

Symposium:  
»Is Reason a Neutral Tool  
in Comparative Philosophy?«

# A Manifesto for Re:emergent Philosophy

## *Abstract*

Is Reason a Neutral Tool in Comparative Philosophy? In his answer to the symposium's question, Jonardon Ganeri develops a »Manifesto for [a] Re:emergent Philosophy.« Tracking changes in the understanding of »comparative philosophy,« he sketches how today's world of academic philosophy seems to be set to enter an »age of re:emergence« in which world philosophies will (and can) be studied through modes of global participation. In their responses, the symposium's discussants tease out implications of this *Manifesto* for different issues: While Mustafa Abu Sway suggests that comparative philosophy be understood as an intra-philosophical dialogue, whose aim depends on its participants, Paul Boghossian questions whether there can be conflicting, yet equally valid, ways of arriving at justified beliefs about the world. For her part, Georgina Stewart draws out the similarities between Ganeri's understanding of comparative philosophy and the ethical stance involved in studying Maori science. In his *Reply*, Ganeri fleshes out his understanding of a pluralistic realism. Only an epistemic culture, which is open to a plurality of epistemic stances, he contends, can propel polycentric modes of knowledge production.

## *Keywords*

Comparative philosophy, intellectual decolonization, intra-philosophical dialogue, relativism, Indigenous philosophies, Jonardon Ganeri, Mustafa Abu Sway, Paul Boghossian, Georgina Stewart.

Insofar as »comparative philosophy« is a branch of philosophy reason must be instrumental in its pursuit, given that philosophy is the employment of the human capacity for reasoned thought to »understand how things in the broadest possible sense of the term hang together in the broadest possible sense of the term«. But comparative philosophy

is not, I submit, a branch of philosophy nor is it a distinct philosophical method: it is an expedient heuristic introduced at a particular moment in world history as part of a global movement towards intellectual decolonisation. The ambition of comparative philosophy was not to generate new philosophical insights but to protect thinkers in colonised countries from the peculiar form of intellectual servitude colonialism sought to impose. Recognition and integration were its leading motifs: a first generation of philosophers, still colonised, seeking recognition for indigenous manners of understanding through the demonstration of their comparability with colonial insight; a second generation, in the years after the end of colonial rule, hoping for assimilation and integration in an internationalised philosophical academy. Philosophers writing bravely against the grain in colonised societies or in the ferment of postcolonial nation state formation made extraordinary progress in the rediscovery of lost philosophical inheritances and in the demonstration of their full entitlement to philosophical recognition. Yet coloniser philosophy remained in such endeavours a privileged mode of thought and point of reference, if only as a focus of resistance. These projects aimed either to incorporate indigenous thinking into an unchallenged colonial paradigm or else to reverse colonial asymmetries while leaving a fundamentally colonial structure intact.

By »colonial« I mean European in the context of South America, Africa and much of South-east Asia; British in the context of India and the rest of South Asia, the Gulf, North America, Australasia, and southern Africa; Soviet in the context of Central Asia, the Baltic and the Caucasus; Han in the context of Tibet, Mongolia, and inside mainland China; American in the context of the Pacific basin; Danish in the context of Nordic countries; Japanese in the context of Korea, Taiwan and China. When in what follows I refer to »the colonial use of reason« I shall not mean its use by the ancients or pre-moderns but by those philosophical giants in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries who provided colonialism with its moral and intellectual foundations. This colonial use of reason represented itself as impartial, objective and universal but was in fact anything but, and that was its first dishonesty. Its second was the way it defended its claims to impartiality and universality over and against competing claims from outside. It did not engage in honest debate, philosopher to philosopher, but instead dismissed the alternative's claim to universality altogether. So colonisers took what was in fact itself a local way of using reason (one con-

textually entangled with the history of the colonial project), falsely promoted it as a uniquely acontextual methodology, and denied that outsiders had so much as a concept of the general application of reason on the grounds that they did not share its parochial epistemic practices.

Colonial rationalists' false claim to neutrality catches the excluded outsider in a vicious dilemma: make your use of reason like ours (in which case what extra value does your philosophy bring to the table?), or admit that you are outside reason and not actually engaged in philosophy at all. The dilemma is false because the neutrality of colonial reason it presupposes is a phoney mixture of two myths. The first, that the colonial will to universality is impartial; the second that the existence of the outsider's will to universality is to be denied. In denying outsiders a will to universality, the coloniser denied them their humanity, and the various ignominious philosophical rationalisations of colonial rule were but corollaries of this basic double move. Simone Weil would observe it in the intrinsic absurdity of children in French Polynesia being made to recite »Our ancestors the Gauls had blond hair and blue eyes [...]« while forbidden their indigenous custom, language and tradition, forbidden even access to the libraries containing documentation relating to it; and was it not Macaulay who said that a random single shelf of European books was of more value to humanity than the entirety of Sanskrit literature. The move is evident when a history of epistemology in the west describes itself simply as *the* history of epistemology, protest met with disinterest. The colonial power had philosophy, the rest of the world has only what was described as »culture« or, more condescendingly still, »wisdom tradition«. The colonisers' claim that reason (meaning their specific and provincial use of reason) is a neutral tool had thus to be exposed as trickery, this a precondition for the intellectual decolonisation of the rest of the world, and the redressing of a blatant epistemic injustice was the ambition and project of comparative philosophy.

The world of academic philosophy is now entering a new age, one defined neither by colonial need for recognition nor by postcolonial wish to integrate. The indicators of this new era include heightened appreciation of the value of world philosophies, the internationalisation of the student body, the philosophical pluralism which interaction and migration in new global movements make salient, growing concerns about diversity within a still too-white faculty body and curricular canon, and identification of a range of deep struc-

tural problems with the contemporary philosophical academy in its discursive, citational, refereeing and ranking practices. We are entering what we might call »the age of re:emergence«, a new period the key features of which are as follows. First, philosophies from every region of the world, locally grounded in lived experience and reflection upon it, are finding new autonomous and authentic forms of articulation. Second, philosophical industry, leaving behind a centre-periphery mode of production, is becoming again polycentric: the philosophical world is returning to a plural and diverse network of productive sites. Third, Europe and other colonial powers have been provincialised, no longer mandatory conversation partners or points of comparison but rather unprivileged participants in global dialogue. Fourth, philosophers within the largely anglophone international academy are beginning to acknowledge their responsibility so to arrange international institutions as to enable wide and open participation; that is, acknowledge that their control over the academy is a fall-out from colonialism rather than a reflection of intellectual superiority.

Philosophers in the age of re:emergence certainly are thinkers using reason to seek new ways to understand how things, including human beings, hang together. However, the uses they make of reason are markedly different from the way reason has been used and abused in colonial intellectual projects in Europe and elsewhere. Conscious by necessity of the colonisers' ways of doing philosophy, newly emergent thinkers are continuously on guard not to allow themselves to fall into the invidious dilemma described above. A re:emergent way of thinking must combine appeal to the indigenous with defensive dialectical skills. Non-Europeans had to turn themselves into Europeans in order to figure out how to side-step its enslavements; the same was true of those who were at the mercy of other colonial powers. Philosophy in the age of re:emergence is thus not a matter of seeking the essence of autochthonous ways of thinking, and indeed essentialism about philosophical traditions is but a modern strategy to cope with colonial guilt, resting in the vain hope that the colonised have not, after all, been deprived of intellectual integrity. The once-colonised do not have the luxury to practice philosophy in some state of philosophical innocence, and nor do they wish for it: for in this new era every philosophical identity is hybrid and dynamic, criss-crossing multiple localities of geography and epoch, transcending each and again returning (»cross-cultural philosophy« and »fusion philoso-

phy» are but special cases of the re:emergent project, as is »intercultural translation«, but re:emergence does not require cross-culturality). They leave to philologists and text-critical historians the attempt to construct an archaeology of past systems of thought destined only to become specimens in a museum of ideas, for the once-colonised has always to watch against being made into an ethnographic object. For them the use of reason consists in the manner in which they inherit a past and transform it into an articulation of a lived experience, and in that very act of retrieval and reinvention fashion a distinctive understanding of how it all hangs together, and why. When it is therefore asked, »Can Asians and other non-Europeans think and reason?«, the answer is »Yes, of course!«. Must they think and reason as if they are Europeans? No, because the fundamental asymmetry that colonialism produced cannot simply be made to disappear in an act of collective amnesia of the sort intellectuals of former colonial powers seem so remarkably adept. The cosmopolitanisms of re:emergence are subaltern and subversive interplays between a plurality of open vernaculars and new, non-coercive, ways to think about our common humanity. Solidarity across borders among the once-colonised leads to revitalisations in the understanding of those various inherited pasts, revitalisations that in turn deepen cosmopolitan awareness (such a project indeed retrieves the cosmopolitan ideal from imperial misappropriation).

As philosophers in every linguistic and geographical region of the globe re:emerge, so too do innovative ways to use reason. I shall give two examples of ways of using reason that do not fall into the colonial model I have criticised. Here I appeal to India, the non-European philosophical world I know best: world philosophers everywhere must retrieve from their own inheritances their own renewed ways to use reason. My studies of logical theory in India have led me to see that there is a fundamental contrast between two styles of reasoning, that of formal deduction and that of particularist, case-based, »blueprint+adaptation« extrapolation. The latter model – whose origins in India lie as much in the ritual reasoning of the *Mīmāṃsā* exegetes and the jurisprudence of the *Dharmaśāstra* as in explorations in the science of prediction in the medical treatises and, perhaps most especially, in early *Nyāya* logic – developed into a general theory of ethical and normative reasoning. The basic idea is that an object is inferred to have one, unobserved, property on the grounds that it has another, observed, one: »there is fire on the mountain because

there is smoke there«. The most distinctive aspect of the schema is the fundamental importance given to the citation of an example, a single case said either to be similar or else dissimilar to the topic at hand. Suppose I want to persuade you that it is about to rain. I might reason as follows: »Look, it is going to rain (*pakṣa*: proposed thesis). For see that large black cloud (*hetu*: sign). Last time you saw a large black cloud like that one (*dṛṣṭānta*: exemplary case), what happened? Well, it's the same now (*upanaya*: application). It is definitely going to rain (*nigamana*: decision)«. What does it tell us about the nature of reason when particulars are in this way made to work as exemplary cases? First, that methods of selection and adaptation are implied by the description of the particular. As a structured complex whole, the particular is normative: it constrains what other particulars count as resembling it by sharing a common basic framework, and it constrains what modifications or substitutions are possible, thereby determining a method of adaptation. Like a curved object used as a benchmark, an exemplary case bends the ruler to fit itself. Second, the standards are context-sensitive and localised, because of the requirement that proper purpose is preserved, whether that be matching the shapes of objects, performing rituals that have their intended effects, or making accurate predictions. This implies that substitutions and comparisons remain close to the prototype, that the spread of the standards of selection and adaptation is localised. In both versions of the »blue-print+adaptation« model, the version in which particulars are typical samples and the version in which they are prototypical schemata, the standard is not absolute and universal, but localised, sensitive to context and open-textured. The early Indian thinkers thus present an important style of thinking well, yet one that is not understood if we think of all good reasoning as involving subsumption to general rule.

Within this model there can be diversity in reasoning-and-evaluating practice without incommensurability. From variation in reasoning practice it does not follow that the idea of reason itself is context-sensitive, though the uses to which it is put may well be: it implies only that there is a variation in the base-sets of exemplars and in the kinds of background information that inform similarity judgements. Case-based norms are trans-sectarian but dialogue-specific. The model provides for the kind of immersed rational practice that I regard as essential in the evaluation, development and criticism of values, using cognitive resources available to a group in order to provide authentic forms of justification (for example, of human

rights) and critical revision (for example, of social inequality); that is, a method for the evaluation of values that is both genuinely critical and yet does not imperiously impose from without. The Sanskrit idea of the *pūrvapakṣa* (an opponent imaginatively considered by the author of a philosophical work) is that of potential objection that is in this sense immersed.

The act of bringing into contact philosophical ideas from distinct geographical regions or linguistic communities should be seen as being itself a creative one, the act of creating a »case«, a site of unresolved tension between conflicting measures, and the working out of the case is itself constitutive of a form of philosophical practice, producing in time new measures, new philosophies, new models for the way individuals conceive of themselves and their place in the world. It is an illustration of the way in which forms of philosophical practice can be governed by reason even in the absence of some explicitly identified common ground (a common ground is implied but not explicit). Such acts of creative philosophical confrontation are by their very nature embedded in the moment, and the rules by which they are governed must themselves be adjusted to every new encounter. The philosopher identifies cases of interesting contraposition and, in the spirit of the theory just set out, exploits those moments of resemblance in processes of adaptation and substitution to fashion new strategies in philosophical inquiry. This is an intellectual activity that replaces comparative philosophy in the age of re:emergence, and it is indeed a genuinely philosophical use of reason in search of understanding.

There is, to give a second example of an acolonial use of reason, a kind of philosophy that consists in perspicuous ordering, staying on the surface, rendering evident. The distinction between, on the one hand, generative explanations, the step-by-step reasoning of a philosophical deduction, and, on the other, using insightful ordering and sparseness to put the phenomenon in question on display, has a strong parallel in the Indian mathematicians' discussion of a kind of mathematical proof, which they say aims at rendering a mathematical result transparent rather than reaching it in a series of deductive steps. So Bhāskara II's diagrammatic proof of the theorem known from the *Sulba-sūtra* is meant to display the theorem not deduce it. A diagram is just a diagram, it does not itself do anything: what does the proving is the viewer's moving triangles around in imagination to form two squares. So, likewise, philosophy here occurs at the interface between text and reader, in the reader's acquisition of a clear

perspective in the topology of concepts through their imaginative engagement with the text. One finds this method at work in the Indian philosophers who compose extremely compact texts, written in short aphorism-like formula which aim more at conceptual cartography than at system-building. Seeing interrelatedness is as creative a philosophical act as drawing consequences. One is a matter of evidence, the other of what is evident. The interrelations between the components of a complex theoretical structure can be explained or at least explicated by displaying their isomorphism with another structure, perhaps more familiar or antecedently better understood; so, in this method, similes function as models. A clear map of the conceptual terrain is a powerful tool, enabling both creative thought and empathetic attention, and philosophy based on this second use of reason has not lost sight of its ties to deepened ways of living. In this use of reason, the idea of omission plays an important role, for philosophers who use reason in this second way are careful to omit anything that can cloud the reader's capacity to form a picture – a large part of philosophical skill is knowing what to ignore.

Thus I would say that what makes a practice philosophical is the use of distinctively human capacities to find orientation in the space of reasons (that is to say, to move from perplexity or *saṃśaya* to clarity or *nirṇaya*), and that orientation can come either in the form of a reasons *compass*, which enables the activity of going step-by-step engaging one's powers of deductive manoeuvring and capacities for projective extrapolation, or else in the form of a concept *map*, which engages the imagination and enables one to make a survey of the terrain, locating oneself within it. This conception of philosophy embodies a type of pluralistic realism, a commitment to the claim that there are many ways to investigate a reality whose existence is independent of human inquirers, a plurality of ways of thinking that cannot be reduced to any single mode of interrogation (least of all to the colonial use of reason).

I have described two techniques for the interrogation of reality that I discovered through commerce with Indian philosophical texts in Sanskrit, and I have given an indication of the styles of philosophical practice they sustain and their potential for contributing to a re:emergence of creative philosophy from this one part of the decolonised world. Those who are immersed in philosophies from Africa, Asia, Mesoamerica and Australasia will have their own contributions to make, and we may look to a future when there will be a vibrant

pluralistic realism in departments of academic philosophy around the globe, and a new cartography of philosophy.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: I have drawn the term »re:emergence« and its distinctive typography from Yuko Hasegawa, curator of the exhibition »Re:emerge: Towards a New Cultural Geography« (<http://www.sharjahart.org/biennial/sharjah-biennial-11/information>); the colon suggesting correlative obligations of submerger and submerged. The famous first definition of philosophy is due to Wilfred Sellars. I have learned from Hamid Dabashi, »Can Non-Europeans Think?« (<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2013/01/2013114142638797542.html>), Bharat Vallabha, »The Philosophy of Pluralism« (<http://insearchofanideal.com/2015/07/05/the-philosophy-of-pluralism/#more-1016>), Monika Kirloskar-Steinbach, »Comparative Philosophy as a Philosophy of Practice«, Mimesis World Philosophies Workshop, SOAS June 2015, and Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Epistemologies of the South* (2014). The epistemology of visual thinking in mathematics, to which I allude, is excellently analysed by Marcus Giaquinto (<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2015/entries/epistemology-visual-thinking/>).

## Responses

## On the Possibility of Rational Neutrality in Comparative Philosophy: A Response to Jonardon Ganeri

In »*A Manifesto for Re:emergent Philosophy*« written for the *Confluence* symposium on the question »*Is Reason a Neutral Tool in Comparative Philosophy?*«, Jonardon Ganeri argues that »comparative philosophy« is neither a branch of philosophy, nor a distinct method in and by itself (Ganeri 2016a: 134). It is rather an »expedient heuristic« forming a »part of a global movement towards intellectual decolonisation« (*ibid.*: 135). He further added that »comparative philosophy« is there to prevent »intellectual servitude« that colonialism sought to impose (*ibid.*). Comparative philosophy is, therefore, an *equal* opportunity venue for philosophies of the south, where the south is a construct that betrays geography, much like Edward Said showed how the east is an orientalist construct. Within colonial terms of reference, some regions double as ›south‹ and ›east,‹ but do they all get the same attention in Ganeri's paper?

Ganeri defines »colonial« by listing various colonial powers and the regions that fell under direct colonialism including North and South America, Africa, Central and South Asia, the Tibet and Australasia, the Nordic countries and the Gulf, etc. (*ibid.*) Nevertheless, I was surprised that a conscientious paper like this is shy of mentioning British-French scooping of the Middle East (remember the Sykes-Picot agreement!), including the longest modern colonial project in Palestine that continues to be a reminder of the failure of the international community to be serious about ending it. This is not to say that elsewhere on earth, everything is ok.

The principle of equality should not be taken as in sprinting, where athletes begin by situating themselves in identical starting blocks, running on the same tracks, and reaching the same finish line, albeit with different speeds. I do hope that philosophers of the south are not expected to make it to a colonial finish line, for they didn't begin from the same cultural blocks, where they could have begun long ago in different and rich cultural contexts that they are »redis-

covering» as Ganeri puts it. They do not need a civilizing factor (i. e., colonialism) to bring them to where »coloniser philosophy [...] is a point of reference« (*ibid.*). If the road map for philosophers of the south will be measured against philosophy produced by the colonizers or the structures they left behind, and they will be expected to reach the same conclusions, then colonial undercurrents still abound.

In a Eurocentric colonial worldview, only that which is »western« makes it to the top of every product, spiritual, intellectual or material culture. A third world thinker, therefore, could only approximate that which is European, including Europe's normalized extensions in different parts of the world that are geographically not contiguous. Examples of normalized extensions include, but are not restricted to, the USA, Australia and New Zealand. These are places where colonialism succeeded in the sense that the post-colonial, indigenous inhabitants do not try to change the new status quo. An example where direct colonialism failed is Algeria. Yet the weight of the colonial cultural package is still visible in language (French in Maghreb, Italian in Libya, and where the British were colonizers, it is English). Some thinkers from the former colonial powers and the formerly colonized do not necessarily have a decolonized egalitarian frame of reference. Crossing the Mediterranean southward does not necessarily mean putting both intellectual histories on equal footing, to begin with, nor crossing the Mediterranean northward necessarily means a decolonized intellect. The latter is expressed in identifying with the former colonizer, uprooting herself/himself from the indigenous cultural context in order to demonstrate their »comparability with colonial insight« (*ibid.*), even in a post-colonial period, for ending the colonization of physical geography does not mean that the immaterial cultural space goes through the same rapid transformation. Both sides continue to assess the impact of the war; the end of French colonialism in Algeria in 1962 prompted rethinking French universalism. Examples of French intellectuals who crossed the Mediterranean are Mohammed Arkoun and Jacques Derrida. They were born within two years of each other in Algeria, 1928 and 1930 respectively, but Derrida was granted French citizenship before stepping a foot in France because all Jews in Algiers became citizens in 1870. Derrida is described as French who was born in Algiers, while Arkoun is described as Algerian/French. I personally think that Arkoun struggled with his identity much more than Derrida who took small measures such as modifying his first name from Jackie to Jacques! They both were in the

business of »deconstruction,« but I doubt they were accorded the same stature. This is about the politics of identity and not an evaluation of philosophical input.

Today, refugees flocking to Europe across the Mediterranean, running away from conditions that originate in colonialism, are asked to demonstrate their comparability or rather subscribe to what are loosely described as European values. This seems to be a call for assimilation rather than integration. A woman's head-scarf, for example, is taken as a symbol of her purported antagonism towards »European« values. However, its prohibition is in fact the antithesis of the European value of liberty.<sup>1</sup>

I am afraid that first generation immigrants continue the quietism they are used to in their original countries where dictators prevail. Another important aspect is that it, in general, seems values are ever-changing in the Western liberal paradigm, and asking refugees and immigrants to subscribe to values contrary to their own personal conscience is twisting their arms in times of need, and this is the antithesis of the liberal values of freedom of conscience as well as autonomy. It is also inhumane. It will be a great loss – even for the European societies themselves – if highly educated refugees practice self-censorship and refrain from contributing to intellectual life and public discourse, because they are afraid it would jeopardize their legal status.

The question »*Is Reason a Neutral Tool in Comparative Philosophy?*« reflects the need to understand neutrality and comparative philosophy. Jonardon Ganeri described comparative philosophy as »expedient heuristic« connected to »intellectual decolonization« (*ibid.*)! I would venture into considering comparative philosophy a

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<sup>1</sup> In Germany, Chancellor Merkel, who does not subscribe to multiculturalism, stated that »refugees must respect our culture and learn our language,« and added that they also must adhere to laws that protect equal rights for women and gays, and that they reject anti-Semitism (Newsweek, Dec. 2, 2015, and Times of Israel, Dec. 3, 2015). While there should be no room for Judaeophobia, there are two overgeneralizations here: the refugees are Judaeophobic and Germans are not. Rather than encourage participation in public life and dialogue, Merkel's comments could stifle legitimate criticism of Israel (What country is above criticism anyhow?) and having a personal educated position vis-à-vis social issues. Laws and policies should be in place, but one's citizenship should not be conditioned on having a specific position regarding social issues, for to assume that all German citizens existing today (Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Muslims and others) are supportive of gay rights, or being pro-choice regarding abortion defies reality.

kind of intra-philosophical dialogue, the aim of which might differ according to the participant, much like in interfaith dialogue. If it is possible to decolonize the intellect, neutrality of the intellect will shine, but is it possible to be totally decolonized? And is it possible to be radically neutral, even in principle? Even if one wills to be decolonized, and is very conscientious of that which is colonial, there might still be residues, preventing total neutrality from taking place. Entering into dialogue in Comparative Philosophy might prove to be a space to discover these residues. One has to clarify that colonialism is not the only source of prejudice. Individual, group and general biases, regardless of where one comes from, are signs of the lack of neutrality.

Islamic philosophy could be part of the dialogue within comparative philosophy and beyond, but Islamic thought is not alien to the European scene, especially if we see Ibn Rushd (1126–1198), Ibn Tufayl (1105–1185) and many other philosophers who hailed from Andalusia as European. In his infamous Regensburg lecture on 12 September 2006, Pope Benedict XVI used quotations from a medieval dialogue that took place between the 14<sup>th</sup> c. Byzantine Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos with an unnamed Persian, the message of which is that Islam is both violent and irrational. Ibn Hazm (994–1064), also from Andalusia, was the only Muslim scholar quoted, who was a very interesting literalist (i.e., Zahirite), a school that ceased to exist long time ago. I would rather introduce Imam Al-Ghazali (1058–1111) for his intellectual humility and deep insight, both of which are the outcome of systematic doubt and the limits of reason, allowing a window for esoteric knowledge and spirituality. Epistemologically, Imam Al-Ghazali's position is not counter to reason or irrational, it is that reason ultimately acknowledges its own limitations, precisely because exploring the metaphysical is beyond the capacity of reason, unless it is animated (literally, from the Latin *animus*).

Comparative Philosophy might have provided a venue for non-western thinkers to express a post-colonial stage that dealt with western philosophy as triumphant, appropriating it, at times as branded, and sometimes claiming original thinking within that frame of reference. On whether non-Europeans can think, and whether they think like Europeans? Ganeri's answers were ›yes‹ and ›no‹ respectively. Human existence, I fathom, goes hand-in-hand with thinking, but the history of complex philosophical ideas might show philosophical development in many lands way before and away from Europe. Civi-

lization itself is cumulative, borrowing from past and co-existing civilizations. Therefore, Ganeri's reference to cross-cultural philosophy and fusion philosophy are in line with cross-culturality, where thinking is most likely the result of crossing geographical boundaries, physically and virtually, but he is right that such cross-culturality is not a condition for the re:emergent project. Otherwise, original thinking, which in Ganeri's words would be done in a state of innocence, does not have a reality of its own.

I share with Ganeri the hope for a future academia with a fair representation for the philosophical traditions coming from Africa, Asia, indigenous Australasia and Mesoamerica. But much of the world has yet to be truly decolonized, from direct and indirect colonization alike.

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## Is Comparative Philosophy Based Upon a Mistake? A Reply to Ganeri's »Re:emergent Philosophy«

Comparative philosophy, as I understand it, is the study of philosophical problems in a cross-cultural setting: a comparative philosopher may, for example, study the nature of knowledge by comparing Western epistemology with the Confucian tradition's writings on the subject.

Comparative philosophy has been gaining in popularity. Western philosophy, and especially Western analytic philosophy, the dominant strain of philosophy in the Anglophone world for a century, used to be strikingly insular. It all but ignored philosophical work in non-Western traditions. To this day, one can easily earn a philosophy PhD in the very best graduate programs in the Anglophone world without being exposed to a single word of Chinese, Indian or Arabic philosophy.

Recently, though, this insularity has been giving way. There is a new openness to, and interest in, philosophical work in non-Western traditions. There is talk of appointments in comparative philosophy. The Berggruen Institute for Philosophy and Culture (Los Angeles, USA) is funding postdoctoral fellowships in Asian philosophy and major departments are eagerly lining up to host them. Faculty and graduate students are spontaneously forming reading groups to study major non-Western texts.

What's the point of comparative philosophy? Is it a good thing that it is gaining in popularity?

Viewed from where I am sitting, it certainly seems to be. I am interested in certain basic philosophical questions. What is value? Are there truths about value and if so on what do they depend? What is consciousness and how does it relate to the physical? In what does a person's identity consist and can it survive the demise of their physical body?

It stands to reason that ancient civilizations such as those of India, China and the Arab world, all of which attached a great deal of

importance to philosophy and all of which produced thinkers of the first distinction in a whole host of other areas, will have developed important insights into some of these very same fundamental questions. (It is left open, of course, whether these insights take the form of alternative answers to the very same questions, or the rejection of the original questions and their replacements by more fruitful alternatives.)

In any case, whether or not comparative philosophy yields insights into basic philosophical problems, the comparative exercise is important in its own right. Non-Western cultures are of intrinsic interest and one good way to interrogate and reveal their thought is to compare what they have to say about philosophical problems with alternative approaches to those problems.

In his rich and provocative essay, »Is Reason a Neutral Tool in Comparative Philosophy?« Jonardon Ganeri rejects this rosy picture of comparative philosophy (Ganeri 2016a: 134–135):

[...] comparative philosophy is not, I submit, a branch of philosophy nor it is a distinct philosophical method: it is an expedient heuristic introduced at a particular moment in world history as part of a global movement towards intellectual decolonisation. The ambition of comparative philosophy was not to generate new philosophical insights but to protect thinkers in colonised countries from the peculiar form of intellectual servitude colonialism sought to impose. Recognition and integration were its leading motifs: a first generation of philosophers, still colonised, seeking recognition for indigenous manners of understanding through the demonstration of their comparability with colonial insight; a second generation, in the years after the end of colonial rule, hoping for assimilation and integration in an internationalised philosophical academy. Philosophers writing bravely against the grain in colonised societies or in the ferment of postcolonial nation state formation made extraordinary progress in the rediscovery of lost philosophical inheritances and in the demonstration of their full entitlement to philosophical recognition. Yet coloniser philosophy remained in such endeavours a privileged mode of thought and point of reference, if only as a focus of resistance. These projects aimed either to incorporate indigenous thinking into an unchallenged colonial paradigm or else to reverse colonial asymmetries while leaving a fundamentally colonial structure intact.

Ganeri leaves it unclear whether he thinks that comparative philosophy *essentially* involves »intellectual servitude,« (*ibid.*) or whether it contingently involved it as it was practiced by the first and second generations of comparative philosophers. The fact that he dismisses it as a legitimate subfield of philosophy suggests the former. But his

other remarks make sense only on the latter reading. In any case, it is hard to see how comparing what distinct philosophical traditions have had to say about some of the perennial questions of the human condition could be an essentially reprehensible exercise.

On Ganeri's view, comparing non-Western philosophy with Western philosophy in the modern era was bound to lead to unhappy results because Western philosophy pretended that only its use of ›reason‹ was legitimate. This is how he puts it (*ibid.*: 135–136):

When in what follows I refer to ›the colonial use of reason‹ I shall not mean its use by the ancients or pre-moderns but by those philosophical giants in the 18th and 19th centuries who provided colonialism with its moral and intellectual foundations. This colonial use of reason represented itself as impartial, objective and universal but was in fact anything but, and that was its first dishonesty. Its second was the way it defended its claims to impartiality and universality over and against competing claims from outside. It did not engage in honest debate, philosopher to philosopher, but instead dismissed the alternative's claim to universality altogether. So colonisers took what was in fact itself a local way of using reason (one contextually entangled with the history of the colonial project), falsely promoted it as a uniquely acontextual methodology, and denied that outsiders had so much as a concept of the general application of reason on the grounds that they did not share its parochial epistemic practices.

I found myself a little unclear about exactly what Ganeri means by the ›colonial use of reason.‹ He says it is the use of reason by those philosophical giants of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that provided colonialism with its intellectual and moral foundations. But as he is no doubt aware, the intellectual and moral legitimacy of colonialism was a matter of active debate among those giants (John Stuart Mill, for example, being an apologist for it while Diderot was a critic). But on any notion of reason that I recognize, both of those thinkers were using the same principles of reasoning.

It's a good question what accounts for disagreement between good thinkers when it occurs. Presumably, more often than not, it derives not from the fact that they *reason* differently from premises to conclusions, but, rather, from the fact that they find different *pre-mises* plausible. In the debates about colonialism, for example, some thinkers found it plausible that there was such a thing as ›natural law,‹ that the alternative practices of indigenous peoples violated that law, and that this served as a proper basis for justifying their exploitation. Others, though, rejected these claims. Ultimately, disagreements

about these matters can be traced not to disagreement about principles of reasoning but to a disagreement about various initial assumptions or axioms.

Ganeri (*ibid.*: 138–139), however, seems very much to hold that it is principles of reasoning that are at issue, rather than the differential plausibility of competing axioms.

As philosophers in every linguistic and geographical region of the globe re-emerge, so too do innovative ways to use reason [...] My studies of logical theory in India have led me to see that there is a fundamental contrast between two styles of reasoning, that of formal deduction and that of particularist, case-based ›blueprint+adaptation‹ extrapolation. [...] The basic idea is that an object is inferred to have one, unobserved, property on the grounds that it has another, observed, one: ›there is fire on the mountain because there is smoke there‹. The most distinctive aspect of the schema is the fundamental importance given to the citation of an example, a single case said either to be similar or else dissimilar to the topic at hand.

Suppose I want to persuade you that it is about to rain. I might reason as follows: ›Look, it is going to rain (pakṣa: proposed thesis). For see that large black cloud (hetu: sign). Last time you saw a large black cloud like that one (dṛṣṭānta: exemplary), what happened? Well, it's the same now (upānaya: application). It is definitely going to rain (nigamana: decision)‹.

Ganeri goes on to make interesting claims about what makes this ›blueprint and adaptation‹ (b+a) type of reasoning distinctive, and why it might not have so easily contributed to justifications of colonial exploitation. Unfortunately, I don't have the space to consider all those claims. Instead, let me simply invite him to say a bit more about the following questions.

First, how does this form of reasoning differ from standard forms of inductive reasoning – for example: whenever we have observed large black clouds in the past, they have led to rain. So, this large black cloud is also likely to result in rain?<sup>1</sup>

Second, assuming it is a distinctive form of reasoning, distinct from standard inductive reasoning, is it supposed to be *compatible* with standard inductive reasoning or not?

If the former, then the two methods would yield all the same results under the same circumstances, so there would be at best only a notional difference between them.

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<sup>1</sup> Ganeri contrasts this ›blueprint and adaptation model‹ with formal deduction, but it seems to me that its closest Western cousin is induction not deduction.

Presumably, then, Ganeri must think that the b+a model is *incompatible* with standard inductive reasoning. Suppose we agree with this and also accept his claim that it is an innovative and legitimate way to reason. How should we respond?

Should we conclude that standard inductive reasoning, which is essential to the scientific method as practiced in the West, is to be rejected in favor of this b+a model? That seems implausible.

Or is the idea that while inductive reasoning is appropriate for the West, blueprint and adaptation reasoning is appropriate to non-Western countries?

If we take that line, though, it seems as though we will have to concede that colonial reasoners were perfectly justified in their pro-colonial conclusions, even as colonized subjects may have been justified in rejecting them.

But the conclusion we wanted was that putative justifications for colonialism were mistaken. (Similar questions could be raised for the second example that Ganeri provides.)

Ganeri (*ibid.*: 141) concludes:

This conception of philosophy embodies a type of pluralistic realism, a commitment to the claim that there are many ways to investigate a reality whose existence is independent of human inquirers, a plurality of ways of thinking that cannot be reduced to any single mode of interrogation (least of all to the colonial use of reason).

However, as I have tried to argue here, and as I have tried to show in detail elsewhere, it is in fact very hard to make sense of the idea that there are many conflicting, yet equally valid, ways of arriving at justified beliefs about the world.<sup>2</sup>

—Paul Boghossian, New York University, New York, USA

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<sup>2</sup> See my *Fear of Knowledge* (2006).

## What's In a Name?

### In Support of *A Manifesto for Re:emergent Philosophy*

I was lucky enough to meet Jonardon Ganeri in June 2015, at the Mimesis workshop on World Philosophies, held at SOAS, University of London ([mimesisinternational.com/world-philosophies-series-workshop](http://mimesisinternational.com/world-philosophies-series-workshop)). It is a pleasure to continue the conversation through the pages of this journal. I draw on a background in Māori philosophy (Mika 2014; Stewart 2014a) and Māori science education in responding to Ganeri's »Manifesto« article (Ganeri 2016a: 134–142), which introduces and advocates for a new form of philosophy he calls »re: emergent philosophy«. Ganeri's big message in this article is that the time of »comparative philosophy« has expired: it is time for a new term to capture the new spirit of philosophy today, and to lead philosophy forward into the future. »Re:emergent philosophy« is his suggestion for that term.

Before turning to his arguments, a note is in order about Ganeri's chosen term, »re:emergent philosophy«, inspiration for which he attributes to a major intercultural art exhibition curated in 2013 by Yuko Hasegawa, titled *Re:emerge, Towards a New Cultural Cartography*<sup>1</sup>, commenting »the colon suggest[s] the symmetrical obligations of submerger and submerged« (Ganeri 2016a: 142). For the reader, the colon in the middle of the adjective »re:emergent« sends ambivalent signals. First, it suggests sympathy towards linguistic novelty, or the transgression of language norms (as in the language of texting or youth culture), since using a hyphen instead would be more grammatically correct, and give almost the same range of meanings. Second, it aligns somehow with market thinking, providing a recognisable »brand« for this philosophical position. Thus this phrase is open to critique, even before considering its conceptual claims, yet in such a way that seems part of its strategy, and hence a strength. In

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<sup>1</sup> See: [www.sharjahart.org/biennial/sharjah-biennial-11/welcome](http://www.sharjahart.org/biennial/sharjah-biennial-11/welcome) (last accessed on 8 January 2016).

themselves the choices represented by this term can lead to a rich philosophical discussion about language, linguistics, discourse and power: key phenomena at the heart of the critique advanced in its name.

Ganeri (*ibid.*: 135) begins by interrogating the term ›comparative philosophy‹, which, he explains, is best understood, not as a »branch« or »method« of philosophy, but as an »expedient heuristic« or helpful teaching tool in the global educational challenge of advancing beyond the recent period of modern intellectual history and philosophy, which for several lifetimes has been inextricably associated with colonialism and social power backed up by military force (Mignolo 2011). Ganeri highlights the politicised meaning of ›comparative philosophy‹ in describing its primary purpose or object:

The ambition of comparative philosophy was not to generate new philosophical insights but to protect thinkers in colonised countries from the peculiar form of intellectual servitude colonialism sought to impose (Ganeri 2016a: 135).

And again in defining his terms:

[When] I refer to ›the colonial use of reason‹ I shall not mean its use by the ancients or pre-moderns but by those philosophical giants in the 18th and 19th centuries who provided colonialism with its moral and intellectual foundations (*ibid.*).

Ganeri thus defines ›comparative philosophy‹ as an intervention against the colonial use of reason, which affects the meaning of the symposium theme question: Is Reason a Neutral Tool in Comparative Philosophy? Reason, according to comparative philosophy, has been anything *but* neutral in the last 200 years or so of world history. Reason, for example, in the form of Victorian science, featuring Social Darwinist notions of the ›Family of Man‹, has underwritten British colonisation and the subjugation of the indigenous Māori people throughout the history of New Zealand, dating back to the late 18th century: a national history that bears similarities to those of many other postcolonial countries around the globe: contemporary nations that are ex-colonies of European and other imperial powers. By definition, the meaning of the term ›comparative philosophy‹ includes cognisance of those other histories and identities, since if there were only one form of philosophy and one way of being, how could it be compared with anything?

A detailed description of comparative philosophy and its history is presented in the introductory essay with which the first issue of *Confluence* opened. In that essay, comparative philosophy is described as dating back to (at least) the inauguration of the journal *Philosophy East and West* in 1951, and as being »a vibrant field today« (Kirloskar-Steinbach et al. 2014: 8). Tracing its increased emphasis over time on the politics of philosophy, less on a method of comparison, and concomitant moves away from a lopsided tendency to explain »the East« in terms of »the West«, the perspective on comparative philosophy in this essay is consistent with that of Ganeri:

Generally speaking, mainstream philosophers have not, as yet, seemed to fully comprehend the relevance of comparative philosophy to philosophy as a discipline (*ibid.*: 43).

These authors explain that *Confluence* was established specifically as a forum for comparative and intercultural philosophy, which have been »sidelined« and »disenfranchised« within professional philosophy (*ibid.*: 44). Whereas Kirloskar-Steinbach seeks to raise up its profile, Ganeri recommends replacing it altogether. But what does it mean to change the terminology in a field: at what point does a philosophical label reach the limits of its usefulness?

In discussing the heuristic, educational meaning of »comparative philosophy«, Ganeri's reasoning is analogous to my argument that the term »Māori science« is best understood as a provocation of the meaning of »science« especially the idea that science is Western. The meaning of »Maori science« is more ethical than epistemological: it is an indigenous Māori response to the Eurocentric implications of the dominant notion of science as being essentially modern and Western in nature. Similarly, Ganeri argues that the meaning of »comparative philosophy« is based on political, ethical concepts rather than epistemic categories. In this view the role of »Māori science« is to interrogate the unmarked meaning of »science«, just as (so Ganeri argues) the role of »comparative philosophy« is to interrogate the unmarked meaning of »philosophy.«

These and other related epistemological debates turn on the slippage between possible alternative meanings invoked when some kinds of modifying words, such as »comparative« or »Māori«, are used with basic knowledge nouns such as »science« or »philosophy.« Many such two-word knowledge phrases, such as »Māori science« or »comparative philosophy«, are vulnerable to divergent interpretations, not

all of which are philosophically/politically robust or aligned with each other. This slippage in meaning is apt to be confusing and unhelpful, and may even be manipulated to thwart the interests of the original, often ameliorative, impulse out of which such terms arise in the first place. For example, ›Māori science‹ (or Indigenous science in general) is dismissed as ›creationism‹ or ›anti-science‹ by most philosophers of science. On the other hand, Māori sometimes over-promote the claims of ›Māori science‹, as discussed below. The result is an unhelpful binary in which both sides talk past each other.

Also unhelpful is when these terms migrate from one field of knowledge to another, with unpredictable effects. A Canadian example arose at government hearings of evidence against establishing a new diamond mine. In presenting his testimony based on traditional indigenous knowledge, an Aboriginal Dene Nation elder explained, ›I call it Dene science because in the literature it is regarded as a science‹. Terms such as ›Dene science‹ appear in social science research (in anthropology and related fields) in relation to initiatives to record and recover traditional knowledge of Aboriginal American peoples (see, for example, Alaska Native Knowledge Network).<sup>2</sup> But the idea of ›Dene science‹ holds no authority within the discourses of scientific rationality that underwrite government, industry, and an engineering project such as a diamond mine. Here the elder falls into the trap set by academic politics and disciplinary boundaries; and science, as usual, supports capital in trumping any argument from indigenous or environmental perspectives.

Another example of migrating terms is the idea within the Māori education community that there is a distinctively ›Māori‹ form of science, on which a culturally-appropriate science curriculum for Māori students should be based. This politically ›innocent‹ view of ›Māori science‹ follows the global trend of teaching ›Indigenous science‹ to Indigenous students, and contradicts the critical argument, outlined above, that the meaning of ›Māori science‹ is primarily ethical, not epistemic. A critical, politicised view of science, shorn of Eurocentric overtones, is implicit in my original term, ›Kaupapa Māori science‹ – a model for science education that combines mastery of science knowledge with studies in critical history and philosophy of science, exposing science's role in the service of colonization and global capital. This new term designed to update the ›Māori science‹ de-

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<sup>2</sup> See [www.ankn.uaf.edu](http://www.ankn.uaf.edu) (last accessed on 2 January 2016).

bate is analogous to Ganeri's recommendation of the new term, re:emergent philosophy.

Ganeri's delineation of universalist philosophy as colonising »trickery« aligns with the wider critique against the Western academy advanced in recent decades with the emergence of new traditions, including feminist philosophy, critical theory, comparative philosophy itself, and, more generally, poststructuralism, which is based on a questioning of any »grand narrative« including philosophical grand narratives such as universalism, and critical research methodologies, which seek more inclusive participation of diverse voices and sectors in the academy. To date, these reforms have advanced more successfully in adjoining fields, such as education, than in philosophy itself, which underscores the importance of Ganeri's article, and the mission of the journal *Confluence* itself, in placing this debate more squarely within philosophical discourse.

Ganeri explicitly includes and speaks for a wide range of critical philosophical traditions, including cross-cultural, fusion and intercultural philosophy, while noting that »re:emergence does not require cross-culturality« (2016a: 138). Avoiding the traps of homogenisation, Ganeri clarifies how these various traditions differ and overlap with each other, and with comparative philosophy, and envisions next steps towards which attention might be directed.

Ganeri lists four features of the »age of re:emergence« (*ibid.*: 137):

1. The articulation of philosophies and traditions located in many countries all around the world;
2. The shift from a centre-periphery structure to a »plural and diverse network« of philosophical work;
3. The demotion of Europe and other colonial powers in a flattening of the international academic hierarchy; and
4. The acceptance by philosophers in the »largely anglophone international academy« of their responsibility to support these three trends above, acknowledging their own privileged position as »a fall-out from colonialism rather than a reflection of intellectual superiority«.

Ganeri outlines two useful models or »similes« (*ibid.*: 141) for the application of re:emergence philosophy: one that sees philosophy as a compass, or direction-setter; the other for philosophy as like a map, which helps the philosopher to orient within their locality. Both models emphasise a concept of philosophy as action or a practice, rather

than a set of truths or criteria for truth. Drawing on Indian philosophical traditions, Ganeri demonstrates how comparative philosophy provides a means to reflect on the nature of philosophy itself, freed from the trappings of colonial reason, »retriev[ing] the cosmopolitan ideal from imperial misappropriation« (*ibid.*: 138) and reinforcing the value of the liminal perspective, such as Māori philosophy, in being able to hold up a mirror to the mainstream.

Ganeri explains that re:emergent philosophy

embodies a type of pluralistic realism, a commitment to the claim that there are many ways to investigate a reality whose existence is independent of human inquirers, a plurality of ways of thinking that cannot be reduced to any single mode of interrogation (least of all to the colonial use of reason) (*ibid.*: 141).

Here he identifies »pluralistic realism« as a relevant »branch« of philosophy, in the sense he discounts as possible for comparative philosophy. A pluralist position is consistent with a limited form of relativism; a relativist epistemology that allows for the existence of indigenous people-as-indigenous at all. Understood in this sense, pluralistic realism counts as part of a wider effort to reform analytical philosophy, to overcome the reductionism inherent in universalism, which tends towards scientism and the subordination of reason to power, such as in the colonial use of reason. Similar motives also seem part of the rationale for contextualism, pragmatism, and other recent philosophical traditions. As with many such terms, pluralism takes on different shades of meaning at different levels of debate: political, scientific, religious, philosophical. But whether expressed in terms of pluralism, relativism, or even diversity, the important point seems always to be to overturn the »false claim to neutrality« of the colonial use of reason (*ibid.*: 136).

By the end of the article it is clear that Ganeri is less interested in terminological debates and more in promoting a vision both practical and utopian:

Those who are immersed in philosophies from Africa, Asia, Mesoamerica and Australasia will have their own contributions to make, and we may look to a future when there will be a vibrant pluralistic realism in departments of academic philosophy around the globe, and a new cartography of philosophy (*ibid.*: 141–142).

As a Māori – an indigenous person from Aotearoa-New Zealand – I count myself as included within »Australasia« in this sketch of Ga-

neri's vision for the future of philosophy, as well as those he describes as the »once-colonised« (*ibid.*: 137). In my own life, real-world problems brought me to philosophy: in my early twenties I completed an MSc with First Class Honours in Chemistry, but decided not to continue to doctoral study, and worked in technical and commercial jobs in Chemistry for several years before leaving to live on my father's ancestral land. Two decades later, after an intervening career as a secondary teacher of Te Reo Māori, Mathematics/Pāngarau and Science/Pūtaiao, I started doctoral study in Education. My doctoral research was on the Māori science curriculum: a deeply philosophical topic. My external examiner was a leading figure in PESA, the Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia ([www.pesa.org.au](http://www.pesa.org.au)) and since 2007, when I attended my first PESA conference held in Wellington, PESA has been my primary academic network. Yet in 2015, despite the strength of Māori education across Aotearoa-New Zealand, built up over the last several decades, in particular with Kaupapa Māori, I am one of only two Māori members currently active in PESA. The two of us represented »Australasia« at the World Philosophies Workshop referred to above at the start of this piece, which suggests a lack of Māori/Indigenous representation to be found within philosophy itself in this part of the world.

During the last 200 years of Pākehā occupation of their lands, Māori, of necessity, have been culturally pragmatic for survival. It therefore seems natural for Māori philosophy to align with the key concepts of pragmatism (as espoused by Peirce, James and Dewey), in addition to a limited version of relativism, as noted above, and a general attitude of incredulity towards Eurocentrism and its grand narratives of Eurocentrism. As already discussed, such an attitude is a key characteristic of poststructuralism.

Those who do not see the point of poststructuralism, postmodernity, postcolonialism, and so on, sometimes make deprecating jokes, such as labelling them all »the posties.« From an indigenous scholar's point of view, this kind of ludic scholarship is a serious impediment, perhaps equally as serious as the »shriek[ing of the] neoconservative demonology«. Not to afford poststructuralist or postmodernist ideas the respect of even engaging with them is tantamount to the philosophical equal of »terrorism«, understood as a situation in which »neither side can really »see« the other« (Dutta 2004: 434). That some (perhaps much) postmodernist scholarship is badly written is no excuse for ignoring the need for reform in philosophy.

Ganeri's vision for the future of philosophy is inclusive but politicised, rigorous yet supportive – a balance that is not always easy to maintain. Key for those who practice philosophy while identifying with colonising philosophy's »excluded outsider« (Ganeri 2016a: 136) is to understand this project, and develop the ability to recognise their allies of all stripes, who may use a range of labels to express their ideas, but who share genuine commitment to the project of decolonising philosophy. This is a change whose time has come.

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Reply

# Reflections on Re:emergent Philosophy

## 1 Philosophy without Borders and Cosmopolitan Thought Zones

Re:emergent philosophy consists in a retrieval and rearticulation of precolonial philosophical heritages in such a manner as to enable creative philosophical thinking in solidarity with others. Let me begin by describing two ideas in the same conceptual territory. Early in 2016 a new volume appeared. Edited by Arindam Chakrabarti and Ralph Weber, its official title is *Comparative Philosophy without Borders* (2016). Yet this title is a little misleading, for the essays contained in it are not exercises in comparative philosophy but explorations in a beyond-comparative experiment the editors term »borderless philosophy«, ones for which their »Introduction« and »Afterword« constitute a brilliant call-to-arms: »Once we have climbed up to the level playing field of global combative cooperative critical creative philosophy from the fetid wells of centuries of unacknowledged epistemic inequalities, we can, it is hoped, throw away the ladder of comparison« (*ibid.*: 238). A borderless philosophy should »spontaneously straddle geographical areas and cultures, temperaments and time-periods« (*ibid.*: 22) in which »instead of preserving, quoting, and juxtaposing [one's sources], one picks up a concept, a line of reasoning or some, however minor point arising out of years of imaginative rearrangement and cross-fertilization of the ideas retrieved from different cultures, periods, texts, and disciplines« (*ibid.*: 231). Borderless philosophy is not a synthetic »fusion«, because in a borderless philosophy, »when making, say Zhuangzi speak to Strawson about knowing other minds, the point cannot be which of them is right to say what he says, but simply what is the right thing to say, independently of who says it. What would come out would perhaps be less historical and less encyclopaedic as a reference to this philosopher or that philosopher, but it would be something valuable, some-

thing in a twilight zone, surely something constructive, probably even something original» (*ibid.*: 232). A borderless philosophy leaves behind three stages of comparativism, a first stage in which analogues for Western ideas were sought in non-Western traditions, a second stage which discovered lacunae in Western tradition in comparison with the non-Western, and a third stage defined by the imperative »to re-interpret Indian, Chinese, or Japanese philosophy in terms of (oppositionally or positively) Western philosophical ideas as much as contributing back into English-language philosophy by bringing in elements of Asian or African or Hawaiian philosophy« (*ibid.*: 20). The history of colonialism looms large in these comparative exercises, for:

whether it was predominantly a history of knowledge-looting, or of conversion in the name of civilization or of systematic erasure of non-European intellectual traditions by means of deletion and distortion of indigenous cultural memories, the history of colonialism and its dream of Europeanization of the globe, changed the global research-imperative in the Humanities. Under and immediately after colonialism, comparison has been done, somewhat anthropologically, merely for the sake of understanding other cultures or for the sake of finding »fascinating« resemblances and disanalogies (*ibid.*: 28).

The insidious dilemma I described in the *Manifesto* (2016a: 134–142) is restated here in the following terms: »There is one extremely frustrating charge that should worry all of us who have dedicated considerable parts of our intellectual careers to this risky business of boundary-breaking cross-cultural thinking [...] The charge, when formulated abstractly, is this: either we represent an Asian (or African or Islamic or Hawaiian etc.) philosophy in its own original terms, which are utterly alien to Western philosophy, in which case it is not philosophy proper, or we rephrase it in Western terms, in which case it risks ending up as just a repetition of what we already have in the West. Thus we either have no need of comparison with foreign ideas because they are just the same or too similar to our own native ideas, or we cannot allow it to count as hard-core philosophy because it is too different from how philosophy is done in the Western tradition« (Chakrabarti and Weber 2016: 18). Put in this way there is a structural parallel with the Paradox of Inquiry, often known as »Meno's Paradox« but in fact discussed and refuted in detail within the Sanskrit knowledge systems: either you already know what you are searching for, in which case the search is pointless, or you don't, in which case

you cannot even begin. And as with that pseudo-paradox, the solution here is to acknowledge states of incomplete understanding, enough to get inquiry off the ground without forestalling it:

This space between unrecognizably and unintelligibly alien and boringly familiar has to be found by any comparative philosopher who wishes to be heard by the mainstreams of both of the traditions that she is trying to bring together, either in conflict or in cooperation, in conversation or contestation (*ibid*).

A second vital document is the »Introduction« by Kris Manjapra to a volume of essays entitled *Cosmopolitan Thought Zones* (2010). What Manjapra demonstrates is that experiments in borderlessness and re:emergence have been going on for a hundred years already, outside the arena of orthodox comparativism. The term Manjapra uses to denote those experiments is »aspirational cosmopolitanism«:

By speaking of »aspirational cosmopolitanism« we mean the pursuit of conversations across lines of difference, between disparate socio-cultural, political and linguistic groups, that provisionally created shared public worlds. Translation, interpretation and shared social experience created heterogeneous transnational public spaces [...] Cosmopolitan thought zones are the treacherous and provisional shared worlds that arise when disparate groups seek to solve problems together (*ibid.*: 1).

These anticolonial cosmopolitanisms are »lateral networks« in which a centre-periphery model is displaced by »political, intellectual and social connections of South Asians with other colonized peoples worldwide, and with European and American groups who stood on the margins of imperial power, or were critical of it« (*ibid.*: 2).

[A concern with] medial zones of thought is not tantamount to a shift of focus onto the intermediate spaces between two intransigent poles, Europe and the colonies, the West and the East. Rather, the attempt is to disaggregate and scale these monoliths, and to trace the plural nettings, interactions and affinities that ranged across global dimensions [...] A different framework is needed in which »the intermediate« does not signify the state of being »in between« two poles, but rather evokes the dynamic of being itself, as an open process of circulation and historicity. The intermediate state of becoming has an ontological status that need make no reference to assertions about »rooted« authenticity or the bounded termini of enclosed cultural identities (*ibid.*: 7).

Here, the two myths I described in the *Manifesto* by which colonialism seeks to ensnare the colonised is identified with perceptive clarity:

Colonial peoples were said by British administrators to be particulars without access to universals. Colonial rule insisted that the particularity and peculiarity of Indians broached no larger ethical universalism, and had no ultimate horizon of social meaning. The only universalism Indians could possibly belong to was the universalism bestowed by empire. It was not state inclusion versus state marginalization that cosmopolitans in the colonies had to challenge, but the assertion about the very impossibility of their global imagination and pursuits amounting to anything more than ›sedition‹ or ›insurgency‹. They faced an existential conundrum between inclusion into the category of ›humanity‹ as mimics of the West, or relegation to a stagnant and archaic particularity, having no access on their own to larger significance (*ibid.*: 10).

The way out of this insidious dilemma is through the creation of ›universal communities transcending the imperial axis‹ (*ibid.*).

While Chakrabarti and Weber take the mind of the individual philosopher as the site within which borderless experimentation takes place, for Manjapra what is of interest is a transient shared public world that is a ›thought zone‹. These two forms of activity, philosophizing without borders and constructing medial cosmopolitan thought zones, are perfect examples of what I have in mind when I refer to a re:emergent philosophy.

## 2 The Politics of Post-Comparativism

Georgina Stewart (2016: 154–161) enriches and finesses ideas in the *Manifesto* with the kind of deep insight available only to someone for whom philosophy is not merely an academic game but a part of lived experience. She has demonstrated the importance of language and terminological innovation to these quests for borderlessness, re:emergence, and medial cosmopolitanisms. When an adjective drawn from one discourse is placed in apposition with a noun from another, the linguistic effect need not be simply one of semantic restriction but instead one of critique. So there is, in the phrase ›Māori science‹, ›a critical, politicized view of science, shorn of Eurocentric overtones [...] a model for science education that combines mastery of science knowledge with studies in critical history and philosophy of science, exposing science's role in the service of colonization and global capital‹ (*ibid.*: 157). Similarly, in phrases such as ›Buddhist epistemology‹ or ›Ubuntu ethics‹, there is a subtle rhetorical rejection of the

comparativist model – a search for predefined epistemological or ethical categories in the philosophical literatures of the colonised – and instead a challenge to rearrange and reformulate those very categories. Stewart forcefully reminds us that even as some parts of the world rapidly progress along the path of decolonization, in other parts the struggle is even now one of basic survival. Philosophy has been widely hailed, in many historical epochs and many geographical locations, as a medicine for the human spirit. If it can serve as a cure, when the disease is one of intellectual colonization and the destruction of indigeneity, then we shall also need a »preventative philosophy«, to stop the disease returning, and now, as in the past, cosmopolitan thought zones may provide a sought-after solidarity.

If solidarity is needed anywhere it is in the region of the world known as West Asia or the Middle East, of which the Perso-Arabian Gulf is but one part (and »gulf« here does indeed seem to be the right noun for adjectival critique). Solidarity is needed with those who attempt with huge courage to find avenues of understanding between Palestinian and Jew, and the three stages of comparativism continue to serve in their important heuristic role. Here indeed, as Mustafa Abu Sway (2016: 147) rightly points out, comparative philosophy underpins and facilitates inter-philosophical dialogue in a manner analogous to interfaith dialogue. Solidarity is needed too, as Sway emphasises, with those millions of »refugees flocking to Europe across the Mediterranean, running away from conditions that originate in colonialism« (*ibid.*: 146). And solidarity is needed with the vast numbers of immigrant workers from South Asia, indentured by recruitment fees, embezzled by false contracts, and finally enslaved by the inhumanity of the *kafala* system. Solidarity is grounded in a shared instinct for justice, and for Sari Nusseibeh the instinct for justice cannot be separated from the instinct of love. In his marvellous experiment in borderless philosophy, »To Justice with Love«, published in the volume I mentioned above, Nusseibeh draws on Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406) to upturn John Rawls, rehumanizing justice with the idea of *asabiyyah*, the natural instinct to care for another. On the basis of this retrieved idea he defines an Overlapping Principle, »that there be a coincidence of the want for those things I want for others with those things that they want for themselves« (2016: 194). This principle »guarantees that I seek to help others to develop themselves [...] obliging me to extend help to others«, and is, Nusseibeh argues, more fundamental than and provides a basis for the Raw-

Isian Difference Principle, which guarantees only »that I do nothing that might prevent their ability to so develop themselves« (*ibid.*). In this preventative philosophy, injustice is dissolved by the solidarity of love before it has chance to turn into rage.

Another adjectival construction of the same sort as those referred to by Stewart is »comparative philosophy«. My claim in the *Manifesto* is that the addition of the adjective here engenders a movement away from philosophy and towards a different kind of intellectual activity altogether, one whose value has historically largely been in the context of projects of intellectual decolonization. Paul Boghossian rightly observes that this intellectual activity has value in cross-cultural understanding, for »non-western cultures are of intrinsic interest and one good way to interrogate and reveal their thought is to compare what they have to say about philosophical problems with alternative approaches to these problems«, and perhaps also in the philosophical inquiry into fundamental problems, since non-Western thinkers »developed important insights into some of these very same fundamental questions« (2016: 150). I am as encouraged as he is in what genuinely seems to be a new wave of interest in the academy in non-Western philosophies; my point is that, in addition to the two kinds of comparative exercise he mentions, which correspond to the second and third stages of comparativism isolated by Chakrabarti and Weber, there is a more productive model available in terms of which to understand the nature of this new engagement. The philosophical academy must go global, but this will require a more profound reorientation than has hitherto been realised.

### 3 What is a »Use of Reason«?

I appeal in the *Manifesto* to the notion of »a use of reason« (Ganeri 2016a: 135). Boghossian rightly presses me to clarify what I mean by the phrase, an expression there left undefined. I will spend what space I have left attempting to do just that. To sum up the argument I am about to make: in *Fear of Knowledge* (2006) Boghossian argues that there cannot be a plurality of genuinely distinct epistemic systems, where an epistemic system is a set of epistemic principles, and an epistemic principle is a general normative proposition. If my phrase »use of reason« were taken to be a synonym of his »epistemic system«, his argument would apply to me too. What I mean by that

phrase, however, is something else: I mean an epistemic stance, where a stance is not a proposition but a policy or strategy concerning the use of epistemic principles (in Indian vocabulary, the distinction is between the notions of *pramāṇa* and *naya*). Other names for an epistemic stance include »epistemic culture«, »style of enquiry«, »way of interrogating reality«, »use of reason«, and »mode of argumentation«. My epistemic pluralism is a pluralism about stances, and so is not the position Boghossian has argued against. In the *Manifesto* I contrast the epistemic stance of colonialism with »case-based« and »visual thinking« stances. What denies legitimacy to the epistemic stance of colonialism is that it is dogmatic in denying the existence of alternative stances and that it recommends the use of violence over reason to silence alternatives.

Space for what I describe as a pluralistic realism seems to vanish in the oscillation between two views that have largely shaped contemporary discussion, the view, on the one hand, that that science is a single, unified, discipline that discovers a single objective world according to a uniquely valid set of objective epistemic procedures, and the view, to the contrary that truth is relative to the interests, perceptions, background commitments, and values of disparate communal groups. The most influential advocate of the second view in recent times has been Richard Rorty, and of the first, Paul Boghossian. Boghossian meticulously constructs an argument against the compatibility of epistemic pluralism and realism. The target of his argument is the relativistic view that »if our judgments about what it's ›rational‹ to believe are to have any prospect of being true, we should not claim that some belief is justified absolutely by the available evidence, but only that it is justified relative to the particular epistemic system that we have come to accept« (2006: 62). Such a view would seem to »give immediate support to the idea that there are many radically different, yet equally valid *ways* of knowing the world« (*ibid.*). A relativist ought not say that there are many radically different, yet equally *rational*, ways of knowing the world, because »that would amount to endorsing a use of ›rational‹ that is absolute, whereas the relativist view on offer is precisely that we cannot sensibly speak of what is rational, period, but only of what is rational relative to this or that accepted epistemic system« (*ibid.*: 63, n.5). Here, the notion of an epistemic system is that of a collection of epistemic principles, »general normative propositions which specify under which conditions a particular type of be-

belief is justified» (*ibid.*: 85). There are »generation« principles, which generate a justified belief on the basis of something that is not itself a belief, and there are »transmission« principles, which prescribe how to move from some justified beliefs to other justified beliefs (*ibid.*: 65). Again, there are »fundamental« epistemic principles, principles »whose correctness cannot be derived from the correctness of other epistemic principles«, and »derived« epistemic principles, whose correctness can be so derived. The way of fixing beliefs that we call »science«, Boghossian suggests, is but a rigorous application of certain »ordinary, familiar« fundamental epistemic principles. In particular:

(Observation) For any observational proposition *p*, if it visually seems to *S* that *p* and circumstantial conditions *D* obtain, then *S* is *prima facie* justified in believing *p*.

(Deduction) If *S* is justified in believing *p*, and *p* fairly obviously entails *q*, then *S* is justified in believing *q*.

(Induction) If *S* has often enough observed that an event of type *A* has been followed by an event of type *B*, then *S* is justified in believing that all events of type *A* will be followed by events of type *B*.

And perhaps also

(Inference to the best explanation) If *S* justifiably believes that *p*, and justifiably believes that the best explanation for *p* is *q*, then *S* is justified in believing *q*.

Might there be epistemic systems other than the one for which these »ordinary, familiar« epistemic principles provide a conception of justification? Perhaps, for example, premodern Christian societies took as fundamental the epistemic principle Revelation:

(Revelation) For certain propositions *p*, including propositions about the heavens, believing *p* is *prima facie* justified if *p* is the revealed word of God as claimed by the Bible.

Likewise, the Azande, it would appear, employ a different epistemic principle, Oracle:

(Oracle) For certain propositions *p*, believing *p* is *prima facie* justified if a Poison Oracle says that *p*.

The three epistemic systems, modern science, Christianity, and Azande, appear to employ divergent underived epistemic principles,

and that might seem to motivate epistemic relativism, a view which Boghossian defines as the conjunction of three claims (*ibid.*: 73):

- A. There are no absolute facts about what belief a particular item of information justifies. (Epistemic non-absolutism).
- B. If a person, *S*'s, epistemic judgments are to have any prospect of being true, we must not construe his utterances of the form »*E justifies belief B*« as expressing the claim *E justifies belief B* but rather as expressing the claim *According to the epistemic system C, that I, S, accept, information E justifies belief B*. (Epistemic relationism).
- C. There are many fundamentally different, genuinely alternative epistemic systems, but no facts by virtue of which one of these systems is more correct than any of the others. (Epistemic pluralism).

Two objections to Epistemic relationism are now countenanced. First, propositions of the form *E justifies belief B* are normative, they make claims about what one should believe given certain evidence, whereas propositions of the form *According to the epistemic system C, E justifies belief B* are purely descriptive, they merely document the logical implications of a given epistemic system (*ibid.*: 75). A purely factual remark about what an epistemic system requires has come to replace a normative claim. There is a second, apparently fatal, objection. According to the relativist, the absolute claim *E justifies B* must be false, because justification is never absolute but only relative to an epistemic system. The objection is that epistemic principles are general normative statements about what beliefs are justified by what sorts of evidence. If, therefore, particular normative statements of this sort express something false (or incomplete), then the epistemic principles too must be false (or incomplete):

Given that the propositions which make up epistemic systems are just very general propositions about what absolutely justifies what, it makes no sense to insist that we abandon making absolute *particular* judgments about what justifies what while allowing us to *accept* absolute *general* judgments about what justifies what. But that is, in effect, what the epistemic relativist is recommending (*ibid.*: 87).

Again,

If we think of epistemic systems as composed of propositions, we will have to think of those propositions as complete, truth-evaluable propositions which encode a particular conception of epistemic justification. And if we do that, we will fail to make sense of epistemic relativism. We will be unable to understand how we could coherently accept the relativist's recommendation that we speak not of what is justified and unjustified, but only of what is justified or unjustified relative to the epistemic systems that we happen to accept. For we will no longer be able to make sense of our acceptance of some of those systems over others (*ibid.*: 91).

The view I want to defend affirms pluralism but rejects relativism, and I can thus agree with Boghossian on this point. Note though his merging two separate claims under the general label »Epistemic relativism«. Boghossian's argument against *relativisation* is an argument only against what he terms »Epistemic *relationism*«, and does not yet speak to Epistemic pluralism. Boghossian does present an independent argument against pluralism, which he defines as the claim that there are many fundamentally different, genuinely alternative epistemic systems, but no facts by virtue of which one of these systems is more correct than any of the others. Let us suppose that one epistemic system, C1, employs epistemic principles that imply *if E, B is justified*, while another epistemic system, C2, employs epistemic principles that imply *it is not the case that if E, B is justified*. How can it be, in this circumstance, that there are no facts by virtue of which one system is more correct than the other, Boghossian asks. If there are no absolute facts about justification, then C1 makes a false claim, and C2 claims something true. More generally, if we take any contradictory pair of epistemic systems, »if one of them is deemed to say something false, the other will have been deemed to say something true. Under those circumstances, it's hard to see how it could be right to say that there are no facts by virtue of which one epistemic system could be more correct than any other« (*ibid.*). Boghossian's target is the thesis he terms Equal Validity: »There are many radically different, yet »equally valid« ways of knowing the world, with science being just one of them« (*ibid.*: 2). His argument is that the very idea of a plurality of epistemic systems, each encoding a particular conception of epistemic justification, is incoherent.

Boghossian, however, mischaracterises the view of an epistemic pluralist. He is wrong to claim that pluralism about epistemic cultures is reducible to a pluralism about epistemic *systems*, as these have been

defined by Boghossian, namely as sets of general normative propositions which specify under which conditions a particular type of belief is justified. Reflection on the Sanskrit knowledge systems makes this evident. Indian epistemology in general is an analysis of *pramāṇas*, methods for interrogating reality, sources of warranted belief. A *pramāṇa* is, more or less, what Boghossian means by an epistemic principle. The Indians were perfectly aware of the distinction between generative principles and transmission principles, and would have chastised Boghossian for failing to mention an important transmission principle, Testimony:

(Testimony) For certain propositions *p*, believing *p* is *prima facie* justified if a reliable witness testifies that *p*.

Their names for Observation, Deduction, Inference to the Best Explanation and Testimony are *pratyakṣa*, *anumāna*, *arthāpatti*, and *śabda*. Yet they may have forgiven him, because they also discussed and disagreed among themselves whether Testimony is a fundamental or a derived epistemic principle, and they were, in general, fully cognisant of the importance of establishing a basic set of underived epistemic principles. Other putative epistemic principles, *pramāṇas*, were entertained, and much discussion took place around the question of their status, for example, whether they are derivable from more basic epistemic principles and whether they ought to count as epistemic principles at all. Indian versions of Revelation and Oracle, for instance, were largely dismissed. Yet, the crucially important point is that although the different Sanskrit epistemic cultures disagreed with each other about what the underived epistemic principles are, they agreed that there is just one correct set of such principles. That is, they *agreed* about there being just one epistemic system, even though they disagreed about what constitutes it. Thus the epistemic pluralism that the Indian tradition displays cannot correctly be described as a pluralism about epistemic systems.

In fact, the nature of the epistemic pluralism on display has already been analysed for us, and by the Sanskrit tradition itself. The remarkable Jaina philosophers make a distinction of fundamental epistemological significance when they say that as well as and in addition to *pramāṇas*, epistemic principles, there are also *nayas*, epistemic *standpoints* or *stances*, and that both are essential constituents of

an epistemic culture.<sup>1</sup> A *naya* is not a proposition but a practical attitude, a *strategy* or *policy* which guides inquiry: it is an *approach* to the problem of producing knowledge, not a thesis about the sources of justification.<sup>2</sup> One such policy might be to attend only to what is immediately present in experience, another might be to enumerate everything one encounters without making any categorial distinctions, another to attend to stasis rather than flux, or vice versa. To see that stances are not propositions, we need only reflect on the epistemic stance adopted by Nāgārjuna, the Buddhist Mādhyamika, who denied that there is any way to say what nature is *in itself* (*svabhāva*). Nāgārjuna was accused of refuting himself, for if his epistemic proposition that everything is thus empty then that proposition should be itself empty, i.e. without meaning *in itself*. His response was that he held no proposition, that emptiness is not a proposition, indeed that it would be a fatal error to mistake adopting emptiness as a philosophical position for belief in any philosophical proposition.<sup>3</sup> And this might remind one immediately of van Fraassen's argument that, as a position in the philosophy of science, empiricism is not a propositional thesis, for if it were then, since it claims that every thesis is open to empirical confirmation or disconfirmation it would itself be open to empirical confirmation or disconfirmation (van Fraassen 2002).<sup>4</sup> To put it in Boghossian's terminology, someone who claims that Observation is the only underived epistemic principle would have to regard Observation as itself rationally justified on the basis of observation. van Fraassen's response is to say that:

A philosophical position can consist in a stance (attitude, commitment, approach, a cluster of such – possibly including some propositional attitudes such as beliefs as well). Such a stance can of course be expressed, and may involve or presuppose some beliefs as well, but cannot be simply equated with having beliefs or making assertions about what there is (2002: 48).

The idea is helpfully elaborated by Anjan Chakravartty, who says that,

<sup>1</sup> TS 1.6 (Tatia 1996); NAV 29.28 (Balcerowicz 2002: 124).

<sup>2</sup> »Among these, the [general] definition is as follows: ›The reflection of one facet of an object recognised by a *pramāṇa* is the standpoint‹, because this [general definition] pertains to all particular standpoints and because it is capable of distinguishing [among standpoints of] different forms« (NAV 29.12; Balcerowicz 2001: 97).

<sup>3</sup> Nāgārjuna, VV 29 (Bhattacharya et al. 1978: 113).

<sup>4</sup> See Doctor (2014).

a stance is a strategy, or a combination of strategies, for generating factual beliefs. A stance makes no claim about reality, at least directly. It is rather a sort of epistemic ›policy‹ concerning which methodologies should be adopted in the generation of factual beliefs [...] Stances are not themselves propositional; they are guidelines for ways of acting. One does not believe a stance in the way one believes a fact. Rather one commits to a stance, or adopts it (2004: 175).

So, for instance, ›physicalism is not so much a factual thesis, but a deference to the claims of basic science«. To adopt a stance is to resolve or commit oneself to acting or making decisions as described by it. Stances are open-ended, in terms of how they are interpreted and applied; their application requires discretion and judgement. They express and implement values, much as the policy of not lying implements a positive valuation of the truth (Teller 2004: 166). Let me therefore say that a stance is a policy adopted towards the employment of epistemic principles. Epistemic pluralism is a commitment to pluralism about epistemic stances, not to epistemic systems in the Boghossian sense.

Boghossian's argument against pluralism about epistemic systems was that ›if one of them is deemed to say something false, the other will have been deemed to say something true. Under those circumstances, it's hard to see how it could be right to say that there are no facts by virtue of which one epistemic system could be more correct than any other« (2006: 91). This argument does not apply to epistemic stances, for it is possible for there to be pairs of genuinely alternative epistemic stances and no facts by virtue of which one is more correct than the other. We can see this most clearly if we remember that stances are action-guiding policies governing the application of epistemic principles. One can analogously think of a route as a guide to performing the action of reaching the summit of a mountain: there can be different routes up the mountain, perhaps with different benefits and drawbacks, but equally good for reaching the top. Here it is absurd to say that deeming one of the approaches ›true‹ necessitates deeming the other ›false‹, both because truth and falsity are not the norms according to which plans for action are evaluated, and because whatever that norm is, both approaches may satisfy it equally well. To give another example: it is often the case that a given mathematical theorem can be proved in two different ways, adopting in each case a different proof strategy, yet both equally ›correct‹, i. e. sound as proofs of the theorem in question.

A fundamental distinction emphasised by the Jainas – and this was their second great theoretical achievement – is a distinction between *inclusive* and *dogmatic* ways of adopting a stance. A stance is adopted inclusively if its adoption does not prohibit others' use of different stances; a stance is adopted dogmatically if its adoption does prohibit others' use of different stances. Someone assumes a stance dogmatically if they believe, or expect, or even just hope, that in the context under consideration, the stance is susceptible to rational support of the kind that makes it uniquely defensible as opposed to its contraries (cf. Teller 2004: 162). It was, claim the Jainas, the great failing of the traditional proponents of the Sanskrit philosophical systems that they invariably took a dogmatic approach to the epistemic stances they articulate. The importance of the distinction is now clear: if we restrict our attention to stances adopted dogmatically, then a version of Boghossian's argument against pluralism about epistemic systems returns. For to adopt an epistemic stance dogmatically is to deem that its prescriptions for the use of the epistemic principles is correct and that any other prescription is faulty.

Siddharṣiḡaṇi, indeed, argues, in an exact parallel to Boghossian's argument against pluralism about epistemic principles, that the dogmatist claims that whenever a piece of evidence justifies a belief that an object has some one sort of property, e.g. stability, it also justifies a belief that it does not have other, contrary, properties, e.g. transformation, a claim that is literally false if reality is indeed multi-aspectual. Epistemic stances ought not commit themselves to the second conjunct of this claim, but should remain silent on how things go with properties other than the one under investigation, and to that extent they are always *incomplete* ways of interrogating reality. Epistemic principles, on the other hand, are *complete* or absolute in their claims about justification, but they achieve completeness because there is a suppressed quantification over hidden parameters, which can be made explicit by attaching the operator »in a certain sense; somehow« (*syāt*). This is how he explains the Jaina thesis that »this cognitive approach to a particular cognoscible may consist in standpoints (*naya*) and principles (*pramāṇa*). Among these two, a principle should be known to grasp completely, whereas a standpoint should be known to grasp incompletely« (NAV 29.28; Balcerowicz 2002: 124).

Boghossian does consider a related idea, which is that epistemic systems, as he has defined them, are sets of imperatives. He rejects

that idea on the grounds that an epistemic system encodes a particular conception of epistemic justification, but a set of imperatives does not, as well as on the ground that it cannot make sense of the relativist's relativisation of justification to systems (2006: 91–93). But neither argument succeeds against the view that pluralism concerns stances. For, first, we have agreed that there is a unified epistemic system comprised of a set of epistemic principles (*pramāṇa*), we have defined an epistemic stance as a policy governing the use of that epistemic system; thus a stance does not itself encode a conception of epistemic justification. And second, we have separated out the claim about relativisation and the claim about pluralism, which Boghossian surreptitiously merges in his conjunctive definition of relativism. Having separated these distinct claims, it is evident that epistemic pluralism about stances is compatible with a rejection of relativisation. Indeed, if it were true that epistemic principles are imperatives then stance pluralism would be impossible, for there cannot be distinct alternative approaches to the dictates of an imperative.

The Jaina distinction between principles and stances is enough to diffuse Boghossian's argument against epistemic pluralism. I have said that distinct stances may sometimes apply with equal correctness to an investigation. The Jainas argue that this does not entail that the distinct deliverances of stances are necessarily contradictory. Rejecting the idea that things have a single unique essence, the Jainas instead say – and this is their third theoretical innovation – that reality is in some sense manifold or multifaceted: the Jaina term is *anekānta*. Metaphysics tends to treat objects, qua targets of inquiry, as if they are simple points, like the peak of a mountain. Yet the mountain itself is metaphysically more complex, its variously shaped sides offering different aspects to the climber and so different potential routes to the top. So, to quote Siddhasena, »the real thing, whose essence is multiplex (*anekānta*), [forms] the domain of all acts of awareness; an object qualified by one facet (*ekadeśa*) is known as the province of the standpoint (*naya*)« (NA 29.28; Balcerowicz 2002: 83). Siddharṣigaṇi elaborates, adding that »the real thing, both external and internal, endowed with a form that is under the sway of *multiplex essential natures* not separate from each other, unfolds itself to all epistemic principles (*pramāṇa*)« (NAV 29.1.; *ibid.*: 84). Mountaineers, whichever route they select, have the same tools and techniques available to them, but the mountain unfolds itself differently to each, and each aspect thus presented has as much of a claim to be the essence of the moun-

tain as any other. Likewise, each non-dogmatic epistemic stance is an approach to some one aspect of the world. Different stances are policies for warranting beliefs about different aspects of the world. That is, we might think that there is a plurality of special sciences, each special science having as its provenance some particular domain or level of properties, no such domain being reducible to any other. To say this is to deny that there is a single way the world is *in itself*, that there is some uniquely objective description of the world viewed *sub species aeternitatis*, from nowhere; rather, the multiplicity of different approaches collectively constitute a »view from everywhere«.

#### 4 Classifying and Evaluating Epistemic Stances

An epistemic stance is a policy governing the employment of the epistemic principles. Other names for an epistemic stance include »epistemic culture«, »style of enquiry«, »way of interrogating reality«, »use of reason«, and »mode of argumentation«. The traditional proponents of the Sanskrit *śāstras* fell into dogmatism in their attitude towards the epistemic stances they articulate. Bracket the dogmatism and what remains is a viable mode of accessing some one aspect of reality. Each of the Sanskrit »knowledge systems« is thus an epistemic *stance* (not an epistemic *system*, in Boghossian's use of that term), practiced in a distinctive way to produce knowledge in a distinctive domain. For example,

{Nyāya Meta-epistemology} Use the epistemic principles (*pramāṇa*) to produce knowledge about those very principles, with a background commitment to metaphysical realism and a negative hedonic soteriology.

{Alaṃkāra Poetics} Use the epistemic principles to produce knowledge about poetry, subject to the aesthetic conventions of courtly Sanskrit.

The emptiness of Madhyamaka Buddhism is also an epistemic stance,

{Madhyamaka Emptiness} Use the epistemic principles to refute any claim about what a thing is in itself.

The Jainas, in their survey of the variety of epistemic stances employed in classical Sanskrit intellectual culture, identified seven distinct stances and discussed their application. »There are [the following] standpoints: comprehensive, collective, empirical, direct, grammatical,

etymological, and factual», says Umāsvāti (*Tattvārtha-sūtra* 1.33; Tattia 1994). But Siddarṣigaṇi thinks rather that,

according to the number, however, [standpoints are] infinite, because the real thing is endowed with infinite properties and because [various] outlooks confined to [one] property of this [real thing] are standpoints. Nevertheless, ancient preceptors taught that there are seven standpoints, by means of assuming seven outlooks that collect together all [possible standpoints] (NAV 29.12; Balcerowicz 2001: 97).

Geoffrey Lloyd is sensitive to a corresponding pluralism within European intellectual cultures, and in his early pre-comparative work identified in broad outlines two epistemic cultures or »modes of argumentation«, which he termed polarity and analogy. The analogical stance questions reality by appeal to resemblances, models, images and related notions; »analogies apprehend or postulate similarities or connections, often suggesting inferences and extensions of the similarities apprehended« (2015: 3). He has shown in his later comparative investigations that the analogical stance is to be found in many Chinese writers, including those of the *Huainanzi*. I have argued that this is the epistemic stance of several strands within ancient India, most explicitly evident in the Ritual sūtras and in the *Nyāya-sūtra*, and in the *Manifesto* I used the term »case-based use of reason« to describe it. The analogical stance is the epistemic stance according to which

{Paradigm} Use Induction liberally, including even from single instances (models, exemplars), and in combination with Inference to the Best Explanation.

This is not an epistemic principle derived from Induction and Inference to the Best Explanation, but a distinctive epistemic policy regarding their use. By polarities Lloyd means,

modes of reasoning that focus on pairs of opposites and use those oppositions as the basis of schemas of argumentation, as when two opposites are held to present mutually exclusive and exhaustive alternatives, and one proceeds from the rejection of one to the confirmation of the other (*ibid*).

The polarising stance, in which the epistemic principle Deduction and in particular the law of the excluded middle are prominent, is also evident in the work of the great Buddhist logician Dignāga, whose »wheel of reasons« encodes just such a view about argumentation.

Another epistemic stance, widely employed in India, appeals to visual thinking in mathematics, the use of external visual representations, such as diagrams, graphs, or symbol arrays, whose »epistemic roles include contributions to evidence, proof, discovery, understanding and grasp of concepts« (Giaquinto 2015). The same stance is operative in hermeneutics, when compactly formulated texts are treated as putting on display a certain array of concepts, rather than as presenting explicit narrative argument (Clooney 2016). We might describe the policy of such a stance approximately as follows:

{Visual Thinking} Use Observation, in application to diagrams, graphs, or symbol arrays, instead of Deduction, in the construction of mathematical proof or hermeneutical understanding.

This is the second stance I described in the *Manifesto*. The stance of European scientism is dogmatic because it incorporates the belief that science, and science alone, explains all modes of being. This is more a creature of mythology than of fact, that the idea of science as a unified quest for a view from nowhere is a piece of collective self-depiction rather than a description of actual scientific practice.

{European Scientism} Use the epistemic principles in accordance with scientist mythology, and do so dogmatically.

Alternative epistemic stances, such as Paradigm and Visual Thinking, have no place within the stance of European Scientism, and are regarded as being incorrect. Yet they too represent modes of accessing aspects of reality, aspects that have not been thought to fall within the field of vision of European science, at least according to its own mythology. These are stances that do not use the epistemic principles with the intention of viewing the world from nowhere, for they are contextual in application and work through the extrapolation of local standards of comparison, drawing variably upon the individual cognitive capacities of specific viewers or readers.

Dogmatism about the actual practices and modes of production that constituted 19th and early 20th century European science, along with a belief in the appropriateness of the use of violence to suppress other stances, is constitutive of still another epistemic stance, which one might term »European colonialism« or the »colonial use of reason«:

(European Colonialism) Use the epistemic principles in accordance with the conventions of 19th/20th c. European scientific communities, and use violence against anyone who employs them differently.

The violence here is brute and physical, supplementary to the intellectual violence (*hiṃsā*) implicit in dogmatism. While Boghossian describes relativism as implying a »fear of knowledge«, the hallmark of this colonial stance is »fear of *others'* knowledge«. Sheldon Pollock writes that »when colonialism made the norms of Europe the norms of India the Sanskrit intellectual formation melted like so much snow in the light of a brilliant, pitiless sun« (2001: 24). But first, they were not the norms of *Europe*, because, I have argued, there is a common set of general normative epistemic principles that constitute a conception of justification, and indeed this was something agreed by the Sanskrit intellectuals as much as by the Europeans. It wasn't the epistemic norms of Europe that were made India's by colonialism but its colonial epistemic *stance*, the policy of imposing its own provincial mode of accessing reality and actively undermining all others with non-evidence-based means. That was what Simone Weil condemned as the intrinsic absurdity of children in French Polynesia being made to recite »Our ancestors the Gauls had blond hair and blue eyes [...]« while forbidden their indigenous custom, language and tradition, forbidden even access to the libraries containing documentation relating to it. Stances are certainly open to evaluation according to non-alethic norms, and what rules out European Colonialism as a legitimate stance is that it is dogmatic in denying the existence of alternative stances and that it recommends the use of violence over reason to silence alternatives.

For a World Philosophies project, the lessons to be learned are that attention should be focused on philosophies as expressions of stances, that there should be detailed investigation into the non-truth-based standards of legitimacy that are appropriate to stances, that dogmatism should be everywhere revealed for what it is, and that all philosophies can contribute to working out what are the underived epistemic principles. In this way, »conversations across lines of difference« are grounded in a pluralist realism.

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