PHILOSOPHICAL ARCHAEOLOGY IN KANT, FOUCAULT, AND AGAMBEN
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1. MISSING REFERENCES

A review of Michel Foucault's *The Order of Things* appeared in the *New York Times Book Review* on February 28, 1971. The reviewer claimed that Foucault had called the work an "archaeology of the human sciences" because the word "archaeology" had enjoyed "an aura of depth and genesis, outside its normal field, since Freud."[1] Foucault forcefully denied this charge, claiming in his response to have derived his conception of archaeology from Immanuel Kant. "The reviewer does not know," Foucault said, "that Kant used this word in order to designate the history of that which renders necessary a certain form of thought."[2] Foucault then advises the reviewer "to leaf through Kant," even though Kant is "not as fashionable as Freud."[3]

While he seems to take a great deal of pleasure in this display of erudition, Foucault does not tell his readers where Kant addresses "the history of that which renders necessary a certain form of thought" or why he had called it "archaeology." Foucault merely gestures toward an unspecified passage in an unspecified work, in which he claims to have "pointed to this use" of archaeology in Kant.[4] Yet the discussion in question does not appear in any of the texts that Foucault published during that time. The editors of his *Dits et Écrits* have appended a footnote to Foucault's response to the *New York Times* review, referring readers to Part IV of *The Archaeology of Knowledge*; however, Kant's conception of archaeology is not discussed in the pages to which the footnote refers. Nor is it discussed anywhere else in that work.[5]

In what follows, I will attempt to supply the discussion that is missing from Foucault's response to the *New York Times* review and *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. By exploring the concept of philosophical archaeology that Kant develops in his late essay on the progress of metaphysics and relating it to Foucault's archaeology of the human sciences, I hope to shed some light on the critical exchange with Kant that is to be found in Foucault's early writings.[6] I also hope to refute a claim recently advanced by Giorgio Agamben, who has taken up the question of philosophical archaeology in an essay included in his book *The Signature of All Things*.[7] In his essay, Agamben suggests that Foucault's archaeology is intended to reveal the arbitrariness of the distinction between the past and the present and undermine any claim to an "essential" history. I will show, however, that both Kant and Foucault affirm the existence and the priority of epistemological conditions determining what can be thought

within a certain historical period, conditions which are by no means arbitrary.

Even if the connection between Kant's conception of philosophical archaeology and Foucault's archaeology of the human sciences is more tenuous than Foucault's response to the *New York Times* review would suggest, I will argue that it still provides a better model for understanding Foucault's archaeology than the alternative proposed by Agamben. Foucault's reference to Kant helps to illuminate the role played by the historical *a priori* in his archaeology, while Agamben's essay obscures the epistemological priority Foucault ascribes to the experience of order.

2. A PHILOSOPHICAL HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

When Foucault said that Kant used the word archaeology "to designate the history of that which renders necessary a certain form of thought," he was referring to the "jottings" for Kant's unfinished essay on the progress of metaphysics.[8] It is here that Kant introduces the concept of "philosophical archaeology" (*philosophische Archäologie*) and uses it to describe the conditions of a "philosophical" history of philosophy.[9]

Kant's notes and the transcripts of his lectures show that he had an abiding interest in the history of philosophy and its relation to the practice of "philosophizing."[10] While Kant acknowledges that there is something to be gained by studying the history of philosophy and the works of other philosophers, he is primarily concerned with the use one makes of one's own reason when one is philosophizing. Kant denies that the *Critique of Pure Reason* is "a critique of books and systems," for example, precisely because it seeks to advance the cause of philosophical knowledge. Kant is not concerned with what other philosophers have thought or written in his *Critique*, because he thinks one must already possess philosophical knowledge, in order to judge the merits of their work. Without a properly philosophical understanding of the history of philosophy, Kant says, "the unqualified historian and judge assesses the groundless assertions of others through his own, which are equally groundless."[11] This, more than anything else, is what one must avoid, if one wishes to think philosophically about philosophy.

The Prussian Royal Academy of the Sciences gave Kant the opportunity to explore the idea of a philosophical history of philosophy more systematically when it posed the question "what real progress has metaphysics made in Germany since the time of Leibniz and Wolff?" for its prize-essay competition in 1790.[12] Although the Academy extended the deadline for submissions from 1792 until 1795, Kant was unable to finish his essay and never submitted his work to the Academy. There are, of course, many reasons Kant did not finish his essay, many of them having to do with his old age, his ill-health, and the controversies surrounding his critical philosophy; however, one should not discount the possibility that there was a more philosophical reason for Kant's failure to complete his answer to the Academy's prize-essay question. The difficulties Kant thought he would face in presenting a "philosophical" account of the progress metaphysics had made in Germany since the time of Leibniz and Wolff are evident from the very first pages of the drafts for his essay.[13]

Kant explains the difficulties involved in presenting a philosophical account of the progress of metaphysics when he explains his understanding of the question his essay was to answer. According to Kant, "the Royal Academy of Sciences calls for a survey of the advances in one part of philosophy, in one part of academic Europe, and also during one part of the present century."[14] Such a survey should be "a readily performable task," Kant says, "for it only has to do with history."[15] By listing the discoveries philosophers have made in metaphysics in Germany in the period following Leibniz and Wolff, contestants would be able to produce a history of philosophy comparable to the history of any other science. Because metaphysics is not a science like astronomy or chemistry, mathematics or mechanics, however, Kant does not think it admits of the same kind of historical explanation as do those sciences.

Metaphysics does not admit of the same kind of historical explanation as the other sciences because it is, in Kant's words, "a shoreless sea, in which progress leaves no trace behind, and whose horizon contains no visible

goal by which one might perceive how nearly it has been approached."[16] An answer of the kind the Academy expects is, for that reason, something "almost despaired of."[17] Even if a suitable answer could be found, Kant fears that "the condition laid down, of presenting in brief compass the advances it has achieved, makes the difficulty greater still."[18] Metaphysics is "by nature and intention a completed whole" for Kant, something which is either "nothing or everything."[19] As such, the work of philosophy cannot be described in terms of the "constant and unending" progress of the other sciences.[20] Nor is any survey of the progress of metaphysics possible, unless one is also willing to systematically reconstruct the whole science of metaphysics.

Despite the difficulties he enumerates regarding the nature and scope of the Academy's question, Kant says he will attempt the task set before him, and explain how metaphysics finally became a science in the period following Leibniz and Wolf. Kant credits Wolff with making valuable contributions to ontology, but in general he denies that metaphysics had made any real progress since Aristotle.[21] The halting steps made by dogmatists and skeptics—ancient and modern—cannot be considered real progress, in Kant's view, because metaphysics is a science which is either "nothing or everything."[22] For that reason, metaphysics only achieves its "ultimate purpose" (*Endzweck*) with the *Critique of Pure Reason*.[23] It is the *Critique of Pure Reason* that finally makes metaphysics "the science of progressing by reason from knowledge of the sensible to that of the super-sensible."[24] "If it has done this in Germany, and done it since the days of Leibniz and Wolff," Kant says, "then the problem of the Royal Academy of Sciences will have been resolved."[25] In other words, because the *Critique of Pure Reason* was published in Germany, in the period following Leibniz and Wolff, Kant believed it was finally possible to address the "progress" (*Fortschritt*) of metaphysics.

Kant's references to the historical and geographic conditions under which metaphysics had become a science are clearly ironic, but it would be wrong to conclude that Kant thinks history and geography were entirely incidental to the history of philosophy. The "temporal sequence" (*Zeitordnung*) through which metaphysics becomes a science is "founded in the nature of man's cognitive capacity" according to Kant.[26] He thought that human beings had a natural predisposition (*Naturanlage*) to metaphysics, in other words, because the idea of metaphysics "lies wholly prefigured in the soul."[27] It is for this reason that "the idea of a metaphysics inevitably presents itself to human reason, and the latter feels a need to develop it."[28] What is crucial for the history of philosophy, however, is that human reason develops the idea of metaphysics according to a determinate temporal sequence, through which the history of philosophy achieves its ultimate purpose. This development is not shaped by the influence of historical contingencies or empirical facts or any other conditions external to philosophy. The historical development of philosophy is, on the contrary, determined by reason itself.

Kant explores the conditions under which one might be able to reconstruct the "temporal sequence" according to which metaphysics develops in a "jotting" bearing the title 'On a Philosophical History of Philosophy.' While it seems that Kant never incorporated the contents of this "jotting" into the text of his essay on the progress of metaphysics, it is significant for our purposes, because it is here that Kant describes his conception of philosophical archaeology. According to Kant "a philosophical history of philosophy is itself possible, not historically or empirically, but rationally, i.e. *a priori*. For although it establishes facts of reason, it does not borrow them from historical narrative but draws them from the nature of human reason, as philosophical archaeology."[29] Foucault surely had this passage in mind when he said that Kant called archaeology "the history of that which renders necessary a certain form of thought."[30] Kant's remarks make it clear that it is the nature of human reason itself which "renders necessary a certain form of thought." Philosophy articulates the principles of human reason in history and according to a certain "temporal sequence," to be sure, but the history of philosophy is determined by reason rather than history, if history is considered to be a kind of empirical knowledge of "things as they are."[31] To know the history of philosophy philosophically, that is, to know how philosophy would be articulated by reason itself, as a science, and to know the history of philosophy in a way that follows from the necessity of *a priori* principles—this is what Kant calls "philosophical archaeology."

3. THE HISTORY OF THE THING WHICH HAS NOT HAPPENED

The discussion of Kant's reflections on the possibility of a philosophical history of philosophy with which Giorgio Agamben begins his recent essay on philosophical archaeology suggests that he was aware of Foucault's reference to Kant in his response to the *New York Times* review. Yet Agamben makes no mention or Foucault's reference to Kant or "the history of that which renders necessary a certain form of thought" as he passes from his consideration of Kant to discussions of Nietzsche and Overbeck, Heidegger and Benjamin, Mauss, Dumézil, and Freud. This oversight may be surprising, given Agamben's preoccupation with philology and the evident pleasure he takes in making curious and unlikely connections. His silence becomes less surprising, however, when one considers the paradoxes Agamben attributes to Kant's philosophical archaeology.

According to Agamben, the conception of a philosophical archaeology that Kant develops in the "jottings" for his essay on the progress of metaphysics "runs the risk of lacking a beginning" and recounting "the history of the thing which has not happened."[32] This introduces an "essential dishomogeneity" into Kant's conception of a philosophical history of philosophy, which Agamben traces back to the difference between the "factical beginning" of the history of philosophy and the principles which determine the course of the development of metaphysics *a priori*.[33] Because Kant does not refer the beginning of philosophy to any "chronological datum," Agamben does not think the philosophical history of philosophy Kant describes can mark its beginning in time.[34] The beginnings of the history of philosophy are philosophical, for Kant, so they must be sought in principles which determine what "ought to happen" and "what could happen" in the history of philosophy, according to the nature of human reason. Agamben takes this to mean that Kant's conception of a philosophical history of philosophy is only an idea, something which "can never truly be given as an empirically present whole."[35] While Agamben does not explain why this should be the case, we may suppose that it is because "what should happen" and "what could happen" are possibilities, whose potential "not to be" cannot be excluded. The realization of the philosophical history of philosophy is, for that reason, always deferred, and the gap between the real history of philosophy and the ideal history of what Kant thinks philosophy could be or should happen becomes "essential," because the real history of philosophy and the ideal of a philosophical history of philosophy never coincide.[36]

Although Agamben insists that Kant's philosophical archaeology becomes "the history of the thing which has not happened," Agamben also regards the "essential dishomogeneity" of Kant's philosophical history of philosophy as the "constitutive gap" that defines Kant's conception of philosophy and renders it intelligible. It is because Kant excludes what could happen and what should happen in the history of philosophy from its real history, in other words, that Kant can define what is to be included within the history of philosophy according to his own understanding of the nature of human reason. Agamben describes a similar logic at work in philology, history, anthropology, and psychoanalysis in his essay, arguing in each case that these sciences exclude the "origin" as something "prior to" the order of knowledge, in order to define themselves and preserve the integrity of the order they impose on the objects of their investigations.[37] It is only by defining the "beginning" of a science in opposition to what came "before" that science that one is able to delimit a particular field of inquiry. In so doing, however, one establishes a relation between what is included within the order of knowledge and what is excluded from it.[38] What is excluded then becomes no less definitive of that science than what is included and what is included simply becomes what is not excluded.

The logic of this operation is the same as the logic of the ban that Agamben describes in *Homo Sacer*. Agamben calls the ban "the power of delivering something over to itself, which is to say, the power of maintaining itself in relation to something presupposed as nonrelational."[39] In *Homo Sacer*, Agamben tried to show how this logic was paradoxical, because it both excluded bare life from the political order and included it within that order at the same time. Because a political life is a life which is subject to sovereign power, Agamben argues, bare life must be understood as a life which has no relation to the political order and which is not governed by sovereign power. Insofar as subjection to sovereign power is something which is imposed on life, however, the idea of a political life necessarily presupposes the idea of a life which precedes political subjection. Instead of being a

life which is outside the political sphere and free from sovereign decision regarding its life and death, bare life comes to be included within the political order as life that is to be subjected. The history of modern political institutions illustrates the disastrous consequences of this logic and the ongoing attempts sovereign power has made to include bare life within the political order.[40]

In his essay on philosophical archaeology, Agamben casts archaeology as the science which exposes the paradoxes of the logic of presupposition and exclusion. Unlike Kant, whose philosophical archaeology merely reproduces this logic, Agamben thinks Foucault acknowledges the gap between "a heterogenous stratum that is not placed in the position of a chronological origin" and something "qualitatively other," which establishes the relation between what is excluded from that order as heterogenous and what is included within the order of knowledge.[41] This gap is constitutive for archaeology, according to Agamben, because it renders that which is included intelligible and establishes its credentials as knowledge. Instead of presenting this knowledge as essential and necessary, however, Agamben claims that Foucault's archaeology establishes the distinction between knowledge and its presupposed yet excluded other "in order to work on it, deconstruct it, and detail it to the point where it gradually erodes, losing its originary status."[42]

What is central to archaeology, for Agamben, is "the movement of freedom" that Foucault attributes to dreams and the imagination in his 'Preface' to Binswanger's *Dream and Existence*.[43] Foucault had praised Binswinger for recognizing the "poetic"function of dreams and the imagination, rather than emphasizing their role in wish fulfillment, as Freud had done.[44] The "movement of freedom" to which Agamben refers is this imaginative "poetics." Instead of proposing an objective account of the past "as it was," Agamben thinks Foucault's archaeology exercises its "freedom" and its "poetic" license, conjuring up an image of the past, which it then proceeds to deconstruct.[45] Through this movement, Agamben suggests, archaeology exposes the past as a projection of the present, which contains the present within itself. This in turn reveals the image of the past to be a history of the present, because it shows how the present recreates itself as the "future anterior" of the past.[46] By making the past the origin of the present order, while simultaneously excluding the past as "other" than that order, the present secures a beginning for itself and saves that beginning from critical scrutiny. The origin of the past is simply the "will have been" of the present, whose image is "derealized" by archaeological excavations.[47]

Recognizing the logic of inclusion and exclusion at work in our image of the past allows us to free ourselves from the fantasy that the set of inclusions and exclusions that order our lives are somehow the "archaic" origin of our present reality. Far from being an inheritance which we must carry into the future, archaeology presents the past as a work of fiction, something which is literally "made up."[48] We may study the past and play with the distinctions projected into the past by the present, but we are under no obligation to regard them as essential and original features of our individual and collective modes of existence.[49] This, I think, is the concrete meaning of redemption for Agamben, because it "unworks" the distinctions that organize our lives and our political institutions, and gives us the freedom to create new forms of life.

4. THAT WHICH RENDERS NECESSARY A CERTAIN FORM OF THOUGHT

It should be clear by now that Kant and Agamben present very different accounts of the nature and value of philosophical archaeology. Yet neither of them seems to correspond to the archaeology of the human sciences that Foucault undertakes in *The Order of Things* and *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. This is all the more curious, since Foucault claimed to have derived his understanding of archaeology from Kant and because Agamben is allegedly drawing his account of philosophical archaeology from Focault. By weighing the different conceptions of philosophical archaeology which are to be found in Kant and Agamben and comparing them to Foucault's own archaeological practices, however, it may be possible to assess their relevance for our understanding of Foucault and his reasons for relating his own investigations to Kant's philosophical archaeology in his response to the *New York Times* review.

PHILOSOPHICAL ARCHEOLOGY IN KANT, FOUCAULT AND AGAMBEN

The fact that Foucault claims to have derived his conception of archaeology from Kant does not prove that Foucault agreed with every aspect of Kant's account. Foucault would most likely have seen Kant's identification of the principles of a philosophical history of philosophy with the principles of human reason as evidence of the kind of subjectivism and anthropologism he so sharply criticized in phenomenology. In the 'Forward' to the English edition of *The Order of Things*, Foucault says he rejects phenomenology, precisely because it "places its own point of view at the origin of all historicity—which, in short, leads to a transcendental consciousness."[50] While these remarks appear to be directed against Husserl, later chapters reveal Kant's critical philosophy to be "the threshold of our modernity," which makes man the privileged object of the human sciences.[51] Phenomenology is for Foucault only a late and confused expression of this development, causing it to "topple over, willy-nilly, into anthropology," despite its claim to be a pure philosophy and a rigorous science.[52] If Kant's philosophical archaeology could be said to follow a similar trajectory, founding its philosophical claims about the history of philosophy on a theory of the subject, then many of the objections which Foucault raised against phenomenology could also be leveled against Kant.

The archaeology of the human sciences that Foucault presents takes a theory of discursive formations as its starting point, rather than a theory of the subject.[53] By focusing on the discursive practices which order the epistemic fields of the renaissance, the classical age, and modernity, Foucault highlights the differences between the ways knowledge is ordered in each period. Because Foucault brackets questions of causality in *The Order of Things*, however, it is difficult to see how his archaeology could be said to describe "the history of that which renders necessary a certain form of thought."[54] While Foucault emphasized the necessity with which certain forms of thought are determined in his response to the *New York Times* review, it is impossible to recount the history of that which "renders necessary" (*rendre necessaire*) a certain form of thought, when one has suspended questions of causal determination, explanation, and influence. Something is necessary because it is determined in a way that is not merely possible and not merely actual, for reasons which are neither arbitrary nor contingent. Unless one is willing to explain why something takes place, in other words, it is impossible to determine how it might be rendered necessary. Foucault's resistance to causal explanation distances him further from Kant's conception of philosophical archaeology, because it prevents him from saying anything about the necessity of the discursive practices he considers.

The impossibility of describing the necessity "a certain form of thought" in archaeological terms does not mean that Foucault is committed to the peculiar conception of arbitrariness that characterizes Agamben's understanding of philosophical archaeology. By making archaeology a kind of conjuring trick, which creates an image of the past as the presupposed but excluded origin of the present, Agamben denies that there is anything which is necessary about the forms thought takes in certain periods.[55] The very idea that something would render a certain form of thought necessary is absurd, for Agamben, because he regards history as a catalog of the distinctions we use to order our thoughts and our activities, which is projected into the past.[56] The effects of the distinction between life and death, man and animal, alien and citizen, friend and enemy and many other distinctions may be real parts of our social and political history, but these distinctions are simply works of fiction.[57] Attributing any kind of necessity to such distinctions would be the most obscene kind of obscurantism, from Agamben's perspective, because it would give them the power and authority of an ontological foundation, which would guarantee their legitimacy.[58] By revealing the ungroundedness of the distinctions which order our lives and thoughts and showing them to be arbitrary and inessential, Agamben thinks we suspend their effects and free ourselves from the illusion that the catastrophe of the present was unavoidable.

To declare the distinctions which order knowledge in a given period to be arbitrary would be going too far for Foucault. Foucault does not address questions of causality in his archaeology, because he regards the causal explanations which are usually employed in the history of philosophy and science to be "more magical than effective."[59] Explanations which claim that a particular event was determined by "the spirit of the age," for example, are not so different from those which purport to explain how the soul moves the body. Citing the invention of the telescope as the cause of the revolution in modern astronomy and talking about how the attempt to address social inequality leads to totalitarianism are, for similar reasons, too simplistic to be taken

seriously as explanations. Anyone with a sense of the complexity of the forces which drive historical change will readily acknowledge that these accounts are insufficient from a methodological perspective, regardless of the particular contexts in which they appear. Denying their efficacy does not, however, commit one to the view that change is arbitrary. Nor does it suggest that the distinctions we use to order our knowledge are fictional. It merely acknowledges the difference between description and explanation, while recognizing the complexity of the causal relations between different historical events.

Foucault avoids the "magical thinking" of traditional narrative history by describing the transformations which take place in the epistemic fields of different periods and highlighting their differences.[60] Yet he does not limit archaeology to empirical observation, simply by privileging description over explanation. The force of Foucault's archaeology comes from the recognition that the empirical is the product and not the principle of the order of knowledge. "There is no similitude and no distinction," Foucault claims, "that is not the result of a precise operation and of the application of a preliminary criterion."[61] The attempt to distinguish various "empiricities" according to the qualities we observe in them must therefore presuppose principles of similarity and difference, deriving their significance and the schema according to which they are applied from a certain order of knowledge. For Foucault, this means that empirical phenomena become visible through a "hidden network that determines the way they confront one another."[62] While Foucault acknowledges that the order which derives from this network "has no existence except in the grid created by a glance, an examination, a language," he insists that the existence of order is as undeniable as its effects.[63] Foucault's archaeology of the human sciences is concerned with the "experience" of that order, which he regards as a "historical *a priori*" allowing different ideas, sciences, and rationalities to become manifest in different periods.[64]

Foucault's "historical *a priori*" is very different from the universal and necessary conditions of possible experience that Kant identifies in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, but it is not an oxymoron as Agamben suggests.[65] In his essay on philosophical archaeology, Agamben argues that there can be no historical *a priori*, because a historical *a priori* would have to be "inscribed within a history."[66] This means that a historical *a priori* have to be projected backwards onto the past by the present. A historical *a priori* would therefore have to "constitute itself *a posteriori* with respect to this history," rendering the historical *a priori* both *a priori* and *a posteriori*.[67] Such a paradoxical formulation is striking, but it not to be found in Foucault. Foucault's archaeological inquiries are motivated by the experience of order and its effects upon knowledge. Order is experienced, not because it is conjured up by a certain form of inquiry and projected onto the past, but because it has regular and observable effects on knowledge and discourse. Even if order is historically contingent and different orders obtain in different periods, the fact of order remains, along with its effects.

The thread which ties Foucault's archaeology to Kant's conception of philosophical archaeology is perhaps to be found in the priority Foucault affords to the experience of order. Kant and Foucault both affirm the priority of order and the posteriority of inquiry and its objects. Knowledge of order, in other words, is possible because order really exists. We recognize empirical objects within a pre-established framework, because that is what it means to "experience" order. Kant appeals to universal and necessary principles to determine that order, whether they are the pure concepts of the understanding or the principles which allow a science of metaphysics to become manifest in history. The temporal order according to which the idea of metaphysics develops is consequently a necessary order, which cannot fail to achieve its ultimate purpose. Foucault distances himself from Kant, because he does not consider the epistemic configuration which orders knowledge in a given period under the sign of necessity. Nor is Foucault concerned with the "ultimate purpose" of that order, as it might be determined by human reason. Questions of modality and teleology are simply beyond the scope of the archaeological inquiry he undertakes in *The Order of Things* and *The Archaeology of Knowledge*.

Even if he cannot go so far as to say that thought "necessarily" assumes a certain form during a certain period, Foucault recognizes that different epistemic configurations make certain forms of thought possible at certain times. Regarded as the historical *a priori* of a historical form of thought, Foucault even acknowledges that the order of an epistemic configuration may serve as the "condition of existence" of knowledge.[68] By insisting

upon this point, Foucault refutes the arbitrariness that Agamben attributes to the distinctions that organize our lives and thoughts. Foucault associates his archaeology of the human sciences and, indeed, knowledge as such, with Kant's philosophical archaeology, simply because he recognizes the priority of the order that serves as the historical condition of the possibility and actuality of knowledge.

5. CONCLUSION

Foucault shares with Agamben a concern for the effects of knowledge and the desire to destabilize the present order. This concern leads Agamben to insist that the present order of knowledge is arbitrary, based on fictional distinctions which are projected onto the past by the present. According to Agamben's reading, Foucault's archaeology conjures up these fictions in order to unwork them. The conception of order that emerges in Foucault's own accounts of his archaeology, however, suggests a rather different view.

Foucault associates his archaeology of the human sciences with Kant's philosophical archaeology, because he takes order to be the condition of the possibility and the condition of the existence of knowledge. While Foucault does not follow Kant in his attempt to determine the conditions of the possibility of all possible experience and the principles governing the progress of philosophy in history, he seeks to understand the effects of that order on historical forms of knowledge. It is for this reason that he addresses his archaeological investigations to the epistemological fields of the renaissance, the classical age, and modernity.

The considerable differences between Foucault's historical analyses and Kant's philosophical archaeology must be stressed. Yet these differences are not indicative of a fundamental distinction between Kant's philosophical history of philosophy and Foucault's archaeology of the human sciences; instead, they qualify a common interest in the way *a priori* principles affect the historical forms of knowledge. Foucault's claim, in his response to the *New York Times* review of *The Order of Things*, that his use of the word archaeology is anticipated by Kant should therefore be taken as a testament to Foucault's knowledge of Kant's works and his proximity to the Kantian tradition.[69]

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NOTES

1. George Steiner, "The Mandarin of the Hour—Michel Foucault," *New York Times Book Review* (February 21, 1971).

2. Michel, Foucault, "Monstrosities in Criticism," Translated by Robert J. Matthews, *Diacritics* 1 (1971, 60). See also Michel Foucault, "Les Monstrousités de la critique," Included in *Michel Foucault: Dits et Écrits I (1954-1975)*, Edited by Daniel Defert et al. Paris: Gallimard, 2001, 1089-1090.

3. *Monstrosities in Criticism*, 60. *Les Monstrousités de la critique*, 1090.

4. *Monstrosities in Criticism*, 60. *Les Monstrousités de la critique*, 1090.

5. See *Les Monstrousités de la critique*, 1089. See also Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, Translated by A.M. Sheridan Smith, New York: Pantheon Books, 1972, 135-195.

6. The details of Foucault's early appropriations of Kant are analyzed in great detail in Marc Djaballah, *Kant, Foucault, and the Forms of Experience*, New York: Routledge, 2008.

7. Giorgio Agamben, "Philosophical Archaeology," Included in *The Signature of All Things*. Translated by Luca D'Isanto with Kevin Attell. New York: Zone Books, 2009, 93. See also Giorgio Agamben, "Philosophical Archaeology," *Law and Critique* 20:3 (2009, 211-231).

8. "Jottings" is the term used by the editors of the *Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant* to designate those parts of Kant's *handschriftliche Nachlaß* which are called *löse Blätter* in the standard *Akademie Ausgabe* (AA) of Kant's *Gesammelte Schriften*. A more precise translation would be "loose sheets," but I have followed the convention established by the Cambridge edition in my references to Kant's "jottings."

9. Kant actually refers to a *philosophirenden or* "philosophizing" history of philosophy. It is important to note that talk of a "philosophizing" history of philosophy is as unusual and unconventional in German as it is in English, but Kant's usage corresponds to the emphasis he places on the practice and activity of philosophizing in other texts. I have nevertheless preferred to call Kant's history "philosophical" rather than "philosophisizing," for reasons of style.

10. See, for example, Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on Metaphysics*, Edited and Translated by Karl Ameriks and Steve Narragon, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997, 299-302 (AA XXVIII: 531).

11. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*. Translated by Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998. pg. 150 (A13/B27).

12. The Academy's question was motivated by its concern about the growing influence of Kantianism and its members desire to save philosophy from the "great confusion" (*grosse Verwirrung*) wrought by the influence of Kantianism. See Adolf Harnack, *Geschichte der königlich Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin (Erster Band, Zweite Hälfte)*, Berlin: Reichsdruckerei, 1900, 609-610.

13. Immanuel Kant, "What real progress has metaphysics mad in Germany since the time of Leibniz and Wolff?" Translated by Henry Allison, Included in *Immanuel Kant: Theoretical Philosophy After 1781*, Edited by Henry Allison and Peter Heath, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Henry Allison provides a useful survey of the history of the text of Kant's essay in his editorial introduction in the Cambridge edition of *Immanuel Kant: Theoretical Philosophy After 1781* (339-442).The text we have today was compiled shortly after Kant's death from three different manuscripts by Kant's friend Friedrich Theodor Rink. The original manuscripts have been lost and the shortcomings of Rink's editorial procedures make it difficult to determine the authenticity of Kant's text. A certain degree of caution is therefore necessary in attributing the claims found in *What real progress has metaphysics mad in Germany since the time of Leibniz and Wolff?* to Kant. The positions attributed to Kant in this essay have, however, been confirmed by comparison with Kant's notes and lectures.

14. *What real progress has metaphysics made in Germany*, 353 (AA XX:259).

15. *What real progress has metaphysics made in Germany*, 353 (AA XX:259).

16. *What real progress has metaphysics made in Germany*, 353 (AA XX:259).

17. *What real progress has metaphysics made in Germany*, 353 (AA XX:259).

18. *What real progress has metaphysics made in Germany*, 353 (AA XX:259).

19. *What real progress has metaphysics made in Germany*, 353 (AA XX:259).

20. *What real progress has metaphysics made in Germany*, 353 (AA XX:259).

21. *What real progress has metaphysics made in Germany*, 354 (AA XX:260).

22. *What real progress has metaphysics made in Germany*, 353 (AA XX:260).

23. *What real progress has metaphysics made in Germany*, 353 (AA XX:260). The idea that an *Endzweck* is an "ultimate purpose" plays an important role in Kant's writings on teleology. See, for example, Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, Translated by Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000, 294 (AA V: 426).

24. *What real progress has metaphysics made in Germany*, 353 (AA XX:260).

25. *What real progress has metaphysics made in Germany*, 357 (AA XX:264).

26. *What real progress has metaphysics made in Germany*, 357 (AA XX:264).

27. *What real progress has metaphysics made in Germany*, 419 (AA XX:342). See also *Critique of Pure Reason*, pg. 147 (B21-22).

28. *What real progress has metaphysics made in Germany*, 419 (AA XX:342). See also *Critique of Pure Reason*, pg. 147 (B21-22).

29. *What real progress has metaphysics made in Germany*, 417 (AA XX:341).

30. *Monstrosities in Criticism*, 60. See also *Les Monstrousités de la critique*, 1089.

31. *What real progress has metaphysics made in Germany*, 417 (AA XX:340).

32. *Philosophical Archaeology*, 81.

33. *Philosophical Archaeology*, 82-83.

34. *Philosophical Archaeology*, 82.

35. *Philosophical Archaeology*, 82. Agamben admits that "what could or ought to have been given" in philosophy is something that "perhaps one day might be," but he also suggests that the realization of that possibility is infinitely deferred, when he says "at the moment, they exist only in the condition of partial objects or ruins." Because the realization of the possibility of what could be and what should be is never realized "at the moment," the possibility of what could and what should take place in the history of philosophy must always remain a possibility with respect to the present, something which is forever "to come,"which, for that reason, never is. Jacques Derrida has analyzed this logic in many places, especially with respect to "democracy to come." See Jacques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, Translated by Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005, 78-94. Agamben has objected to the way this logic infinitely defers the "unworking" of an ultimately fictional injunction by interminably deconstructing it, maintaining it, Agamben says, "in a spectral life." See Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, Translated by Kevin Attell, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005, 64. The difference between Derrida and Agamben on this issue is discussed by Catherine Mills, *The Philosophy of Agamben*, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009, 121.

36. *Philosophical Archaeology*, 82. Agamben's discussion of the paradoxes of Kant's philosophical archaeology and his defense of Foucauldian archaeology should be compared with his criticism of deconstruction in Giorgio Agamben, "Theory of Signatures," Included in *The Signature of All Things*, Translated by Luca D'Isanto and Kevin Attell, New York: Zone Books, 2009. 78-81. It should also be noted that Kant did not maintain the view that Agamben attributes to him at the beginning of his essay on philosophical archaeology. Agamben points to a passage in Kant's *Logic*, where Kant says that philosophy cannot be learned, because "it is not yet given," but Agamben misrepresents the context in which Kant made this claim and its implications when he suggests that the whole of philosophy can *never* be given as such for Kant. Instead of arguing that philosophy is only an idea and does not exist in reality, as Agamben claims, Kant is arguing, in the passage from the *Logic*—and in the corresponding passage in his lectures, which I have cited in note 8—that one must philosophize, in order to become a philosopher. One cannot simply memorize what other philosophers have said, taking their words to be true on the authority of the wise men who have spoken them. One must think for onself, if one wishes to learn philosophy, and approach philosophical questions with one's own reason. When one has done that, then Kant thinks one has "given" oneself philosophy. Kant cannot mean that it is impossible for philosophy to be given at all, or that philosophy cannot be an empirically given whole, because Kant claims to have made metaphysics a science in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781/1787). Kant went on to defend the claim that his "critique" had made metaphysics a science in his *Progomena to any future metaphysics that will be able to come forward as a science* (1783), *On a discovery whereby any new critique of pure reason is to be made superfluous by an older one* (1790), and the drafts of his prize-essay on the progress of metaphysics (1793/1804). In his late writing against Fichte, Kant even claimed that his *Critique* contained the entire science of metaphysics, a claim which is contradicted by the text of the 'Introduction' to the first (A) and second (B) editions of the work. For all of these reasons, it is impossible to maintain that Kant thought that "what could happen" and "what should happen" in the history of philosophy could not be realized.

37. *Philosophical Archaeology*, 82-92.

38. For a helpful account of Agamben's critique of this logic, see Alexander García Düttmann, "Never Before, Always Already: Notes on Agamben and the Category of Relation," *Angelaki: A Journal of the Theoretical Humanities* 6:3 (2001, 3-6).

39. Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Translated by Daniel Heller-Roazen, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998, 109-110.

40. See, for example, *Homo Sacer*, 148, 169-176.

41. *Philosophical Archaeology*, 84.

42. *Philosophical Archaeology*, 102.

43. *Philosophical Archaeology*, 103.

44. *Philosophical Archaeology*, 104. See also Michel Foucault, Michel, "Introduction," Included in Ludwig Binswanger, and Michel Foucault, *Dream and Existence*, Translated by Keith Hoeller, Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1993, 72.

45. *Philosophical Archaeology*, 104-105.

46. *Philosophical Archaeology*, 105-106.

47. *Philosophical Archaeology*, 103-105.

48. The English word "fiction" is derived from the Latin *fingere*, which means "to touch," but also "to shape" and "to form." Etymologically, the term need not refer to works of literature, but may be extended to anything which is "shaped" or "formed" or even "made." Reading the various "fictions" Agamben refers to in his works as things which are "made up" is helpful for understanding his critique of the distinctions distinction between the norm and exception, law and anomie, man and animal, and so forth.

49. On the significance of study and play, see *State of Exception*, 63-64.

50. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, New York: Vintage Books, 1994, xiv. Similar claims are to be found in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, where Foucault is even more explicit in his criticism of the phenomenological approaches to history. It is here that Foucault famously accuses phenomenology of "transcendental narcissism" and claims that his archaeology aims to "free history from the grip of phenomenology." See *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 203.

51. *The Order of Things*, 319.

52. *The Order of Things*, 220, 248.

53. *The Order of Things*, xiv. The theory of discursive formations to which Foucault refers is articulated more generally in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 31-39.

54. *The Order of Things*, xii-xiii.

55. The fictional and even arbitrary character of the distinctions human beings use to order their life and thought is a general feature of Agamben's thought, but it is perhaps most clearly expressed at the end of *Language and Death*, a work dedicated to the "ungroundedness" of philosophy. In the context of a discussion of the relation between violence and sacrifice, Agamben argues that "man, the animal possessing language, is, as such, ungrounded... he has no foundation except in his own action... in every case, the action of the human community is grounded only in another action... the ungroundedness of all human praxis is hidden here in the fact that an action... is abandoned to itself and thus becomes the foundation for all legal behavior; the action is that which, remaining unspeakable and intransmissible in every action and in all human language, destines man to community and to tradition." This means that the categories governing human language, communities, traditions, and laws have their foundations in human action. The acts which "found" those languages, communities, traditions, and laws may have real and even disastrous consequences, but they are ultimately gratuitous. They cannot be considered necessary, for Agamben, because they are arbitrary. See Giorgio Agamben, *Language and Death: The Place of Negativity*. Translated by Karen E. Pinkus and Michael Hardt. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991, 105.

56. *Philosophical Archaeology*, 93.

57. See Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, Translated by Kevin Attell, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004, 35-36. See also Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, Translated by Kevin Attell, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005, 86-88.

58. At the end of his essay on philosophical archaeology, Agamben argues that "the human sciences will be capable of reaching their decisive epistemological threshold only after they have rethought, from the bottom up, the very idea of an ontological anchoring, and thereby envisaged being as a field of essentially historical tensions." See *Philosophical Archaeology*, pg. 111. Given his emphasis on the ultimately fictional nature of the distinctions which generate these historical tensions, it is likely that Agamben would deny that these distinctions have any "ontological anchoring," which would provide them with I have simply called "a foundation in "reality."

59. *The Order of Things*, xii-xiii.

60. *The Order of Things*, xii-xiii, xxii, 218. See also *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 5-6, 169-177.

61. *The Order of Things*, xx. See also *The Order of Things*, 252, where Foucault begins to discuss the role this approach to the empirical will take in the epistemic configuration of modernity, noting that "visible forms, their connections, the blank spaces that isolate them and surround their outlines—all these will now be presented to our gaze only in an already composed state, already articulated in that nether darkness that is fomenting them with time."

62. *The Order of Things*, xx.

63. *The Order of Things*, xx. Agamben's position could be said to emphasize this element of Foucault's argument.

64. *The Order of Things*, xxi-xxii.

65. *Philosophical Archaeology*, 93-94.

66. *Philosophical Archaeology*, 93.

67. *Philosophical Archaeology*, 94.

68. The phrase "conditions of existence" (*les conditions d'existence*) appears several times in *The Order of Things*, often in conjunction with Foucault's discussion of Cuvier. See *The Order of Things*, 274. It acquires a more general methodological significance in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. See *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 27-28, 38, 116-117. Foucault also sometimes refers to the historical a priori as the "condition of reality" (*condition de réalité*) of statements, which I take to be lexically equivalent to the idea of a "condition of existence." See *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 127.

69. I have described the limits within which I think Foucault may be described as a Kantian in Colin McQuillan, "Transcendental Philosophy and Critical Philosophy in Kant and Foucault: Response to Colin Koopman," *Foucault Studies* 9 (2010, 145-155).

Philosophical archaeology in Kant, Foucault, and Agamben. C Mcquillan. From sovereign ban to banning sovereignty. Agamben's genealogy of power in terms of political, philosophical and legal thought. In this inaugural volume of the Edinburgh Encounters in Law and Philosophy series, Giorgio Agamben focuses upon the on-going warfare European state power has waged against its most malignant enemy: civil war itself. The survival of the State is seen to depend on its ability to preserve the political community from factional enmity. The concept of philosophical archaeology in Kant and Foucault. Save to Library. Download. Phenomenology of Bartleby Abstract: The philosophy of Giorgio Agamben – philosophical archaeology – presents an intriguing combination of phenomenology and deconstruction. For Agamben, the phenomenon is only ultimately given in the exposure of its archÄ" – its moment of arising and fulfilment. However, this moment of archÄ" means also, by a Hegelian influence, the disintegration of the phenomenon's vitality. The phenomenon, then, must be rendered inoperative before it can be understood. Philosophical archaeology in kant, foucault, And agamben. Colin McQuillan. Foucault's reference to Kant helps to illuminate the role played by the historical a priori in his archaeology, while Agamben's essay obscures the epistemological priority Foucault ascribes to the experience of order. 2. a philosophical history of philosophy. When Foucault said that Kant used the word archaeology "to designate the history of that which renders necessary a certain form of thought," he was referring to the "jottings" for Kant's unfinished essay on the progress of metaphysics.8 It is here that Kant introduces the concept of "philosophical archaeology" (philosophische ArchÄ¤ologie)