straightforward, clear cut definition. This leads to a usage of similar terminology for different ends. The difference can be subtle at times, but a difference nonetheless. This is an issue in that it can lead to complex, conflicting and vague theories and approaches as was shown with media archaeology. For instance, media archaeology can be described as being about discourse and foremost about its non-discursive aspects, whereas for the next it is about the discursive (with a limited role for the non-discursive); both media archaeology, referring to Foucault, but with different interpretations.

However, as stated, this can also be a virtue. It has become clear from all the descriptions of media archaeology that the context, heterogeneity and interdisciplinary is fundamental to media archaeology. There is not one discipline or field that can give answers or analyses on that which is being asked by media archaeologists, the research questions are interdiscplinary. Besides, narrow definitions seldom lead to broad usage, which in itself is paradoxical. A definition reduced in scope (i.e. narrow) lends itself to being meticulous, clear cut and in that sense highly functional. Yet, at the same time its meticulousness lacks flexibility which is so fundamental for media archaeology. Media archaeology needs to be able to move around in media studies, history, media art, computer science, electrical engineering and other fields. Thus, broad definitions of terms such as discourse or archaeology give way to the necessary flexibility but in exchange steal some of its clarity. However, this clarity can be regained in later stages.

The regaining of clarity coincides with Kluitenberg's notion of attaining a critical attitude towards Foucaldean concepts and the contextual nature of media archaeol-

ogy. A consequence of broad definitions, such as the ones given by Foucault, is that it is the responsibility of the scholar to explain the specific usage in the context of his or her research. However, as has been shown, too often this is neglected; terms such as discourse are used but not explicated. There is no one causal explanation for this negligence but the in depth analysis of Foucault, Foucaldean terminology and its uses brought to light possible influencing factors. Wardrip-Fruin for instance stated that the influence of Foucault has become so widespread it's to be almost invisible; a scholar creates arguments taking a lot of Foucault just for granted but losing much of the details. There is a lack of going back to the original source. This is clearly visible in media archaeology where terms such as discourse, materiality or archaeology get thrown around and in many cases are not explicated.

Still, there are cases in which a scholar makes a clear argument for his or her media archaeology which for a big part is exactly because a scholar does engage in explicating terms that are used in his or her research. Wolfgang Ernst is quite clear about how he interprets terms such as discourse, materiality, archaeology, the archive and the relation between these terms. As a result, one can form an understanding of his media archaeology and try to operationalize it, practice it. However, as should be clear now, this does not mean that media archaeology is only that which is explicated by Wolfgang Ernst. The nomadic nature of media archaeology should be respected. It is merely to say that in the nomadic situation of media archaeology Wolfgang Ernst does a terrific job in positioning his media archaeology.

Besides Ernst's terrific example there are other notions that became visible which are fundamental to media archaeology. Several media archaeologists argue for a non-static positioning of media archaeology. The nomadic nature has already been mentioned but it is more than that. Zielinski, Wardrip-Fruin and Ernst argue not only for the contextual but also the processual. According to Ernst it is in the operations of technological media that what has been stored, that the past can be in the present; Wardrip-Fruin wonders how to engage with a work's processes; Zielinski sees media archaeology as a *Tätigkeit*. One cannot equate these statements to one another, but it does indicate an interpretation of media archaeology as activity. Furthermore, interpreting media archaeology as *Tätigkeit*, acknowledging the need to engage with the medium, also differentiates it from 'just' discourse analysis (especially just linguistic discourse analysis). What does this mean with regards to creating a media archaeological method or approach?

As stated in the problem statement section: A method implies that you need guidelines on how to do something specific. "The point of knowing which recipe you are following and to make what sort of dish, to extend this analogy, is a first-base distinction in terms of method/s."[246] By learning how to do things a certain way you are also learning to know things a certain way. Research methods are rules and procedures that researchers working within a disciplinary framework employ to im-

246 M.I. Franklin, *Understanding Research: Coping with the Quantitative - Qualitative Divide* (Routledge, 2012): 45.

prove the validity of their inferences. However, if media archaeology is so contextual, nomadic and a *Tätigkeit* it becomes undesirable to pin it down via regulation (which is often mentioned by media archaeologists). It is a similar issue as with broad definitions, pinning them down makes them narrow and less flexible. However, the various media archaeologies with their unique perspectives are still all media archaeologies and there is a need to explain why, if only to be taken seriously and also to legitimize it amongst peers.

One way to go would be not to create these rules and procedures which constitute a method, but to create the rules and procedures to create these rules and procedures in specific instances i.e. zoom out one level. This would also give reason to still identify approaches as media archaeological because they deal with similar constituting elements but differentiate on the detailed, contextual level. Basically it means that a tool should be constructed which allows to puzzle together these constituting elements but the eventual puzzle can have different outcomes i.e. internal difference but the end result is a media archaeology.

Coincidentally, this touches upon the ever burning question of structuralism. Similar to Foucault, media archaeologists struggle with avoiding structuralism whilst at times claiming certain structure or at the very least highly robust aspects. One of the clearest examples would be Huhtamo's notion of cyclically returning phenomena, and de Vries' extension of this. The argument could be made that on a detailed contextual level Huhtamo's and de Vries' media archaeology show some degree of structuralism (as has been discussed) but that this is not a necessary element of media archaeology on the more abstract level, it is a possible one. To explain this further a discussion will follow on what the *abstract* (i.e. one level zoomed out) rules and procedures would look like which are necessary to create the *detailed* rules and procedures of possible media archaeologies.

For one, these abstract procedures are closely tied to the earlier mentioned notion of a critical attitude towards Foucauldean terminology and respecting the contextual and heterogeneous nature of media archaeology. The latter is also advocated by Vivian Sobchack in her afterword of the book *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications and Implications* where she states that media archaeology by desiring presence has certain 'family features' that create a certain degree of coherence (where she also literally means relating to 'co' and 'here') in a habitus which allows some internal diversification. [247] Sobchack sums up these 'family features:

- A valorization of media in their concrete particularity rather than as a set of abstractions;
- media as material and structures (in their broadest and most dynamic sense) rather than as subaltern "stuff" subject (and subjected) to theory or metaphysics;
- media practice and performance as a corporeal, instrumental, and epistemic

247 Sobchack, "Afterword, Media Archaeology and Re-Presencing the Past", 327.

method productively equal to methods of distanced analysis;
- description of media's materials, forms, structures, and operations rather than the interpretation of media content or social effects;
- media's formal and epistemic variety rather than their remedial similitudes;
- finally …, media, in their multiplicity, rupturing historical continuity and teleology's rather than supporting them.[248]

Sobchack's description of family features is helpful but as has become clear through the analysis in this research on media archaeologies and the describing of crucial terminology, open to discussion.

In the features mentioned by Sobchack there is a clear prevalence of the material. However, this is not necessarily the case in each of the media archaeologies and does not have to be. In Foucault's description of discourse, the discursive and non-discursive leaves room for where to place emphasis. It is possible to have media archaeologies that do concern themselves with media content, the discursive aspects or social effects. One cannot escape to explicate this though, to explain the position of the discursive, the non-discursive and their interrelatedness i.e. one cannot escape critically describing an interpretation of discourse. On top of that, Foucault is surprisingly absent from Sobchack's family features which by now should already start to ring some alarm bells.

Furthermore, the notion of media archaeology as desiring presence is also arguable. As has been discussed, Huhtamo's notion of cyclically returning phenomena implicitly makes way for statements on possible futures, which is explicitly stated by de Vries (and toyed with by Elsaesser).[249] On top of that, a scholar such as Kittler who is central with regards to media archaeology can be seen as actually having difficulty accessing the present due to his purposefully staying away from it and focusing on the historical. Lastly, both Marshall and Eric McLuhan play with the idea of the possibility of prediction in *Laws of Media*.[250] Still, Sobchack's points on avoiding teleology's, looking at media in their concrete particularity and the variety of media archaeologies are constructive. And although critique has been given on the fact that she stresses on the material at the expense of the non-material, it cannot be denied that the material (or non-discursive) needs to be present. Without the material, would media archaeology not simply fall into a linguistic discourse analysis instead of archaeology?

To find a next step in stating what the abstract rules and procedures could be to construct the detailed rules and procedures, a move from Sobchack to Foucault is beneficial. Based on the discussion on Foucault and the different media archaeologies in this research project, a tetrad can be constructed which could provide

248 Ibid.

249 In the section *ruptures/discontinuities* in the final quote by Elsaesser, he toys with the idea of media archaeology as discussing possible futures.

250 Marshall McLuhan and Eric McLuhan, *Laws of Media: The New Science* (University of Toronto Press, Scholarly Publishing Division, 1992): 8.

more 'stability' for media archaeology as *Tätigkeit* and add to an understanding of how to do media archaeology. This tetrad is precisely the earlier mentioned tool to puzzle together the constituting elements forming a puzzle with different possible outcomes. The tetrad, although inspired by McLuhan, is in no way a grand theory or gesture. Unlike McLuhan's insistence on the comprehensiveness of his tetrad and laws of media, the tetrad constructed here is as stated a tool. This tetrad can be perceived as the abstract procedure to come to a specific media archaeology. It is certainly not the only way but it is a way, referring once again to Tinbergen's notion on dissemination and audiences, to create legitimation and more clarity for media archaeology. Moreover, it encompasses critical positioning towards Foucault, space for internal differences, heterogeneity and media archaeology as *Tätigkeit* (See figure 1 for the Tetrad of Media Archaeologies).

As can be seen in figure 1, the guiding questions that followed from the section on Foucault have been placed in the tetrad. There is no hierarchy between these questions, they are interrelated. As became clear from using the guiding questions throughout the section on media archaeologies, they provide valuable insights, clarity and show where the gaps are for specific media archaeologies. Answering questions about what discourse, archaeology and materiality mean for a specific media archaeology leads to a more coherent media archaeological field with room for internal difference. It leads to coherence because it would mean picking pieces of a puzzle, picking from a set of constituting elements, to start constructing the puzzle. As such scholars would develop the opportunity to 'start puzzle together' and to use

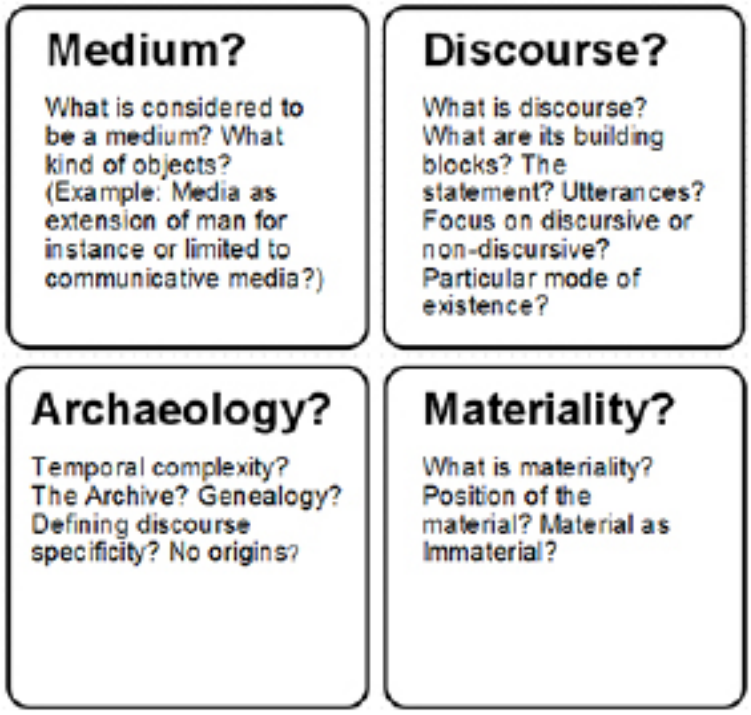


Figure 1: Tetrad of Media Archaeologies

similar constituting elements, describing what they choose and why resulting in a deeper mutual understanding of the possible outcome of the puzzle i.e. the eventual media archaeology created by a scholar for his or her research.

A fourth question has been added, that of what a medium is in the specific media archaeology. This question has been added due to insights gained from the section on media archaeologies. The discussion on media archaeologies showed that there is also a negligence on explicating what is understood by a medium at times or that the understandings differ greatly. Zielinski for instance wants to keep whatever a medium is as open as possible whereas Bolter and Grusin, influential to media archaeology, argue for remediation which results in a different understanding of what a medium is. Such assumptions or understandings undeniably have an impact on the outcome of what a media archaeolgy is in a specific research project; one has selected a different piece of the puzzle to construct it and that has affected the entire puzzle.

This puzzle or the created media archaeology, taken at its bare minimum, can say something about a research object vis-à-vis a medium. Thus, by describing each of the four questions of the tetrad of media archaeology a basic media archaeological approach can be created (or at the very least described) that does exactly that i.e. make statements about a medium. From that minumum scholars can start building using the created tool, the tetrad. Needless to say, the choices made in answering each specific question influence all questions of the tetrad. The description below offers some of the aspects a scholar can focus on for each question; to be as specific as possible when using the tetrad for one's own research a re-visit of Foucault is necessary as has been done in this research. Besides this it is of course possible, and recommendable, to side with existing media archaeologies to elaborate on one's media archaeology.

**Medium:** It is crucial to reflect on what is understood by a medium. Interpretations differ wildly from McLuhan's extensions of man to Kittler's focus which is more on communicative and storage media. Or what about Janet Murray's notion of inventing the medium versus Bolter and Grusin's ideas on remediation so in line with McLuhan? The list can go on with scholars such as Kluitenberg who focusses on imaginary media or Parikka and Hertz who also notes the possible focus on dead or zombie media.

**Discourse:** From the re-visiting of Foucault the elements and complexities of discourse became apparent. Thus, it is necessary to reflect on what is meant by discourse in a specific media archaeology. Is the focus on the discursive or non-discursive? Is the focus on both or on their interrelatedness? Is the building block of discourse also the statement in the media archaeology constructed? What is the interpretation of the particular mode of existence?

**Archaeology:** In this question reflection is possible on temporal complexity. It has become clear that there is distaste for teleology's, but what does the alternative look like? Is it archaeology that is being done or actually genealogy, or a combination? What is the role of the archive? Again, the choices here influence the choices made in other questions.

**Materiality:** Although implicitly incorporated in the question on discourse, the aspect of materiality needs emphasis. For one because a complete negligence of materiality would likely turn into 'mere' discourse analysis and not media archaeology. Consequently, it has been noticed that there is a slight preference for new materialist directions of media archaeology, though other directions are possible as has been shown.[251] Moreover, the question and importance of materiality has also been noticed by Parikka at the end of his book *What is Media Archaeology?* where he notes the complexity of the term. According to Parikka there are multitudes of materialities: materialities of technologies, the materiality of materials and materiality of cultural practices.[252] A specific media archaeological approach cannot refrain from reflecting on this question.

The tetradic tool plays into the common notion Parikka emphasizes in an interview: there should not be one media archaeological approach, there are competing media archaeologies and this is a good thing. To the question whether or not guidelines would be useful in such a competing landscape he reacts affirming. However, Parikka sees reflecting upon methodological choices as part of any kind of general humanities methodology in terms of choice of research methods and building research.[253] Although Parikka is correct that this should be the case, this research has shown that this reflective attitude, especially with regards to Foucault, is deficient. Moreover, the desire for internal difference, variety, heterogeneity and resistance can at least to some extent benefit from guidelines such as the tetrad of media archaeologies. Also, questions about whether or not approaches such as platform studies, software studies or digital craft can be seen as media archaeological, can be discussed along the lines of the tetrad.[254] Moreover, asking these questions is exactly what leads to a next step in Foucauldean archaeology, towards media archaeology. Where Foucault leaves too much unanswered, the media archaeologists can and must specify the elements of the tetrad and their interrelatedness.

It provides a way to discuss media archaeologies amongst peers, to inform student and perhaps even translate it to the 'general public'. Though I was critical earlier about the at times privileged position of media arts with regards to media archaeol-

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251 Nicoll, "Review : Jussi Parikka's What Is Media Archaeology ?".

252 Parikka, *What is Media Archaeology*? 163-164.

253 Interview with Jussi Parikka, Appendix B.

254 Recently the paper "Teaching Digital Craft" which I co-authored with Michael Nitsche, Kate Farina, Andrew Quitmeyer and Hye Yeon Nam got accepted to the 2014 alt.chi conference. The material engagement, the questioning of materiality and the relation to culture show possible connections to media archaeology.

ogy, to communicate scholarly work to the public, the domain of media arts and performance can do wonders. PhD student Andrew Quitmeyer from The Georgia Institute of Technology has investigated the ways in which scholarly work can be disseminated and shows the incredible work that can be done via performance.[255]

In short, this section has shown a tool that can be used when doing media archaeology. It can be used to create a media archaeology or to reflect on media archaeology. A great experiment would be to use this during a course on media archaeology (surely not during the first lesson), to see if it is beneficial for a student's understanding of media archaeology and ability to do media archaeological work. The next section will be the conclusion in which there is a return to the main question(s) asked at the beginning of this research project, a critical reflection on the methods used and a discussion on possible next steps for media archaeology.

255 Website of Andrew Quitmeyer, http://andy.dorkfort.com/andy/digitalnatural/ last visit on February 2nd 2014. Although Quitmeyer focuses on ethology and digital media, several perspectives are similar to what has been argued in this research. Quitmeyer refers to Tinbergen and Hertz (who is one his committee) regularly in similar ways such as on the dissemination of information.

# Eternity as Timelessness

If we take eternity to mean not infinite temporal duration but timelessness, then eternal life belongs to those who live in the present. Our life has no end in the way which our visual field has no limits. This quote from Wittgenstein is printed on the front of this research project with a reason. Wittgenstein shows the power to re-imagine and re-position perspectives. Media archaeology does a similar thing and this freedom and space is at the heart of media archaeology. What if we take media phenomena as cyclically returning phenomena? What if we assume that the world we live in is a technical-mathematical one? On top of those assumptions a scholar can build and imagine a media archaeology.

However, the freedom, space and growing side of media archaeology have resulted in difficult and at times unclear situations. As stated in the introduction and problem statement, and as acknowledged by scholars such as Sobchack, Parikka and Druckrey, media archaeology is undisciplined, heterogeneous and nomadic. Thus, as Druckrey notes it is necessary for the field of media archaeology to distinguish it as a nascent discipline and to set some boundaries in order to avoid its subjectivication. On top of that Parikka states how media archaeology has the potential to be an innovative 21st century arts and humanities discipline, but it needs to be clear and up-front about its special positions at the crossroads of art, science and technology and show the longer lineages in such border-crossings.

These statements by Druckrey and Parikka formed the starting point for the main question(s) asked in this research project: Could media archaeology be at least one of the methods which would lead media studies to a more structured field with field specific methods? Can it become clear how one 'does' media archaeology? To answer these questions discourse analysis as described by James Paul Gee, critical literature review and interviews were used. A combination of those methods leads to broad yet deep insights and also stimulates a sharing of knowledge in the academic community as advocated by Tinbergen.

Especially the questions posed by James Paul Gee, which can be found in appendix A, played a constructive role in the background of this research. It allowed asking questions on the relations between scholars, their background, situated meanings of used terminology and the role of specific institutions. At the same time gaps and flaws have to be acknowledged. Discourse analysis as described by Gee brings with it the difficulty of deciding what works and sources to include in the analysis but also to exclude. With limitations such as the size of this research project or the time to create it come decisions of what to focus on. Without a doubt, valuable perspectives haven't been included of which some have already been named (such as Flusser, Gitelman, Kirschenbaum, Pias or Galloway).

The same goes for the interviews. Decisions have to be made who to interview

and one has to be lucky enough that both parties can find the time for the interview. Moreover, at times it can be difficult to ask the right questions on the spot. Of course one can prepare, but conversations can go into unexpected directions; this is a strength as well as a weakness. Still, from Gee's discourse analysis, the critical literature review and the interviews it became clear that Foucault holds a central place in the discourse of media archaeology but that a critical reflection upon Foucault is often lacking (one of the main points Kluitenberg makes too).

Consequently, the section following an explication of the methods in this research project is a dive into Foucault's work, especially work in which he describes archaeology, discourse and genealogy. The discussion on Foucault revolved around 3 issues that have been underexposed in the context of media archaeology:

1. *Misusing Discourse:* There is a widespread consensus that the current usage of the term discourse originated with Foucault. There are however scholars stating that the current usage of discourse did not originate with Foucault, and in some ways contradicts his own limited technical usage. Anglo-American scholars increasingly began to attribute the concept to Foucault, this has contributed to a misreading of Foucault;
2. *The Complexity of Foucault:* Foucault's writing is not always consistent or easy to understand. Concepts such as the archive, archaeology or genealogy, fundamental to media archaeology, are not easily described or differentiated; not even by Foucault himself. Attention needs to be placed to the explanation of certain concepts but also acknowledge where explaining is problematic;
3. *Foucault and Materiality:* The German media archaeological tradition extends Foucault by placing focus on materiality. Following the discussion on late Foucault, it becomes important to retrace Foucault's ideas on materiality and issues surrounding this.

The focus on each of these issues focused on what appeared to be multi-interpretable concepts Foucault describes such as discourse, archaeology, the statement or genealogy. It showed a more material interpretation of Foucault's concepts is not impossible and that interpretations depend heavily on what works of Foucault have been focused on. There can be extreme variations in Foucault's thinking between his earlier and later work.

Consequently, one of the lessons learned from the section on Foucault is that a scholar, whether media archaeologist or not, should be clear about what works, theories and concepts of Foucault he or she is referring to, or where other scholars are used. The latter refers to for instance the complexities surrounding the term discourse which is also central in Lacanian or Althusserian works. In short, the purpose of the section on Foucault was to try and retrace what Foucault's interpretation was of these concepts but also acknowledge that there is room for alternate or even unexpected uses of Foucauldean concepts. It is a freedom which results in

arguments, contestation and complexities but also to a wide range of uses and appropriation as can be seen with media archaeology, which necessitate a clear and critical attitude towards Foucault's work.

The result of the section on Foucault was also the creation of 3 guiding questions. Understanding now that crucial concepts in media archaeology stem for a large part from Foucault, and that these concepts can be multi-interpretable, these questions are focused on bringing more clarity and structure to discussing media archaeology. The 3 main questions are **what is discourse in media archaeology, what is archaeology in media archaeology and what is materiality in media archaeology?** Of course other matters will be discussed as well, but these questions provide structure to the discussion as well as answers. In the section on how to do media archaeology a 4$^{th}$ question was added: **what is media in media archaeology?**

This question was a result from the discussion on media archaeology. In Foucault's work the question of what a medium is seems less crucial. He is quite clear on what for instance a statement is, what the position of the statement is in discourse and what the object of research is. For Foucault it is not a question of researching media but researching the statements and discourses. In media archaeology the interpretation of what a medium is can differ quite a bit. This stems already in the first section on discussing media archaeology referring to McLuhan and his axiom the medium is the message, setting the tone for a specific interpretation of media varying from for instance Huhtamo's, Kluitenberg's or the tendency of some media archaeologists to focus on 'dead media'.

Besides structuring the section on media archaeology along the 3 guiding questions, the structure of this section also narrowly follows a categorization or taxonomy created by Wanda Strauven. She claims there are 4 dominant approaches in media archaeology being *the old in the new*, *the new in the old*, *recurring topoi*, and *ruptures/discontinuities*. However, Strauven's structure is followed to show the opposite, that in fact a taxonomy of media archaeology is doomed to fail. Such a nomadic, heterogeneous and contextual approach goes against the more static idea of a taxonomy. On top of that, scholars such as Siegfried Zielinski oppose such categorization whole heartedly, it is inherent to his idea of media archaeology. Still, this is not mentioned and on top of that Zielinski's media archaeology (or variantology) is taxonomized.

Furthermore, in this taxonomy of media archaeology elements get reduced and simplified. Notions such as remediation inevitably leads to a linear approach to history are not backed up by any argument, but are positioned as central to a specific dominant approach. Interviews with a scholar such a Jay Bolter also shows that the question of whether or not remediation has clear association to linear thinking is not easily answered; Bolter's arguments position the concept away from such linear connotations. Such flaws in the created taxonomy are visible in every constructed dominant approach: a simplified interpretation of temporal relations and complexities, a narrow view of a specific scholar's media archaeology and in general a limited

scope on media archaeologies that are out there.

The guiding questions on discourse, archaeology and materiality however gave clarity to issues surrounding media archaeology. Firstly, it showed that some scholars, such as McLuhan or Bolter, should not be perceived as media archaeologists but as influential to media archaeology. Their ideas on media and how media operate are mirrored in media archaeologies, but Bolter and McLuhan are not necessarily concerned with questions revolving around discourse or archaeology. It would be foolish to call their approaches or concepts media archaeological simply because of their ideas on non-linearity or materiality; media archaeology is more than that. Secondly, the guiding questions showed where gaps are or possible flaws in some media archaeologies. Examples would be Huhtamo's use of Foucaldean archaeology but at the same time claiming to be closer to the history of ideas, Zielinski's initial lack of reference to Foucault or the varied use of Foucauldean terminology.

At the same time examples of well described media archaeologies came to light. However, one of the best examples was found by looking beyond Strauven's taxonomy, Wolfgang Ernst. True, she mentions Wolfgang Ernst, but only in a few sentences. Looking closely, it became apparent that Ernst critically positions his media archaeology in relation to Foucault's work. He describes his view on concepts such as discourse, archaeology and materiality (specifically his emphasis on the non-discursive). Although one can disagree with Ernst, for instance with the assumption that we live in a techno-mathematical world, the fact remains that his intentions for his media archaeology are clear. The main point here is that differences between media archaeologies are perfectly acceptable and even aimed for, but that the argumentation and explanation for a specific media archaeology needs to be at a minimum as deep as Ernst's.

Looking beyond the scholars mentioned by Strauven is fruitful; she leaves many media archaeological influences and approaches out of her 'dominant approaches'. Furthermore, there are upcoming approaches such as platform studies that deserve attention. Although not necessarily a media archaeological approach, a discussion on platform studies shows the at times similar thinking about media across geolocations. It contradicts notions on different media schools or traditions, which also in the mind of Parikka is a good thing seeing such notions are catch-all terms reducing variety (a similar argument of course is made for Strauven's taxonomy).

Thus, although it is not constructive to think of media archaeology in ways of a taxonomy there are still those approaches, perspectives and ideas that border media archaeology or those that clearly are media archaeology. But how to establish or at the very least discuss what is on the outskirts of media archaeology and what is not? Such a question of course implies an understanding of how to do media archaeology, which in turn links closely to an understanding of what media archaeology is. This research project suggests a tetrad built upon a critical reflection upon Foucauldean concepts, the 3 guiding questions on discourse, archaeology and materiality and the 4$^{th}$ question on the medium which followed from the section on media archaeology:

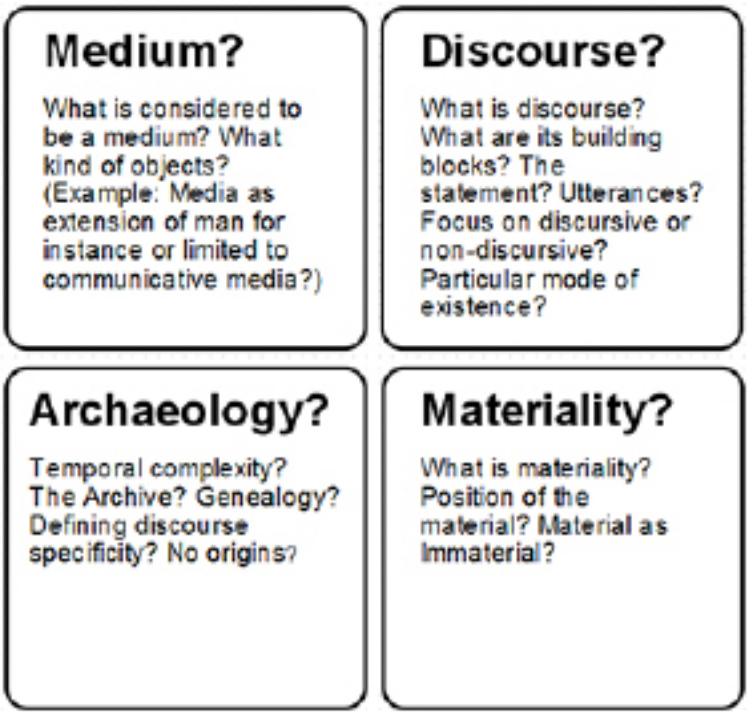


Figure 2: Tetrad of Media Archaeology

Besides taking into account the re-visiting of Foucault, it adheres to one of the fundamental qualities of media archaeology Sobchack for instance writes about when she discusses the 'family features' of media archaeology, room for internal difference. The tetrad can be used as a tool to create a specific media archaeology. To create a method, a media archaeological method, would be to destroy the very nature of media archaeology. As Zielinski is observant to point out, it would lead to homogenization and in his eyes it would be a disgrace to see media archaeology end up in some academic hand book.

The interpretation of medium, discourse, archaeology and materiality directly relate to the notion of how to perceive and research that which is in the world. Essentially this is what 'methods' are about; rules, procedures or indications that let one steer within epistemological boundaries. Thus, although media archaeology allows for internal difference, each media archaeology has at least to clarify how it perceives the world consequently establishing ways of analysis. What makes media archaeology a media archaeology is exactly that this explanation revolves around a critical positioning in relation to medium, discourse, archaeology, materiality and their interrelatedness. As such media archaeology allows for a unique position where the emphasis can shift between the discursive and non-discursive. Media archaeolgy allows for the understanding of the medium being the message but at times realizing that the message can also be the message. Media archaeology allows fot these two sides to be part of the same coin.

As stated, the tetrad is not meant to be used on the level of method, it is to be used to establish the rules and procedures for the process or *Tätigkeit* that is media archaeology. The latter so crucial in that media reveal in their operation, in their procedures. Media archaeology is doing, it is an activity as Zielinski notes. Therefore, the notions of heterogeneity, the nomadic, the need for contextualization and *Tätigkeit* provide a first answer to what has been posed in this research project. Media archaeology cannot be a media studies specific method, it cannot be method in the traditional sense at all and it cannot be placed in one field. Media archaeology needs to be able to move freely between fields such as media art, engineering, computer science, history, archaeology and others.

Still, even if not a method in the traditional sense of the word accompanied by the connotations so vigorously opposed by Zielinski, the tetrad does help construct an understanding on how to do media archaeology. In answering the questions of the tetrad the feeling might arise that this remains close to Foucauldean archaeology. This thought is not unjustified. The difference however is exactly that Foucault refrains from answering these questions clearly, he leaves it open as has been shown in the discussion on Foucault. A media archaeology needs to be specific, as for instance Ernst is. It needs to be specific not only in answering these questions but also their interrelatedness. Each decision, each choice in answering a question inevitable influences the other questions. There is no hierarchy in these questions, it requires considerable reflection and re-constructing to come to a clear media archaeology.

If done properly though, this research and the tetrad bring media archaeology closer to an understanding of how to do media archaeology and the possibility to disseminate this. Tinbergen played a significant role in this research because his insistence on the importance of dissemination not only with academic peers, but also students and the public. Although I am critical of the importance attributed to media art with regards to media archaeology, it does seem to lend itself more to dissemination of media archaeological practices to the public. One cannot ask a person unversed in computer science or engineering to suddenly be interested or understand complex phenomena in those fields. However, art in this author's mind clearly has a function towards the public.

The tetrad performs a function for academic peers and student, a next step in media archaeological research could be to investigate how to disseminate this to the public, perhaps how to link the tetrad to media art. Besides this, I applaud the work done by media archaeologists discussed in this research project. Parikka strongly makes the move towards media art and is translating many works, Zielinski travels the world for his variantology and each of the media archaeologists discussed continue to publish, set up conferences and discuss media archaeological matters. It is this authors hope to test this tetrad in action, to see what it contributes to a student's work, what it contributes to discussion. As stated by Parikka media archaeology needs to be clear and up-front about its special positions at the crossroads of art, science and technology and show the longer lineages in such border-crossings. Eter-

nity can be perceived as timelessness or a multitude of other things, but it needs to be up front on how and why and disseminated amongst peers, student and public.

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# Appendix A – Discourse Questions

*Semiotic building*

1. What sign systems are relevant (and irrelevant) in the situation (e.g. speech, writing, images, and gestures)? How are they made relevant (and irrelevant), and in what ways?
2. What systems of knowledge and ways of knowing are relevant (and irrelevant) in the situation? How are they made relevant (and irrelevant), and in what ways?
3. What social languages are relevant (and irrelevant) in the situation? How are they made relevant (and irrelevant), and in what ways?

*World building*

4. What are the situated meanings of some of the words and phrases that seem important in the situation?
5. What situated meanings and values seem to be attached to places, times, bodies, objects, artifacts, and institutions relevant in this situation?
6. What cultural models and networks of models (master models) seem to be at play in connecting and integrating these situated meanings to each other?
7. What institutions and/or Discourses are being (re-)produced in this situation and how are they being stabilized or transformed in the act?

*Activity building*

8. What is the larger or main activity (or set of activities) going on in the situation?
9. What sub-activities compose this activity (or these activities)?
10. What actions (down to the level of things like "requests for reasons") compose these sub-activities and activities?

*Socioculturally-situated identity and relationship building*

11. What relationships and identities (roles, positions), with their concomitant personal, social, and cultural knowledge and beliefs (cognition), feelings (affect),and values, seem to be relevant to the situation?

12. How are these relationships and identities stabilized or transformed in the situation?

13. In terms of identities, activities, and relationships, what Discourses are relevant (and irrelevant) in the situation? How are they made relevant (and irrelevant), and in what ways?

*Political building*

14. What social goods (e.g. status, power, aspects of gender, race, and class, or more narrowly defined social networks and identities) are relevant (and irrelevant) in this situation? How are they made relevant (and irrelevant), and in what ways?

15. How are these social goods connected to the cultural models and Discourses operative in the situation?

*Connection building*

16. What sorts of connections – looking backward and/or forward – are made within and across utterances and large stretches of the interaction?

17. What sorts of connections are made to previous or future interactions, to other people, ideas, texts, things, institutions, and Discourses outside the current situation (this has to do with "intertextuality" and "inter-Discursivity")?

How do connections of both the sort in 16 and 17 help (together with situated meanings and cultural models) to constitute "coherence" – and what sort of "coherence" – in the