

## HETEROTOPIA

A category proposed by Michel Foucault, which denotes a place opposite to utopia.

Foucault derived the notion of heterotopia from reflections on space, place and location, resulting not so much from fixed points on the axis, as from the variables of the network of relations defining this location. Foucault defined heterotopia as the location opposite to utopia (a location that does not physically exist), distinguishing the six principles of heterotopia: 1) it is not accessible to all, although as 'another space' it exists in every culture and society; 2) it has a specific function within the society to which it belongs and at the same time its place as a culturally defined space is not fixed; 3) it can put together in one real place numerous spaces that are incompatible with each other; 4) it is governed by its own time, it is heterochronous; 5) it is subject to a system of opening and closing which separates it from the rest of the space and at the same time makes it accessible (which does not mean, however, that heterotopia is available in the same way as public space - access to it may be based on ritual, duty or coercion); 6) as a "different space", heterotopia may give the impression of real spaces being illusory. Heterotopia is therefore a place that clearly distinguishes itself from its surroundings.

Foucault distinguishes several types of heterotopia: heterotopies of crisis, i.e. unwanted places associated with unwanted situations (boarding house, sacred, guarded or exclusive places to which only the chosen have access); deviant heterotopies - places where the lifestyle differs from the normative model - places of "inactivity". (hospitals, sanatoriums, prisons). The concept of heterotopia is often used by various disciplines exploring the living spaces of man (e.g. humanistic geography).

[M.St.]

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