Dialogos

Archeology and Humanism: An Incongruent Foucault

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Introduction

A tension exists in Foucault's writings concerning his alleged anti-humanism. While his early archaeological period is taken to sediment his post-structuralist, anti-humanist methodology, Foucault still lets humanism creep into his writing, particularly in his later work. In the spirit of charity, I consider two ways of reading Foucault to overcome this tension: either (1) emphasize his post-structuralism over his humanist leanings or (2) take his humanism seriously and minimize his post-structuralism. After analysis, neither reading is adequate. I conclude that Foucault's *oeuvre* is best understood simply as incongruent, contrary to his own remarks to unify his writings and methodologies.

When a writer produces multiple works throughout a career, the tendency is to unify the discourses under the name of the author and map progressions, digressions, and regressions to illustrate coherence even in the presence of obvious discontinuity. The focus of unity is on the author's subjectivity, a coherent tracing of the author's originary discursive intentions and, oftentimes, non-discursive personal needs that are deemed to compose the author's works. Heightened attention is given to the author's interiority in light of the exteriority of social influence, economic materiality, and history. External factors are not excluded from analysis, but they are subject to the primacy of beliefs, desires, and consciousness. This is a *methodologically humanistic* (humanism$_m$) interpretation or constitution of the collection of discursive texts, the *oeuvre*, that sets the creative intentions and activities of the human as the locus of history above all social and historical structures. For my purposes, I make a distinction between *methodological* and *substantive* humanisms. *Methodological* humanism (humanism$_m$) refers only to the process of unifying discourses or practices according to the consciousness of a human subject or subjects; human consciousness frames all inquiry about the *oeuvre*, rather than, for example, structures that are out of our control. *Substantive* humanism (humanism$_s$) corresponds to theories emphasizing the importance of humanity via some shared attribute, essence, or substance. In both cases, *humanity* is the center of consideration and importance, warranting the name of 'humanism,' but they are different applications of the theme.

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Structuralists and post-structuralists alike oppose humanistic$_m$ constitutions. Whether such thinkers favor static or dynamic structures, they relegate the human subject to a deprivileged space, and the *oeuvre* is unified according to sets of structural criteria much different than humanist$_m$ classifications. The author ceases to be the criterion of unity. Instead, both the author and the collection of texts are delineated by constitutional structures that alter the interpretation of what constitutes the "author" and the appropriate collection of texts. Often characterized as a post-structuralist, Michel Foucault provocatively asks, "What difference does it make who is speaking?"[1] The author *per se* is not important nor is the author's proper name *as a proper name*. What *is* important is how the author's name plays a certain role in a discursive classification system. Foucault identifies this as the *author function*, the "characteristic of the mode of existence, circulation, and functioning of certain discourses within a society" organized around the author's proper name but going well beyond the normal functioning of a proper name.[2]

Formulation of the author function leads Foucault to emphasize studying discourses based purely on their modes of existence and their particular functionings and attributions that shape and are shaped by the cultures they circulate, instead of focusing on the author. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault challenges humanistic$_m$ understandings of books and *oeuvres* and goes in the direction of a "project of a *pure description of discursive events* as the horizon for the search for the unities that form within it."[3] We should no longer investigate an author's originary acts and threads of consciousness that link collections of texts. Rather we should stay on the level of the discourses themselves and engage the texts *descriptively* to uncover the rules of discursive formation that give rise to those particular statements rather than other possible statements.

In later writings, however, Foucault comments on the relationship between his well-noted methodologies of archaeology, genealogy, and ethics in a manner that unifies them according to his own consciousness, while apparently still holding the post-structuralism of his archaeological period. Foucault unintentionally assents to a humanistic$_m$ interpretation of his own collection of texts, even as he assents to an anti-humanistic$_m$ rendering of history. He says,

> So that in these three areas – madness, delinquency, and sexuality – I emphasized a particular aspect each time: the establishment of a certain objectivity, the development of a politics and a government of the self, and the elaboration of an ethics and a practice in regard to

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[1] Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?" in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. by Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 120.

[2] *Ibid.*, 108.

[3] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London: Tavistock Publications Limited, 1972; reprint, London: Routledge, 2000), 27.

> oneself. But each time I also tried to point out the place occupied here by the other two components necessary for constituting a field of experience. It is basically a matter of different examples in which the three fundamental elements of any experience are implicated: a game of truth, relations of power, and forms of relation to oneself and to others.[4]

Foucault regards these "elements" as the three axes that define our complex experience.[5] Thus, whenever Foucault privileged knowledge and truth, power and domination, or technologies of the self in his analyses, he believed he was not discounting his other methodologies; rather, he was restricting his methodological domain in order to emphasize one component of the total field of experience, a form of methodological bracketing.[6] Foucault then unifies his three methodologies according to his understanding of the field of experience, where each aspect elucidates part of the experiential whole. Foucault constructs a tripartite meta-methodology based upon his conception of experience and his intention to express that conception. Foucault's ordering of his own texts revolves around himself as the author, *and this is a humistic$_m$ interpretation.* This understanding of his own project is clearly at odds with his post-structuralism as a tension forms between his humanistic$_m$ ordering and anti-humanistic$_m$ declarations against such an ordering. Foucault does that which he argues against.

If we value some congruence in the reading of an author's work, as Foucault does with his own, there are two interpretations that could minimize this tension in Foucault: either (1) read him through his own post-structuralism and privilege his archaeological work over his humanism$_m$ or (2) take his humanism$_m$ seriously and lessen the import of his post-structuralist remarks. To some, this tension may seem like nothing more than a small quibble against Foucault. One may admit that Foucault neglects to account for himself in the historical classification of his own methods and lapses into a humanistic$_m$ project, but that, nonetheless, this is only a minor complication. The thrust of his anti-humanist project remains intact if one does not take too seriously his comments on unification. The import of his work, one may say, is found in his particular historical analyses and not in his own unifying thoughts about them. I believe that most who are sympathetic to the early Foucault will de-emphasize his humanistic$_m$ comments in virtue of preserving his post-structuralist anti-humanism$_m$. This is an appeal to the first interpretive approach to Foucault. But is this a sustainable approach?

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[4] Michel Foucault, "Polemics, Politics, and Problemizations: An Interview," in *The Foucault Reader*, 387.

[5] Michel Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics: An Overview of Work in Progress," in *ibid.*, 351-2.

[6] This is parsimonious with Deleuze's interpretation of Foucault's later work, that Foucault undertook a shift in emphasis towards the subject rather than discourse. See Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988).

In this essay, I argue that the first interpretive approach is not sustainable, but neither is the second, more humanist approach. I first argue that Foucault's post-structuralist method is itself internally inconsistent, that his anti-humanism$_m$ is self-defeating because it entails humanism$_m$. Such a result renders Foucault's post-structuralism problematic to use as a lens to read the entirety of his work. Secondly, I take up Foucault's humanist$_m$ interpretation of his own works, the attempt to unify the three methods across his works, and show that Foucault's archaeological method conflicts with his later genealogy and ethics because of the unacknowledged substantive humanism (humanism$_s$) imbedded within them. Thus, I conclude that Foucault's *oeuvre* should be left as it is, simply incongruent.[7]

Archeology and the Archeologist

In this section I show how Foucault's archaeological anti-humanism$_m$ is self-defeating; it contradicts its own presuppositions regarding the description of differing epistemological eras, or *epistemes*. The consequence is that one cannot use Foucault's own archaeological method to understand and organize the corpus of his work. One cannot privilege Foucault's anti-humanism$_m$ as the unifying centerpiece of his *oeuvre* as the first interpretive approach would have it.

In the space between explicit social and scientific codes and materiality, the space between the intentional and the physical, Foucault's early work engages in an "archaeological" project to uncover the "positive unconscious" of discursive corpuses of knowledge (*connaissance*) that produce regularity and order.[8] He believes that there is much more to the regularity of discursive practices than can be explained by attributions to originary intentional subjects or the structural materials of social and cultural milieus.[9] This positive unconscious is an epistemological framework that the subjects and discourses of the period embody without questioning its validity and, yet, they operate without being able to recognize its presence. Foucault is interested in mapping these epistemic rules of formation, these rules of order, that prescribe what statements can be created and limit the extent of the domain of thought. Foucault writes,

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[7] This is similar to Peter Dews' assessment in "The Return of the Subject in Late Foucault," in *Radical Philosophy*, 51 (1989), 37-41. Dews' reasoning is that Foucault must have found postmodern thought too limiting to speak meaningfully about freedom; thus, he needed to introduce the concept of the subject. I also agree with Joan Reynolds' judgment that Foucault moved away from his post-structuralism to a "pragmatic humanism" ("'Pragmatic Humanism' in Foucault's Later Work," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 37:4 (2004), 951-979. In the same sentiment as Dews, Reynolds writes that this allows for Foucault to write about ethics and freedom. However, while Reynolds underplays Foucault's incongruence, my aim is to make the incongruence clear.

[8] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, Vintage Books Edition (New York: Random House, Inc., 1994), xi.

[9] *Ibid.*, xiii.

> Order is, at one and the same time, that which is given in things as their inner law, the hidden network that determines the way they confront one another, and also that which has no existence except in the grid created by a glance, an examination, a language; and it is only in the blank space of this grid that order manifests itself in depth as though already there, waiting in silence for the moment of its expression.[10]

Where Foucault uncovered the origination of specific concepts in his previous archaeological works (e.g., the concepts of madness and disease), in *The Order of Things* he shifts his attention to larger archaeological structures that underlie considerable expanses of time and distinguish themselves through comparative discursive discontinuities with adjoining periods. These larger structures are the *epistemes* of the time period, the total set of transversal unifying relations that constructs the knowledge infrastructure of a given time period in all of its aspects (subjects, disciplines, and systems) and constitutes its discursive regularities.[11] The episteme is not the composition of extant knowledge; it is the set of conditions for the constitution of knowledge. Epistemes are temporally localized, not universal, so that ahistorical truths and concepts are jettisoned in favor of the "historical *a priori*," where what counts as 'true' and 'meaningful' are given without dispute and determined by the epistemological possibilities generated. These rules of formation create the conditions for true discourse and meaningful language without necessitating the expression of any particular set of statements over another within the realm of epistemic possibility. Truth is not a transcendent reality; it is contemporaneous with discourse – immanent, yet logically prior, to discursive practices. Truth becomes historicized and changes with change in the episteme. This is, then, a defining difference between Foucault's notion of the episteme and the tenets of structuralism. Epistemes are not immutable or universally static; they determine the possibilities of discourse at the micro level of specific practices and languages, but there remains a macroscopic indeterminate element across periods, which structuralists deny.

The archaeological method for discovering epistemes is through the analysis of discourses and discourses alone. Documents become *monuments* for archaeological analysis, bifurcated from subjectivity and consciousness. Foucault is only interested in the rules of formation, the games of truth and meaning, that immanently constitute the discourses and reveal the inner law of the episteme.[12] Foucault does not wish to invoke the authority of a sovereign behind an *oeuvre* or relate archaeology to psychology or anthropology, disciplines that make human subjectivity the engine of human production. Archaeology is a rewriting of what has already been written in a way that avoids

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[10] *Ibid.*, xx.
[11] Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 191.
[12] *Ibid.,* 138-40.

the humanism$_m$ of most other historiographical recountings. Archaeological analysis means to be thoroughly anti-humanist$_m$.

These discursive practices are identified and subjected to comparative analyses with other discourses so that their differences are made manifest. In this sense, archaeology is always a study of plurality since the contours of difference are required, already implying disparate regularities between discourses. The archaeologist notes how the discourses distinguish themselves from other modes of discursive thought that make visible epistemological breaks. For Foucault, these analyses are genuine *discoveries*, rather than inventions, since the archaeologist must operate within a blank space that is defined by the "exteriority of its vicinity" in order to conduct an archaeological analysis.[13] One cannot be influenced by the epistemic conditions one seeks to analyze; the archaeologist must remain externally neutral to the discursive concepts one studies in order to conduct a project of pure description. The archaeologist discovers the actual rules of formation immanent to the surface of discourse, rather than shaping the field of inquiry according to one's own set of normative criteria, concepts, and projects.

If Foucault is successful here, he alleviates the problem of hermeneutics, the problem of uncovering only that which is a product of our own interpretations. One is not forbidden to consider the various interpretations that have been postulated by historians. Yet, Foucault cautiously warns that we are not constrained by these prefabricated epistemic groupings. "I shall take as my starting-point whatever unities are already given…; but I shall not place myself inside these dubious unities in order to study their internal configurations or their secret contradictions."[14] Instead, Foucault tentatively holds these unities to scrutinize and dismember them to construct legitimate reformed unities that are based on the comparative differences they reveal in relation to other discursive unities.

In *The Order of Things*, Foucault surveys the discursive landscape of texts beginning roughly from the sixteenth century up through modern times and discovers two great discontinuities in the Western epistemological infrastructure, thus, producing three epistemes: the Renaissance, the Classical, and the Modern, in chronological order. Each embodies its own set of conditions for intelligibility. The Renaissance episteme is based on *resemblance* where the world is conceived as one continuous chain of signifiers and the signified, all linked by relations of similarity. For example, the seeds of the aconite plant are "tiny dark globes set in white skinlike coverings" resembling human eyes and, hence, are taken to be signs of our eyes and used as ocular medicine.[15] The immense diversity of life and materials are associated together through the chain of resemblances so that even the greatest being, God, and the most insignificant parts of the universe can be traced and related to one

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[13] *Ibid.,* 17.
[14] *Ibid.,* 26.
[15] Foucault, *The Order of Things,* 27.

another.   Resemblances are the grounds of knowledge set within a well-connected intrarelated universe of significations.

The Classical episteme privileges *representation* as the condition for knowledge; language is capable of ordering the universe through self-evident representation, which grounds and makes possible the absolute certainty of knowledge. Language is given the special function of being the medium of order, able to categorize objectively the rational array of objects and categories that are already present in the world. The Classical episteme assumes that there is an absolute order that can be captured through adequate representation, through adequate codification. Classical discursive practices systematize simple classifications into tabular form and move gradually to more complex classifications building upon the simples. When all of the data is gathered and the tables complete, absolute certainty is attained. As Foucault describes,

> The Classical *episteme* can be defined in its most general arrangement in terms of the articulated system of *mathesis*, a *taxinomia*, and a *genetic analysis*. The sciences always carry within themselves the project, however, remote it may be, of an exhaustive ordering of the world; they are always directed, too, towards the discovery of simple elements and their progressive combination…The center of knowledge, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, is the *table*.[16]

This gave rise to the upsurge of Classical biological, economic, and philological classification systems that spatially locate all simples within a two-dimensional taxonomic schema.   In philosophical discourse, representation based on simples is the keystone of Descartes' foundationalism where he first theorizes the one absolute simple of the *cogito* and then builds an epistemological edifice upon it using the notions of 'clear' and 'distinct' ideas, notions that rely on the transparent demarcation of true concepts and beliefs by the faculty of language; language that is already capable of order becomes the principle of order.

Yet, with all the possibilities for representation, the Classical episteme could not represent that which is closest to itself, the *representer* and the *act of representing*; the representer is, simultaneously, the nearest and the farthest to representation. The one who represents is nearest because she is the origin and center of all representations, an infinite space by which all things can be organized. However, the representer is also the farthest; if the epistemological space of the knowing subject lacks any aspect of finitude or immanence, there is no recourse for self-classification in the field of knowledge that is comprised of finite, immanent relations between objects and categories. This does not mean that the Classical episteme fails to recognize the representer in the

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[16] *Ibid.*, 74-5.

universe, but it could not make intelligible the representer *as a representation*, as a finite, immanent object among other objects, something to be tabularized.

The mark of discontinuity between the Classical and Modern epistemes lies in the Modern episteme's ability to create the conditions for radical self-reflection, a self-awareness that situates humankind organically within history and finitude. The knower recognizes that she herself, her knowledge, and her act of knowing emerge from historical, cultural, philological, and biological contexts; she recognizes that she is finite and is herself, in many ways, just another object in a field of objects. The knower becomes the known and for the first time "humanity," as a represented object of study, exists, not as part of an ideal taxonomic system, but as occupying a real place in history. Humanity gains a deep-seated historicity. This does not mean that the Modern subject is conceived only as empirical. She is still regarded as the transcendent knower who unifies the field of knowledge – only now, there is more in the field.

For Foucault, this conception of humanity raises deep problems precisely because the empirical and the transcendental are held together in an unstable manner. The human is conditioned wholly by external factors (e.g., environment, biology, character, and language) and, yet, she is supposed to be the transcendental subject who has decisive control over herself and her knowledge; the human is understood to be a historical product, but she is supposed to be the sole originator of her own history. Foucault describes this unusual development as the *analytic of finitude* which emerges in at least three tenuous binaries: the transcendental-empirical, *cogito*-unthought, and retreat-return of the origin.[17] Briefly, the transcendental-empirical doublet means that the transcendental aspect of humanity determines the form and possibility of the empirical, while the empirical is conceived as the necessary content for the formation of the transcendental. The *cogito*-unthought doublet refers to humanity as the source of thought that happens to be born from unthought, the materiality of the world, whereas the unthought is pursued by the *cogito* in hopes of assimilation so that its ideational generative abilities remain primary. The unthought is everything not thought, even as the *cogito* attempts to encompass everything under thought. The retreat-return of the origin is a means to explain that humanity's origin is ever-retreating from empirical disclosure because humanity is not the source of its own being; the social and material exteriority of humanity extends infinitely beyond us, even as the origin is ever-returning because humanity deems itself the creator of history, the one who makes history possible. The historical origin of humanity is both internal and foreign to the conception of humanity. It is for these reasons, these unstable binaries, that Foucault proclaims that the end of "man" is nearing.[18] Invented by the Modern episteme, the concept of humanity will cease to exist when the Modern episteme slips away.

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[17] *Ibid.*, 312-34.
[18] *Ibid.*, 387.

Such is Foucault's archaeological method and its use in delineating the three most recent epistemes. Is this a workable method? Can it be coherently implemented to map epistemes? Is the archaeological position a legitimate epistemological position?

To help answer these questions, I appeal to an unlikely thinker, Bishop George Berkeley, to illustrate a now well-known point.   Though he has long been discounted as providing a viable philosophy, he was masterful at handling objections. The motto of his immaterialism, *esse est percipi*, means that all that exists is that which is perceived, and this implies that that which is not perceived does not exist, that it is not possible for something to exist without being perceived. Objectors quickly retorted that all that is required to debunk Berkeley's idealism is to imagine an unperceived object, thus, making it at least possible that there exists something unperceived. To this, Berkeley eloquently writes,

> But, say you, surely there is nothing easier than for me to imagine trees, for instance, in a park, or books existing in the closet, and nobody by to perceive them. I answer, you may so, there is no difficulty in it; but what is all this, I beseech you, more than framing in your mind certain ideas which you call book and trees, and at the same time omitting to frame the idea of any one that may perceive them? But do not you yourself perceive or think of them all the while?[19]

To engage in the act of trying to imagine an unperceived object is already a failed attempt, for one cannot subtract oneself as a perceiver from the act. Foucault theorizes that the epistemological position of the archaeologist is externally neutral to the discourses under study and that the fruit of his labor is a pure description of the discursive rules of formation immanent to the texts. Foucault is asking us to believe that we can accurately describe the conceptual framework of foreign concepts without the importation of our own concepts. In the spirit of Berkeley, we should certainly ask: can the archaeologist subtract herself from her methodology to the extent that Foucault requires?   The answer is 'no' because we have no recourse to archaeological theorizing without our own concepts; to avoid using our own concepts in any analysis makes as little sense as trying to imagine an unperceived object. And this is a familiar point in post-positivist philosophy, stating that all observation, theory-formation, and interpretation do not occur in vacuums, but are thoroughly constituted by our cognitive capacities and conceptual systems.[20] In brief, the

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[19] George Berkeley, *The Principles of Human Knowledge*, ed. by G. J. Warnock (New York: The World Publishing Co., 1969), 75.

[20] See Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 3rd Edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); W. V. O. Quine, "Epistemology Naturalized," *Ontological Relativity and Other Essays* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969); Laurence BonJour, *The Structure of Empirical Knowledge* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985); Sandra Harding,

normativity of our own concepts seeps into all "descriptive" projects – and this means that no project is *purely* descriptive. Foucault inadvertently assents to projects of theorizing that are fundamentally inconceivable. His error is the failure to theorize himself as the archaeologist adequately in his own post-structuralist methodology.

Foucault's mistake presents a substantial problem for him. Discussing the transition between the Classical and Modern epistemes, Foucault makes the comment, "When discourse ceased to exist and function within representation as the first means of ordering it, Classical thought ceased at the same time to be directly accessible to us."[21] This is a crucial statement Foucault needs to make to demarcate the Modern from the Classical episteme, but it derails his archaeology. Classical thought is not directly accessible to us in the sense that it is set within an epistemological infrastructure that is foreign to us. We, as Modern archaeologists standing outside that infrastructure, neither use nor "think" the same kinds of concepts as those Classical texts we are studying.[22] Therefore, we must use our own epistemological orderings and concepts to understand those foreign discursive practices because there is no other recourse; the Modern archaeologist is wholly constituted as a knowing subject by the epistemological framework of the Modern episteme. Thus, to reiterate, the discourses we analyze must be constituted by our Modern epistemic rules of formation. If this is what we must do, it is then strange that Foucault speaks of distinct foreign epistemes with altogether different rules of formation. This situation makes it hard even to refer meaningfully to this kind of utterly foreign episteme. As others have argued, if we conceive of "foreign" epistemes at all (or conceptual schemes as Donald Davidson writes), they cannot be absolutely foreign because we have to locate them on a common coordinate axis in relation to our own episteme in order for us even to understand them.[23] The presumptive nature of rationality means that we must interpret other people

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Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?: Thinking from Women's Lives (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991); Susan Haack, *Evidence and Inquiry: Towards Reconstruction in Epistemology* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 1995); and Linda Alcoff, *Real Knowing: New Versions of the Coherence Theory* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996).

[21] Foucault, *The Order of Things,* 304.

[22] Foucault is inconsistent on exactly where the archaeologist stands in relation to the discourses he studies. In *The Order of Things*, Foucault clearly believes that he himself is speaking as a Modern and that there is no complication mapping discursive rules of the Renaissance and Classical epistemes as well as the episteme he inhabits (*The Order of Things,* xxii, 385). However, in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault remarks that it is only after we have passed an episteme, when it becomes *outside* to our own, that we can begin archaeological analysis. Thus, this implies that we could not be in the Modern episteme if what he wrote concerning the Modern episteme in the *The Order of Things* is accurate (*The Archaeology of Knowledge*; 130-1). For the purpose of this essay, all that matters is that Foucault acknowledges that he is in a different episteme than the Renaissance and Classical epistemes and, yet, is still engaged in archaeological analysis under the conditions of externality that he specifies. For simplicity, I will assume Foucault's comments in *The Order of Things* that we are still in the Modern episteme.

[23] See Donald Davidson, "On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme," in *Inquires into Truth and Interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984); and Stephen Lukes, "Some Problems of Rationality," in *Rationality*, ed. by Bryan Wilson (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970).

and other discourses as conceptually and rationally like ourselves; otherwise the other is not considered foreign or irrational, but simply *unintelligible*. There would be a failure to understand the other, and worse, a failure to imagine what it would take to understand. Needless to say, this contradicts Foucault's archaeological presuppositions because he clearly believes that he can understand and classify the Classical episteme without importing his own concepts and rationality.

Foucault's interpretive problem grows into two related difficulties. First, when the archaeologist is theorized adequately into her own methodology, the archaeologist can no longer adopt a purely post-structuralist position on pains of inconsistency. Rather, she must admit to a level of humanism$_m$. Since the archaeologist identifies demarcations between epistemes and interprets epistemic discourses according to her taxonomic concepts, the methodology she engages revolves around her consciousness, even as she maps discursive structures. This does not preclude archaeological analysis *in toto*, but it does mean that one must be attuned to and account for how one shapes the employed methodology. As it stands, however, Foucault's post-structuralism is self-defeating if its humanistic$_m$ element goes unincorporated.

The second difficulty is closely related to the first regarding the truth and meaningfulness of archaeological analysis. For Foucault's stated method to work, the archaeologist must perform a double phenomenological bracketing of truth and meaning, both in her own episteme and the episteme she is describing, so that she can study the epistemological conditions for truth and meaning in different epistemes without the interference of contaminating conceptions.[24] Archaeological findings, then, have a paradoxical status. The archaeologist reveals these discoveries under the assumptions that they accurately describe some characteristic about an episteme and that these discoveries are intelligible to us, whereas according to the constraints of double bracketing, these reports can neither be *accurate* nor *intelligible* since truth and meaning play no regulative role. One may retort that archaeological findings are always relayed through the conditions of truth and meaning immanent to the episteme under study. Unfortunately, this response succumbs to the first difficulty noted above where we cannot help but impute our notions of truth and meaning into the conceptual project of delineating the epistemic conditions for truth and meaning in the other episteme.

All of this suggests that Foucault is caught in the analytic of finitude he believes he safely avoids. Foucault reduces the human subject to an epistemic node constituted by practices of truth and meaning made possible by the episteme; the episteme wholly constitutes the knowing, intelligible subject. This explains for Foucault how the subject is not of her own making. She is an empirically finite subject derived from social, economic, historical, and epistemic constitutional practices. At the same time, however, she is still the

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24 Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, 2nd Edition (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 49.

archaeologist who conceptualizes the analysis and theorizes the contours and limitations of the episteme, thereby assuming the role of the transcendental observer who is able to bifurcate herself from the interpretive process. This situation echoes the transcendental-empirical doublet that tenuously acknowledges that we are entirely empirical while also the infinite knowers who methodologically constitute the field of experience and analysis. Thus, by Foucault's own conclusions, his archaeological project is unstable and in need of revision.

With these difficulties regarding Foucault's post-structuralist anti-humanism$_m$, we find that this methodology is internally inconsistent for, in its neglect to theorize the archaeologist within the method, the archaeologist contradicts her own presupposition of a subject-less construction. This is enough to discount a primarily post-structuralist reading of Foucault's *oeuvre* that ignores his humanism$_m$. I will now take his humanism$_m$ more seriously, as he himself seems to do in his remarks on unifying his methodologies, and consider how coherent of an interpretive project it makes. The next section is an analysis on the compatibility of archaeology with genealogy and ethics.

The Case of Humanism in Foucault's Later Works

Coming back to Foucault's later remarks that although he might emphasize one method over another in particular studies, he maintains that all three of his methodological concentrations are important in understanding the complete field of experience and should not be excluded as possible terrains of analysis. The question that concerns us here is whether archaeology can be implemented consistently alongside genealogy and Foucault's technologies of the self. How commensurate are the methods together in unity?

The common thread between archaeology and genealogy is that analysis focuses on the surfaces of practices without reference to deep meanings, teleologies, decisions, or intentions.[25] Foucault still intends to avoid a regulative role for the subject.[26] Yet, where archaeology limits description at the level of discursive practices, genealogy pushes beyond just discourse to the level of actual bodies and the dynamics of power that inscribe and use them as vehicles of perpetuation. Genealogy attends to creative power, which is not a repressive force legislated by a sovereign, but it is productive and immanent to the field of its operation.[27] Power is not localized or held by any individual. "Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere."[28] This move away from purely discursive practices is a substantial difference between archaeology and genealogy, but the divergence

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[25] Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. by Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 76-7.

[26] Michel Foucault, "Truth and Power," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, ed. by Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 117.

[27] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction, vol. 1,* trans. by Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books/Random House, 1990), 92.

[28] *Ibid.*, 93.

becomes more profound when knowledge is theorized into genealogy, creating for Foucault categories of hegemonic and subjugating knowledges.

Where knowledge is usually isolated from the influences of power in traditional epistemologies, Foucault theorizes that knowledge and power cannot be separated from each other; they are mutually constitutive.[29] Thus, if power/knowledge is a viable notion, there is room to theorize the possibility of some knowledges that dominate over others. These are hegemonic knowledges that legislate over all subjects what is to be true, intelligible, and count as knowledge to the detriment of other "subjugated" forms of knowledge that attempt to qualify as legitimate claims to knowledge, but fail due to the external standards imposed on them. Subjugated knowledges "have been disqualified as inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborated: naïve knowledges, located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity."[30] An integral role of genealogy is to uncover these subjugated knowledges in order for us to become aware of epistemological hegemony, resist its dominance, and "detach the power of truth" from these knowledges that suppress; genealogy is a methodology of liberation from certain expressions of knowledge/power.[31]

When Foucault shifts to investigating technologies of the self, those genealogical analyses focusing on how and why individuals construct their own subjectivities, he refers again to resistance in the face of danger,

> I would like to do the genealogy of problems, of *problématiques*. My point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous, which is not exactly the same as bad. If everything is dangerous, then we always have something to do. So my position leads not to apathy but to a hyper- and pessimistic activism. I think that the ethico-political choice we have to make every day is to determine which is the main danger.[32]

In addition, Foucault recognizes three types of struggles individuals face: (1) domination in ethnic, social, and religious spheres, (2) exploitation in the workplace concerning one's relation to what one produces, and (3) submission to one's identity as it subjects him to others, a form of self-imposed subjugation.[33] Foucault writes, "And nowadays, the struggle against the forms of subjection – against the submission of subjectivity – is becoming more and more important even though the struggles against forms of domination and

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[29] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 2nd Edition, trans. by Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books/Random House, 1995), 27-28.

[30] Michel Foucault, "Two Lectures," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, ed. by Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 82.

[31] Michel Foucault, "Truth and Power," 133.

[32] Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics: An Overview of Work in Progress," 343.

[33] Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power," in *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, 2nd Edition (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), 212.

exploitation have not disappeared. Quite the contrary."[34] The third form of struggle becomes the focus of Foucault's later work, but the other struggles are still quite present, and Foucault calls us to resist the "dangers" that cause those struggles.

It is Foucault's activist insistence to resist danger and combat struggles in his genealogy and technologies of the self that diverge most from his earlier archaeology. Where Foucault was once content to remain at the descriptive level, he now delves into the normative. The consequence: a *substantive humanism* (humanism$_s$) slips into his genealogy that is absent from archaeology, a humanism that attributes some substantive quality to humanity that serves as the focus of Foucault's later work. Some may find this claim outlandish, but it is warranted.

Again, the difference between methodological and substantive humanisms is that humanism$_m$ privileges human consciousness or subjectivity only in the organizational process of unity, such as traditional historical accounts or collections of works understood through the intentions of an author. In contrast, humanism$_s$ postulates some important, shared quality to humanity that is worthy of attention, preservation, and activism to protect. Humanism$_m$ is silent about any shared qualities of humanity, and humanism$_s$ does not have a view on how one should conduct one's methodology.

Assuredly, Foucault believes that subjectivity is wholly constructed whether one approaches the subject from archaeology, genealogy, or ethics. And in each of these methodologies, the "subject" takes on a different meaning. The archaeological subject is the nodal space created for a subject, by the episteme one inhabits, to know and be intelligible for other subjects. The genealogical subject is the subject produced under meticulous control and surveillance techniques. Subjects are the effects of power through which power moves; they are its vehicles whereby force relations find their existence and manifest themselves.[35] The subject in Foucault's ethics is the individual who subjects herself to an identity according to her own conscience.[36] The subject is produced through self-knowledge and self-activity.

Since the human subject is always constructed in Foucault, it might seem outlandish to claim that he endorses a kind of humanism$_s$; he never appeals to an "essence" of humanity. Yet, it is his appeals to resistance, confronting danger, and facing struggle that warrant careful attention. While Foucault refrains from making ethical judgments about the subjectivity he emphasizes in archaeology, which accords with his post-structuralism, it is his ethical judgments present in his genealogy and technologies of the self that are implicit endorsements of humanism$_s$.

If one makes normative/ethical judgments about what should and should not be allowable in the construction of subjectivity, one implies that there are some practices that are better and some that are worse for humans.

[34] *Ibid.*, 213.
[35] Foucault, "Two Lectures," 98.
[36] Foucault, "The Subject and Power," 212.

If one assents to practices that are better and worse, more and less dangerous, one implies that there is a relative level of stasis in humanity that should be attained for the cultivation of a healthy subjectivity; one identifies a continuum of constructed subjectivities that mark out gradational categories or states of being that are more and less appropriate for humanity. But once there is an implication of what is appropriate for humanity, it requires a tacit conception of what humanity is, even if such a conception is vague and unformed. One implies a notion of humanity that entails meaningful attributes of what it is to be a healthy human so that one can compare and make visible whether any given subjectivity is appropriate and commensurate with these attributes. Without a standard of comparison, judgments of appropriateness are unfounded. Thus, those subjectivities lacking requisite attributes are unhealthy, and those who do entail them in their constitution are safe and conducive to the unoppressed cultivation of humanity.

Foucault does not ever specify what he takes to be these "substance" attributes of humanity, those attributes he uses to determine whether something is dangerous or not. Therefore, *at most*, we can surmise that healthy subjectivities must be free from domination, exploitation, and harmful submissions to oneself for the gain of others. But this is all we need to claim for Foucault an assumed humanism$_s$ in his work! Without such a tacit commitment, his comparative *judgments* would not make sense; the normativity in Foucault's call for resistance requires some standard to undergird that normativity. Although Foucault may intend his genealogical project to be free of normative standards so that his work proceeds without a predetermined direction, some normative standards must be in place to support his direction of ethics. And that is why Foucault must subscribe to some form of humanism$_s$.

In light of this analysis, the disparity between Foucault's earlier archaeological method and his later genealogy and ethics is shown to be great. While Foucault cannot avoid importing a measure of humanism$_m$ into his archaeology, there is no reason to suspect any tacit importation of humanism$_s$. In his archaeology, Foucault refrains from normative, ethical assertions on the appropriateness of his findings to the well-being of humanity. In fact, any incorporation of humanistic$_s$ conclusions would be anathema to Foucault's post-structuralism. This then raises a dilemma regarding how we should interpret Foucault's *oeuvre* in light of his comments on his own authorship: either his genealogical techniques and humanistic$_s$ implications are somehow meant to be consistent with his post-structuralist archaeology *or* we must admit that Foucault's archaeology and genealogy cannot be reconciled together. The first option proves to be untenable because of the sheer incommensurability between his earlier and later methods. Yet, the second option belies Foucault's own comments relating to the coherence of his work. Neither option saves Foucault from incongruity. Foucault's remarks on the unity of the three methodologies he has implemented over the years is then quite overstated and, ultimately, incongruent because of the incommensurability between his post-structuralist and humanistic$_s$ projects.

Conclusion

In the end, it is puzzling how to interpret Foucault's remarks on unity for one cannot successfully approach them post-structurally, due to the internal inconsistency within his archaeology, and one cannot approach them by taking Foucault seriously at his word since a fundamental tension exists between his post-structuralist archaeology and his genealogical methods that contain a tacit humanism$_s$. Thus, one cannot read Foucault's *oeuvre* with an eye either to (1) emphasize his post-structuralism over his humanism$_m$ or (2) take his humanism$_s$ seriously and minimize his post-structuralism. There appears to be no solution to Foucault's remarks and, therefore, they should be left as such – simply incongruent.

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