

TRADITION, CULTURE, AND THE PROBLEM OF INCLUSION IN PHILOSOPHY

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ABSTRACT: *Many today agree that philosophy, as an academic discipline, must, for the sake of its very survival, become more inclusive of a wider range of perspectives, coming from a more diverse pool of philosophers. Yet there has been little serious reflection on how our very idea of what philosophy is might be preventing this change from taking place. In this essay I would like to consider the ways in which our ideas about philosophy's relation to tradition, and its relation to other dimensions of human culture, influence efforts to promote greater diversity in the field.*

Keywords: *tradition, culture, inclusion, Hegelianism, Gilbert Harman, Margaret Wilson*

1.

Sometimes it is said that “the past is a foreign country”, and indeed it may be that here we have the first and most formidable expression of philosophy’s exclusionary character, of its xenophobia, if you will. This is a chronological xenophobia, also sometimes called ‘presentism’, which imagines the inhabitants of the past much in the way that ethnocentrists, as for example Eurocentrists, imagine the people in other parts of the world: as children, as a developmental stage on the way to the final version of humanity, which is represented by ourselves. Of course there is no political urgency to deal with this form of exclusion. The country of the past has a current population of zero; its inhabitants are all dead, and it is of no concern to them whether we regard them as equals or not. But this exclusion may still be helping to maintain, in unseen ways, other forms of exclusion that do very much affect the living.

For one thing, while the people of the past are themselves dead, recognition of their accomplishments, of their contributions to *traditions*, can give force or authority to the speech of the living today. Yet the presentist tendency in Anglo-American philosophy has made it difficult or impossible to affirm the significance of traditions.

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What this means in actual practice is that there is only one recognized tradition, the Anglo-American one, but it does not conceive itself, for the most part, *as* a tradition. Rather, it is supposed to be a neutral and universal method for the apprehension of truth. This means that if you have been brought up to think philosophically, in a *math* a *madrassa*, in a lineage of masters and of textual authorities that extends back a thousand years, the claims you make from your position embedded within this lineage can have no particular force, from the point of view of the Anglo-American philosophical presentist, as philosophical claims. On the terms on which the academic discipline is currently defined, there can be no dialogue of equals *across* traditions, since the perception reigns that it is only the other member of the attempted dialogue who belongs to a tradition at all, and that this is intrinsically an inferior form of engagement with ideas.

It is true, of course, that today there are few explicit presentists in the Anglo-American philosophical tradition. Most do not openly agree with Gilbert Harman's legendary injunction, as the sign on his Princeton office door said, "Just say no to the history of philosophy!" In the 1980s Harman himself explained that he took his views to be "mostly orthodox". These views were never meant to denigrate the study of the history of philosophy in general, but only to dispute the supposed need for students of philosophy to study it. Harman is reported to have regretted upsetting people by distinguishing between philosophy and the history of philosophy, but to have averred that he did not fully comprehend the reasons for the upset (Sorell and Rogers 2005, 43-44).

Harman had the lucidity to denounce what he called, following Walter Kaufmann, 'exegetical thinking', in which one's own views are read into a "sacred" text, "so that one can read them back out endowed with authority" (Sorell and Rogers 2005, 43-44). Harman rightly found this form of engagement with the past suspicious, and so preferred to conceive the project of philosophy as one that can do without the past altogether.

Interestingly, Harman cites Margaret Dauler Wilson, his "late friend", as a historian of philosophy who is engaged in an intellectual project that is venerable, but still different from his own (Sorell and Rogers 2005, 43-44). Wilson wrote in 1992 of the tremendous upsurge of interest in the history of philosophy within American philosophy departments, and of the accompanying improvement of scholarly standards, notably in the mastery of the necessary languages and of the relevant philological skills. For her it was important to establish that the history of philosophy could be proven to be part of the same broad endeavor from which Harman had sought to separate it. In the end, the crucial question for Wilson is to determine, as she puts it, "how much reason [there is] to think that all this activity is likely to bear *philosophical* fruit" (Wilson 1992, 193). Simply coming to know that Descartes made this or that philosophical argument, in this or that text, in response to this or that set of problems, is not itself doing philosophy. For Wilson, the historian of philosophy begins doing philosophy when he or she takes Descartes's arguments and shows how they can be put to use for the resolution of problems of current concern.

Arguably, such an approach could be thought of as "exegetical thinking" in

Harman's sense: attempting to endow one's own philosophical project with the authority of a respected elder: hence Harman's denial of tradition, of the idea that philosophy *has* elders at all. Wilson would certainly not see her engagement with Descartes in this way. For her, Descartes is worth going to not because he is a respected elder, but because he is a source, potentially, of true arguments, for the resolution of current problems.

One might suppose that the expectation of philosophical fruit, as expressed by Wilson and like-minded historians of philosophy, emerged in part as a result of pressure from the much more powerful forces of Harman and like-minded non-historian philosophers. That is, in order to prove our worth, and Descartes' worth, the historians of philosophers imagined, we needed to prove that Descartes had something to say about problems a philosopher such as Harman would be prepared to recognize as philosophical. This is not to deny that Wilson sincerely had positive philosophical aims and interests of her own, but only to explain how it may have come about that an understanding such as Wilson's of the relationship of the history of philosophy to philosophy came to dominate in American philosophy: an understanding on which philology, linguistic training, the study of the diversity of human cultures and of styles of expression, is only ever a means to an end, rather than an end in itself, only ever part of the tool-kit, rather than something constitutive of the very nature of the undertaking. We are not identifying with a cultural tradition, but only mining for resources.

One may also ask why, if it is true or useful arguments we are after, rather than inscribing ourselves in a tradition, we should focus to such a remarkable degree on the intellectual output of a small number of prominent figures from the European past who for their part *did* see themselves as working within a tradition (to varying degrees of course: after all, Descartes, just like Harman after him, went to great lengths to conceal his intellectual debt to his predecessors). Why go truth-mining only within a predetermined and extremely narrow philosophical canon? What if the greater reserves of truth are not to be found in the narrow shafts of the few known mines, but rather in the great beds of the world's literary, religious, scientific, and legal traditions? What if the proper equipment to extract it is not only the pick-axe and the assayer's glass (the equipment of the close reader of few texts), but also the telescope, the world map, the aerial survey?

2.

There are two related reasons for the limitation of the history of philosophy to known mines, of relatively easy access. The first is that, typically, in looking at history for answers to current philosophical problems, we are necessarily limiting ourselves to *known* philosophical problems. We are looking to the past for new answers, not new questions. This means that willy-nilly, and however we may think about what we are doing, we *are* working within a tradition, namely, the historical lineage of the people who have engaged with a particular set of questions that we, in the present, see as more or less exhausting the list of questions that might be asked under the banner of

philosophy. If we were in fact only truth-mining, looking for past ideas that might bear philosophical fruit, rather than joining up with a particular tradition, then we would be equally interested in discovering true, or plausible, answers to questions we have not even asked, perhaps questions we had never even thought of asking. Thus, again, a figure like Harman, who by his own lights rejects tradition *tout court*, ironically ends up putting pressure on historians of philosophy such as Wilson to stay true to a tradition, in order to be able to come up with answers from that tradition that Harman would be prepared to recognize as true and valuable on tradition-independent grounds.

The questions we didn't even think of asking, not surprisingly, often stem from intellectual traditions in regions more or less geographically and culturally removed from Europe. There is a continuity of conversation in what has come to be thought of as “Western” philosophy. Even if Heraclitus wrote in a very different idiom, and thought about what he was doing in a very different way than, say, Descartes or Kripke later would, there is nonetheless a retroactive subsumption of Heraclitus and other citizens of the foreign past into the same tradition that would also later include the professors in academic philosophy departments in the Anglo-American world. Such retroactive measures cannot be taken freely, to include just anyone from the past in the same continuous conversation. They must, rather, have taken place already in the distant past. They must have a long and venerable legacy. In other words, the rules that govern which figures Wilson might go to in search of answers to philosophical problems are, precisely, the rules of tradition.

3.

For reasons that go well beyond the history of ideas, Anglo-American philosophy emerges out of a tradition that includes Greeks, but excludes Indians. Since the 19th century, there have been attempts, many of them initiated in Germany, to revise the ancient canon, and to provide a new interpretation of the history of philosophy that retroactively includes the work of at least the members of the six Orthodox schools of Indian philosophy, and certain of the Unorthodox schools, notably Buddhism. But for the most part the Western philosophical tradition, even among people who refuse to see it as a tradition (either for the Harmanian reason that philosophy ought have no constitutive dependence on its past at all, or for the Wilsonian reason that we are only looking for truth, and are simply happy to receive it from people of the past who were asking the same sort of questions), has been unwilling to permit such a radical retroactive transformation of its past.

What is the nature of this resistance? Here we come to the second of the two related reasons for the limitation of the history of philosophy to a few familiar mine shafts. The 19th century, again, saw considerable interest among some European philosophers in plumbing the depths of the Vedas, and in welcoming Indian thought as an expression of the sort of archaic “authenticity” that was also found in classical Greece but was, some thought, compromised or vitiated by Judeo-Christian and “Semitic” influence. But for all the enthusiasm of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and the

many philosophically inclined German Orientalists, there was a simultaneous surge in interest in defining the project of philosophy to explicitly exclude “Oriental” traditions. This was a move that had never seemed necessary until the real possibility arose, and concrete examples were given to show, that European philosophers might actually do philosophy as well or better by reading the *Upanishads* as by reading Aristotle or Kant.

G. W. F. Hegel, in his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* of 1825-26, represents a very clear instance of this reaction, of this unprecedented Europeanization of philosophy. This reaction would prove triumphant by the end of the 19th century, and in important respects remains the implicit vision of philosophy held by Hegelians and anti-Hegelians alike today. Bertrand Russell, who had had his anti-Idealist break at the close of the *fin-de-siècle*, and who would spend the rest of his career intermittently disparaging the Hegelian legacy, nonetheless repeats, in his own *History of Western Philosophy* of 1945, the same basic prejudice Hegel himself had expressed in his *Lectures* more than a century earlier. According to this prejudice, Oriental philosophy does not belong in the main body of any proper survey of the history of philosophy. In his *Lectures* Hegel does treat the various Oriental traditions—in which he includes not only India and China, but also the ancient learning of Mesopotamia, Iran, Syria, Egypt—but only does so in the Introduction. Part One of the work, the *real* beginning, sets out from Greece.

On Hegel’s view, Oriental philosophy fails to qualify as philosophy in the true sense, insofar as it remains thoroughly intermixed with religion, mythology, ritual, and other forms of spiritual and cultural life. Philosophy comes into being in earnest when it becomes autonomous from the cultural life of its practitioners, and this in turn is possible only under historical conditions, such as those that first obtained in classical Greece, in which men experience themselves as free individuals. To the extent that philosophy becomes newly autonomous from spiritual life in ancient Greece, however, there is a corresponding decline in the philosophical profundity of Greek religion. Its gods are conceived simply as individuals, rather than as representatives of concepts, whereas, for example, the Zoroastrian gods are not really individuals at all, but rather only “representations”, and thus incitements to philosophize:

Individuality, as long as there is a lack of freedom, is not firm, and where the general representations are also individually constructed, it is still only superficial form. This is the main reason why Oriental representations appear to us at once as philosophical thoughts. As we hear from the Greeks of an Ouranos, Kronos—time, but also already individualized—we find among the Persians Zurvan Akurana, but this is unbounded time. We find Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu as the general sages, as representations; they appear as general principles, which thus seem to have a kinship with philosophy, or appear themselves as philosophers (Hegel 1993, 366).¹

¹“Die Individualität, weil die Freiheit mangelt, ist nicht fest, und wo die allgemeinen Vorstellungen auch individuell gebildet sind, ist es doch nur oberflächliche Form. Dies ist der Hauptgrund, weshalb die orientalischen Vorstellungen uns gleich als philosophische Gedanken erscheinen. Wie wir bei den

The Persians thus get whatever limited philosophy they can from religion, while the Greeks have a religion with no philosophy, and a philosophy that, unfettered from other domains of culture, offers depths without limit. But if philosophy must be autonomous from culture in order to be true philosophy, then the study of the culture-embedded philosophy of the Orient must not fall within the purview of academic philosophers. It must rather fall within the various scholarly disciplines of what was once called Orientalism, Indology, Sinology, etc., and would later be redubbed --in the hope of breaking free from the political legacy of these older traditions--“South Asian Studies”, “East Asian Studies”, and so on.

And this is in fact what has occurred: Hegel’s argument triumphed. Philosophy is not supposed to be concerned with the sort of human ideation that comes inextricably embedded in cultural forms such as religion and ritual. But in the Orient, the old Hegelian prejudice has it, there is no such autonomous philosophy, but only more or less philosophical manifestations of culture. Therefore Indian thought is not studied by the philosopher, but by the Indologist. Or, to update this slightly (and only slightly): you’ll find your Indian philosophy in courses offered by the South Asian Studies department, but not, for the most part, by the philosophy department. If there is an occasional course of this sort, it will likely be slotted under the generic 'Non-Western Philosophy' label. It is the residual class: what is left over when the real work of philosophy has been taken care of.

4.

Harman and Hegel are in fact not so far apart: both take philosophy to be an autonomous discipline, unconnected to the study of culture. Wilson is not so far from them either: she recognizes that one has to engage with the efflorescences of culture – not just “foreign” languages, but also, when necessary, literary forms such as the philosophical novel or poem—but only as a means to the end that she shares with Harman and Hegel alike: autonomous engagement with philosophical ideas. The great difference between the three of them lies in the different ways each engages with tradition: Harman rejects it as a quagmire of exegetical illusions; Wilson steps cautiously into it, while not seeing her work as exegetical at all, but only as looking for philosophical fruit in the European philosophical tradition’s past; Hegel embraces a single tradition, and fully, indeed he sees philosophy as itself constituted by the “unfolding” of this tradition, ontologized in his mind as the “absolute Idea”. This Idea, however, this ultimate ground of human existence, is and must remain, for Hegel, a discretely, pure-bloodedly Greco-European thing.

Anglo-American academic Philosophy would indeed have remained stuck with this unattractive selection of options, had its hidden Hegelian presuppositions not been seriously shaken over the past few decades by certain important social changes

Griechen von einem Uranos, Kronos – der Zeit, aber auch schon individualisiert – hören, so finden wir bei den Persern Zerwana Akarana, aber es ist die unbegrenzte Zeit. Wir finden Ormuzd und Ahriman als ganz allgemeine Weisen, Vorstellungen; sie erscheinen als allgemeine Prinzipien, die so Verwandtschaft mit der Philosophie zu haben scheinen oder selbst als Philosophen erscheinen.”

that extend throughout all of academia and indeed throughout much of the broader society in North America and in parts of Europe. In particular, since the early 1990s, when Harman was promoting chronological ethnocentrism, and Wilson was cautiously stepping out of the strictest formation of this prejudice, ethnocentrism in the strict and literal sense has become significantly harder to maintain as a vision of the world. In the academic context, the majority of younger professors are now very attuned to the ethnic and gender composition of the academic crowds they move in, and almost everyone agrees that too many 'white men' can have a detrimental effect on the flourishing of philosophical inquiry. The presumption is that the demographic homogeneity leads directly to a philosophical homogeneity, that in order for there to be a maximum diversity of views, there must be a maximum diversity of subtypes of human being. Diversification of the curriculum, in turn, becomes instrumentalized as a way of attracting a greater diversity of people, who will in turn, it is expected, bring with them a greater diversity of points of view.

There surely is a connection between demographic and philosophical diversity, and diversifying the curriculum is surely one of the ways of changing the demography. There has been little reflection, however, on how the categories that are salient in current social reality correspond to the categories with which we may usefully divide up the history of various philosophical traditions. To consider an obvious example, there does not seem to have been, in 17th century Europe, a category, "women", that included all biologically female human beings in its denotation and that involved, in its connotations, all or even many of the same ideas and values associated with that term in the early-21st-century educated West. There were queens and duchesses who wrote philosophical treatises and carried on correspondences with canonical male philosophers, but it is not at all clear that in doing so they thought of themselves as realizing a capacity that was shared, equally, with women fishmongers or peasants. To take another example: however we today racialize Asian people who enter into the demographic mix of American or European academia, it is fairly safe to say that no Indian philosopher in the classical period thought of himself as a "person of color". If "color" enters into a traditional Sanskrit pandit's self-conception at all, it does so as *varṇa*—literally "color", but also "caste"—and here the pandit's "color" places him squarely on top of the social hierarchy. It is true that beginning in the Mughal period, the Persian Islamicate elite introduced quasi-racial distinctions, in which darker skin reflected lower status, and that these Persian distinctions in turn played an important role in the French philosopher François Bernier's supposedly novel 1684 racial typology (the first of its kind in Europe, anyhow) (Rubiés 2013). But the fact remains that 'woman', 'person of color', and other salient terms in today's academic and social landscape, are historically constituted terms, indeed constructed categories, and they do not help us in any significant way to understand what Elizabeth of Bohemia or Gaṅgeśa's philosophical projects were all about, let alone what the social conditions were that made these projects make sense.

One thus fears that if Elizabeth or Gaṅgeśa are added to the curriculum simply in order to assure students, and potential future professors, that philosophy includes

“people like me”, there is something of a swindle taking place. One senses that scholars ought to be *studying* the conditions of this appearance of “likeness”, not presuming it at the outset. One fears, moreover, that this presumption amounts to a sort of variation on Harman's notion of “exegetical thinking”, except that now one reads one's very *identity* back into texts, rather than just one's own views, so that one can read that identity back out, as Harman says, endowed with authority.

5.

Elizabeth and Gaṅgeśa are prime candidates for canonization: they are innovative, original thinkers, and they left ample textual evidence of this. The latter fact, their literacy and their access to the means of textual dissemination of ideas, are a reflection of their elite status in society (Elizabeth is far more elite within her society than Gaṅgeśa within his).

These considerations do not much trouble the mainstream campaign within Anglo-American academic philosophy for diversification. This casual indifference is peculiar. In some ways we might see the recent surge of interest among analytic philosophers in the cluster of problems grouped under the label of ‘standpoint epistemology’—roughly, the idea that who you are in society determines the range of things you might believe or might be pragmatically able to say, and also determines the range of interpretations that other members of society will give to what you say—as a rather delayed echo of some of the principal insights of postcolonial theory and its later descendant, Subaltern Studies, for the development of which Indian intellectuals have played a crucial role (Chatterjee 2000). Characteristically, analytic philosophy ignores its debt, is for the most part unaware of this heritage, and leaves important elements of it out.

Subaltern Studies in particular has been centrally concerned with finding ways to draw out the voice of those who are, under a given social or political order, voiceless, notably members of the Dalit class in India, whose modes of communication typically do not involve texts or systematic arguments. The task of finding the voices of the subaltern has led the members of this movement to develop rather rigorous and complex philological methods for drawing out submerged points of view. These methods often yield something in the spirit of Carlo Ginzburg's influential microhistorical study, *The Cheese and the Worms*, in which the voice, and the cosmological representations, of a 16th-century Italian peasant are recovered from a rare court transcript that preserved, in an official record of the Inquisition, a trace of the popular imagination, spoken in dialect (Ginzburg 1980 [1976]). James H. Sweet, to provide another example of this sort of approach from a different part of the world, has recently offered a rich reconstruction of the thought-world of a 16th-century Afro-Brazilian slave and herbalist, who was tried in a Portuguese court for devilry (Sweet 2011). The slave, Domingos Alvares, defended himself on the grounds that he was interested only in herbs, not the devil, and in the course of this defense we learn a considerable amount about the naturalist knowledge, inscribed within a long African

intellectual tradition, of a non-textual thinker, indeed a natural philosopher, whom history would otherwise have forgotten.

By multiplying the examples in this way I am hoping to motivate the conclusion that adequate attention to the worlds of the traditionally voiceless will necessarily involve both scholarly approaches that go beyond those suitable for studying canonical or easily canonizable texts, and will necessarily involve a rejection of the Hegelian view that philosophy embedded in culture—for example in the botanical knowledge required to treat tropical diseases—is not really philosophy at all.

Interestingly, we find just such a rejection in many of the programmatic proposals for the advancement of non-European philosophy made by intellectuals in Asia, Latin America, and most of all Africa, beginning in the mid-20th-century period of decolonialization. Thus, for example, at the Second Congress of Negro Writers and Artists, held in Rome in 1959, the participants in the Commission on Philosophy declare “that the African philosopher must base his inquiries upon the fundamental certainty that the Western philosophic approach is not the only possible one; and therefore... that the African philosopher should learn from the traditions, tales, myths, and proverbs of his people, so as to draw from them the laws of a true African wisdom” (Asante and Abarry 1996, 231-32).

This is an approach to the study of philosophy that is in one sense diametrically opposed to Hegel's. It says that philosophy embedded in culture is philosophy in the fullest sense. This is also an approach that would yield very rich studies of the conceptual world of many African cultures, as for instance in Alexis Kagame's 1976 study, *La philosophie Bantu*, which sets out from the Danish linguist Louis Hjelmslev's dictum that “there is no philosophy without linguistics”, and goes on to construct a systematic philosophy for Bantu-speaking peoples out of the semantics and etymologies of the various Bantu natural languages (Kagame 1976). Kagame does not claim that there is a specialized class of members of Bantu-speaking societies consciously engaged in an activity that may be called ‘philosophy’, but only that the natural languages of all members of Bantu societies contain, so to speak, a latent philosophy, to which everyone in these societies has immediate access simply in virtue of their mastery of the languages. In a somewhat similar vein, in an influential volume edited by the late Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, we learn a great deal about oral traditions and values, and also quite a bit about what may be called ‘folk science’. For example, there is a section on Yoruba physics, which includes a discussion of a rain-predicting hygrometer constructed from saliva expectorated by a Yoruba farmer into his hand and held up to the wind (Eze 1998).

While denying Hegel's separation of philosophy from culture, in another sense these works reinforce it. They effectively agree with Hegel that there *is* a legitimate distinction to be made between the forms of thought of non-Europeans and those of Europeans: the latter have their philosophy expressed in a high-culture, institutionally sanctioned, systematic tradition, while the former have their philosophy diffused throughout all of culture and natural language. This creates a manifest double standard, to the extent that it fails to recognize, for example, that European farmers

too have comparable methods of rain prediction, but that in Europe these do not get to count as philosophy.

To the extent that philosophy is permitted to be culture-embedded outside of the Greco-European tradition, but expected to be culture-autonomous within that tradition, there can be no hope for a unified or cohesive conception of the project of philosophy. The serious study of the least systematized, the least institutionally affirmed, the least textually canonized traditions will continue to be neglected, and if they are considered philosophy by those who conceptualize the project of philosophy in institutional, canonical, and textual terms, they will be so only as a matter of courtesy. Africa will remain the most disadvantaged. Special cases will be made for India and China, as insitutionally complex, literate civilizations, but here too their inclusion will be a matter of approximation of a standard set by the conventions and institutions valued by Hegel and like-minded Westerners.

6.

What then is to be done? To begin, we must free ourselves of our remaining Hegelian prejudices. This is not as difficult as it might seem, for indeed there is a long pre-Hegelian tradition in European philosophy, recognizing the culture-embedded philosophy of traditions that do not descend from ancient Greece as philosophy in the fullest sense. In the 1740s Johann Jakob Brucker wrote extensively on the philosophy of the Celts, the Scythians, etc., as though it was just obvious that they had such a thing (Brucker 1742-44). Joseph-François Lafitau wrote similarly on the philosophy of the Iroquois in the 1720s (Lafitau 1724). In fact the idea that the search for wisdom might go beyond textual traditions and someday include what can be called 'folk philosophy' was not just a curiosity suggested by scattered minor figures. Canonical figures such as G. W. Leibniz, too, seem to have been keen on the idea that the study of culture-embedded thought, of oral traditions and popular wisdom, might well be the ultimate frontier of a philologically grounded philosophy. Thus Leibniz writes in the *New Essays concerning Human Understanding* of 1704:

When the Latins, Greeks, Hebrews and Arabs shall someday be exhausted, the Chinese, supplied also with ancient books, will enter the lists and furnish matter for the curiosity of our critics. Not to speak of some old books of the Persians, Armenians, Copts and Brahmins, which will be unearthed in time so as not to neglect any light antiquity may give on doctrines by tradition and on facts by history (Leibniz 1849-60, 5, 318).

With these textual traditions mastered, Leibniz thinks that the real work will have just begun: “And if there were no longer an ancient book to examine, languages would take the place of books, and they are the most ancient monuments of mankind” (Leibniz 1849-60, 5, 318). Leibniz's injunction seems to echo in turn through the work of later German humanists such as J. G. Herder, who would in turn influence the anthropological projects of Franz Boas and Zora Neale Hurston, who in their own

ways sought to discern, so to speak, the unity in the multiplicity. Kagame's project, too, would amount to a sort of realization of Leibniz's prediction.

So the first major obstacle to greater inclusiveness, the casting off of the Hegelian prejudice, proves fairly easy: there are ample alternatives to such a limiting conception of philosophy even within the European intellectual tradition. A further obstacle, which must be overcome, in addition to the Hegelian elevation of a single tradition above all others, is the Harmanian rejection of tradition *tout court*. I hope to have established by now that we all work and think within traditions, and that the work of the philosophical scholar ought to include some interest in surveying the diversity of traditions. I hope to have established, also, that there is no good reason not to presume full equality of all traditions at the outset, regardless of differences in their mechanisms of transmissions (e.g., textual, oral), or of the degrees of systematization of their commitments from within the traditions themselves. If there is less systematization, as in the case of Bantu philosophy, this simply means that there may be additional work for the scholar to carry out in order to draw it out in a way that will enable outsiders to appreciate it. But the simple difficulty of accessing something can be no evidence for its non-existence, any more than damaged portions of papyri, rendering bits of text illegible, may justify the conclusion that the missing words must have been the unimportant ones. Challenges are not grounds for neglect, but on the contrary for redoubled effort.

There is, further, no contradiction between continuing to work within a tradition, and developing a scholarly interest in the diversity of traditions. This is a banal truth to scholars in the other human sciences. No Mesopotamianist believes that she must abandon her society's system of time measurement in order to study Babylonian calendars. But this does not prevent her from learning things from these calendars about the way humans grapple with and think about the passage of time. Only philosophers remain as if phobic about potential contamination from foreign belief systems.

Finally, it will be necessary to reject the 'area studies' approach to different philosophical traditions. This approach continues to reign, and to needlessly limit, the study of human history and culture in several university departments, creating artificial boundaries that reflect linguistic, or current geopolitical realities, but that neglect real relations of exchange and communication between regions. Thus for example there can be no good scholarly reason, as Karine Chemla has compellingly shown, to study the history of Chinese mathematics as, principally, a Chinese matter (Chemla 2012). There are so many transregional connections and ramifications in the spread of mathematical ideas and techniques that to confine the focus to a national or regional scale is to fail to adequately understand the subject in question. The same is certainly the case for European mathematics. Yet this is hard to see, in large part because here too there is a strong urge toward canonization. We want to attach names to innovations. Thus we have the "Leibniz series", for dealing with the infinite expansions of trigonometric sine, cosine, and arctangent functions. We have recently agreed to start calling this the "Leibniz-Mādhava series", in recognition of the Indian mathematician Mādhava of Sangamagrama, who seems to have worked it out roughly

three centuries before Leibniz. We may presume, in turn, that there are countless intermediaries whose names will never be known—Persians, Arabs, French and Italian Jesuits, who brought it about that forms of thinking might diffuse from South Asia to Europe so as to make Leibniz's “discovery” possible. The adequate study of this sort of mathematical discovery is the one that does not permit it to remain the property of one or two discoverers, or of any particular national or regional tradition. Its nature is best grasped by the approach that academic historians have come to call ‘connected history’ (Subrahmanyam 2005a, Subrahmanyam 2005b).

7.

It is a reasonable hypothesis, one that I intend to let guide all of my own future work, and that I would like to encourage other historians of philosophy to adopt as well, that all of the history of philosophy might best be approached in this way: as global, connected history. There are traditions, *pace* Harman, and they are inescapable. But they are not, *pace* Hegel, discrete or autochthonous expressions of something special in one exceptional culture or in a limited number of cultures. They are, rather, local inflections of a universal human capacity. The capacity we call ‘philosophy’—the conceptual engagement with the nature of reality and of our place in reality—finds its inflection in all human cultures, and there are channels of transmission and exchange of philosophical ideas between cultures, even apparently 'static' cultures, to which we will never be able to attach the proper names of innovative thinkers.

In order to adequately appreciate these facts, and to study these philosophical inflections in an adequate way, we need to recognize that the study of philosophy is, among other things, the study of culture. Such a transformation, I maintain, is a necessary precondition of any future form of academic philosophy that will satisfy the current desideratum of greater inclusiveness.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to Anand Vaidya for proposing the collaborative project that led to this essay. Thanks also to the participants in the meeting of the Society for Modern Philosophy at the 2015 meeting of the Pacific Division of the American Philosophical Association in Vancouver, especially Lisa Shapiro and Lewis Michael Powell, who heard and commented on an earlier version of this text.

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