An Unspoken Synecdoche

The History of Philosophy and its Epistemic Injustice

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1. Epistemic Injustice: A Boundary Crossed

There is a form of epistemic injustice that has been perpetrated, and which continues to be reproduced, in the practice of writing histories of philosophy. This form of epistemic injustice can be likened to a synecdoche[1]: in the current canon[2] of the history of philosophy, a part – namely the history of Western[3] philosophy – has been

1 A synecdoche in language is a figure of speech in which a part of something, such as a word or a phrase, is used to refer to the whole of it ("a pair of hands" for "a worker"), or where the whole of something is used to refer to a part ("the law" for "a police officer"). See https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/synecdoche (30.10.2023).

2 As Sandra Lapointe and Erich Reck argue regarding the term "canon," it is interesting to note that "the notion of a 'canon' was initially used by Christian theologians to refer to a list of texts considered to be genuine (i.e. arising from divine revelation) and accepted as sacred (Holy Scripture), thereby forming the basis of Church dogma. Later, the notion came to play a role in secular contexts as well [where] canons were seen as collections of works considered to be of exemplary quality, thus worthy of continued attention and teaching. […] One might argue that different traditions in philosophy have their own distinctive canons and that there is not one canon all philosophers ought to share; similarly for philosophical sub-fields, like ethics, aesthetics and logic. But the implications are the same in each case, and the same critical questions and reservations apply." See Lapointe, Sandra/Reck, Erich H.: Historiography and the Formation of Philosophical Canons, New York 2023, 3.

3 In this chapter, I use the adjective "Western" to refer to the Ancient Greek, Roman, western European, U.S. American, and mainly Christian philosophical traditions that form the actual canon in the history of philosophy and thus determine curricula and research fields in academia. I use the term "Western" exclusively in quotation marks in order to point out its problematic and constructive character, both as "a reduction of complexity in terms of cultures, religions, history, language and, of course, the diversity of philosophical theories" (see Graneß, Anke: Philosophie in Afrika. Herausforderungen einer globalen Philosophiegeschichte, Berlin 2023, 50) and as a "project, not a place" (see Glissant, Édouard: Caribbean discourse.Selected essays, Dash, J. Michael (ed.), Charlottesville 1999 (1989), 2). The label "West" or "Western" is in fact commonly used to highlight the power asymmetry between the industrialized countries on the one hand, and the so-called developing countries

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taken to be the whole – namely, the history of philosophy in general. This synecdoche, however, is an unspoken one, since the custom of specifying the history of "Western" philosophy has taken hold only in the last 50 to 70 years.[4] If this synecdoche managed to creep in surreptitiously and unnoticed, it was certainly due to the tradition, forged over the past two centuries, of considering the history of philosophy, and philosophy in general, as an all-European affair which can at best be imported to other countries. Since the conflation of philosophy in general and "Western philosophy" has largely remained an unacknowledged presupposition, it has been difficult to evaluate the synecdoche and its effects seriously.

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on the other hand, and in this case may refer to a wider area than present-day (midwestern) Europe and the U.S.A., such as Japan or Canada. For a questioning of the notion of "Western Philosophy," see Platzky Miller, Josh: From the 'History of Western Philosophy' to entangled histories of philosophy: the Contribution of Ben Kies, in: British Journal for the History of Philosophy (20.4.2023), 1–27, https://doi.org/10.1080/09608788.2023.2188898 (30/10/2023).

4 As far as I could research, with few exceptions – such as in Japanese (first publication in 1862) and Chinese (first publication in 1907), languages that start to use the term "Western" regularly from the 1920s onwards – the first references to "European," "Western," or "Occidental" philosophy can be found around the 1950s, and in most of the cases regarding translations of Bertrand Russel's *History of Western Philosophy* (1945). In parallel with the inclusion of U.S. American philosophy in the narrative of the history of philosophy, the adjective "Western" appeared in some titles of histories of philosophy. Regarding the earlier engagement with "Western" philosophies in Asian languages, it is also noteworthy that in several Japanese translations of some English and German works on the history of philosophy, the adjective "Western" (西洋, *seiyō*) or "European" (欧洲, *ōshū*) was added to the titles, as for example in the translation of Arthur Kenyon Rogers (trsl. 1914, orig. 1907), Karl Vorländer (trsl. 1929, orig. 1903), Windelband (trsl. 1918, orig. 1892 "European" was added; trsl. 1930, orig. 1892 "Western" was added), Albert Schwegler (trsl. 1939, orig. 1848), and others (cf. Krings, Arisaka and Kato 2022). In European languages the adjectives "European," "Western", or "Occidental" appear in the 19th century, once in French in 1872 and once in German in 1883. For a broader overview on the histories of philosophy in different languages see https://www.uni-hildesheim.de/histories-of-philosophy/philosophiegeschichten/ (30/10/2023).

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Looking closely at historiography of philosophy[5] – that is, the history of histories of philosophy – we[6] realize that this has not always been the way for which the history of philosophy has been accounted. Moreover, and most importantly, over the last century, and even more so in recent decades, the history of philosophy has been struggling to become more and more global and plural, with all the difficulties – in terms of methodology and content – that can be expected from a systematic discipline that already crystallized its methods and content centuries ago.

The purpose of this chapter is to note some important changes in the historiography of philosophy since its formal origins in European historiography[7] to the present day, in order to trace the practices of exclusion perpetrated through this discipline in philosophy in general starting between the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century[8]. This re-reading aims to make visible, in broad strokes, how the practice of writing histories of philosophy is based – at least since

5 The expressions "historiography of philosophy," "history of the histories of philosophy," "philosophical historiography," or "historiography of the history of philosophy" refer to the study of the narratives of the past of philosophy in form of a history of this discipline.
The first example of a history of the histories of philosophy was *De Scriptoribus Historie Philosophicae Libri IV* (1659) by Johannes Jonsius. In the 20th century comprehensive attempts to deal with philosophical historiography have been undertaken by Lucien Braun (1973), Martial Gueroult (1984–1992), Giovanni Santinello and Gregorio Piaia (1979–2004) regarding the European or "Western" histories of philosophy, and Elberfeld (ed. 2017) regarding the histories of philosophy in global perspective, thus including in the research horizon histories of philosophy in different languages worldwide such as Latin, German, French, Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, Hebrew, and others. For an overview of the history of the histories of philosophy, see Elberfeld, Rolf: Geschichte der Geschichten der Philosophie im Horizont verschiedener Sprachen weltweit. Erste Ergebnisse des Koselleck-Projekts, in: Polylog 46 (2021), 7–20. In addition, see the section "Bibliographies" in the book series Histories of Philosophy in Global Perspective (Universität Hildesheim | OLMS Verlag), which started in 2022 and is publishing several bibliographies of histories of philosophy divided by languages worldwide and which are extensively introduced.

6 I use the term "we" in this context to address the reader(s) of this chapter who I accompany through my arguments. Nevertheless, the term represents a broad abstraction of the concrete reading person situated in a concrete environment and for this reason. I thus invite readers to envision at least one context other than their own in which this text might be read and to reflect on the similarities and differences.

7 Santinello identifies Renaissance historical activity as the premise of the genre *Historia Philosophica* that began to flourish in the 16th century. See Santinello, Giovanni: Storia delle storie generali della filosofia. Dalle origini rinascimentali alla "Historia Philosophica", Brescia 1981.

8 Here I take as a point of reference the works of Dietrich Tiedemann (1791), Johann Gottlieb Buhle (1796), and Wilhelm Gottlieb Tennemann (1798). One should note that the editions of Buhle's and Tennemann's works represent interesting cases in which histories of non-European peoples, mainly "Oriental," were excluded or added in later editions. For an account of these cases, see Greco, Francesca: A Look into the "Storia delle Storie Generali della Filosofia" in: East Asian Journal of Philosophy, 02 (2023) 01, 17–38, and for an account on the phe-

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the end of the 18th century – on an epistemic injustice that is still silently reproduced and rarely questioned, not only in textbooks but also in teaching and research. To this purpose, I will begin by discussing the inherent plurality and transformative potential of philosophy, to which injustice is done by reducing its scope, and conclude with a reflection on the intricate entanglements – political, economic, and intellectual – that one has to deal with when questioning a discipline such as philosophy and its historiography.

1.1 The Sound of Philosophies

There is a certain plurality to philosophy, both in terms of the many different philosophical currents and the culturally specific approaches that exist within the "Western" landscape, as well as the diversity of philosophical approaches from different cultures worldwide. However, this inherent plurality is put at risk as philosophers[9] have become accustomed to regarding their discipline as a *singulare tantum*. This is due in part to the aspiration of "Western" philosophy to universality, which has excluded the philosophies of "non-Western"[10] countries, people, and traditions. One consequence of an at once narrowing of the concept of philosophy and a broadening of its scope is that philosophers worldwide have become so accustomed to their own absence – with regard to the absence or scarcity of women in philosophy as well – in their own discipline and that taking a stand – sometimes vehemently – against the *re*integration and expansion of the established canon of philosophy – namely, in the singular and universal – has become an automated, self-defending reaction. This reaction can be compared to plugging one's ears during a concert, for instance, when the sound of an audio cable interference becomes unbearable to hear.

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nomenon of orientalism see Bjarkö, Frederik: Orientalism in 19th-Century Swedish Historiography of Philosophy in: East Asian Journal of Philosophy, 02 (2023) 01, 61–98.

9 With this term I address every person who is doing philosophy (men, women, and diverse people) unless otherwise specified.

10 I use the term "non-Western" to refer to traditions outside the "Western" one, namely outside Ancient Greek, Roman, western European, and U.S. American, and mainly Christian philosophical traditions. I am aware that using this negative terminology presents at least two problems. The first one is the reproduction of a dichotomy that keeps the "West" at the center of attention and sets it up as universal measure. For the purpose of this chapter – which is to draw attention to the narrowness of the current canon that is limited to "Western" philosophy – this terminology serves to highlight the dichotomy created by the narrowing of the philosophical canon around the end of the 18th century. The second problem is the assumption of a clear separation between these two major blocs which does not take into account the exchanges and entanglements that occurred between these two supposed blocs. For an account on such entanglements, see Holenstein, Elmar: Philosophie-Atlas. Orte und Wege des Denkens, Zürich 2004; and for an extensive account on Africa see Graneß: Philosophie in Afrika.

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The general concern is that philosophy becomes a cacophony without any intrinsic – and yet content-wise necessary – unity and coherence. However, this is not the experience of those, for instance, who have been to concerts in which – without detracting, of course, from the value of solo concerts – a set of instruments, sometimes very different from each other, play simultaneously in different musical keys, thus playing on their contrasts and interferences. In case of music, it would be impoverishing to discredit or devalue some instruments or some clefs in favor of others, such as the violin clef, which is privileged because it is the most used in European score notation, and would be defined as the most "perfect" correct one for reasons determined by those who use this particular clef. In the ensemble of global philosophies, European and "Western" philosophy in general has been granted this privilege, and non-European, "non-Western," and other philosophies are regarded as interferences.

1.2 Epistemic Ignorance

Silencing other philosophies, ignoring their actual and potential contributions, and making of Philosophy just a *singulare tantum* is an epistemic injustice – towards philosophy, philosophies, and philosophers – that can be found following the practice of writing histories of philosophy. This is something with which all philosophers, I venture, deal today without exception. Nowadays, in fact, it is difficult to not have heard about the voices from all over the world doing philosophy – in traditional and different ways – as well as demands for more diversity in the content and form of philosophizing.

As Linda Alcoff notes, epistemic ignorance[11] in the practice of philosophy, and the epistemic injustices that result from it, has many different facets. There are three principal ways in which one can ignore something: by (1) not being aware of something's existence at all, which is a kind of epistemic blindness; by (2) having heard about or acknowledged something without considering it further, whether out of selfishness or an implicit epistemic discrediting or devaluation; and finally by (3) more or less actively excluding something, which can range from violence (both epistemic to physical), oppression, and the imposition of supremacy.[12] What is important is not merely avoiding any kind of ignorance for the sake of justice; it would be

11 See Alcoff, Linda: Philosophy and Philosophical Practice. Eurocentrism as an epistemology of ignorance, in: Ian James Kidd, Ian/Medina, José/Pohlhaus, Gaile Jr. (eds): The Routledge Handbook of Epistemic Injustice, New York 2017, 397–408.

12 Although in the first two cases listed above, the injustice resulting from ignorance is an almost unintended injustice, in the last case ignorance and injustice overlap and the intentionality of both marks a major difference with the previous two. It cannot be defined whether injustice comes from ignorance or the other way around. In this case, ignorance and injustice overlap.

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philosophically much more productive to try to detect the reactions – one's own as well as those of others – to these kinds of ignorance and the injustices from which they derive. Regarding the presence of philosophical voices outside of the "Western" canon, and the number of philosophers who are currently speaking out on behalf of them, taking refuge inside the limits of the first form of ignorance is no longer possible: the line has been definitively crossed, and one cannot simply claim to not have known. Even if philosophy were to remain seemingly singular and strictly "Western," this would still be a reaction to the "interferences" caused or represented by "non-Western" philosophies. Otherwise, if philosophy gets declined in the plural, the faces and voices of philosophy will heavily change.

1.3 Epistemic Transformation

An acute form of epistemic injustice toward philosophy is, in fact, the belief that the history of philosophy has been, can be, or should be univocal. It is fallacious to think that philosophy *itself* has remained unchanged since the ancient Greeks after the innumerable processes of appropriation and reproduction of philosophies as they spread from one country to another – within Europe as well as in the global reception of its tradition.[13] The assimilation of "non-Western" traditions and practices into the "Western" canon, in terms of the interactions between "non-Western" traditions with each other and without "Western" mediation, will continue to transform philosophy. These transformations are not only about the number of pages written on philosophy in general and the history of philosophy in particular, but more importantly about how the image and narrative of "what philosophy is" will be profoundly affected by the relationships with other traditions, practices, and cultures, both outside and inside the "West." For some philosophers, this shift will be so radical that "philosophy" may seem unrecognizable, for example, as "哲学" (*tetsugaku*), "ةفسلف" (*falsafa*), or even "thinking." The term "thinking," in fact, is sometimes used in different European and non-European languages to distinguish other kinds of thinking, wisdom, or knowledge from a pure philosophical thinking.[14] Embracing such a process of transformations does not mean, however, opening up to the idea that philosophy is simply about any form of thinking. On the one hand, as Franz Martin Wimmer notes, not all people explicitly formulate and document their thoughts,

13 For an example of the wide variety of concepts collected under the name "philosophy" in the European tradition, see Elberfeld, Rolf: Was ist Philosophie? Programmatische Texte von Platon zu Derrida, Stuttgart 2006.

14 To this extent, see Krings, Leon/Arisaka, Yoko/Kato, Tetsuri: Histories of Philosophy and Thought in the Japanese Language. A Bibliographical Guide from 1835 to 2021, Hildsheim 2022, 21–30.

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and only a few who do have their ideas retained in cultural memory, thereby building philosophical traditions of thought in different languages, societies, and times.[15] On the other hand, the assumption that *all* people philosophize would in turn be just as universalistic and totalizing as establishing *one* univocal definition of philosophy, universal in its scope but particular in its history.

2. An Unspoken Synecdoche: The Histories of Philosophy

An evident case of perpetrating epistemic injustice in the field of philosophy that I will address below is the discipline and practice of narrating histories of philosophy following a common thread produced exclusively in one tradition and imposed as universal elsewhere. This is the history of philosophy as it is told, taught, and researched in academia in the vast majority of universities to date.

2.1 The Status Quo

No matter where we are in the world, if we buy a book or take a course entitled "History of Philosophy," we expect to enjoy a *general*, no matter how in-depth, overview of the *entire* history of philosophy. We would not expect any further delineation or focus beyond what is promised by the title. Instead, what we generally find is a history of Ancient Greek and occasionally Roman philosophy; a bit of philosophy from the mid-West European Middle Ages, which is eventually connected with Islamic thought related to Aristotle; a couple of mostly central European modern philosophical currents such as the Enlightenment, Empiricism, and Idealism; if we are lucky, some U.S.-American authors from the 20th century; a sprinkling of national philosophies such as French, German, or Italian philosophy; and finally, some contemporary currents in philosophy such as phenomenology, existentialism, analytic philosophy, etc. The strong discrepancy between the general and even universal aspiration of the history of philosophy and its factually particular outcome should come as no surprise to many readers. The claim of the exclusively Greek origin of philosophy is widely accepted and far too rarely questioned or studied in depth.[16] This attitude,

15 See Wimmer, Franz: Interkulturelle Philosophie. Eine Einführung, Wien 2004, 25.

16 In the European historiography of philosophy, the question of the origin of philosophy remained controversial until the 18th century, and the tradition of situating the beginning of the history of philosophy with ancient, oriental, or North African philosophies is carried out in parallel to the dominant trend of starting the narration from Thales. On questioning the beginning of the histories of philosophy from Thales, see Cantor, Lea: Thales – the 'first philosopher'? A troubled chapter in the historiography of philosophy, in: British Journal of the History of Philosophy (29/3/2022), 727–750; Graneß: Philosophie in Afrika, 57–69, 126–197; Zedel-

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largely following authority and habit, is in truth quite unphilosophical insofar as critique and doubt are indispensable elements of philosophizing. This attitude has led increasingly to the identification of a general, all-embracing, and universal history of human reason with the triangulation of a Greek, European, and U.S. American history, often referred to as "Western."

The equating of "general" and "Western" philosophy comes to the extent that the latter adjective hardly needs to appear next to the designation "History of Philosophy," as one can easily verify in the shelves of nearly any university library or in bookstores. Since this is a generalized phenomenon in space and time, we will at first probably not even notice the absence of several philosophical currents, people, countries, and even continents.[17] In fact, at least in the last two centuries, we would experience more or less the same phenomenon across the globe, from Latin America to Japan (even this latter phrasing continues to operate with a geographically Eurocentric view of the earth's map, both concerning the central perspective on Europe and the relations between north-south). Reiterating this generalization naturally reinforces the purported truthfulness and credibility of its own finding, thus crystalizing the same narrative. Of course, the issue is much more complicated than it seems, both throughout the centuries and in different places. Indeed, this was not always the case in early histories of philosophy, and it is not the case nowadays, especially in the last twenty years considering the phenomenon of World Philosophies in different languages.[18]

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maier, Helmut: Der Anfang der Geschichte Studien zur Ursprungsdebatte im 18. Jahrhundert, Hamburg 2003.

17 On the website of the Koselleck-Project (see https://www.uni-hildesheim.de/histories-of-philosophy (30/10/2023)) one can find a wide collection of materials on the histories of philosophy in several European and non-European languages which display the range of histories of philosophy of continents, regions, religions, teachings, people, nations, gender, disciplines, and areas of philosophy.

18 See ibid. for a wide collection of materials on global histories of philosophy in several European and non-European languages under the label of "Global Philosophies". Histories of philosophy have been considered "global" – with some exceptions – if they cover more than the "Western" and the three renowned Asian traditions of India, China, and Japan, including at least one region among Africa, Latin America, Oceania, and other regions of the world. According to the research in the project, the first account of global history of philosophy can be considered to have appeared in Japanese language in 1902. On this work, see Krings/Arisaka/Kato: Histories of Philosophy and Thought in the Japanese Language, 44–49. For an account on global histories of philosophy in European languages see Herzl, Namita: Global Histories of Philosophies in European Languages, in: East Asian Journal of Philosophy 02 (2023) 01, 5–16.

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2.2 *Other* Philosophies

Let's return to our image of the bookstore, filled with these generic textbooks on the "History of Philosophy." We would be surprised and intrigued to find there – and also in academic philosophy curricula in general, as well as in other academic departments under the title of "Philosophy" – entire monographies and classes on "Eastern," "East-Asian" philosophies, typically devoted to Indian, Chinese or Japanese philosophy, or on "Oriental" philosophies, which may refer frequently to the sum of these three or to Near and Middle Eastern philosophy, but rarely to both. Sometimes these follow the formula "history of philosophy" by adding a predication such as "the history of East-Asian philosophies," "the history of Japanese philosophy," and at other times simply headline "East-Asian philosophy." We might be further surprised to find in those texts long stretches of time, and various topics and forms of philosophy covered, such as discussions between Buddhist monks. In fact, in such texts, the mentioned traditions are sometimes considered over millennia, and thus not only in the context of their encounter with European and/or American thought. Moreover, these traditions and practices do not rely solely on religion – as is often highlighted, sometimes overlooking how much Western thinking and acting relies, directly or indirectly, on Christian values – but also on different social and political patterns and practices which can be considered philosophical insofar as they contribute to the creation and discussion of knowledge. Since these *other* philosophical contributions from *different* currents, people, countries, and continents are rarely, or at any rate separately, treated from a "(general) history of philosophy" perspective, if one *wants* to find them – assuming that one knows about their existence – one has to look somewhere else, in other sections of the bookstore or in other university departments.

In addition, we might be no less astonished to eventually find texts and lectures – but hardly in faculties of philosophy – on African, Latin American, Caribbean, and Australian philosophy, the so-called "indigenous" philosophies, and other philosophies of different parts of the world from America to Oceania recounting Filipino, Indonesian, Caribbean, Ecuadorian, Kenyan, Ethiopian, Russian, etc.[19] philosophy or "thinking."[20] The inclusiveness of the term "thinking" shows in this case one con-

19 Surely these geographic specifications can be as problematic as the absence of such specifications, revealing a universalistic and encompassing intent. Regarding national philosophies, for example, these can often increase nationalistic, exclusivist, and essentialist attitudes.

20 Not in every language is the term "thinking" used tendentially as opposed to the term "philosophy" – as is often the case in Japanese philosophy as we have seen above. In some languages, for example Italian, and depending on the research contexts, the two terms are used as synonyms without a strict demarcation of their proper domain. Reflecting on the use of the two terms, however, one can recognize a certain tolerance of plurality in the use of "thinking" which the term "philosophy" tends to standardize and universalize.

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sequence that at least needs to be problematized. In fact, talking about "thought" instead of "philosophy" would shift the issue from *Philosophy* to the broader categories of *Intellectual History*, *History of Knowledge*, *History of Science*, etc., thus integrating philosophical traditions in a broader frame, but one which is not philosophy proper. In other words, through this move, almost exclusively "Western" philosophy would continue to be taught in the philosophy departments all over the world – perhaps with one or two exceptions here and there – while courses on (the history of) African or Japanese thought would be found in *other* faculties or degree programs such as Area Studies, Religion, Anthropology, History, etc. That is to say, nothing would be changed in the *status quo* in philosophy, neither formally in philosophy departments nor in the concept of philosophy itself, with the latter staying untouched in its singular and universal state. The philosophies related to *other* regions, peoples, or religions would remain excluded from the discipline of philosophy. However, suddenly one would wonder where all these "thoughts" came from, where they were hidden, and in which times and ways they were developed, documented, and pursued. We would continue to wonder if we should really take them seriously, as thinking altogether and as philosophies in particular.

2.3 Narratives Old and New

A wide range of people and countries were regularly addressed in the historiography of philosophy – even if not always in a good light.[21] Between the very first accounts of histories of philosophies in the 16th century until the establishment of the discipline in the 18th century, it was customary to begin the narration of a (general) history of philosophy from the "antediluvian," "pagan," "oriental," "barbarian," or "exotic" philosophies, integrating in different parts of the text the philosophies of the Orient, or specifically the philosophy of the "Chaldeans," "Persians," "Arabs," "Phoenicians," "ancient Egyptians," "Turks," "Sinesians," "Indians," "Japanese," "Jews," "Africans," "ancient Jews," "Shiites," "Thracians," "Celts," "Etruscans," etc.[22]

21 The intellectual contributions of peoples other than the Greeks were often accepted as borderline cases and not as philosophy in the strict sense. Even if various forms of exchange between Greeks and other peoples are assumed in these examples (see Flashar, Hellmut/Bremer, Dieter/Rechenaue, Georg: Frühgriechische Philosophie, Basel 2013; Jeck, Udo Reinhold (ed.): Die lautlose Invasion. Zur Auseinandersetzung griechischer Philosophen mit dem persischen Mythos, Hamburg 2017), the first examples of pure philosophy are set in ancient Greece. In the best case, these contributions were categorized as "thought" or "wisdom" because they were classified as unsystematic, under-complex, religious, superstitious, or pagan. Here, Hegel's lectures on the history of philosophy are the main example.

22 This is exemplary in the works by Christoph August Heumann (1715), Jakob Brucker (1731), Elias Schmersahl (1744), Appiano Bu¬onafede (1766, 1785), Johann Gottlieb Buhle (1796), and Wilhelm Gottlieb Tennemann (edited in 1829 by Johann Amadeus Wendt). For further

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Besides these works, there are also entire monographs on non-European philosophies in various languages such as Latin and English. This usage persisted at least until the middle of the 18th century, a period when, for example, through Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz's interest in Chinese culture, the reference to non-European currents of philosophy experienced a genuine flowering to the extent of assuming a genuine complementarity of two origins and corresponding developments of philosophical thought.[23] This trend did not survive the 18th century.[24]

It was toward the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century that the genre of the history of philosophy underwent both a narrowing of its content and a widening of its scope. In line with the aspirations of the late Enlightenment and the historiography of philosophy inspired by Kantian thought,[25] the *philosophical* task of the history of philosophy was to trace the history of the whole human thought. And yet, following the same principles, what came to be called "human thought" had the clear characteristics of a logical, rational, systematic, and teleologically oriented thought. The result was equally clear: the general reason of all people on earth, as Wimmer describes it, "has a skin color and a gender and its high form thrives properly only on a cultural and religious underground: it is white, male, Hel-

works see https://www.uni-hildesheim.de/histories-of-philosophy/philosophiegeschichten/ (30/10/2023).

23 See Wimmer: Interkulturelle Philosophie, 38.

24 In contrast to the widespread tendency of that period, some currents of philosophical historiography at the beginning of the 19th century continued to show an interest in the philosophies of different peoples and cultures and have developed in parallel with the Kantian approach to the historiography of philosophy, but their legacy has not been recognized as successfully as in the cases of the Kantian and Hegelian ones. Among such currents, we find, for example, the hermeneutic school (Santinello, Giovanni (eds.): Storia delle storie generali della filosofia. L'età hegeliana I (4.1), Padova 1995, 183–448; Santinello, Giovanni/Blackwell, C. W./Piaia, Gregorio (eds.): Models of the History of Philosophy. The Hegelian Age (4), Berlin/Heidelberg 2022; 3–130), the school of Schelling (see Santinello (ed.): L'età Hegeliana I (4.1), 349–412; Santinello/Blackwell/Piaia (eds.): The Hegelian Age (4),131-82), and later the approach of Dilthey (see Santinello, Giovanni/Piaia, Gregorio (eds.): Storia delle storie generali della filosofia. Il secondo Ottocento (5), 328–63). Such philosophical-historical currents incorporate, in general, stronger cultural, linguistic, religious, and cosmological aspects into philosophical thought and were not as quick as their contemporaries to exclude the presence of reason in other philosophical systems.

25 For more details about the "Kantian turning point" in the historiography of philosophy, see Santinello, Giovanni (eds.): Storia delle storie generali della filosofia. Il secondo Illuminismo e l'età kantiana (3), Padova 1988, 879–958; Santinello, Giovanni/Blackwell, C. W./Piaia, Gregorio (eds.): Models of the History of Philosophy. The Second Enlightenment and the Kantian Age (3), Berlin/Heidelberg 2015; 697–964. For its development into the Hegelian age, see Santinello, Giovanni (eds.): L'età hegeliana I & II (4.1 & 4.2); Santinello, Giovanni/Blackwell, C. W./Piaia, Gregorio (eds.): The Hegelian Age (4).

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lenistic-Christian."[26] In other words, while reason was universal, its highest realization nevertheless did not – or precisely for this reason – go beyond some enlightened cultures and minds in the heart of – and so, not everywhere within – Europe. According to the criteria of progressive reason recognizing itself and being logically the only one capable of realizing such heights, the history of philosophy should in turn be rational, systematic, and teleologically oriented. It should narrate the vicissitudes of universal human reason, and yet it was born in Ancient Greece, rediscovered in the European Renaissance after the dark epoch of the Middle Ages[27], and reached its greatest flowering on German soil between the end of 18th and the beginning of the 19th century. Following this circular, self-reinforcing, and self-legitimating narrative, the supposedly universal human reason crowns itself, heroizing its own history and justifying the supremacy of Europe over *other* territories and cultures as well as their thinking.[28]

From this period on, historians of philosophy dropped any reference to older traditions other than the Greeks and let the history of philosophy begin clearly from Thales. While the philosophical contributions of various ancient peoples were practically completely forgotten, from the 19th century onwards there began to be established specific studies on Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Buddhist, Arabic, Jewish, etc. philosophies in specialized research areas such as Indology, Sinology, Judaic Studies, Oriental Studies, Anthropology, Ethnology, etc.[29] Thus, research on non-European philosophies and their historiography could be developed in parallel with, but

26 Wimmer: Interkulturelle Philosophie, 38. Translation by the author.

27 On the question of the periodization of the Middle Ages, see Libera, Alain de: La philosophie médiévale, Paris 1995; Speer, Andreas/Wegener, Lydia (eds.): Wissen über Grenzen: Arabisches Wissen und lateinisches Mittelalter, Berlin 2008; Speer, Andreas (ed.): Knotenpunkt Byzanz. Wissensformen und kulturelle Wechselbeziehungen, Berlin 2012; Speer, Andreas: Wie schreibt man die Philosophiegeschichte des Mittelalters?, in: Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie Médiévales 1 (2021), 283–311; Borgolte, Michael/Schneidmuller, Bernd: Hybride Kulturen im Mittelalterlichen Europa. Vorträge und Workshops einer internationalen Frühlingsschule, Berlin 2010. Furthermore, there are historians of philosophy who exclude periods or currents of philosophy or who regard them as highly controversial, such as Adolf Schwegler with regard to the Middle Ages and Victor Cousin with regard to the Renaissance (see Couzinet, Dominique/Meliadò, Mario: L'institution philosophique française et la renaissance: l'époque de Victor Cousin, Leiden/Boston 2022; Schwegler, Albert: Geschichte der Philosophie im Umriss. Eine Übersicht, Stuttgart 1848.

28 Nevertheless, this process of epistemic injustice and ignorance began much earlier than the 18th century, and was born of imperial and colonial projects, namely at least from the "discovery" of America and early attempts at colonization. See Alcoff: Philosophy and Philosophical Practice, 402; Elberfeld: Dekoloniales Philosophieren, 105–122.

29 See Schlegel, Friedrich von, Über die Sprache und die Weisheit der Indier. Ein Beitrag zur Begründung der Altertumskunde, Heidelberg 1808; Windischmann, Karl Josef Hieronymus: Philosophie im Fortgang der Weltgeschichte, Bonn 1827. Noteworthy is the work by John Wesley Powell, published in 1877 in New York, which offers an overview of the philosophy of the

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not related to, the European/"Western" narrative on the history of philosophy. Various works have been published in European as well as non-European languages, but which have been ignored – probably in various forms – by the philosophical canon. It was only since the mid-20th century that serious discussions with "non-Western" philosophies have been slowly resumed and intensified thanks to new translations and more extensive research in the field of philosophy. This work began with the Asian continent (China, India, and Japan), contributing to the emergence first of comparative and then of intercultural streams of philosophy.[30]

In a similar but opposite trend to the narrowing of the philosophical narrative in the 18th century, the 20th century saw a disaggregation of the "general" historiography of philosophy which split into the historiographies of different epochs, national divisions, disciplines, and areas.[31] At the same time, especially from the middle of the century onward, several very different attempts for global openings in historiography of philosophy took place in different parts of the globe. Given the intent to expand the current philosophical canon, these attempts drew on knowledge collected in Area, Linguistic, Religious, and Anthropological Studies of various faculties. The phenomenon of "World Philosophies"[32] is very diverse and often still maintains a particular focus on the philosophies of India, China, and Japan. Despite the change in content and methodologies, it is still rare to see a balance between continents and eras, methodologies, and periodization. Africa, Latin America, the Pacific and Caribbean Islands, Southeast Asia, the Arab World, and several European countries are still largely marginalized in philosophy and little or nothing is done to support research in and about these regions.

North American Indians. See Powell, John Wesley: Outlines of the Philosophy of the North American Indians, New York 1877.

30 Elberfeld: Dekoloniales Philosophieren, 157–170.

31 See Santinello/Piaia: Il secondo Ottocento (5); Piaia, Gregorio: Storia della filosofia e decolonizzazione del passato, in: Piaia, Gregorio: Il lavoro storico-filosofico. Questioni di metodo ed esiti didattici, Padova 2001, 11–30.

32 To this extent, see the noteworthy project of the *Journal of World Philosophies* (see https://scholarworks.iu.edu/iupjournals/index.php/jwp (30/10/2023)) which "aims to develop the contours of a philosophical understanding not subservient to dominant paradigms and provide a platform for diverse philosophical voices, including those long silenced by accident, history, or design" (cf. Journal of World Philosophies – Homepage). See as well the podcast and book series of the *History of Philosophy Without Any Gaps* headed by Peter Adamson. Among other publications of the last 25 years under this label or orientation, see the *Encyclopédie philosophique universelle* (UNESCO 1998); *World philosophies* (Ninian Smart 1999); *Introduction to World Philosophy: A Multicultural Reader* (Daniel Bonevac and Stephen Phillips (eds.) 2009); *Filosofie nel mondo* (Virgilio Melchiorre (ed.) 2014); and *Key Concepts in World Philosophie* (Sarah Flavel and Chiara Robbiano (eds.) 2023). For a detailed account of the works on world philosophies in the last 20 years, see Herzl: Global Histories.

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3. Conclusion: The Enmeshment of Justice and Injustice

Just as a discourse on *in*justice is inherently linked to justice, the opposite is also true: justice is also inherently linked to in*justice* , namely by virtue of their negative but nonetheless inseparable relationship.[33] As the negative cannot be separated from the positive it seeks to deny, so too is the separation of the positive from the negative only a linguistic illusion. An injustice – suffered as well as perpetrated – cannot, in fact, be erased by a just action, and so, as for our case, there is no just synecdoche – or other figure of speech – that could completely replace the unjust one which has been crystallized in the philosophical canon for centuries. While the historical realities of slavery and colonialism cannot be canceled, this does not mean that reparative action should not be taken. Furthermore, no one can say how philosophy would have developed without its "singularization" in the current canon – although it feels good trying to imagine it. Epistemic injustice is endemic in philosophy's canon and the signs of its consequences can be found in nearly every one of its areas. Since trying to erase injustice by erasing the "in" from "injustice" would bring us back to the mentioned linguistic illusion, so too would it be a mirage to think of eliminating or replacing the epistemic injustice present in the current philosophical canon. It is for this reason that the history of philosophy reveals itself to be in reality a history of

33 This difficult and complex relation between the positive and negative cannot be discussed in detail within the scope of this chapter. Justice is bound to injustice because the concept of justice is necessitated and thus created on account of injustice, whether it has already occurred or will possibly occur in the future, in order to avoid them or to contain their consequences. Also, if justice is only a positive value to strive for, this means that the future situation has to become better than it is in the present in order to pass from a state of less perfection or justice (which can be addressed as unjust in relation to a higher justice) to a state of higher perfection or justice. Alcoff makes a similar argument regarding the concept of the "human" (see Alcoff 2017, 402). In this way, the negative is not only the opposite of and dependent on the positive, but rather the negativity of the negative opens to a variety of layers that also include not seeing, not understanding, not wanting, etc., as we have seen in the case of ignorance. One of the tasks of post- and decolonial philosophy is to bear the negative, to bring the negative into the focus of the investigation and for an enduring critical gaze without claiming for a positive, reconciliatory, and premature reversal of the same. On the relation between the negative and decolonial philosophy, see Elberfeld: Dekoloniales Philosophieren; Greco, Francesca: Die Begegnung mit den eigenen Schatten. Polylogisches Philosophieren in globaler Perspektive zur Zeit der Dekolonisierung, Wien 2022.

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entanglements, whether just or unjust, or rather a *Verstrickungsgeschichte*,[34] that is, a *history of enmeshments* in the sense developed by Rolf Elberfeld.

Listening to the voices raised today from around the world – from New Zealand, to India, to South Africa, Nigeria and both Americas and more – casts a different light on the history of heroes of human reason, revealing thinkers and ideas that would otherwise have remained mere shadows.[35] In the history of philosophical enmeshments of power and knowledge, the narrative of a teleological unity of events becomes a mesh of intricate, unclear, ruthless, spiteful, and violent relationships which show the inherently contradictory and rough unity of this history of philosophy. Such philosophical enmeshments cannot simply be integrated – as if the epistemic injustice "non-Western" philosophies have undergone could be repaired in this way and so probably will almost once again be hidden – into the established framework of the history of philosophy as if one can – to put it bluntly – simply add a few names of women and non-Western cultures to the known history of great and almost exclusively male, Christian, white, and heterosexual thinkers. The discipline and narrative of philosophy must radically change its narrative in resonance with the global reach of its activity and with the enmeshments of its history in global history to give greater space to plurality and diversity, not only of the philosophies but also of the voices in them.

34 *Verstrickungsgeschichte* (history of enmeshments) is a philosophical term coined by Rolf Elberfeld in his book from 2021 *Dekoloniales Philosophieren. Versuch über philosophische Verantwortung und Kritik im Horizont der europäischen Expansion*. This term refers in particular to the negative implications of philosophical arguments that have contributed to the establishment, justification, and implicit reproduction of colonialist power structures, or to the deliberate and ignored concealment and obfuscation of the same through various strategies of negation and immunization. Elberfeld claims to make this "negative" entanglement now visible alongside the interweaving entanglement of global philosophizing. This procedure implies an active stance against the negative effects of one's own work, which in turn would not have to be about taking destructive actions against the historical canon of philosophy or the "Western" tradition. Elberfeld formulates the following intention for the above-mentioned book: "In the present book, I would first like […] to provide a philosophical response to the sometimes massive criticism that has been and continues to be directed at European history and philosophy – primarily by non-European thinkers – that does not ward off this criticism, but attempts to assume philosophical responsibility within the horizon of this criticism." Elberfeld: Dekoloniales Philosophieren, 12. Translation by the author.

35 For more details on this and also on the metaphor of shadows, see Greco, Die Begegnung mit den eigenen Schatten.

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