TEMPORALITIES

AND

TERRITORIES

The Geopolitical Imaginary of German

Philosophies of History

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ABSTRACT

To counter the deeply-entrenched disciplinary reluctance to consider the history of philosophy's overlaps with the histories of empire and colonisation, this thesis draws on insights from postcolonial studies to argue that one way to reckon with these histories is through a critical analysis of the 'geopolitical imaginary' of philosophy and its construction out of so-called discovery literatures. While the thesis is, as a whole, specifically focused on German philosophies of history in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the importance of discovery literature to the emergence of the modern concept of history is in Part One interrogated in relation to how time in the eighteenth century was spatialised, as temporal distance came to be projected onto peoples across the globe. Joseph-François Lafitau's *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains comparées aux moeurs des premiers temps* (1724) is here shown to have paradigmatically articulated a regime of comparability through which a shift from a view of 'savages' as exemplars of 'natural man' to that of 'primitive man' could be effected.

Against this background, Part Two constructs three critical models in the philosophy of history in order to articulate different inscriptions and projections of a geopolitical imaginary: one centred on Immanuel Kant's concept of universal history with a cosmopolitan aim; one centred on G.W.F. Hegel's critique of Kantian cosmopolitanism through a philosophy of world history; and one centred on Wilhelm and Alexander von Humboldt's counter-teleological conception of civilisation and planetary humanity. Chapter Three demonstrates how, in the Kantian model, the concepts of race and that of cosmopolitanism are linked through a differentiated conception of the educability of humankind in the Kantian philosophy of history. Chapter Four foregrounds the centrality of Hegel's philosophy of history to the very construction of the concept of Eurocentrism to give an account of their complex interrelation. Chapter Five argues that both a different philosophy of history and a different cosmopolitanism, which integrate a conception of cultural difference mediated through linguistic difference, is to be found within the writings of both

Humboldts. With these three models, the thesis aims to escape the subsumption of all philosophies of history under a unified 'philosophy of history', instead seeing within each a specific configuration of notions of territory and temporality, in the projection of different geopolitical imaginaries.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

Full bibliographic details of the below can be found in the Bibliography appended to this thesis.

<u>Works by Immanuel Kant</u>

Note: Citations of Kant in English are for the most part taken from the Cambridge Edition of the Writings of Immanuel Kant. The only exception is *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, where the better translation, in my opinion, is that of Werner S. Pluhar (Hackett Publishing). Where, for the sake of clarity or argument, it has been necessary to include the German phrasing or term, a reference in brackets will indicate the appropriate Academy volume and page number of Kant's *Gesammelte Schriften*, edited by the Prussian Academy of Sciences (Berlin: Georg Reimer, subsequently Walter de Gruyter, 1900–).

APPV	*Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*
CF	'The Conflict of the Faculties'
CPJ	*Critique of the Power of Judgement*
DCHR	'Determination of the Concept of a Human Race'
EP	'Essays regarding the Philanthropinum'
IUH	'Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim'
LA	*Lectures on Anthropology*
LP	*Lecture on Pedagogy*
MM	*The Metaphysics of Morals*
OCS	'On the Common Saying: That may be correct in theory, but it is of no use in practice'
ODR	'Of the different races of human beings'
OFBS	'Observations on the feeling of the beautiful and the sublime'
OUTP	'On the use of teleological principles in hilosophy'

PG	*Physical Geography*
RJGH	Review of J.G. Herder's *Ideas for the philosophy of history of humanity. Parts 1 and 2*'
TPP	'Toward Perpetual Peace'
UNHTH	'Universal natural history and theory of the heavens or essay on the constitution and the mechanical origin of the whole universe according to Newtonian principles'

Works by Alexander von Humboldt

CAS	*Cosmos: A Sketch of a Physical Description of the Universe*
PEIC	*Political Essay on the Island of Cuba: A Critical Edition*
PEKNS	*Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain*

Works by Wilhelm von Humboldt

OHT	'On the Historian's Task'
OL	*On Language: The Diversity of Human Language Structure and its Influence on the Mental Development of Mankind*

Works by G.W.F. Hegel

Note: In what follows, I cite from two editions of the *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*: the first is translated by H.B. Nisbet and published with Cambridge University Press in 1984 (signalled with PWH); the second is a critical edition edited and translated by Robert F. Brown and Peter C. Hodgson with the assistance of William G. Geuss and published with Clarendon press in 2011 (signalled with PWHCE).

EL	*The Encycopedia Logic*
EPR	*Elements of the Philosophy of Right*
PM	*Philosophy of Mind*
PS	*Phenomenology of Spirit*
PWH	*Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, trans. by H.B. Nisbet, Cambridge University Press, 1984
PWHCE	*Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, trans. Robert F. Brown and Peter C. Hodgson, Clarendon Press, 2011
SL	*The Science of Logic*

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The philosophy of history is not a thing of the past; this is the premise that runs through this thesis such that it both informs the work undertaken and is explored within its parameters. As it is most often understood, the canonical, German form of 'the philosophy of history' emerged during the last decades of the eighteenth century and established itself in the first decades of the nineteenth. Despite the fact that, since this point, several well-founded critiques have taken their aim at its concepts, motives, construction, and arguments, it is my contention that it has not been surpassed but re-shaped and re-articulated within an increasingly globalised world. Similarly, and connected thereto, the rise to prominence of discourses on the Anthropocene and planetarity has not resolved the tensions and contradictions of earlier discussions of cosmopolitics, geopolitical imaginaries, and the realities that subtend them, but has rearticulated these tensions within new terminological registers. To comprehend how this may be so, the very idea of a singular philosophy of history must first of all be dissolved in the face of a recognition that, even within the period of its most canonical articulations, *philosophies* of history were always plural and always internally differentiated.[1]

At the heart of this study is a return to three such philosophies: to Immanuel Kant's idea of a universal history toward cosmopolitanism; G.W.F. Hegel's philosophical world history; and Wilhelm and Alexander von Humboldt's alternative cosmopolitanism, subtended by an alternative philosophy of history. These three readings in the history of philosophy are gathered here not simply out of historical interest, however much they might also in their own right merit to be studied as such. Their selection, rather, owes something to Theodor W. Adorno's concept of the critical model: 'They are not examples; they do not simply elucidate general considerations', and are therefore to be understood as opposed to

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[1] The insistence upon a pluralisation of the very concept of 'the philosophy of history' owes much to Bertrand Binoche's work, in particular *Les trois sources des philosophies de l'histoire, 1764–1798,* . For further discussion of this text, see Chapter One of this thesis.

that philosophical usage of examples that views them 'as matters of indifference in themselves'.[2] Rather, it is their topicality that guides the construction of each critical model, a topicality that derives from their integral position in the history of concepts operative in our present historical conjuncture. Cosmopolitanism is one such concept, but it cannot stand alone. In each instance, it is confronted within and refracted through others; specifically, those of race, culture, and Eurocentrism. Similar to what Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak once remarked in regard to Kant, Hegel, and Karl Marx, it is because the bodies of works considered for each critical model constitute 'source texts of European ethico-political self-representation' that the philosophy of history cannot simply be disregarded as something like a false science.[3] Because they, as conceptual constructs retain effectivity and structuring force within contemporary discourses, to simply turn once back on them 'when so much of one's critique is clearly if sometimes unwittingly copied from them, is to disavow agency and declare kingdom come by a denial of history'.[4]

The wager of this thesis is that a mutual illumination might be generated out of critically attending to these issues from the standpoint of a present that is profoundly marked by globalisation. By mutual illumination, I mean that our historical perspective illuminates certain truths about prior philosophical texts, just as such philosophical texts might reveal something true of our current historical moment. How, this thesis asks, are discourses of history in the 'world historical sense' philosophically intelligible today after intensified processes of globalisation and critiques of imperialist and colonial projects? On this view, globalisation names the tendential accentuation of a structural asymmetry within which the true 'globality' of finance capitalism produces 'localised effects' within and among nation-states, whilst the 'real' universalisation of capitalist social relations places into question the geo-historicity of the universalist concepts of political modernity.[5] This epistemological and

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[2] Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics,* trans. E.B. Ashton (New York: Continuum, 1973) xx (translation modified). To think in models is, for Adorno, what generates the rigour of systematic philosophies which do not construct systems. The model is, in other words, the methodological key to systematicity without a system. In *Negative Dialectics* – wherein the third part comprises three interpretive models – 'Freedom: On the Metacritique of Practical Reason', 'World Spirit and Natural History: An Excursion into Hegel', and, 'Meditations on Metaphysics' – the model is contrasted to the simple examples in that it 'strikes at the specific and at the more than specific, without letting it evaporate into its more general over-concept', *ibid.*, 29 (translation modified). Stewart Martin has convincingly shown that while Adorno's concept of the model to a certain degree remains obscure, it can be understood as an attempt to appropriate Walter Benjamin's early perspectival conception of the constellation as the mode of presentation of ideas. See Stewart Martin, 'Adorno's Conception of the form of Philosophy', *Diacritics* 36, no.1 (spring, 2006), 51.
[3] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (Cambridge MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1999), 8.
[4] *Ibid.*
[5] This is understood according to Giacomo Marramao's notion of a 'passage west'. See Giacomo Marramao, *The Passage West: Philosophy After the Age of the Nation State* (London: Verso, 2012).

political predicament was what Dipesh Chakrabarty concisely summarised in the opening statement of *Provincializing Europe*:

> Concepts such as citizenship, the state, civil society, public sphere, human rights, equality before the law, the individual, distinctions between public and private, the idea of the subject, democracy, popular sovereignty, social justice, scientific rationality, and so on all bear the burden of European public thought and history. One simply cannot think of political modernity without these and other related concepts that found a climactic form in the course of the European Enlightenment and the nineteenth century.
> These concepts entail an unavoidable – and in a sense indispensable – universal and secular view of the human. The European colonizer of the nineteenth century both preached this Enlightenment humanism at the colonized and denied it in practice.[6]

Following this, I consider it to be the case that the idea of universal world history – which in one way or another is at stake within each of the three sites – is increasingly a *problem* for thought, as the empirical unification of the globe unfolds. If, for a brief moment, discourses on globalisation could sustain the belief that history had irreparably relegated the significance of nationalised territorial divides and state sovereignty to the past, it now seems increasingly clear that, within the remit of global crises, there are numerous mediations of forces which assert the boundaries of sovereign territories with those that render these very bounds porous. While the notion of *a* unified history of humankind is no doubt as chimeric today as when it came to prominence, the histories of those numerous processes of conflictual *unification* that shaped the world can be glimpsed within different conceptions of it. No mere examples *of* the philosophy of history, I treat each as a different model *in* the philosophy of history, which itself has only a conflictual unity.

Secularisation and Colonisation: The Histories of the Philosophy of History

As a term, 'the philosophy of history' made its entry into philosophical vocabularies primarily through French, after Voltaire polemically used *La Philosophie de l'histoire* as the title to a 1765 pamphlet surveying the histories of ancient peoples, dedicated to the Empress Kathrine II of Russia and published under the assumed name of l'abbé Bazin.[7] In Voltaire's sense, a philosophy of history is *philosophical* first and foremost because it is critical, in the spirit of Pierre Bayle's *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (1697): it sought to perform a work of demystification in regard to those theologies of history which placed its origins in biblical times. Thereby, Voltaire took aim, in particular, at Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet's *Discours sur l'histoire universelle* (1681) and the regeneration found therein of an Augustinian parallelism

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[6] Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 4.

[7] Voltaire, *La Philosophie de l'histoire*, in *Œuvres complètes de Voltaire* vol. 59, ed. J. H. Brumfitt (Geneva: Institut et Musée Voltaire, 1969). For further discussion of this text, see Chapter One of this thesis.

between a providential and a historical order.[8] For this reason, Karl Löwith, in *Meaning in History* (1949), took care to separate out Voltaire's notion of philosophical history from a characterisation of *the* philosophy of history as essentially secularised Judeo-Christian eschatology, a characterisation which has since come to form a contentious centre for ensuing interpretations.[9] Indebted to Carl Schmitt's assertion that '[a]ll significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularised theological concepts',[10] Löwith sought to demonstrate how ideas of progress, revolution, and liberation, oriented toward a future qualitatively different from both present and past, embedded the structure of the eschaton within conceptions of intra-worldly historical development. This narrative of the coming-to-be of the philosophy of history hinged on his claim that Augustine's *The City of God against the Pagans* (426) and its proposal that worldly history is guided by providence, remained operative within modern conceptions of progress. According to Löwith, the philosophy of history was first of all a 'systematic interpretation of universal history in accordance with a principle by which historical events and successions are unified and directed toward an ultimate meaning'.[11] This insight was put to work in a tremendous hermeneutical concatenation, sketching a history of the philosophy of history read backwards from Marx to eschatological scriptures. In this movement from the historically familiar toward the unfamiliar, the aim was to demonstrate that the most significant aspects of those concepts of history that emerged in the eighteenth and blossomed in the nineteenth century, were not to be found in their conceptual innovations or in their ruptures from what had come before, but rather in their continuity with an idea of history as the history of fulfilment and salvation. While Löwith's version of the secularisation thesis may have left many puzzled as to what 'secularisation' as transformation *and* preservation precisely signified,[12] the thesis itself

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[8] The background to Voltaire's historiographical interventions is complex and intimately bound up with disputes between constitutionalist and absolutist conceptions of sovereignty. An overview of this background insofar as it relates to Voltaire's practice as a historian can be found in Karen O'Brian, *Narratives of Enlightenment: Cosmopolitan History from Voltaire to Gibbon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 36–41.

[9] Karl Löwith, M*eaning in History: The Theological Implications of the Philosophy of History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949). This work first appeared while Löwith was in exile in an English translation but the subtitle of the later published German edition, '*Die theologischen Voraussetzungen der Geschichtsphilosophie*', captures better the argumentative arch of Löwith's reading: that the *presuppositions* of the philosophy of history were essentially theological and, therefore, even its secularised articulations remained bound to theological commitments. Karl Löwith, *Weltgeschichte und Heilsgeschehen: Die theologischen Voraussetzungen der Geschichtsphilosophie*, (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1953).

[10] Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, trans. George Schwab (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1985), 36.

[11] Löwith, M*eaning in History*, 1.

[12] From the outset, Löwith's reading was sharply critiqued by Hans Blumenberg who in an early paper argued that the idea of progress in history was better understood to have been gerenalised from out of a number of more restricted notions of progression – most notably in the sciences and in technological development. This critique was since expanded in the major study *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age* (1966). See Hans Blumenberg,

nevertheless functioned as a both powerful and enduring unificatory device for understandings of the philosophy of history as one. The problem with this view, and with the secularisation thesis more broadly, lies not so much in the very idea that theological concepts came to be re-inscribed within discourses of a worldly and temporal realm, but rather in how it, at several levels, failed to fully consider the spatial and geographical dimensions at play in its own account of the 'temporalisation of history'.[13] This is true both in the sense of the differential introduced into the very idea of secularisation, when a plurality of different geographically located processes of secularisation are properly reckoned with, and in the sense of just how integral geographical imaginaries of *globally* distributed human diversity were to the formation of late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century philosophies of history. It is with the significance of the latter of these that I am primarily concerned. The degree to which it can be said to form a missing piece in Löwith's reading can be gauged from a crucial, but less commented upon, presupposition within his analysis; namely, that a specifically Judaeo-Christian conception of *mankind* as an idea and ideal to be realised was 'the necessary horizon for the eschatological concept of history and its universality'.[14] Insightful as this observation is, it also serves to emphasise the extent to which *Meaning in History* glossed over the character of the *crisis* that this conception of humankind was led into after the discovery of the Americas. This was a crisis led by those natural-historical typologies of the human *species* that were produced in the wake of that nexus of European trade expeditions, territorial conquest missions, and exploratory voyages that characterised so-called early modern globalisation. In effect, Löwith glossed over the idea that European modernity was always colonial modernity, and that this profoundly influenced those schemas of representation in which planetary humankind both came to be thought as such and came to function as the internally divided subject/object of history.[15]

The Legitimacy of the Modern Age, trans. Robert M. Wallace (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1985). There exists a host of literature dealing with the central questions of this debate as they concern conceptualisation of the continuity and discontinuity of modernity with its past. For a thorough overview of their parameters as they were articulated in the Löwith–Blumenberg disputes, see Robert M. Wallace, 'Progress, Secularisation and Modernity: The Löwith–Blumenberg Debate', *New German Critique*, no. 22 (winter 1981), 63–79.

[13] For the full implications of the expression 'the temporalisation of history' see Reinhart Koselleck, 'Time and History', trans. Kerstin Behnke, in *The Practice of Conceptual History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 100–14. Koselleck both complicated and extended the narrative first presented by Löwith. While an account of Koselleck's epistemology of historical temporalities is beyond the scope of this study; for further discussion, see Chapter One of this thesis.

[14] Löwith, M*eaning in History*, 18.

[15] Sylvia Wynter, '1492: A New World View', in *Race, Discourse, and the Origin of the Americas*, ed. Vera Lawrence Hyatt and Rex Nettleford (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1995), 43. See also Giuliano Gliozzi, *Adam et le nouveau monde: La naissance de l'anthropologie comme idéologie coloniale: des généalogies bibliques aux théories raciales (1500–1700)*, trans. Arlette Estève and Pascal Gabellone (Prais: Théétèe, 2003).

This view onto the philosophy of history has instead been afforded by a range of critical genealogies that, from the 1970s onwards, took as their object the discursively constituted images of those populations that made up western Europeans' geo-historical 'others'.[16] Explored therein was the insight that modern colonisation and imperialism not only functioned through different forms territorial control but also had deep epistemic (and socio-psychic) consequences in a long history of sociocultural 'territorialisations' through which Europe and later 'the West' came to be cast as the sole custodian of analytic and reflexive knowledge and as the gatekeepers of political emancipation.[17] First articulated within the context of twentieth-century anti-colonial struggles, this insight, and the potential consequences it carried for contemporary politics of knowledge production, has become the point of orientation for a wide range of work in postcolonial critique and decolonial studies.[18] Fundamental to these, and among the best known, was Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), which sought to demonstrate a nineteenth century complicity between three fields: 'Orientalism' as a discipline within the comparative sciences (of physiognomies, languages, literatures and religions), depictions of 'the orient' in cultural production more broadly conceived, and the imperialist projects of the French and the English. To recognise the extent to which Western voices *produced* 'the Orient' of which they spoke, Said argued that it was necessary to trace the histories of the binary categorial knots (us/them, advanced/backward, West/East) which bound these three fields together and imprisoned nearly all forms of

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[16] I will discuss here Edward Said's *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978) but from a different geographic and disciplinary perspective see also Valentin-Yves Mudimbe's *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988).

[17] While the politicised epistemological observations of the 1970s themselves also grew out of important 1950s and 1960s anti-colonial struggles, there are important prefigurations of both in the history of thought. One of the most striking examples of which is *De l'égalité des races humaines* (Paris, 1885) by the Haitian anthropologist Anténor Firmin, only translated into English in 2000. See Anténor Firmin, *On the Equality of the Human Races,* trans. Asselin Charles (New York: Garland Publishing, 2000).

[18] I am aware that in placing post- and decolonial frameworks side by side, I am to a certain extent choosing to overlook important differences and even divergences between them. These differences are reflected both in their primary geographic points of reference (Southeast Asia for postcolonial theory and Latin America for decolonial thinking) and in their theoretical genealogies (where Said's discourse analysis was foundational to postcolonial theory, Enrique Dussel's liberation theology and Aníbal Quijano's notion of the coloniality of power was so to decolonial thought). Most important, however, are their differences as *strategies* for how to contend with the colonial question within the politics of knowledge and the divergence between: a) what Matthieu Renault has described as postcolonial critique's dual strategy of rupture *and* repetition which is operative within 'a double movement of decentering (provincialisation) and translation, of wrenching and appropriation of the "gifts" of the West'; and b) the decolonial strategic idea of a complete *de-linking* from Western epistemic frameworks which Walter Mignolo has come to spearhead. As should become clear, I have drawn in particular on work in the postcolonial tradition. While there is much to be said about the merits and limitations of both strategies, I do not believe it is unjust to present them both as *responses* to the same fundamental problematic. This is also the view proposed by Bhambra Gurminder, 'Postcolonial and Decolonial Reconstructions', in *Connected Sociologies* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), 117–40. Matthieu Renault, 'Rupture and New Beginning in Fanon: Elements for a Genealogy of Postcolonial Critique', in *Living Fanon*, ed. Nigel C. Gibson (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011), 105.

European comparativism within a superiority complex; a complex that overdetermined attempts to see, understand, and explain foreignness as anything other than a derivative version of the self-same. While 'the philosophy of history' was of relatively little concern to Said, the critique of a specific conception of history nevertheless subtended his endeavour and later came to be expressly articulated by several others in the attempt to assess the historical colonial gaze but also the reproduction of this epistemic heritage within the contemporary moment.[19] It did so not least because, in its brutal reality, the violence of colonial exploitation, domination, and in some cases genocide was matched by what Frantz Fanon called the 'perverted logic' by which colonisation disfigures the past of those colonised, in a dual process of de-historicisation and racialisation. In *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), Fanon asked, rhetorically, if:

> [p]erhaps it has not been sufficiently demonstrated that colonialism is not content to merely impose its law on the colonised country's present and future. Colonialism is not satisfied with snaring the people in its net or of draining the colonised brain of any form or substance. With a kind of perverted logic, it turns its attention to the past of the colonised people and distorts it, disfigures it, and destroys it.[20]

The historical role of anthropology – the study of human difference and similitude which initially took as its object the 'primitive others' of 'Western' populations – in shaping these distortions and the way in which it as a science was conditions by the very fact of colonial encounters, caused Claude Lévi-Strauss to characterise it as the 'outcome of a historical process which made the larger part of mankind subservient to the other' and as the 'daughter to this era of violence'.[21] And, as critical anthropology began to assess its own imbrication in this process and, thereby, the history of its own disciplinary formation, the relations between colonial domination, so-called discovery literature, natural histories of humankind, and philosophical histories of commerce and civil society in the eighteenth century became privileged objects of analysis.[22] In order to discern the contours of the epistemic field within which universal histories of humankind had emerged, focus therefore partly shifted from Said's nineteenth century of high imperialism to the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century.[23] Indeed, the late eighteenth century 'stands as a kind of threshold for postcolonial

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[19] Said, *Orientalism*, 234. Later prominent examples include Robert Young, *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West* (London: Routledge, 1990), and Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*.

[20] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2004) 148–49.

[21] Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology II* (1973), third English edition, trans. Monique Layton (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 54–55.

[22] Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983). For more on Fabian, see Chapter One of this thesis.

[23] David Lloyd 'The Pathological Sublime: Pleasure and Pain in the Colonial Context', in *The Postcolonial*

theory, marking both the emergence of categories that assert their own universal validity and the formation of political states in which they are to be instantiated'.[24] Though it can of course be questioned, this designation of the eighteenth century as a period that stands in a crucial relation to the contemporary moment is far from arbitrary; instead, it hinges on the importance of this period to the formation of modern concepts of history. Because the question of history has not left us, the relevance of the eighteenth century has not been exhausted. What postcolonial critique offered in this respect was a much-needed extra-European critical perspective onto the construction of history as an object of knowledge. Where Reinhart Koselleck's analysis of semantic changes within German discourses on politics and history had registered the singularisation of the idea of multiple histori*es* (*historie*) into the collective singular of 'history' (*Geschichte*) or 'history as such'; what postcolonial critique named was that this unification of history at a global level also rested upon the temporalisation of (colonial)difference. Understood as the conceptual apotheosis of this specific form of the temporalisation of difference, the syntagm 'the philosophy of history' in postcolonial critique thereby came to function as shorthand for the idea that Europe was at the forefront of processes of a global historical developmental process. With this, late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century philosophies of history were seen to prefigure two iterations of the idea of a 'civilising mission'.[25] The first of these being the explicit articulation of this idea, which, during nineteenth century high imperialism, was used to legitimise colonial occupation through the promise of 'civilisation' brought to colonised populations under the tutelage of European colonial powers. The second, more nebulously, being the translation of this idea into the notion that a global socio-political homogenisation both would and should be the normative accompaniment to the globalisation of capitalist social relations. As such, 'the philosophy of history' became the name for the afterlife of a colonial ideological formation, inscribed within theories of globalisation as modernisation, within which a certain idealised version of Europe was elevated to the teleological model towards which all other nations should aspire. We might then say that while the secularisation thesis unified the philosophy of history though its internal and geographically delimited transmission of a theological heritage, postcolonial critique unified it by focusing on its relation to a colonial 'outside' and by homogenising distinct philosophies of history through

Enlightenment: Eighteenth-Century Colonialism and Postcolonial Theory, ed. Daniel Carey and Lynn Festa (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 72.

[24] *Ibid.*

[25] The expression, which eminently discloses the intimacies of colonisation, civilisation, and Christianisation, comes from the French *la mission civilisatrice*, a turn of phrase which from the 1830s onwards became increasingly common stock within the lingo of French high imperialism.

perceived similarities on the question of the global but exclusionary distribution of historical agency.

The Geopolitical Imaginary of Philosophies of History

What I propose in this thesis, then, is twofold. First, that what needs to be questioned is not a homogenous idea of 'the philosophy of history' but rather the differential afterlives of philosoph*ies* of history. And second, that each of these afterlives articulate and are articulated within geopolitical imaginaries both informed and formed by a colonial world order. Though I take from Michèle Le Dœuff the notion that the history of philosophy remains half untold if imaginaries and the images, tropes, similes, and allegories that they are populated by are omitted from this history proper, it is not precisely her concept of *the* philosophical imaginary that I draw upon.[26] Rather, what I wish to emphasise is what scholars like Chenxi Tang have analysed in terms of the 'geographical imagination of modernity',[27] and how this, properly speaking, should be understood to imply a specifically *geopolitical* imaginary.[28] The term, as it figures in the subtitle to my thesis, is purposively double coded: at once philosophical imaginaries *of* the geopolitical, and what might be called the infra-philosophical imaginaries conditioned *by* a specific geo-political order. In the most straightforward sense, to speak of 'the geopolitical imaginary of German philosophies of history' therefore implies two possible, not mutually exclusive interpretations: that of the 'imaginary' of a specific geopolitical order whose instantiation is either assumed or anticipated within the philosophy of history in question; and that of a specific geo-political *situation* that informs and influences the 'imaginaries' of philosophies of history. When weight is placed on the former, on imaginaries *of* the geopolitical, it becomes clear that part of the following interrogation is shaped by those conceptions (and counter-conceptions) of cosmopolitanism contextually circulating in philosophies of history. This part seeks to grasp how, as the planetary existence

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[26] Le Dœuff's concept of the philosophical imaginary is not confined to an imaginary *in* philosophy but considers an imaginary belonging to a specific and privileged social minority of (primarily) male philosophers. It is the imaginary of a learned public, that through the discipline of the concept breaks with other imaginaries and, as a cultural product (produced and reproduced), is transmitted across different periods. She makes the case that the 'philosophical image-album is a language as technical as our jargon' and that the institution of subjectivity in language there has its own particularism in philosophy. The formation of an educated subject in this sense is also a passage through a number of classical images that one learns and is shaped by, just 'as one learns Latin in a Cicero constituted as a reference work, because desire structures itself into the desire to philosophise'. Michèle Le Dœuff, *The Philosophical Imaginary*, trans. Colin Gordon (London and New York, Contiuum, 1989), 173 and 18.

[27] Chenxi Tang, *The Geographic Imagination of Modernity: Geography, Literature, and Philosophy in German Romanticism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008). For more discussion of this text, see Chapter One of this thesis.

[28] In this sense, the idea of a geopolitical imaginary owes as much to Achille Mbembe – who in *On the Postcolony* drew on Cornelius Castoriadis' *L'institution imaginaire de la société* to analyse the effects and afterlives of the colonial imaginary of Africa instituted in modern political thought – as it does to Le Dœuff. Achille Mbembe, *On the Postcolony,* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001).

of the human species was constructed as an object of contemplation, philosophical cosmopolitanisms expressed the attempt to reckon with this planetarity from the standpoint of possible political and juridical communities. When weight is placed on the latter, on the imaginary conditioned *by* a specific geopolitical order, emphasis is concomitantly placed on how philosophy as a practice is situated within a wider social and political field than what has typically been the case.[29] As a task to be assumed, bringing to the forefront this latter sense of a geopolitical imaginary amounts to something like what Spivak has called the *ab*-use of the European enlightenment: 'to bequeath a geography to it'.[30] This twofold sense of a geopolitical imaginary of philosophies of history is well-captured by Eduardo Mendieta, in his evocation of Enrique Dussel's critique of the persistent blindness of European philosophy as to the significance of its own locus of enunciation:

> Every theory, whether consciously or unconsciously, is determined by a spatial imaginary. This spatial imaginary operates at both macro and microlevels. […] In Dussel's language, every philosophy participates in a geopolitical locus, not only in the sense that philosophy is determined by its place of enunciation, but also in the sense that philosophy also projects a certain image of the planet, the ecumene, and the polis as the space of what is the civilised, or the place of civilisation, which may or may not be besieged by the barbarians. Philosophy enacts an act of spatialisation at the very same time that it is spatialised by its locus of enunciation.[31]

The duality of determination by and projection of a geopolitical imaginary is central to both the construction and the critique of Eurocentrism in philosophies of history. As what J.M. Blaut has called 'the coloniser's model of the world', Eurocentrism consolidates the imaginary of an exceptional European civilisation that came to possess historical priority over all other sites of political organisation, cultural production, and religious and social life.[32] Thereby, the singularity of Europe as the originary territory of modernity is proclaimed while the material conditions for the rise of European powers are occluded. It is precisely because, as Matthieu Renault remarks, 'the colonial imperialist order was never just a (geo)political order but also and inextricably an epistemic order, an order of knowledge',[33] that it is necessary to return to 'the very construction of the global Eurocentric order, as a dual, (geo)political and epistemic order, before the colonialism of the nineteenth and twentieth

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[29] Two such exceptions to this are Matthieu Renault, *L'Amérique de John Locke: L'expansion coloniale de la philosophie européenne* (Paris: Édition Amsterdam, 2014), and Thomas McCarthy, *Race, Empire, and the Idea of Human Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[30] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *An Aesthetic Education in the Age of Globalisation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 20.

[31] Eduardo Mendieta, *Global Fragments: Globalizations, Latinamericanisms, and Critical Theory* (New York: SUNY Press, 2007), 85.

[32] James M. Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World: Geographical Diffusionism and Eurocentric History* (New York: The Guilford Press, 1993).

[33] Renault, *L'Amérique de John Locke*, 12 (my translation).

centuries'.[34] What this means, is that even the history of philosophy, has to be thought through both the territorialisations it has produced and its own territoriality.

The Territoriality of German Philosophies of History

Kant, Hegel and the Humboldt brothers alike can of course be considered *German* writers in a fairly straightforward sense since, aside from Kant's early treatises in Latin, Alexander von Humboldt's French diaries and Wilhelm von Humboldt's occasional English essays, their written language was German. However, since Germany did not become a nation-state until 1871, they were, more accurately, Prussians within the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. Of Germany as a political unit within the post-Westphalian European order, the jurist and natural law theorist Samuel von Pufendorf wrote, in a highly controversial passage of his *The Present State of Germany* (1667), that it 'is an irregular body, and like some misshapen monster [*monstro simile*] […] not now so much as a *Limited Kingdom* […] nor is it a *Body* or *System* knit and united in a League, but something that fluctuates between these two'.[35] Between kingdom and league, it was no less irregular in the latter days of the Holy Roman Empire, whose dissolution in 1806 punctuates the period covered by the texts considered here. Few of the constituent municipal states had any direct colonial possessions overseas, and those colonisation projects that were undertaken were small in scope, short lived, and of negligible economic significance when compared to those of the Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, British, and French empires. In the seventh and eighteenth century, this paucity was at least partly reflective of the minor status of the German states within European power-politics of the period. Not until after Otto von Bismarck's unification of these states did German colonialism develop, properly speaking, in the midst of intra-European political conflicts that played out on a global scale, the fierce hunt for natural resources, and the emerging social Darwinism characteristic of the period of high Imperialism.[36] This is one of the purported reasons why Said did not explicitly engage with either German philosophy or Orientalism within his study. The rules of representation which he attempted to map, related primarily to North Africa and the Middle East, while German orientalist had been largely

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[34] *Ibid.*, 15 (my translation).

[35] Samuel von Pufendorf, *The Present State of Germany*, trans. Edmund Bohun (1696), ed. Micheal J. Seidler (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2007), 173. This piece has a fascinating history, as Pufendorf wrote it as a fictionalised piece of travel literature published under the pseudonym of Severinus de Monzambano, an Italian character writing to his equally fictional brother Laelius to recount his historically informed analysis of the state of constitutional law within the Holy Roman Empire, or, as Pufendorf called it, '*imperii Germanici*'. A variant of this quotation and an analysis of the ways in which it reflects how nation-building happened within a state-territory complex, see Stuart Elden, *The Birth of Territory* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), 314–15.

[36] Sebastian Conrad, *German Colonialism: A Short History*, trans. Sorcha O'Hagan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

enthralled by South and Southeast Asia, with Sanskrit as the primary linguistic point of reference.[37] But, more importantly, if Said had placed German Orientalism to one side, it was because the relation between academic discourse and the form of colonial rule which made use of the 'knowledge of populations' did not and could not match up in the same way as was the case with either the British Empire or the second French Empire, the focal points of his analysis. German orientalists may have shared the authoritative demeanour of their French and British colleagues in the face of oriental culture, but, wrote Said,

> at no time in German scholarship during the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century could a close partnership have developed between Orientalists and a protracted, sustained *national* interest in the Orient. There was nothing in Germany to correspond to the Anglo-French presence in India, the Levant, North Africa. Moreover, the German Orient was almost exclusively a scholarly, or at least a classical, Orient[.][38]

And yet, of course, colonial imaginaries had pervaded the German-speaking regions before unification. Indeed, in the early nineteenth century, against the notion of a monstrous and irregular body of German states, fantasies of 'the (fictitious) colonial Empire served as a screen onto which ideas about national unity and national greatness could be projected'.[39] To this effect, Susanne Zantop has argued that a both racialised and gendered vision of the nation was, in this period, constructed from the standpoint of the colonial peripheries.[40] And while the idea of overseas territories may have sustained and consolidated nationalist identity construction in Europe within this period, the epistemic effects of colonisation themselves certainly did not flow within strictly delineated national bounds. That is to say, before the rise to prominence of the various national-institutional orientalist schools, the production and distribution of so-called discovery literatures in the course of the eighteenth century was trans-European, and the German speaking territories saw as much of an increase in these forms of writings as did the other intellectual centres across the European continent. To understand the colonial traces upon the geographical imaginaries of philosophies of history from this period, is to understand the geographical as also, in some sense, geo-political, and that is the impetus that subtended the manner in which the philosophies of history analysed herein are approached.

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[37] Suzanne L. Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire: Religion, Race, and Scholarship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[38] Said, *Orientalism*, 19.

[39] Conrad, *German Colonialism*, 17.

[40] Susanne Zantop, *Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770–1870* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1997), 32.

Temporalities and Territories

What I explore in the construction of each of the three critical models, then, are the different manners in which historical temporalities have been territorialised within philosophies of history; specifically, according to notions of races, cultures, and peoples. Temporality is here understood as the broadly phenomenological notion of a constitutive interrelation and differentiation between past, present, and future that, in philosophies of history, comes to be imbricated within causal webs of significance. Territory is here understood as an ineluctable part of the conceptual vocabulary of modern political geographies in two senses. First, as the historically specific form of bounded space which, in relation to the state, carries juridical, economic, and political connotations; and, second, as the different forms of territorialisation through which historical differences have been bounded and bound to specific groups. That historical dynamism was viewed as intimately bound up with state actors and that the idea of *world* history that emerged was that of the history of European states, makes the state-form an unavoidable part of these philosophies of history, without necessarily defining their ultimate horizon.[41]

There are few places within the history of philosophy where the profound tensions between universality and globality are as clearly articulated as within those late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century philosophies wherein conceptions of universal world history totalised history itself with respect to its beginnings, ends, and global expanse. In what follows, 'temporality' and 'territory' form the dual key through which the unicity and divergences within the field in question are articulated: each philosophy of history understood as a specific configuration of the two. The point of departure for the construction of the critical models is the genealogy of the eighteenth-century trope that travel across the globe was analogous to travel backwards in time. By outlining the emergence of this idea, an idea caught up in a definite geopolitical imaginary, I show how it reflects views of socio-political, cultural, and racial differences that are deeply intertwined with the temporalisation of geographical space and the territorialisation of historical difference.[42] To show how each philosophy of history emerges out of, or sets itself apart from, this imaginary is therefore also an attempt to place the history of philosophy in relation to histories of colonisation and imperialism. Following Renault, I take it to be the case that:

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[41] This is also the point of origin of the idea of peoples without history, an idea inextricable from that of peoples without states since the *historicity* of a people is presumed to only be assumed at the point at which it shapes itself into a civil whole. See Eric R. Wolf, *Europe and the People Without History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

[42] Fabian, *Time and the Other*.

> To return the colony and empire to their rightful places within the history of political philosophy, when, more often than not, political philosophy is conceived of as a philosophy of the (European) state, is not to replace one problematic with another. Rather, it means that their intertwinements, the transmission between them and their fusions over the past five centuries should be thought.[43]

One crucial aspect of such an exercise of relocation within this thesis is the insistence that the concepts of humankind and humanity – concepts that, in many instances, sustain the universalism of Enlightenment philosophies – must be read in light of how the constructions of global taxonomies of the Earth's populations stood in relation to colonial and imperial projects. Within the analyses here undertaken, this problematic also inscribes an ineluctably confrontation with the constitution of the modern concept of race. It is, as Justin E.H. Smith and many others have noted, difficult to write the history of race because it, as an object, 'does not exist in a robust scientific or metaphysical way'.[44] Rather, it is a both tenacious and powerful illusion, whose entire history is composed of a grand and miserable mixture of natural scientific and political concepts to such a degree that few other illusions better attests to the difficulty of disentangling the former from the latter.[45] In order to begin to understand what has spurred and sustained this illusion, socio-historical factors such as early modern colonial projects, the conquest of the Americas, and the rise and consolidation of the modern institution of slavery are as integral to its history as are mutations within scientific conceptions of humankind.[46] While it is not the primary aim of this thesis to trace the genealogies of the modern concept of race, its articulation within different philosophies of history also cannot be disregarded. Within each of the philosophies of history in question here, their functional conception of race and its efficaciousness will be interrogated.

Kantian, Hegelian, and Humboldtian Models

Why then these three models? And, perhaps most pressingly, why Kant, Hegel, the Humboldts but no Marx? This is a pressing question since, if one of the senses in which the philosophy of history lives on is as an object of critique, then it does so in a complicated manner. The target of critiques of the philosophy of history is not only explicit theories of

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[43] Renault, *L'Amérique de John Locke*, 21 (my translation).

[44] Justin E.H. Smith, *Nature, Human Nature and Human Difference: Race in Early Modern Philosophy* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2015), 68.

[45] Denise Ferreira da Silva, 'Notes for a Critique of the "Metaphysics of Race"', *Theory, Culture and Society* 28, no.1 (2011) 138–48. See also Denise Ferreira da Silva, *Toward a Global History of Race* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007).

[46] Charles W. Mills, *The Racial Contract* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1999). For an impressive overview of a range of different historical forms racism in the West, see Francisco Bethencourt, *Racisms: From the Crusades to the Twentieth Century* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013).

historical development – with modernisation theory as the paradigmatic example after formal decolonisation – but also the pervasive implicit assumptions about the appropriate paths of 'emancipation' and 'liberation'. From this perspective, postcolonial critique can be seen as a historically situated strategy for how to politically, ethically, and theoretically eschew unilinear and monolithic teleologies of emancipation. It is no surprise, then, that one of the primary theoretical antagonisms on the question of history at a global scale largely came to be expressed in the confrontation of Marxism (or at least, a certain Marxism) and postcolonial critique, as is clear from both Robert Young's *White Mythologies* (1990) and Dipesh Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe* (2000).[47] These works raised the issue of the epistemological and political limits of Marxism for the project of writing the history of modernity from the perspective of former colonies. For this reason, Marx and the contested heritage of Marxism sits on the horizon – even if not in the body of the studies presented here. There is, however, good reason to upset the trinitarianism of critical theory, and reconsider the heritage of the Enlightenment from the standpoint not only of Kant, Hegel and Marx but also from that of Kant, Hegel and the Humboldts. While the centripetal force of Kantian cosmopolitanism keeps the idea alive, and the Hegelian critique of Kant's transcendental philosophy has become something of a rite of passage for much critical theory, the inclusion of Humboldtian *Bildungsphilosophie* allows for the cogency of and inherited tensions within the concept of culture to today be addressed in a way that would not otherwise have been the case. Notably, what the Humboldtian model adds is the perspective of a *critique* of Eurocentrism in the philosophy of history articulated at its very founding moment.

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[47] Young, *White Mythologies*; and Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*. As Vivek Chibber's *Postcolonial Theory and the Spectre of Capital* attested to, the questions raised in these debates have neither entirely left us nor been resolved. Indeed, the polemic Chibber therein carried out against the Subaltern Studies Group can be read as an elaboration and reiteration of points already articulated in the first rounds, especially by Aijaz Ahmad's *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures* and later in Benita Parry's *Postcolonial Studies: A Materialist Critique*. There were more actors and positions in this debate than can be done justice to here, but the most fundamental and substantial questions largely converged on the relation between something like a 'globalised' postcolonial condition of temporal hybridity and the inscription or subsumption of narratives of colonisation and decolonisation within global *capitalist* social relations. One question raised was, in other words, that of whether and to what extent postcolonial theory was able to articulate and account for how the past and present of colonial rule and domination in (ex)colony and metropole alike, was bound up with the history of capitalism and *its* globalisation. Where notably Marxist critics of the term called for a return to the notion of 'third world-ism' and for a stronger understanding of what makes and shapes a sense of community that can gives rise to political resistance – in place of notions like hybridity – others instead emphasised the need for more hybridity and a proliferation of historically nuanced theories in allegiance with postcolonial critique that would eschew a monolithic orientation toward 'the postcolonial'. A good critical summary of these theoretical tensions can be found in Stuart Hall, 'When was the Post-Colonial? Thinking at the Limit', in *The Post-Colonial Question: Common Skies, Divided Horizons*, ed. Iain Chambers and Lidia Curti (London: Routledge, 1996), 242–60. For the contemporary stakes of these debates see also Marie Louise Krogh, 'Gridlock!: Review of *The Debate on Postcolonial Theory and the Spectre of Capital*', *Radical Philosophy* 2, no.1 (February 2018), 115–18.

The thesis is therefore composed of two unequally weighted halves, wherein an inverted ratio of historical exposition to systematic analysis largely prevails. Part One draws on and problematises accounts of the emergence of philosophies of history, to make the case for a greater acknowledgement of the importance of colonial projects for the conceptual shape and formation of these philosophies. Since this argument navigates a complex field of epistemic and socio-political conditions, this first part tends toward historical contextualisation and methodological clarification. In contrast, the arguments presented in Part Two, which constitutes the bulk of the thesis, rest largely on textual exegesis and conceptual analysis, in a philosophical critique that aims to fold the historico-epistemological background of Part One into the construction of the three models. By homing in on the German context and on the writings of Kant, Hegel, and the Humboldt brothers, it aims to examine how their respective philosophies of history are inscribed within and depart from the mapped epistemic field and subsequently represent different conceptual trajectories departing from this site. Of course, these three models are related through their historical context and their philosophical vocabularies, bound together by shared presuppositions as well as by active differentiations within the varied landscape of Kantian and post-Kantian philosophy; in many ways, the Humboldt brothers and Hegel jointly articulated their work on the basis of Kant's Copernican revolution in philosophy. Although in most accounts of this period of German philosophy, the relations between Kant's and Hegel's philosophies – with Fichte, Schelling and the early Romantics acting as intermediaries – by far tends to overshadow the relation of either Kant or Hegel to the Humboldts,[48] the minutae of immanent connections and conceptual transmutations that can be spelled out in this regard are for the most part well documented and therefore not of principal concern here. Because the arguments within each critical model are largely self-contained, the movement of Part Two is not so much accumulative as it is reflective and comparative, with the Hegelian and the Humboldtian models understood as responses to a Kantian paradigm operative within conceptions of cosmopolitanism and the philosophy of history.

Today, the concept of history in the collective singular is implicit, even if negatively so, in those many discourse that attempt to reckon with the threat of species extinction and the

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[48] This is the case for some of the most thorough Anglophone studies of the period, which hardly mention either of the Humboldts. See, for instance, Terry Pinkard, *German Philosophy 1760–1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), Frederick C. Beiser, *German Idealism: The Struggle against Subjectivism, 1781–1801* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009). An exception to this tendency is Michael Forster's work on the legacy of Herder's philosophy of language within German idealism, which to the contrary largely downplays the significance of Kantian insights. See Michael N. Forster, *After Herder: Philosophy of Language in the German Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), and Michael N. Forster, *German Philosophies of Language: From Schlegel to Hegel and Beyond* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

already tendential destruction of the conditions of the reproduction of human life on the planet. What is needed and what I here have begun to construct, is the perspective from which it can become possible to recognise and think through, within the different genealogical linages for this concept, the geopolitical imaginaries that these philosophies of history both are inscribed within and project.

Chapter Outline

Chapter One is a primarily contextualising methodological discussion of what is to be counted among the 'circumstances' for the emergence of philosophies of history in the eighteenth century. Therein, I discuss first Ernst Cassirer's account of the construction of history as an object of knowledge in *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment* (1939). Following this, I turn to Bertrand Binoche's more recent *Les trois sources des philosophies de l'histoire* (1994), which probes the tensions within and contradictions between French, Scottish, and German philosophical discourses on history in the late eighteenth century – between sketches of scientific and moral progress within a *tableau historique,* natural histories of man and civil society, and historicisations of Leibniz's theodicy. While valuable insights are drawn from the perceptive analysis within these and related works, the overarching purposes of the chapter is to problematise their shared occlusion of the wider colonial context for knowledge formation in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Following the cues of Michèle Duchet's under-appreciated work *Anthropologie et histoire au siècle des lumières* (1973) and Mary Louise Pratt's now-canonical work *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (1992), I argue that one way to remedy such an occlusion is to interrogate the variety of sources which presented the 'rest' of the world's population to European scholars and philosophers. Doing so, I suggest, would enable contemporary scholarship on this period to better counter the widespread injunction to disregard racism and Eurocentrism within the philosophical canon as merely the expressions of a transmission from so-called 'travel literature'.

Chapter Two concretises the proposal to take seriously the extent to which missionary relations, travelogues, and reports from colonial administrators informed the geography of philosophical imaginaries and functioned as conduits between geo-political and epistemic conditions in knowledge formation. It does so through a reconstructive analysis of the long introduction to Joseph-François Lafitau's *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains comparées aux moeurs des premiers temps* (1724), a proto-ethnographic study written after a nearly six year-long mission (1712–17) among the Iroquois at Kahnawake, in the French settlement of Sault Saint-Louis. Although this work is but one among an overwhelming number of source materials used within philosophical histories, I argue that its significance lies in the manner in which it paradigmatically inaugurated a regime of comparability through which a shift

from the seventeenth-century view of 'savages' as exemplars of 'natural man' to that of 'primitive man' could be effected. The exposition of this chapter aims to show how the triangulation between 'moderns', 'ancients', and 'savages' – a triangulation that would subtend the co-constitution of philosophical anthropologies that emphasised the dynamic and malleable character of human nature and 'philosophical' histories' of civil society, civilisation, or humankind – was articulated with hitherto incomparable clarity by Lafitau, such that this work is emblematic of the way in which difference came to be translated into temporal distance, as the horizon of history was extended across the globe. A brief reception history of this work in eighteenth-century France, Germany, and Scotland concludes this chapter and Part One as a whole.

Chapter Three demonstrates the interpenetration of Kant's conceptualisation of universal history and cosmopolitanism with those parts of his oeuvre which, after Robert B. Louden's revivification of the term, have come to be known as his 'impure' philosophy, notably the writings on race and the lectures on physical geography, pragmatic anthropology, and pedagogy. While Kant arguably constitutes *the* most well-mined reference for writings on cosmopolitanism and political universalisms, the ascendance of recent scholarship that has brought into focus considerations of Kant's equally ground-breaking but more troubling role in the constitution of a scientific discourse on race, has raised a number of questions as to the relationship between these two aspects of his authorship. My intervention into the debates foregrounds the importance of education and educability to Kant's philosophy of history. The concept of humankind is central to Kant's conception of universal history; however, while the whole of the species is here at issue, one of its parts is placed at the spearhead of progression in the development of moral predispositions. As such, the question of an *educative relation* that cuts across the whole of the species forcefully imposes itself. Through a diachronic reading of Kant's preoccupation with the importance of (self)discipline to the assumption of enlightened reason, I argue that what is problematic in Kant's concept of history is that it rests on a racial and geographic fixation of the relation between educators and educated (in the areas of culture, civility, and morality) which should today be called into question when we consider the idea of progress toward a 'cosmopolitan end'. While the chapter neither questions the idea that Kant, over the course of his life, might have changed his position on a great deal of things, nor that a sensitivity to such changes are not welcome in reconstructive readings in the history of philosophy, it is also meant as a challenge to the persistent drive to exonerate the late Kant from the faults of the younger on these issues – a drive which seem suspiciously tinged with a reluctance to fully assess the extent to which the perceived depth of a contradiction between universalism and racism might, in fact, cover over a racist universalism.

Chapter Four examines the grounds for the critique of cosmopolitanism which Hegel articulates in *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* through the concept of philosophical world history. As later Hegelianisms would also come to do, it is the abstract ideality of cosmopolitanism which Hegel critiques, in the endeavour to instead comprehend the real conditions of possibility for the actualisation of freedom. The centrality of Hegel's philosophy of history to the very construction of the concept of Eurocentrism as it is used today, orients the exegetical work of this chapter as it traces the dialectal interpenetration of multiple geographic, socio-political, and, finally, geo-political conditions within his concept of world history. As is the case for Kant, this chapter is less concerned with exonerating Hegel from the charge of Eurocentrism and more concerned with locating precisely wherein the problem of Eurocentrism lies within Hegel's writings. While the most blatant aspect may be the re-articulation of the projection of temporal distance onto nationalised difference (as addressed in Part One), within Hegel's account of the differentiation between spirit and nature, the argument presented here is that what is still more significant is that Hegel – and with him a whole lineage of Hegelianisms – assumes and returns to its own presupposition of a (paradoxical) absolute standpoint of judgement and of the enunciation of absolute universality.

Chapter Five turns to the Humboldt brothers, critically reconstructing the concept of an 'alternative cosmopolitanism' and its attendant alternative philosophy of history in their works. By engaging the intellectual trajectories of both brothers, the articulation of an implicit critique of the 'epistemology of ignorance' attributed to Kantian universalism can be discerned and The rationale for considering the genealogical roots of an alternative cosmopolitanism as traceable not to one or the other but to *both* Humboldt brothers is therefore provided through a broader set of reflections on what it means to read their works as part of a shared oeuvre, shaped by something like a joint research programme. Such a programme, this chapter argues, was premised on the necessity of multiple forms of translation within scientific inquires and on the onto-epistemological primacy of interaction and dynamism. The specificity of the conception of a cosmopolitan ideal constructed therein, as seen against other cultural cosmopolitanisms, is located in the linguistic schematism which Wilhelm von Humboldt's philosophy of language introduces into the very concept of culture. The tensions within this philosophy of language are probed in regard to two (related) problematics: that of a tendency toward cultural essentialism in a conception of cultures as closed totalities; and that of a tendential racialisation of language itself, which displaces but does not expel the concept of race which haunts Kantian cosmopolitanism. As a counter to these tendencies, a practical-political imperative is excavated from Alexander von Humboldt's meta-political writings on colonial modernity and the politics of racial

difference. Such writings demonstrate, through their explicit commitment to the abolition of slavery, that if the ideal for an alternative cosmopolitanism with a positive valuation of cultural-difference is not to run aground on the impotence of its own incapacity to fathom the significance of real power-differentials, this aspect must be considered as important to it as the philosophy of language and culture within which it is conceptually articulated.

PART I

ALIGNMENTS OF HISTORICAL TIME IN GEOGRAPHICAL SPACE

PREAMBLE

FIGURING THE GLOBE

According to Strabo's *Geographica* (c.20AD), the first terrestrial globe had been constructed by Crates of Mallus around 150BC. Thereon, the *oikouménē*, the known or inhabited world of Europe, Libya (North Africa), and Asia was portrayed on the upper quarter of a spherical surface, with named but unknown landmasses depicted in each of the remaining corners.[49]

Figure 1: The Globe of Crate of Mallus, from Ravenstein, E.G. (1911), 'Map § History of Cartography', in Hugh Chisholm, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 17 (eleventh edition), Cambridge University Press, 635. Source: wiki-sources.

Medieval European manuscripts depicting the world on *mappae mundi*, however, focused exclusively on the known world, typically with Jerusalem placed at the Christian religious centre of a circular map, with Asia placed on the top half (often with east, '*oriens*' inscribed above it) and Europa and Africa on both the left and right on the bottom half (often with west, '*occidens*' inscribed below them).[50] As such, these maps seem to have foregone explicit globular references, while retaining the tripartite division of the *oikouménē*, in outline largely identical to that found in the Greek and Roman sources which, more often than not, informed their construction.[51] A biblical division of humankind into three distinct families

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[49] For a figuration of the globe to have any usefulness as a depiction of the known inhabited world, Straboe suggests that it should be no smaller than ten feet in diameter. See Strabo, *The Geography of Strabo*, trans. Duane W. Roller (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014) 134.

[50] Rodney W. Shirley, *The Mapping of the World: Early Printed World Maps 1472–1700* (New Holland Publishers, London 1984), xx–xi.

[51] So-called T–O maps, such as the one shown above, are sometimes counted as a subgenre of the *mappae mundi* and sometimes, because of their less detailed character, their own genre. The distinction is not of great

with genealogical linages from the three sons of Noah was inscribed upon several of these maps, symbolically both distinguishing and unifying the populations of the Earth.
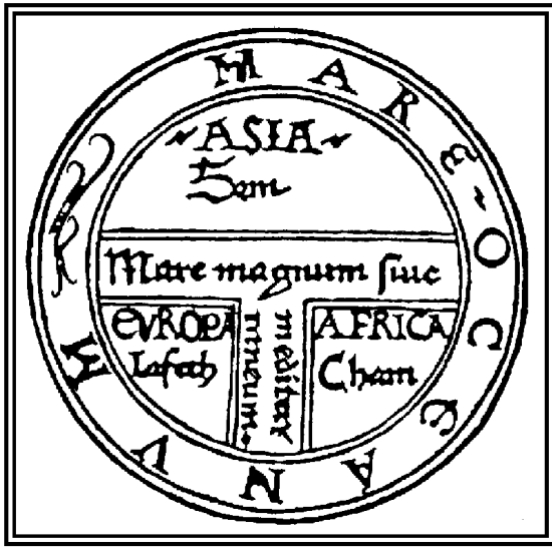
Figure 2: T–O Map from Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae* (ca. 600–25, printed 1472). The three continents are identified as populated by the descendants of Noah's three sons, Shem, Japheth and Cham. Source: wiki-sources.

Cartographic references to the shape of the Earth on world maps did not gain prominence until the rediscovery of Ptolemy's *Geographia* (c.150 AD) and its translation into Latin between 1404–06, a methodological event often taken to be of comparable importance to the introduction of printmaking in Europe in the fifteenth century.[52] The method for map projection based on the concepts of latitude and longitude found in Ptolemy's work increasingly gained influence as prints (first from woodcuts and later from metal etchings) ensured that the same map could be widely

and simultaneously distributed, received, and contemplated. The depiction of landmasses based on mathematical calculations, rather than on their importance in terms of trade or politico-religious influence, changed the face of world representations.[53] Cartographies

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importance here, as the absent relation to a globular shape is comparable between the two.

[52] The first edition of Ptolemy's *Geographia* with printed maps was produced in Bologna in 1477. Shirley, *The Mapping of the World*, xviii.

[53] One weakness of Ptolemy's use of mathematical coordinates was that it did not permit the delineation of

ordered in terms of longitude and latitude, literally inscribed the shape of the Earth onto each map produced.

Figures 3 and 4: In Abraham Ortelius' *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (1606 edition), the Ptolemean conception of the world is neatly depicted, both in relation to the extent of the *oikouménē* of late Greco-Roman antiquity and adapted to the information available in the early seventeenth century.
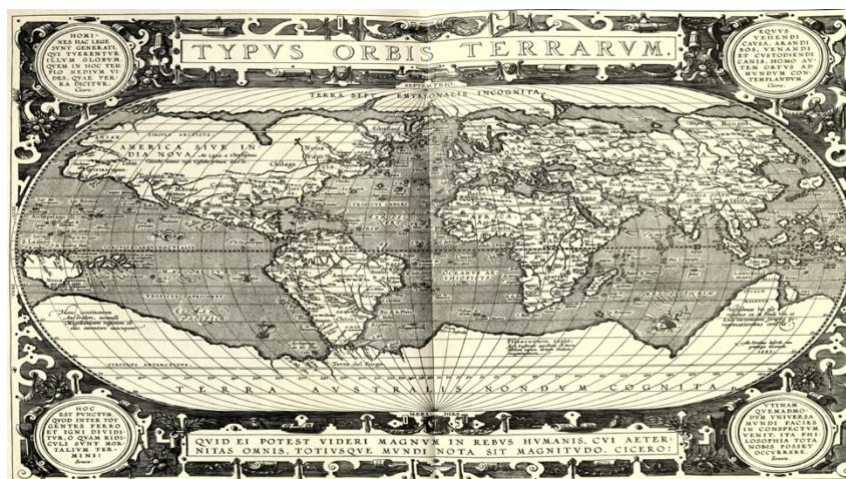
Taken together, the mathematisation of cartographic practices and the wider distribution of each individual map conditioned both the generalisation and the standardisation of world maps across Europe.[54] It standardised them as far as was possible, at a time when the extent of known coastlines was constantly being adjusted, as territorial claims and trade interests drove the quest for uncharted land forward during the next several hundred years. When Louis Antoine Bougainville, who led the first French circumnavigation of the Earth between 1766–69, reflected upon the impact of oceanic exploration, he characterised it as 'one of the distinctive characters of this century which soon will come to an end: to it posterity will owe the knowledge – or at least the great advancement of knowledge – of the figure of the Earth and of almost all the countries which make up its surface'.[55] As whole continents gradually made their appearance on maps of the world, the skewed ratio of known to unknown world described by Straboe was reversed. And between the earlier maps of the known world and maps of the whole world, lies the complex history of exploration, colonisation, exploitation and European empire formations.

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shorelines with a specificity necessary for actual navigation. Portolan charts were the other prominent cartographic tool in the 'age of discovery' and the combination of the two map types became current towards the middle of the fifteenth century. David Buisseret, 'Europeans Plot the Wider World, 1500–1750', in *Geography and Ethnography: Perceptions of the World in Pre-Modern Societies*, ed. Kurt A. Raaflaub and Richard J. A. Talbert (Oxford: Wiley–Blackwell, 2010), 333.

[54] Jerry Brotton, *Trading Territories: Mapping the Early Modern World* (London: Reaktion Books, 1997), 153–61.

[55] Louis Antonine de Bougainville, quoted in Sergio Moravia 'Philosophie et geographie a la fin du XVIIIe siecle', in *Studies in Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* 57 (1967), 946 (my translation). Bougainville's travelogue was published in 1771 as *Voyage autour du monde*. In 1772 Denis Diderot wrote *Supplément au voyage de Bougainville* as an accompaniment to Bourgainville's journal, although it wasn't published until 1796.

CHAPTER ONE

CONQUESTS OF THE HISTORICAL WORLD

Que la connaissance du passé fasse partie intégrante d'un présent, c'est un problème qui nous concerne aussi et exige un élucidation du rapport entre nos modes de pensée et ceux dont nous entendons parler. Autrement dit, il n'y a pas d'historiographie sans philosophie de l'histoire – explicite ou caché.

Michel de Certeau, *L'écriture de l'histoire*, 1975[56]

Between 1519–22, within the initial period of European oceanic explorations and territorial conquest, the first successful voyage to circumnavigate the Earth practically established a sphericity which had long since been assumed in most astronomical models of the known universe.[57] In the service of the Spanish Crown and in the hope of finding a Western passage to the spice-rich Maluku Islands, what has since become known as Magellan's expedition emblematically illustrates the many and complex factors surrounding the process wherein the geographic space of the world known to European cosmographers and cartographers, came to be extended around the globe.[58] In the ensuing continuous adjustment of the ratio between known and unknown worlds, the emergence of a sense of *the* world as globe occurred at the intersections of political-economic interests and mathematical innovations;[59] with increasing frequency, this world came to be cartographically represented as a bounded

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[56] Michel de Certeau, *L'écriture de l'histoire* (Paris, Gallimard, 1975), 147.

[57] In Cleomedes' *On the Circular Motion of Celestial Bodies* (written between the first century BC and second century AD), Eratosthenes of Cyrene is credited with having calculated the circumference of the earth. His estimates, produced as early as 240BC, are, when compared to today's understanding and depending on interpretations of the measuring units, only about 15% larger than the actual circumference of the earth. It is not until much later, in the seventeenth century, that the more proper figuration of the Earth as an ellipsoid figure begins to make an appearance, as in Isaac Newton's *Principia*.

[58] As is well known, this expedition was undertaken by Ferdinand Magellan in 1519 and completed by Juan Sebastián in 1522 under the commission of Charles I of Spain (later Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire). But the first *person* to circumnavigate the globe might actually have been Magellan's slave servant Enrique of Malacca, who, by the time the expedition reached the Philippines, would have travelled the entire circumference of the world within his lifetime.

[59] Stuart Elden, 'Missing the point: globalization, deterritorialization and the space of the world', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 30, no.1 (2005), 11–12.

space on which imperial powers inscribed their claims.[60] Simultaneously, the mosaic of fragmentary descriptions of humankind inhabiting all parts of this globe was gradually pieced together, categorised, and organised until a corresponding sense that a 'comprehensive map of humankind'[61] could and eventually would be overlaid upon the bounded space chartered by geographers and navigators. For the construction of historical time during the eighteenth century both of these registers were central. In different ways, such a construction forms the central object in Part One of this thesis.

In Chapter One, the broad argument is made that the eighteenth-century conceptualisation of historical time took place within a geopolitical imaginary largely structured by the colonialist projects of the age, thus requiring a more through interrogation of the importance of travel literature to the emergence of history as an object of knowledge. More precisely, what is examined is the emergence of *philosophical* histories of mankind, civil society, and reason. Despite the significant differences between these different conceptualisations of history across European Enlightenments, the fact of colonisation stands as their shared, joint condition. Temporally, these forms of philosophical history all extended their scope to the *beginning* of history. Spatially, they were concerned (or, at least, had self-conceptions of being so concerned) with all of the populations of the globe. To that effect, these histories were reliant on a wealth of materials today known as 'discovery–' or 'travel literature'. What I will argue is that through these materials, the philosophies of history in question can be recognised as much more explicitly linked to the colonial and imperial becoming-global of the world than has otherwise often been the case. Furthermore, it is argued that these very materials need to be considered more carefully, if we are to fully appreciate the co-constitution of philosophical anthropologies that emphasised the dynamic and malleable character of human nature and philosophical histories in which historical distance was projected onto peoples across the globe. In Chapter Two, this point is concretised in the analysis of Joseph-François Lafitau's *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains comparées aux moeurs des premieres temps* (1724) and its reception. Today, Lafitau's work is most often found cited in histories of anthropology and ethnology.[62] What I will interrogate here is

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[60] For the theory and history of cartography included in the above preamble, I have drawn in particular on Brotton, *Trading Territories*.

[61] Immanuel Kant, 'Mr. Immanuel Kant's announcement of the programme of his lectures for the winter semester 1765–1766', in *Theoretical Philosophy 1755–1770*, trans. and ed. David Walford with Ralf Meerbote (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 299.

[62] On this point, see the classical study in the history of anthropology, Margaret T. Hodgen, *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Philadelphia, 1964, 114, 131–43. Other anglophone studies which discuss the importance of Lafitau include Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1982), and Anthony Pagden, *European Encounters with the New World* (Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1993).

instead its more subterraneous, philosophical reception across the European Enlightenment.[63] Immediately striking, is the comparative aim so plainly stated in its title (*The Customs of the Savage Americans Compared with the Customs of the First Times*) which marks it as one of the earliest systematic studies of socio-political and cultural differences coded in terms of historical distance.

I. The Circumstances of Philosophical Histories

In Reinhart Koselleck's account of the emergence the modern concept of history, as history in the collective singular, this emergence is tracked through shifts in the 'semantic field' of philosophical and, especially, political terminologies. At a meta-level, these changes were also tracked in emergent conceptualisations of history itself, in regard to which Koselleck noted three significant shifts: the move from '*historia naturalis*' to '*Naturgeschichte*'; from '*historia sacra*' to '*Heilsgeschichte*'; and from '*historia universalis*' to '*Weltgeschichte*'.[64] For the latter of these, of greatest interest to the project at hand, it is central that, as he noted in *Futures Past*, '[t]he geographical opening up of the globe brought to light various but coexisting cultural levels which were, through the process of synchronous comparison, then ordered diachronically'.[65] On this point, Chenxi Tang has written an extensive account of how the 'discovery of historical time was accompanied by the discovery of geographical space' such that 'the historicisation of society and knowledge went hand in hand with what can be called the geographisiation thereof'.[66] And yet, the importance of how and through which channels this 'opening up' found a place among philosophical discourses on history has, as yet, only be explored by a few.[67]

Such an oversight is the glaring omission in Ernst Cassirer's otherwise magistral *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*. Cassirer knew how to play the double genitive in 'The Conquest

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[63] The reception of Lafitau in relation to philosophy has been partially discussed by Michèle Duchet in her cross-reading of ethnological and historiographical texts in Michèle Duchet, *Le Partage des savoirs: Discours historique et discours ethnologique* (Paris: La découverte, 1985).

[64] Koselleck's account can be found in the substantial entry on the emergence and determinations of the modern concept of history, and on how 'history' came to be a 'fundamental concept', in the dictionary of the fundamental political and historical concepts of European (but especially German) modernity, *Geschichtlisches Grundbegriffe,* and in various other articles. For an English-language translation of the section discussed here, see Appendix One of this thesis.

[65] Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. Keith Tribe (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 238.

[66] Tang, *The Geographical Imagination of Modernity*, 3.

[67] I would not have been able to write this chapter were it not for Micèle Duchet, *Anthropologie et Histoire au siècle des lumières: Buffon, Voltaire, Rousseau, Helvétius, Diderot* (Paris: Librairie Albin Michel, 1995). Although its focus is the French colonial world and in particular the function of conceptions of savagery within the historical anthropologies of the *philosophes,* its careful mapping of the differences between different forms of travel literature and the conditions of their reception in learned circles was an invaluable starting-point for the work undertaken in this thesis with respect to the idea of a 'geopolitical imaginary'.

of the Historical World', his 1932 intervention into the intellectual history of the Enlightenment period.[68] Following Wilhelm Dilthey's 1901 essay 'The Eighteenth Century and the Historical World', which had opened with the assertion that the 'Enlightenment of the eighteenth century […] produced a new conception of history',[69] Cassirer argued both that 'the world of historical phenomena had to be conquered and conceptually established in one and the same process of thought'[70] and, in turn, that a proper conquest of the historical world would end up overturning, even conquering, certain central principles of Enlightenment thought, its universalism irreparably transformed by the discovery of the historicity of knowledge and society.[71] What does not make an appearance in Cassirer's play on conquest, is how the term itself might inscribe the colonial and imperial context that coloured those preoccupation with human differences which, today, more clearly stands out as one of the conditions to which especially endeavours to write a history of mankind as a whole responded. Instead, Cassirer's portrait of enlightenment philosophy, building on Dilthey's works, sets off from the geological challenges to the biblical determination of the age of the world and the growing interest in the historicity of the bible itself.[72] The aim of this study was to chart how the eighteenth century came to found a critical philosophy of history, one which 'inquires concerning the "conditions of possibility" of history, just as it inquires concerning the conditions of possibility of natural science'.[73] For both Dilthey and Cassirer, mid-eighteenth century Europe, in particular, is vindicated as the site where history

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[68] As a whole, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment* can in many ways be understood as the endeavour to account for the epistemic conditions of possibility for the emergence of Kantianism. This is no doubt the reason why Foucault, in a little-known review of the first French translation of this book, approximates Cassirer's neo-Kantian portrait of pre-Kantian enlightenment philosophies to his own project. See Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, trans. Fritz C.A. Koelln and James P. Pettegrove (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009), 197–233. Michel Foucault, 'Une histoire restée muette,' *La Quinzaine littéraire* 8, no.3–4 (July 1966) 3-4, reproduced in *Dits et écrits I (1954-69)*, ed. Daniel Defert and François Ewald (Paris: Gallimard, 2007), 545–49.

[69] Wilhelm Dilthey, 'The Eighteenth Century and The Historical World' (1901), trans. Patricia van der Tuyl, in *Selected Works vol.IV*, ed. Rudolf A. Makkeel and Frithjof Rodi (Oxford and Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 325.

[70] Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, 200.

[71] This is argued in relation to Johann Gottfried von Herder in particular. See, *ibid.*, 230–33. The claim itself and its place within a broader argument against a conception of Enlightenment philosophies as fundamentally ahistorical is not dissimilar to one made in more extended form in the equally seminal work by Friedrich Meinecke, *Die Entstehung des Historismus* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1936).

[72] Cassirer emphasizes that it is in Spinoza's *Theologico-Political Treatise* that we find the origins of the idea of the historicity of the bible, remarking that he was 'the first to develop it with sober precision and clarity'. Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, 185.

[73] In this way quite explicitly portraying his Neo-Kantian inflection. Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, 197. Where Dilthey sets out to demonstrate the variety of historical works undertaken in the 18th century along with their points of convergence and their limitations, Cassirer much more forcefully attempt to delineate an, if not homogenous, then at least cohesive 'form of thought' [*Denkform*, translated as 'mind'] characterised above all by Encyclopaedist's opposition of a dynamic '*ésprit systematique*' to that of a perceived static '*ésprit de systeme*', Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, 8.

emerged as a field of knowledge proper, a vindication which could be based primarily on the early attempts to define historical, opposed to natural-scientific, facts, on the establishment of parameters for the critique of source materials, and on the reverberations from debates on natural law.

In a recent study by Bertrand Binoche, these are also among the factors considered of importance to the emergence of more narrowly defined projects for 'philosophical histories' – which we might understand in distinction to the more immediately recognisable 'historical' works such as Edward Gibbon's 1776–89 *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. 'Philosophical histories', for Binoche, names distinct but conceptually interrelated philosophic-historical narratives, retrospectively defined as the 'three sources of philosophies of history':[74] German theodicies of history, French historical tableaus, and Scottish natural histories of society. In this work, Binoche asks how we might think the joint appearance of Isaak Iselin's *Über die Geschichte der Menscheit* (1764), the first proper theodicy of history; of the first registered use of the phrase '*la philosophie de l'histoire*' in 1765 by Voltaire; and of Adam Ferguson's publication of the first great 'natural history' of society *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767). In their own ways, each of these works can be considered to express the infusion of developmental structures into the understanding of human nature across the European continent: in the German *Aufklärung*, the French *Lumières*, and the Scottish Enlightenment. For much of intellectual history today, the porosity which the transmission of knowledge in the Enlightenment period tends to lend to national designators, means that a focus on translation and intellectual cross-pollination has stepped to the fore. While sensitive to this aspect, Binoche nonetheless emphasises the distinct conceptualisations of reason and experience circulating within more proximate milieus and their importance for the specificity of each approach. The 'German' theodicy of history, 'French' historical tableaux, and 'Scottish' natural history are taken to exemplify differing but contemporaneous modalities of philosophical investigation which, in response to both philosophical and political conditions of the age, constructs the concept of history as their essential object. To counter any overarching narratives, in the style of Karl Löwith's secularisation thesis, of how historical facts in the context of an either German, French, or Scottish Enlightenment came to be considered as endowed with meaning and direction, Binoche proposes that we consider their joint but distinct emergence simply as the result of their *circumstances*.[75] This emphasis on circumstance functions to underscore that – since the circumstances surrounding each variation of what might now be called a 'philosophical

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[74] Bertrand Binoche, *Les trois sources des philosophies de l'histoire, 1764–1798* (Paris: Editions Hermann, 2013).
[75] *Ibid.*, 6.

history' are not the same, whether in Germany, France, or Scotland – we cannot assume the conceptions of historical facts themselves, let alone the relation between meaning and fact, to be identical across these three instances. This is an important measure against unruly comparisons, which might too quickly reduce the intra-European comparativist endeavour to the identification of similar conceptual operations. One underlying aim of *Les trois sources* is thus to open the way precisely *for* a comparative history of philosophy, understood as a rigorous framework in which to read the relations between primarily nationally determined intra-European philosophical movements and their individual thinkers. Perceptively, Binoche's reads each of the three 'moments' as distinct responses to a set of largely shared conceptual limitations, organised around a structural opposition between two pairs: on the one side, rationality and genesis and, on the other, history and experience. To illustrate this figure and thereby consider the conceptual choices which on this account underpins the construction of history as an object of knowledge (in an approach that remains quite germane to that of Cassirer), the famous methodological comments which prefaced Jean-Jacques Rousseau's 'Second Discourse' (1754) forms an illuminating counterpoint. In regard to the question as to the 'origin of inequality among mankind', Rousseau writes:

> Let us therefore begin by setting aside all the facts, for they do not affect the question. The Inquiries that may be pursued regarding this Subject ought not be taken for historical truths, but only for hypothetical and conditional reasonings; better suited to elucidate the Nature of things than to show their genuine origin, and comparable to those our Physicists daily make regarding the formation of the World.[76]

The value of this passage lies in its crystalline expression of an opposition between two unequally weighted modes of argumentation. To propose an answer to the question motivating the discourse, regarding the 'origins' and 'foundations' of inequality among men, Rousseau calls for all fact to be swept aside and promotes the advantages of reasoning according to the laws of a rationally established 'state of nature'. Such an analysis, he maintains, must move beyond the domain of experience into the semi-inductive space of rational speculation from effects. With no perceptible logic or structure, history is thought to provide little more than illustrative examples of a reasoned argument whose central tenets are grounded in the immutability of nature. The ensuing delineation between a form of reasoning that operates by way of hypothetical and conditional constructs over and against an exposition of historical truths, gives an emblematic image of the most prevalent

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[76] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 'Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality among Men *or* Second Discourse' (1754)*, in *Rousseau: The* Discourse*s and other early political writings*, ed. and trans. Victor Gourevitch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 132.

conception of history at this point: essentially nothing more than a compilation of facts.[77] From a view internal to philosophical works, it is out of a generalised adherence to this divide, between the rational and logically stringent account of the origins of society and the labyrinthine or chaotic history of this same society, that 'history' as a meaningfully structured field also came into being.[78] Guided by the overarching theme of whether an immanently determinable course could be read out of historical facts, especially if recourse to divine intervention as the central explanatory factor was excluded, the ways of aligning meaning and fact in the knowledge of history became crucial from about the mid-eighteenth century onwards, both for the *selection* of materials to be included in historical works and the *organisation* of internal relations within a written form, as the many references, across bodies of work, to 'guiding threads', 'organising ideas', and 'leading motifs' attest to.

By now, this condensed and tendentially caricatured conceptual narrative will be familiar to most, as are the habitual stops along the road of the intellectual landscape of the period, typically traced out, as does Binoche, between three national contexts – a triangulation to which a detour through Italy and the singularity of Giambattista Vico is occasionally added.[79] To add some depth to this image, it might be insisted that there is also a journey that navigates three forms of discourse: the philosopher's philosophy of history, the universal histories of historians, and the philosophies of history implicit within works that attempted to determine the laws of social and political transformation. It is implied, but not developed further by Binoche, that each of these 'moments' formed a condition for the development of philosophies of history proper, in the nineteenth century, we might say, as important circumstances for their construction. That is, rather than take the various attempts at 'philosophical history' as essentially Christian eschatological narratives translated into intra-worldly schemas of progression through the ages (what Löwith called the translation of *Heilgeschichte* into *Weltgeschichte*, world history *as* a history of salvation), we might attempt to read them as the distinct responses to more localised transformations, both in the political conditions of the age and in conceptualisations of nature, experience and knowledge.

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[77] In the passage immediately preceding the here quoted passage, it is especially the biblical narrative which is recounted as 'historical'. For a brief overview of a preceding dominance of an 'exemplary theory of history' see George H. Nadel, 'Philosophy of History before Historicism', in *Studies in the Philosophy of History,* ed. George H. Nadel, Harper and Row, New York, 1965.

[78] The pre-history of this divide goes back to Francis Bacon at least.

[79] Some studies simply forego the Italian peninsula and Giambattista Vico's work. This isolation is often justified by way of reference to the relative obscurity of Vico's works within his own lifetime, an assertion that more recently has been a topic of some discussion (especially as regards his influence on Montesquieu). See Gustavo Costa, 'Vico's Global Reception: Europe, Latin America and Asia' in *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 44, no.4 (2011), 538–41.

This conception of the circumstances for philosophical practice is useful in that it introduces considerable nuance into our account. This can be seen, in Binoche's study, in that the issue of secularisation is pluralised through geographical and discursive contextualisations; secularisation is read as co-constitutive, not, as in Löwith, as a singular determinant of attempts to produce a 'philosophical' history. However, given the specificity of the question of history, namely of how it, even under many different names and in different discourses, became such a concern for a number of thinkers at this point in time might there not be some conditions of the age that dislocate or globalise the otherwise localising effects of a focus on 'circumstances'? What for instance, would it look like if we, across the intra-European sources for the philosophy of history, looked not just to intra-European cross-pollinations, transmissions and translations (that of course always run the risk of becoming misunderstandings) but also to the colonies and the ways in which knowledge of Europe's 'outside' worked its way into these philosophical histories? What if, in other words, the way in which the world of the Enlightenment became global was considered a *shared circumstance* for their development?

Such a shared circumstance might constrain in specific and various ways, but it would in each case be hard to avoid some consideration of the imperialist and colonial projects which underpinned it. Of course, to account for the internal limits given in the transmission between philosophical works is complicated enough. These complications are further compounded, and shot immanently though with fraught questions, if the account is to consider the wider socio-political circumstances of a specific area and extend the scope to a variety of territorial and imperialist trade projects. One conceptually generative way of broaching these topics is through the prism of travel literature and its reception. That is, through an interrogation of the construction of the geopolitical imaginaries of colonialist projects.

II. Travel Literature and Philosophical History

'Travel literature' as such constitutes an expansive literary category, devoid of any formally defined intra-textual characteristics.[80] In contrast to the travel *narrative*, paradigmatically structured according to the model of departure, adventure, and return, travel *literature* is typically considered to name, in Joan-Pau Rubiés' words, 'that varied body of writing which,

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[80] There is a vast amount of contemporary scholarship on travel literature in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Among those that have been most fruitful for the present analysis are Sophie Linon-Chipon's *Gallia Orientalis: Voyages aux Indes orientales 1529–1722* (Paris: Press de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2003); Sylvie Requemora-Gros, *Voguer vers la modernité: les voyage à travers les genres au XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2012); and, in an anglophone context, Joan-Pau Rubiés, *Travellers and Cosmographers: Studies in the History of Early Modern Travel and Ethnology* (Hampshire and Burlington: Ashgate/Variorum, 2007).

whether its principal purpose is practical or fictional, takes travel as an essential condition for its production'.[81] More a meta-genre than a genre, it also entails no exclusive reference to the texts produced in the contexts of imperialist and colonial European exploration. These types of texts, which proliferated from the late fifteenth century onwards, might be delineated more precisely through the notion of a 'literature of discovery and expansion', for which the term 'discovery literature' in what follows will largely function as the metonym.[82] This is of course a contentious term, in that it places these writings firmly within the dynamics of the subjectivity for whom 'discoveries' could count as such. This construction of European explorers as the subjects of world-knowledge, was greatly challenged by Edmundo O'Gorman's *The Invention of America* from 1961, which instead argued instead that the 'philosophical conquest of America' could be said to constitute an *invention* proper, as part of the great transformation of European geographical-, historical-, and geo-political imaginaries and systems of knowledge, in the wake of the first waves of trans-Atlantic colonisation.[83] There are two main reasons why the term is here retained: one internal to these texts themselves, and one pertaining to their reception and later operationalisation within conceptualisations of humankind and the human species. First, to address these writings with a terminology attuned to a dual perspective wherein the traveller and those he (or, rarely, she) met could be figured in terms, say, of 'encounters', would to a large extent belie both the tone and self-conceptions of works wherein the observation of novelty was central – 'discovery', in a sense, was their aim. Second, the importance of those texts that today might be called 'proto-ethnological' for the taxonomical projects of the eighteenth century retains the sense that their value lies in the addition of new empirical descriptions of the world.

As either instances of or source materials for what in retrospect are often considered early works in ethnography, anthropology, and geography, there can be little doubt about the importance of these relays from travels over land and sea, regardless of the specific trade, scientific, or expansionist purposes of the expedition itself. Indeed, if, like Steven Shapin writes, it 'is difficult to imagine what early modern natural history or natural philosophy would look like without that component contributed by travellers, navigators, merchant-

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[81] Joan-Pau Rubiés, 'Travel Writing as a Genre: Facts, Fictions and the Invention of a Scientific Discourse in Early Modern Europe' in *Journeys: International Journal of Travel and Travel Writing* 1, no.1 (2000), 6.

[82] *Ibid.*, 7. A subgenre within 'travel writings' broadly construed is that set produced on intra-European *Grand Tours*. I will not discuss those here, although it would be interesting to compare how mechanisms of exotisation also might be at work in the emerging 'national' consciousnesses.

[83] Edmundo O'Gorman, *The Invention of America: An Inquiry into the Historical Nature of the New World and the Meaning of Its History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1961, revised and extended edition), 4.

traders, soldiers, and adventurers',[84] much the same could easily be said for the 'human sciences' whose eighteenth-century emergence Michel Foucault traced in *Les mots et les choses*.[85] Between an emerging sense that travel itself might constitute a central part of much scientific research and a dramatic increase in publications from a commercially-driven book market,[86] the conditions throughout the eighteen century were near perfect for these accounts of foreign parts of the world to make their way into fiction, science, and philosophy alike. A philosopher could, much like Daniel Defoe's 'English Gentleman',

> make a tour of the world in books, he may make himself master of the geography of the universe in the maps, atlases and measurements of our mathematicians. He may travell by land with the historians, by sea with the navigators. He may go round the globe with Dampier and Rogers, and kno' a thousand times more doing it than all those illiterate sailors.[87]

It is for this same reason that philosophical imaginaries throughout the eighteenth century were informed by travelogues, memoirs, reports, and notes jotted down or carefully composed by travellers, explorers, navigators, traders, soldiers, and colonial administrators. More often than not, these types of texts are at the root of the many and various remarks about island dwellers, scathing or exoticising descriptions of unfamiliar customs and derogatory comments on the mental capacities of 'other' human races than 'white Europeans'. These frequently contain a litany of prejudices and turns of phrases that spark embarrassment or anger in today's readers. And yet, as Ann Talbot remarks, the extent of discovery literature's contribution to Enlightenment philosophy is still 'largely unexplored, underestimated or misunderstood'.[88] Perhaps this is not entirely surprising, since it is only within the last three decades or so years that the discipline of philosophy itself has begun to take on board re-considerations of Enlightenment racism and justifications of slavery and of colonial rule by European imperial powers within canonical texts of especially political

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[84] Steven Shapin, *A Social History of Truth* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 245.

[85] Michel Foucault, *Les mots et les choses* (Paris: Gallimard, 1966), 137–76 and 314–55.

[86] According to Mechthild Raabe's *Leser und Lektüre im 18. Jahrhunderte*, there was a great upsurge in especially geography books between 1760–89. And out of the quarter of a million books at German book fairs at the end of the century, more than two-thirds were published after 1750. Mechthild Raabe, quoted in Tang, *The Geographical Imagination of Modernity*, 261, n.56.

[87] Daniel Defoe, quoted in Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 1.

[88] Ann Talbot, *'The Great Ocean of Knowledge': The Influence of Travel Writing on the Work of John Locke* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 2. We might add that this is perhaps more so the case in anglophone contexts since a number of important works which did take on the question of how to read the relation of Enlightenment philosophy to colonial ideology through a focus on the explicitly political and economic idea of conquest and exploitation were published in Italian and French contexts in the 1970s. In 1971 works of considerable importance to these questions were published in France and Italy: Duchet's *Anthropologie et histoire au siècle des Lumières* and Gliozzi, *Adam et le nouveau monde*.

philosophy.[89] When considering the disciplinary recalcitrance toward thinking the overlaps between histories of colonisation and the history of philosophy, we might ask whether such a recalcitrance reflects a problem specific to the interplays between philosophy, the history of colonisation and racial ideology, or if it is symptomatic of a wider problematic regarding the configuration between 'philosophy' and 'history' as such? In either instance, the assumption of a relative autonomy of philosophical works from their historical conditions (an assumption which seems to form a condition for a continued engagement with these works beyond a 'merely historical' interest) complicates the issue at hand. What I here propose is that questioning the 'geopolitical imaginary' is one way to probe the meaning of the *relative* without completely dispensing with the notion of autonomy. To do so, I focus on those source materials that mark a clear point of reference for the co-articulation of knowledge production and *philosophising* as a practice situated within a wider social and political field, one in which colonisation and imperial expansionist projects must be considered as integral parts of the historical fabric and political projects of the period in question.

The work of excavating and assessing the deeper influence and importance of discovery literature upon knowledge formations has largely been delegated to either eighteenth century intellectual history or postcolonial studies.[90] In contrast to the relative scarcity of philosophical works, much has been produced in the context of literary studies on the mechanisms of 'othering' and the hierarchisation of cultural and socio-political differences in early modern scientific discourse, at least since the 1978 publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism*. To focus on the proliferation of travel writings across the European continent in the eighteenth century and on their transposition into philosophical works, is therefore one way to bring together works from 'colonial discourse studies' and what might be considered more traditional works in of genre 'history of philosophy'. In this regard, Mary Louise Pratt's 1992 *Imperial Eyes*, a discipline-defining work, holds a central place. With a focus on different exemplary texts, Pratt argued that European travel and exploration writings constituted one of the primary sites for attempts to come to grips with a global

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[89] I am thinking here especially of the work done by Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze and Robert Bernasconi. Other works include Marc Crépon, *Les géographies de l'esprit: Enquête sur la caractérisation des peuples de Leibniz à Hegel*, (Paris: Bibliothéque Philosophique Payot, Éditions Payot & Rivages, 1996). For a discussion of Eze and Bernasconi, see Chapter Three of this thesis.

[90] In the anglophone tradition of intellectual history, Pagden's *The Fall of Natural Man* should be included among the most important works on the early conceptualisation of the relation between the 'old' and the 'new' world and the emergence of ethnology prefiguring the period in question. On questions of theology and secularisation in relation to perceptions of cultural difference, it would be necessary to include Frank E. Manuel, *The Eighteenth Century Confronts the Gods* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1956); and on the formation of the social sciences, Ronald L. Meek, *Social Science and the Ignoble Savage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

horizon, thereby functioning as a mediator between intra-European intellectual milieus and what she called colonial 'contact zones'.[91] Travel writings produced, in other words, 'the rest of the world for [a] European readership' in imaginaries conditioned by colonial relations. In this way they functioned, we might add, as interfaces between geo-political conditions and knowledge productions of the age.[92] In a period where the delineations between geography, natural history, ethnographic, and historical studies were only at the brink of solidifying, Pratt's focus was on the role played by natural history as a crucible wherein a knowledge of nature with a global scope was formed. In particular, the transformations of taxonomical practice and systematic classifications which followed in the wake of Carl Linné's 1735 publication of *Systema Naturae* hold a central place in this account. Namely, with the introduction of botanists and herborisers as standard figures on board vessels and in the contact zones, as they travelled to foreign parts of the world in order to collect and add materials and specimens to the evolving systematisation of organic life.[93] Not only did discovery literature inform natural historical studies as source materials, the 'impact of natural history' exerted an equally strong influence upon the style in which the texts from various expeditions were written. With the globalisation of taxonomical botanical surveys, Pratt considered 'how natural history provided means for narrating inland travel and exploration aimed not at the discovery of trade routes, but at territorial surveillance, appropriation of resources, and administrative control'.[94]

At the same time, beyond Pratt's explicit focus, demands of scientificity also imposed certain limitations on the ways in which both observations and their notation was carried out, reflective of an emerging conception of 'travel as science.'[95] Ostensibly, some fortification against the possibility of unreliable sources and inaccurate descriptions tainting the philosophical and scientific works which might use them were needed, not only in a

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[91] The term 'contact zone' was introduced in Mary Louise Pratt, 'Arts of the Contact Zone', *Profession* (1991), 33–40; and developed in Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*. It was meant, in part, as a counter to the idea of 'community' and of linguistic communities in particular. For a summary of some of the critiques of the central historical and conceptual nodal points of *Imperial Eyes*, such as 'the Linnaean watershed', 'the contact zone' and 'transculturation' see Claire Lindsay, 'Beyond Imperial Eyes', in *Postcolonial Travel Writing: Critical Explorations,* ed. Justin D. Edwards and Rune Graulund (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillian, 2002), 17–35.

[92] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 3 and 15.

[93] *Ibid.*, 28. Pratt's account is heavily informed by Foucault's study of Linné in *Les mots et les choses.*

[94] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 38.

[95] This phrasing is a translation of Sergio Moravia's in 'Philosophie et geographie a la fin du XVIIIe siecle'. See, also, Sergio Moravia, 'The Enlightenment and The Sciences of Man', in *History of Science* 18, no.4 (1980), 247–68. In both papers, Moravia has argued that the demand for scientificity should be thought as having exerted pressure upon the expeditions themselves and, in reverse, the ways in which the expeditions informed the formation of the sciences in Europe. A similar claim is made by Rubiés, although he displaces it chronologically onto the seventeenth century. See Joan-Pau Rubiés, 'Instructions for Travellers: Teaching the Eye to See', *History and Anthropology* 9 (1996), 139–90.

natural historical context. The comparative studies and constructions of classificatory schemas of laws, customs, and manners just as acutely posed the epistemological problem of how to determine the veracity of accounts from travels to parts of the world well beyond familiar terrains of experience. One solution to this problem was to tie the notion of credibility closely to that of the *character* of the traveller. In this manner, accounts could be dismissed due to lack of education, the colour of the traveller's skin, their religion or other traits presumed to be 'character defining'.[96] This is the view reflected in Rousseau's 'Second Discourse'. Just as it was the case for historical writings, discovery literature is cautiously approached by Rousseau, his lament over the credibility of travel accounts is written into a reflection over the type of character typically in a position to write them:

> [T]here are scarcely more than four sorts of men who make extended voyages: Sailors, Merchants, Soldiers, and Missionaries. Now it is scarcely to be expected that the first three Classes would provide good Observers, and as for those of the fourth, even if they are not subject to the prejudices of station as are all the others, one has to be believe that, absorbed by the sublime vocation that calls them, they would not readily engage in inquiries that appear to be a matters of pure curiosity and would distract them from the labours to which they have dedicated themselves.[97]

This problem of verification returns, equally, at the level of the form of the text; that is, in regard to their systematicity. This can be seen, as the following chapter shall consider greater detail, in the example of Lafitau whose work has often described as 'photo-ethnological', especially because of the way in which it is organised into specific analytical units: marriage, warfare, religion, medicinal practices, etc. The criteria of systematicity figures in a certain taxonomical impulse, its division of the study of peoples and their laws, customs, and manners, and the ways in which these came to be classified and set in relation to each other. While the work of philosophical histories may, in part, have adopted such descriptions, further organising their materials in a frame that allowed for customs and manners to be placed in relations across 'peoples', there was also the sense that discovery literature itself was already doing this work. Such is the view expressed by the Jean-François de La Pérouse, a French naval officer whose 1785 expedition eventually was lost at sea, when he in one of his reports back noted that '[w]hen modern navigators describe the mores of newly discovered peoples, their soul objective is the completion of the history of man'.[98] They brought the colonial contact zone home in their writing which, as the following chapter will aim to show, already coded their subjects in terms of historical distance.

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[96] For the many varieties of discreditation see Michèle Duchet, *Anthropologie et histoire au siècle des Lumières*, 65–136.

[97] Rousseau, 'Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality', 209.

[98] Jean-François de Galaup, comte de La Pérouse, quoted in Moravia, 'Philosophie et geographie a la fin du XVIIIe siecle', 966 (my translation).

In a sense, the conditions for this operation is already inscribed within Pratt's use of the concept of the 'contact zone', as it is delineates the social spaces of imperial and colonial encounters, the point 'where subjects previously separated by geography and history are co-present, the point where their trajectories now intersect', more often in the context of conflict, coercion, inequality, and racial violence.[99] This 'co-presence' of the contact zone can be understood as another name for what Johannes Fabian called the 'coeval', in an equally canonical critique of the techniques and terminologies that produce an effect of temporal distance between anthropologists and their subjects of study, that of *Time and the Other* (1983).[100] In a sense, the 'denial of coevalness' is in part what Chapter Two maps. But while his study primarily takes structural anthropology of the 1950s and 1960s as a frame of reference and an object of critique, the discussion here is situated squarely within the history of philosophy. The denial of coevalness of which Fabian writes is part and parcel of this history, in that the prominent temporal ordering within these philosophical histories instantiate precisely this phenomenon.[101] What will be traced, then, is the emergence and proliferation of a conception that in a French context is almost perfectly crystallised in J.M. Dégerando's 1800 exclamation that '[t]he philosophical traveller, sailing to the ends of the Earth, is in fact travelling in time; he is exploring the past; every step he makes is the passage of an age'.[102]

With this trope, a generalised sense of progression through the ages is considered not only to run *across* linear time but equally to involve the coding of different globally distributed cultural and socio-political forms of organisation into an often explicitly racialised spatialisation of this same temporal distance. While the peak of these philosophies might stem from the years either side of 1800, its context and emergence trace a history that is longer, one in which exploration and an emerging comparativist scientific paradigm hold central positions. The first systematic written instantiation on all accounts seems to have been a work published in 1724, Lafitau's aforementioned *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains*. The focus on this work is an attempt to narrate the distances and proximities between the colonial contact zone and the philosophies of history that conceived of their European present as the pinnacle within a history of humanity.

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[99] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 8.

[100] Fabian, *Time and the Other*, 31.

[101] To my knowledge, the closest to the intellectual history side of what I am attempting to do here is Alfonso M. Iacono, 'The American Indians and the Ancients of Europe: The Idea of Comparison and the Construction of Historical Time in the 18th Century', in *European Images of the Americas and the Classical Tradition* vol. I, ed. Wolfgang Haase and Meyer Reinhold (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1994), 658–81.

[102] J.M. Dégerando, quoted in Fabian, *Time and the Other*, 8.

CHAPTER TWO

ANCIENTS AND SAVAGES IN

LAFITAU'S *MOEURS*

In 1724, seven years back from a nearly six year-long mission (1712–17) among the Iroquois at Kahnawake (the Iroquoian place name which refers to the nearby rapids) in the French settlement of Sault Saint-Louis, the Jesuit missionary Joseph-François Lafitau (1681–1746) published his two-volume work *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains comparées aux moeurs des premiers temps*.[103] Judged by its structure and aim, as they are laid out in the opening chapter, this work far from constitutes a travel *narrative*. The volumes are thematically divided and, with one eye turned to 'the ancients' and one to 'the savage Americans', cover topics such as religion and governance, the traditional occupations of men and women, warfare, marriage rituals, education, games, and several other social practices. These are all considered as aspects of a polyvalent conception of *moeurs*, translated into English as 'customs' in the title, but throughout the work just as often and alternately signifying 'manners', 'beliefs', 'rites' and, with an anachronistic stretch, 'forms of social organisation'.[104] Framed accordingly, Lafitau's

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[103] Joseph-François Lafitau, *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains comparées aux moeurs des premiers temps* (Paris: Saugrain l'aîné, 1724); hencefore, *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains*. The English translation from 1974/77 is, to date, also the most extended critical edition in any language and contains one of the most thoroughgoing introductions to the work. Stretching over a hundred pages and accompanied by various other front matter, the introduction provides substantial contextualisation and analysis of the work, while also accounting for sources within it and the subsequent histories of its various editions and translations. However, because this translations was conducted on the basis of the ethnographic after-life of the work, rather than in regard to the intellectual landscape of the period in which it was written, '*sauvages américains*' was transated therein into 'American Indians', thereby somewhat occluding the centrality of the category of the 'savage', which held such and important and contentious place in political philosophy. Since it is this latter context that I am concerned with here, I follow Lafitau's terminology when moving internally to his text, as he both inherits and displaces the figure of the 'savage', just as I have retained the original title of the work. When this is not the case, I have used the term 'First Nations' when the scope is restricted to the areas of modern-day Canada and 'Amerindian populations' when the reference is to the indigenous populations of both North and South America. See *Customs of the American Indians Compared with the Customs of Primitive Times*, trans. and ed. William N. Fenton and Elizabeth L. Moore (Toronto: The Champlain Society, vol.I 1974, vol.II, 1977).

[104] *Moeurs* is notoriously hard to translate. An overview of the different options, from 'ways of mankind', 'folkways', 'manners', 'mores' 'habits', and 'customary ways' in English to the German 'Sitte' can be found in the introduction by W.N. Fenton and E.L. Moore, 'Introduction', *ibid.*, vol. I. (1974), lxviii. See also Barbara Cassin, Marc Crépon, and François Prost, 'Morals / Ethics', in *Dictionary of Untranslatables*, ed. Barbara Cassin,

focus on *moeurs* significantly expanded the scope of previous comparativist analyses of Amerindian populations, by Bartolomé Las Casas, José de Acosta, and several others, which had tended to concentrate almost exclusively on religion and religious practices.[105]

Part of the continued historical importance of this work stems from the many sources and materials gathered therein, in comments and readjustments of older accounts descriptions of Frist Nations.[106] Since he both helped extend and systematise a tradition of taxonomical attempts at describing the characteristic behaviours of societies that were foreign to European readers, it is not too much of an exaggeration to state, as Chenxi Tang has done, that Lafitau might be said to have 'inaugurated a new era in the topical and systematic treatment of customs and manners, to the same extent as Linné's classificatory system did in natural history'.[107] Completely forgone in *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains* is the heroism of stories detailing perilous outbound journeys and safe returns, in which descriptions of curious behaviours and foreign customs appear strewn about within an account of the journey itself. Moreover, if a distance is crossed within the arc of this work, it initially seems temporal rather than spatial in nature, a function of the juxtaposition of customs so plainly stated in its title; the encounters with First Nations in the French colony Nouvelle France (areas that largely overlap with modern-day Canada) are taken by Lafitau as an occasion to gain knowledge of the origins of all mankind. In an elaborate comparative framework, he constructs the cohesion of the 'old' and the 'new' worlds through extended and thematically organised comparisons between the living 'customs' of the 'savage Americans' and the vestiges of those of the ancients'.

With this in mind, what follows treats *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains* not as a travel narrative but as a part of the category of discovery literature, defined by its relation to European colonial and imperial projects. As *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains* most certainly was, this ensured that the circumstances of its production were deeply embedded in the overlapping histories of French colonial occupation of territories of North America and the

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trans. Steven Rendall, et al. (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2014), 694–97.

[105] On comparativism in travel literature on Amerindian populations predating Lafitau's work, see Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man*.

[106] The patchwork of knowledge that Lafitau draws on in his descriptive work, from the moment of the first discoveries of the Americas up until his present, is made apparent by the editorial work of Fenton and Moore, since Lafitau himself often leaves his sources implicit. The most important of these, other than those already mentioned, include Marc Lescarbot's *Histoire de la Nouvelle France* (1609), the Jesuit François du Creux's *Historia Canadensis* (1664), and José de Acostas *The Natural and Mortal History of the Indies* (1590).

[107] Tang, *The Geographic Imagination of Modernity*, 162. It is, however, necessary to add a caveat to Tang's claim. While Linné gained a troupe of followers in his wake, in the form of botanists who travelled around the world to gather specimens for the mapping of nature, no such movement took shape around Lafitau. The way in which he can be said to have 'inaugurate' an era works through much more subterranean influences, for reasons I shall address in what follows.

callings of missionaries to convert the native populations. Understanding it in this way situates *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains* squarely among those works which, in the two centuries after the first European conquests in the Americas, struggled to make sense of both the continents as landmasses unmentioned by the bible and of the genealogical disturbances that the Amerindian populations caused within the linages of Adam. Like many of these works, it was also written in the context of a specific form of proselytisation. It shares the complicated and sometimes contradictory place which the transmissions sent back by members of Christian orders occupied among travel relations of the period, both in terms of their production and reception.[108] Dismissed or discredited by some on account of the religious zeal of their writers, these works at the same time gave an often unprecedented access to local languages, facilitated by the extended periods their authors spent carrying out missions abroad.[109] Such was the case for Lafitau's principal tutor at Sault Saint-Louis, Father Julien Garnier, who, by 1712, , had lived most of his life in the missions of Nouvelle France and spoke several native languages, among those Algonquian, Huron, and the five dialects of Iroquois proper.[110] In the opening passages, Lafitau places an emphasis on the debt owed to Garnier's knowledge, describing their conversations as the primary source for many an observation regarding the ways of the 'savage Americans'. The quality of these observations, their detail, and even their later ethnological import is at the crux of why Lafitau's work came to be praised by ethnologists and even today can be cited favourably.[111] However, when the ethnological content of *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains* is marshalled outside the context of its own explicitly Christian and religiously interested arguments, there is also a question as to how a decoupling of interested investment in theological discussions (to be left aside) and

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[108] For an overview of the receptions of different kinds of travel literature in France in the eighteenth century, Michèle Duchet's analysis of the sources of information available is impeccably thorough. See Duchet, *Anthropologie et histoire au siècle des Lumières*, 65–136. For the specificities regarding the reception of missionary relations see Michael Sievernich, 'Comparing Ancient and Native Customs: Joseph-François Lafitau and the »savages amériquians«' in *European Missions in Contact Zones: Transformation through Interaction in a (Post-)Colonial World*, ed. Judith Becker (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), 195.

[109] Many of the first dictionaries of Amerindian languages were gathered by missionaries who often were at the origins of standardisations as well as transmissions of linguistic structures. For a classical overview of their import see Geoffroy Atkinson, *Les relation de voyages du XViie siècle et l'évolution des idées: Contribution á l'étude de la formation de l'esprit du VIIIe siècle* (Paris: Librairie Ancienne Éduoard Champion, 1924). A recent discussion of the distinctions between missionary linguistics and colonial linguistics can be found in Thomas Stolz and Ingo H. Warnke, 'From Missionary Linguistics to Colonial Linguistics' in *Colonialism and Missionary Linguistics*, ed. Klaus Zimmermann and Birte Kellermeier-Rehbein (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2015), 3–26.

[110] Fenton and Moore, 'Introduction', xxxiii.

[111] At the beginning of the twentieth century, Arnold van Gennep, author of *Rites de passages*, reintroduced Lafitau into the history of modern ethnography in the article 'Contributions à l'histoire de la méthode ethnographique' in *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 67 (1913), 320–38. The destruction of the forms of life encounter in the Americas was already well on its way at the time of Lafitau's arrival. Nonetheless, like other so-called 'proto-ethnographic' travel accounts, in some instances it stands as one of only few testimonies to aspects of Amerindian life destroyed through colonisation.

observation (to be employed in a new argumentative context) could be achieved. In this sense, even a fragmentary overview of its afterlife needs a certain regard for the intertwinements of economic projects and civilisational missions as well as the tensions between eighteenth-century atheist and religious agendas. All of these would come to be important factors in the philosophical take up of the work, or the lack thereof, as the following pages attest to. In the first comprehensive study of Lafitau, Kaspar Kälin articulated the peculiarity of this work thus:

> To acknowledge Lafitau's importance for the philosophy of history and cultural history, we must first point out that his work, of course, does not contain any discussion of any kind about these fields. Consequently, what we would like to demonstrate is that the ideas he discussed contributed to, or, at least, could have contributed to the formation of these new sciences. For the philosophy of history, Lafitau – with Giambattista Vico – created the foundations. He taught how to look at the material object of history, the human being, in a truly historical way, not only as he is in the West, but how he lives in relationships, in this place and in that time, in set conditions and in certain circumstances.[112]

The appeal of *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains* to an investigation into philosophies of history lies in an estimate of the sense in which they can be considered to echo, reproduce, or displace the ideas expressed in this work, particularly with regard to its comparative modus. In varied ways and with different inflections, a certain reception of the work is inscribed and cited within several of the central philosophical histories, broadly conceived. For instance, where Voltaire has only scorn and satire to spare for Lafitau, he is cited favourably by several of the Scottish natural historians and especially in Herder's writings.[113] Beyond a reception history, however, the ensuing chapters makes the case for the importance of discovery literature as what introduced the global horizon in relation to which European philosophies of history came into being. In this regard, the focus on Lafitau hinges on two factors whereby we might consider his work to be paradigmatic of an emergent generalised sense of historical progression through the ages. Such 'progression' was considered not only as extending across linear time, but also as recoding globally distributed cultural and socio-political forms of organisation into a spatialisation of this temporal distance. The first of these two factors, found in the attempt to establish 'a science of the manners and customs of different peoples',[114] renders their objects comparable by abstracting them from their historical specificities – particularly, as the expressions of an extra-historical force (this force, as demonstrated below, for Lafitau is always and ultimately one of divine character). The second

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[112] Kaspar Kälin, *Indianer und Urvölker nach Jos. Fr. Lafitau (1681–1746)* (Freiburg, Switzerland: Paulusdruckerei, 1943), 120 (my translation).

[113] For an overview of the eighteenth-century translations of *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains* into Dutch and German, see Fenton and Moore, 'Introduction, xxi.

[114] Lafitau, *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains*, vol.1, 27.

draws a division between the historical and the non-historical by reference to scriptural techniques, where writing determines where history is illuminated or in the shadows. The aim of this chapter is therefore to introduce the work and its central concepts, such that it might allow us to later discern the operative links in philosophies of history; not only of a dyad formed of anthropological and historical discourses, but more specifically of a triangulation between anthropology, ethnology and history. This can be read out of the way in which the prevalent manner of defining savagery by negative, comparative traits is displaced by Lafitau. Depending on the ideological inclination of the writer, these traits alternately worked either by depreciation (in an emphasis on people '*without* writing, *without* religion and *without* order') or appreciation (in an emphasis on people '*without* masters *without* vices and *without* individual property'),[115] and were employed in the service of a philosophical anthropology where the figure of 'natural man' opposed that of 'political', 'socialised', or 'civilised' man. The idea of the 'savage' as a historical stage that 'Europeans' had surpassed but that was not a mere negation of their current traits is embroiled in the codification of the 'thick' ethnological descriptions provided by Lafitau, both by him and within philosophical histories.

I. Moeurs *in Comparison*

Strategically, *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains* both echoed and intervened in the ongoing debates over 'natural religion' and the affiliated arguments for and against 'natural law' and 'natural rights' that played out in a field defined as much by colonialism and increasing encounters with different forms of social organisation as by the intra-European political upheavals and anxious attempts to legitimise and define political sovereignty. As it attempts to overcome the seeming impossibility of realigning scripture with the disturbances caused by 'ancients' and 'savages' alike, it gives a clear image of the distorting operations that rendered what was foreign to European history familiar by assigning it a place of arrested origin. Not only that, it also afforded an image of how, at the point where history came to be understood as both narration and process, a 'distance is taken in relation to history [the discipline] in the name of a philosophy of history, which gives privilege to the *immemorial* and wipes away the movement which changes, transforms, and alters human practices'.[116]

The official and overarching purpose of *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains* was to counter challenges to Christianity based on the perceived atheism of the inhabitants of the American continents. Its specific aim corresponds neatly to this agenda, as the main thesis concerns

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[115] Duchet, *Anthropologie et histoire au siècle des Lumières*, 11.

[116] Duchet, *Le Partage des savoirs*, 32 (my translation).

the doctrine of primitive monotheism and the assertion that an originary and true religion, Christianity, was at the root of all religious expressions.[117] To this end, Lafitau marshals his comparative 'system' in order to demonstrate the derivative character of pagan gods and goddesses, all retraceable to Adam and Eve:[118] 'It is easy to conceive, in this system, how this religion, having been given to our first fathers, must have passed from generation to generation as a kind of heritage common to all and thus spread everywhere.'[119] In this regard, it is telling that of the thirteen chapters devoted to various instantiations of the multivalent term *moeurs*, the chapter on religion takes up almost 450 pages, against the 100 spent on political formations and rule, and a meagre 26 on peace negotiations and trade encounters between tribes.[120] No names are explicitly mentioned, but as an intervention into religious and theological disputes, *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains* would have to run counter to the assertions of Protestant sceptics like Pierre Bayle, who held that religious beliefs were a question of mere conventionality.[121] In the combat with atheism and Protestantism alike, the Iroquois appear to Lafitau as 'the last keepers of a natural religion, older than Moses, older than even the Deluge, which was given to man by God and which came to perfection in Christianity'.[122] As might be gathered from the above, Lafitau's claims often rest entirely on dogma. Perhaps the most important of these is the monogenist premise that subtends the work but which is never argued for as such.[123] The unitary and Asiatic origins of all of mankind, including the First Nations, is presupposed and the theological stakes play out within a land-based trans-migrationist theory of how the Earth was populated after the great flood. When Lafitau is evoked as a liminal figure, writing at a threshold between science and dogma, it is more on account of the potential harboured in his comparative method than

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[117] Lafitau, *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains*, vol.1, 29 and 31.

[118] This was a modification of a proposition by Pierre-Daniel Huet who, on all accounts, was among the most influential thinkers for Lafitau. In *Demonstratio evangelica* (1679), Huet had proposed that all pagan Gods and Goddesses might be traced back to Moses and Zipporah. See Fenton and Moore, 'Introduction', lxxvii; and Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man*, 183.

[119] Lafitau, *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains*, vol.1, 35.

[120] For this brevity, Lafitau gives as a reason the many already existing descriptions of the topic, emphasising that he has treated it here only to the extent that a comparison of the calumet with Mercury's wand would allow him an occasion for binding two customs together.

[121] Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man*, 201–05.

[122] Gilbert Chinard, *L'Amérique et le rêve exotique dans la littérature française au XVIIe et au XVIIIe siecle* (Paris: Librairie E. Droz, 1934), 318 (my translation).

[123] The terms 'polygenism' and 'monogenism' used to designate opposite views on the ancestral origins of humankind appear for the first time in 1857 in the context of the anthropological school of Philadelphia. As competing theories however, the two go back much further. While the monogenist position is typically bound to the Mosaic conception of the unity of the human 'races' at their origin, polygenism has been traced back to the period between the sixteenth and seventeenth century. Gliozzi, *Adam et le nouveau monde*, and Silvia Sebastiani, 'Race and National Character in eighteenth century Scotland: The Polygenetic Discourse of Kames and Pinkerton' in *Cromohs* 8 (2003), 1–14.

because of the specific uses to which he put it.[124] Methodology, much more than the concrete hypotheses or aims of the work, is what accounts for the singular place of *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains* within histories of anthropological and ethnological theories.

Although, from time to time, the work is mentioned as being at the origin of the alignment of 'savages' and 'ancients' within eighteenth-century developmental theories of humanity, Lafitau was neither the only nor the first to draw analogies between First Nations and ancient paganisms.[125] From surveys of the types of travel literature published at the time, it is clear that several authors employed it as an explicatory mechanism when attempting to render what seemed foreign recognisable to a European readership. In 1700, fellow Jesuit Nöel Alexandre published *Conformité des céremonies chinoises avec l'idolatrie greque et romain*, and, four years later, M. De la Créquinière's *Conformité des coutumes des Indiens Orientaux, avec des Juifs et des autres Peuples de l'Antiquité* made claims similar to those of Lafitau, going so far as to underline that the primary function of understanding the rituals of First Nations was to 'justify what is reported to us by the Ancients and to clarify Antiquity'.[126] Of the more commonly known works, Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle's comparisons of early Greek and Inca fables and mythology in 'On the Origin of Fables' proceeding in a formally related vain, if ultimately with a different aim.[127] In this essay, written earlier but only published in 1724,[128] Fontenelle brought 'the first men' and 'the American barbarians'[129] into a comparative space via reference to 'an astonishing conformity between the fables of the Americans and those of the Greeks.[130] But where Fontenelle's account makes for a brief and evocative text, one

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[124] This is the case in David L. Blaney and Naeem Inayatullah, 'The Savage Smith and the Temporal Walls of Capitalism', in *Classical Theory in International Relations*, ed. Beate Jahn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 127. Fenton and Moore also count him as a scientist on account of his character, 'his 'erudition, his curiosity, his powers of observation, his ingenuity, his energy, his sincerity, his caution'. Fenton and Moore, 'Introduction', lxxix.

[125] The cultures and practices of First Nations were often compared with those considered to be at the origins of the 'civilised' world. Going back further, Marc Lescarbot had also compared the practices of the First Nations to those to Classical Antiquity and Acosta compared the sacrifices of the Inca to those of the ancient Hebrews. Of Acosta, who was demonstrably an influence upon Lafitau, Pagden writes that he believed 'that the history of the 'real' but remote Indian could illuminate the historical process itself and that by studying a seemingly alien society his European readers might come to understand something about the natural behaviour of all human communities, including their own'. Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man*, 150.

[126] On this point see chapter eight of Hodgen, *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, 295–394. For the citation of Créquinière, see *ibid.*, 346.

[127] Neither Fontenelle nor Lafitau appear to distinguish sharply between 'myth' and 'fable'.

[128] The essay by Fontenelle, 'De l'origine des fables' was on all account written at least thirty years before its publication. See the 1932 critical edition of Fontenelle's work (Paris: Libraries Felix Alcan, 1932), where J.R. Carré argues that it is likely to have been written before 1680.

[129] Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle, 'De l'origine des fables', in *Oeuvres de Fontenelle* T.4 (Paris: Salmon, Libraire-Éditeur, 1825), 298.

[130] *Ibid.*, 305 (my translation). The main example for Fontenelle is the recurring motif of great mean as the sons of the sun in both the Greek myth of Orpheus and in the Inca myths of the founders of their empire Manco Cápac.

completely reliant on secondary sources, Lafitau's spans two volumes, continually measures previous descriptions of the 'customs' of the Americans against his own field observations among the Iroquois and constructs a largely systematic edifice of 'mutually illuminating' comparisons between 'savage Americans' and those ancient times of which no proximately recorded written account exist.[131] In the plan of the work, the method is described as follows:

> I have not limited myself to learning the characteristics of the Indians and informing myself about their customs and practices, I have sought in these practices and customs, vestiges of the most remote antiquity. I have read carefully [the works] of the earliest writers who treated the customs, laws and usage of the peoples whom they had knowledge. I have made a comparison of these customs with each other. I confess that, if the ancient authors have given me information on which to base happy conjectures about the Indians, the customs of the Indians have given me information on the basis of which I can understand more easily and explain more readily many things in ancient authors. […] Some of my conjectures may appear light in themselves, but, perhaps, taken all together, they will make a whole, the parts of which will be held together by the connections obtaining between them.[132]

This is the oscillating movement at the heart of *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains*. The problem of the lack in sources is to be ameliorated by observations of living exemplars and, inversely, fragments from antiquity are set to help illuminate the meaning of seemingly strange customs in the 'new world'. The explicitness with which the comprehensive systematisation of comparisons is operationalised into a method servicing ethnological and theological ends caused one commentator to name 'comparison' and the act of rendering *comparable* '*la seule raison du text*'.[133] It embodies a form of reasoning by comparison. It is this fact which later prompted Jean-Marie Goulemot to describe *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains* as a 'voyage in time', a jump to the origins of 'civilised man' in 'ancient man' mediated through the figure of the 'savage american'.[134] Perhaps, more precisely, the effect of the comparative modus which drives the work is time annulled and time traversed. And, ultimately, terrains as well as times, territories as well as temporalities, are all side-lined in the construction of comparative space.

What, then, is being compared? The key terms structuring the comparison are 'savage Americans' and 'ancients', with their mutually illuminative relation established through the mediation of the *moeurs* or customs. That the range of phenomena gathered under the term *moeurs* does not escape Lafitau's attention: the 'matter of customs', he writes, 'is a vast one,

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[131] This is what retrospectively eared Lafitau the title as a 'founder of comparative ethnology', despite the fact that he does not appear to have been widely read among the nineteen century founders of modern-day ethnology in either in France, the UK, or the US.

[132] Lafitau, *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains*, vol.1, 27.

[133] Michèle Duchet, 'Discours ethnologique et discours historique: le texte de Lafitau' in *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* 152–53 (1976), 607.

[134] Jean-Marie Goulemot, 'Questions de terrains et d'arpentage: des récits de voyage, da la pratique de l'histoire et de l'ethnologie' in *Apprendre à porter sa vue au loin: hommage à Michèle Duchet*, ed. Sylviane Albertan-Coppola, (Paris: ENS Éditions, 2009), 97.

comprising everything within its scope, which includes many incongruous things with very little relationship between them. That is why it has been difficult to assemble them under a single point of view'.[135] This, nonetheless, is what he attempts; the polyvalence and the ambiguity of *moeurs* is, in fact, crucial to its unity. It is what the work relies on in order to replace a narrative that intermittently lists instances of observed curiosities with a 'system' of comparisons. Reading the work today, it is hardly possible not to notice how both of these figures, 'savages' and 'ancients' alike, are themselves constructed; gaining consistency precisely in comparison, collaged together from fragmentary observations or interrogations of documents, they are discursive constructs. In a short chapter on the idea or character of savage people in general, Lafitau denies the contention that this descriptor should signify a people 'without letters, science, apparent laws, without temples, without regular worship and lacking the things most necessary for life', but also counters it with the similarly general assumption of a people 'physically of a good constitution, strong and skilful' with a spirit generally characterised as 'well-tempered, proud and with good minds, quick perceptions, admirable memories'.[136] While the larger part of Lafitau's 'fieldwork observations' regard the Iroquois in particular, it was on his own account possible to affirm 'that the customs of the savages in general are rather similar to theirs'[137] and he could, therefore, include any other supporting evidence which came from American nations. The Huron, Iroquois, Algonquins, and several other peoples in this manner recede from specificity to make up a figure comparable to that of an ancient 'barbarian' – itself a patchwork of Phoenicians, Pelasgians, Thracians, Hellenians, Lycians, and Scythians, occasionally added to are the Iberians or Gauls. These 'ancients', at home in *les premiers temps*, figure the populations of an age which Christian chronologists periodised as the first of the world,[138] although the category here is employed with very porous boundaries. The sources which Lafitau rely on in characterising this period are all at a remove from the actual time in question and there is a certain promiscuous frivolity in the temporal and spatial reach they is supposed to cover. Included in the frame of reference are the dynasties of early China and Egypt, the Persians, the East Indians, the Gauls and the Celts, the Barbarians which first inhabited Greece, the Greeks of the Golden Age, and, even, some centuries of classical Rome. In relation to a gentile chronology, the closest we are given to a specific demarcation comes from a reference to the Olympiads and the times before the Greeks reckoned their chronologies by reference to

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[135] Lafitau, *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains*, vol.1, 36.

[136] *Ibid.*, 36, 89, 90.

[137] *Ibid.*, 41.

[138] In this, Lafitau's use of 'les premiers temps' is on all accounts derived from Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet's in *Discourse on Universal History*, although it in some instances strays from his use.

them (that is, before 776 BC), as Lafitau writes: 'we do not find any definite periods in antiquity before the Olympiads. All the periods until then are times of obscurity'.[139] Metaphors of obscurity and illumination in this manner govern the way Lafitau approaches the historical truthfulness of his account. In lieu of sources written contemporaneously with the 'ancients', the 'savages' stand as the living instantiation that might illuminate us on the matters of their social organisation and their religious beliefs and practices. And in regard to the conjunctures regarding how the Americas were populated, the comparison functions to replace verifiable knowledge, for '[h]istory was plunged in this obscurity at the time America, supposing it to be as ancient as that, could have been peopled'.[140] What unites the figures of 'the savage Americans' and 'the ancients', before the comparison brings them into fuller proximity with one another, is a negatively trait: the perceived lack of writing and scriptural techniques through which an archive, a source of historical narratives, could be established. It is the lack of written sources which promotes customs to the status of witness. By virtue of their 'having been passed from generation to generation as a kind of heritage common to all',[141] customs are perceived to reveal their own history, or more precisely put, they retain a certain immutability within a framework that otherwise presumes historical development, such that they can be traced across the centuries. Without using the words, Lafitau seems to have considered the Americans as peoples *without* history, and therefore comparable to the forefathers of the European populations:

> A comparison of the customs or folkways of the nation could lead us to a knowledge unique in itself, but, among these customs, there were universal patterns which, in spite of their distance from each other and slight means of communication, the fathers of the people kept alive without alteration and transmitted to their children.[142]

II. A Subterraneous Afterlife: The French Philosophical Reception of Moeurs

Contrary to what might have been expected, the explicit influence of Lafitau upon the emerging philosophical histories is most difficult to establish in his native French context. In Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d'Alembert's *Encyclopaedia,* he is referenced for an earlier pamphlet on the discover of the Ginseng plant in America,[143] but gets mentioned neither in

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[139] Lafitau, *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains*, vol.1, 46.

[140] *Ibid.*

[141] *Ibid.*, 35.

[142] *Ibid.*, 54.

[143] Louis de Jaucourt, 'Gin-seng', in *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, par une Société de Gens de lettres*, ed. Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d'Alembert, in *ARTFL Encyclopédie Project*, ed. Robert Morrissey (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2008), available from: http://encyclopedie.uchicago.edu/ (last accessed 29 November 2020). For an overview of this aspect of Lafitau's writings, see Christopher M. Parson, 'The Natural History of Colonial Science: Joseph-François Lafitau's Discovery of Ginseng and Its Afterlives', in *William and Mary Quarterly* 73, no.1 (January 2016), 37–72, especially 66 on the inscription of his research

the entry on the 'philosophy of the Canadians', nor on 'the savages' (instead, Pierre François Xavier de Charlevoix's travel journals are quoted as the source for several of these entries). The seemingly small impact made by *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains* can be accounted for by several factors: while comparative studies of religion and of its expressions in rites and myths may not have been as systematically carried out as it was by Lafitau, it did not as such present a new topic, nor did the report on America as such. Published after several accounts from the French colony had already found a place in scholarly libraries – perhaps most notably Marc Lescarbot's *Histoire de Nouvelle France* (1609) and Gabriel Sagard's *L'hisoire du Canada* (1636)[144] – it is quite possible that it 'mattered little that previous writers of travel books laboured with poor skill and without any method, Lafitau's *Moeurs* was tagged as another travel book, and the savants had heard it all'.[145] Moreover, being a Jesuit would not have gained Lafitau many favours at a moment where questions as to the place of the clergy within society was at the point of erupting into outright contestation. As Michèle Duchet notes, Catholicism, like the colour of one's skin, a sub-par education, and a 'too interested' agenda were among the generally acceptable reasons one might give to disregard a source as unreliable.[146] Of the *philosophes*, then, it seems that only Baron d'Holbach and Voltaire can be shown with any certainty to have read the *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains*. For the purpose here, the latter is the most interesting case as well as the most symptomatic in relation to the above causes of disregard.

Voltaire engages directly with *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains* in his *La Philosophie de l'histoire* (1765), where the tone of this his assessment reveals a barely disguised dismissal. As much as the information and descriptions of customs in the chapter 'Of Savages' seems likely to have been lifted from Lafitau, it is in the succeeding chapter 'Of America' that he pits an ironic anti-biblical argument for the polygenetic origins of the various 'races' against the monogenetic premise shared by Lafitau. With reference to what he call's Laftitau's 'History of America', Voltaire makes a mockery of Lafitau's use of the analogical reasoning, noting how he,

> makes the Americans descend from the ancient Greeks, for which opinion he assigns the following reason. The Greeks had their fables, the Americans have also fables; the first Greeks went a hunting, the Americans also hunt; the first Greeks had oracles, the Americans have foreseers; there were dances

within the *Encyclopaedia*.

[144] First edition *Le grand voyage au pays des Hurons* published in 1632.

[145] Fenton and Moore, 'Introduction', lxxxvi.

[146] Specifically, Duchet quotes a passage from Cornelius de Pauw where Lafitau is derided for being unreliable on account of writing 'only to defend an already settled thesis'. Duchet, *Anthropologie et histoire au siècle des Lumières*, 101.

performed at the feasts of the Greeks, the American's dance. It must be allowed that these are very convincing reasons.[147]

In line with the many instances that exclaim that he will not 'engage this seeming contradiction with the bible', Voltaire vows to 'respect everything that is divine' and that he, not wanting to 'judge God', will 'confine [himself] to mere history'.[148] This tongue-in-cheek remark is best read as part of the general critique of Christian universal histories in *The Philosophy of History*, which, as mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, was in particular aim at Bossuet's *Discourse on Universal History*.[149] Rather than a history a single chosen people, Voltaire's 'universal history' consists in the collection of particular histories of the various 'human races', their characteristics, the climatic and geographic conditions under which they live and their own relation to history – in short, measured in terms of their use of scriptural techniques. In the oft-cited opening line, a hint is given both to the aim and the self-perceived method of the work: 'You wish that ancient history had been written by philosophers, because you are desirous of reading it as a philosopher.'[150] Unfortunately, we are led to understand, this has not been the case and 'philosophy of history' in this context above all means *critical* history; this not to the full extent of nineteenth-century notions of the critique of sources, of course, but nonetheless as part of the project of discerning possible distortions introduced by the reproduction of ancient histories and travel narratives alike.[151] It did not, as with later connotations of the term 'philosophy of history', mean an account of history with a view to its direction or principles of movement, nor is there much of a sense in this work that various 'stages' of development could lead of from one another or be read out of the plurality of the nations and 'races' populating the world.

For the early outlines of such an account, and an explicit comparison made between 'ancients' and 'savages', it is of more use to turn to Montesquieu's *L'éspirt des lois* (1748) and perhaps even more pertinently, Turgot's lecture notes on the progress of '*l'ésprit humain*' (1750) and outlines for a discourse on universal history (1751). In Montesquieu's case, some

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[147] Voltaire, *The Philosophy of History*, trans. unknown (Glasgow: Robert Urie, 1766), 38. He also makes a note casting ridicule on the idea that the colour of a child's skin could be determined by the imagination of the mother, an expression of her fondness for the particular colour in question. This notion is found in Lafitau's work as well as in several others, including Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz and Nicolas Malebranche.

[148] Voltaire, *The Philosophy of History,* 88, 172, passim.

[149] Jerome Rosenthal, 'Voltaire's Philosophy of History', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 16, no. 2. (April 1955), 151–78.

[150] Voltaire, *The Philosophy of History,* 1.

[151] Of the ancient Greek and Roman sources, he writes: 'we are pestered with ancient histories […] the offspring of this kind of erudition must be error', Voltaire, *The Philosophy of History,* 64. And later, specifically in relation to miracles and the critique of fables, in which much is owed to Fontenelle: 'ancient history resembles the history of the cabbage, which was larger than a house and of the pot, bigger than a church, in which it was to be boiled.' *Ibid.*, 145.

thematics in *The Spirit of the Laws*, like the matters of diplomacy among the Iroquois and Huron and the question of property right as it arises in relation to the distribution of a hunt, had been explained in greatest detail by Lafitau. The work, however, does not appear to have been in Montesquieu's own library and, in Muriel Dodds' study of the sources uses for its composition, it also does not appear among those mentioned in relation to North America.[152]

Much the same goes for Turgot, especially in 'A Philosophical Review of the Successive Advances of the Human Mind' (in which we find the famous statement 'historical times cannot be traced further back than the invention of writing'),[153] and in the 'Plan for Two Discourses on Universal History' which gave some methodological reflections and the outlines for a universal history that was never to be fully written. On account of both these works, and their function as commentaries upon and modifications of Boussuet's universal history, Turgot has often been considered to stand at a midway point between attempts to reconcile, on the one side, biblical chronology and providentially-ordained histories of worldly empires in the tradition of Christian universal historians with, on the other, the histories of progress read out of changes in forms of social organisation and trade-patterns.[154] Lafitau's influence on both these works are hard to determine with any certainty, although that does not mean that there is no subterraneous connection. The measure of distance in space and time is clearly mapped out in these texts and allotted to chronology and geography as the two pillars of history, but Turgot is primarily interested in the differences that emerge in the 'course of time', and in attempts to decipher what has caused some peoples to 'stagnate' as hunters or herdsmen, gaps that were taken as testimony to the different paths of progress. And, just as it was for Lafitau, the initial and originary state of 'barbarism' is taken to be one of uniformity such that the inequality of nations was the 'product of the progress of the universal history of man'.[155] It is in this context that the comparison between 'savage Americans' and 'ancients' come to the fore, as he notes how 'our ancestors and the Pelasgians who proceeded the Greeks were like the savages of America',[156] thereafter making the larger exclamation that:

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[152] Muriel Dodds, *Les récits de voyages: sources de* L'esprit des lois *de Montesquieu* (Paris: H. Champion, 1929).

[153] Turgot, 'A philosophical review of the Successive Advances of the Human Mind' in *Turgot on Progress, Sociology and Economics: Three Major Texts*, trans. and ed. Ronald L. Meek (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 65.

[154] As does George Canguilhem in his brief mention of Turgot in 'The decline of the idea of progress', trans. David Macey in *Economy and Society* 27, no.2 and 3 (May 1998), 314.

[155] See Ronald Meek, 'Introduction', in *Turgot on Progress*, 8–12.

[156] Turgot, 'A philosophical review' 89. Pierre Vidal-Naquet has written an illuminating piece on the historiographic landslide whereby it became known that the Greeks had *also* been savages. See Pierre Vidal-Naquet, 'Les jeunes. Le cru, l' enfant grec et le cuit', in *Faire de l'histoire: Nouveaux objets*, tome III, ed. Jacques le Goff and Pierre Nora (Paris: Gallimard, l974), 137–68.

A glance over the Earth puts before our eyes, even today, the whole history of the human race, showing us traces of all the steps and monuments of all the stages through which it has passed from the barbarism, still in existence, of American peoples to the civilisations of the most enlightened nations of Europe'.[157]

III. 'Rude' and 'Polished', Far and Near: Lafitau in the Scottish Enlightenment

If *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains* in appears to have been disregarded or overlooked in the French context, a somewhat different reception awaited it across the Channel. Along with Charlevoix's *L'Histoire et description générale de la Nouvelle-France* (1747) and Cadwallader Colden's *The History of the Five Indian Nations Depending on the Province of New-York in America* (1727), it became a staple reference in the mid-eighteenth century Scottish Enlightenment.[158] Not only was it taken up within the pervasive mirror-dynamics whereby the virtues or vices of 'civilised life' were estimated in comparisons with 'noble' or 'ignoble' savages, it also seems to have explicitly provided a systematised vindication to John Locke's earlier conjectural claim that 'in the beginning, all the world was *America*'.[159] Among the several texts which use 'savage Americans' to figure a legitimate image of an origin in time before written sources could provide testimony, Adam Ferguson's *Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767) and William Robertson's *The History of America* (1777) do so explicitly with reference to Lafitau.[160]

The comparisons which in *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains* was meant to establish the actual filiation of the 'savage Americans' from the 'Ancients' plays a crucial if somewhat displaced role in this regard. The difference in social customs that the work so amply testifies to (and attempts to render familiar) gains significance for Ferguson and Robertson in two ways: as the demonstration of a cultural, political and economic divide to be explained at a philosophical level; and as the clue as to how such an elaboration could be structured in a developmental narrative, largely regardless of any interest in actual genetic bonds. This is not to say that Ferguson and Robertson didn't take a stance on the contentious questions as to the unitary or multiple origins of the human species and the species-concept as such. Both

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[157] Turgot, 'Sketch of the Second Discourse', in *Turgot on Progress, Sociology and Economics*, 89.

[158] Troy Bickham, 'American Indians in the British Imperial Imagination 1707–1815' in *British North America in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, ed. Stephen Foster (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 247.

[159] John Locke, quoted in Meek, *Social Science and the Ignoble Savage*, 57.

[160] It was in a letter to William Robertson that Edmund Burke wrote 'But now the Great Map of Mankind is unroll'd at once; and there is no state or Gradation of barbarism, and no mode of refinement which we have not at the same instant under our View. The very different Civility of Europe and of China; the barbarism of Persia and of Abyssinia. The erratick manners of Tartary, and of Arabia. The Savage State of North America, and of New Zealand'. Edmund Burke, quoted in Robert Launay, *Savages, Romans, Despots: Thinking about Others from Montaigne to Herder*, (Chicago, Chicago University Press, 2018) 1. There is good reason to believe that also Smith was influenced by Lafitau. Among the student reports from the 1762–63 course on jurisprudence, a reference is made to Charlevoix and la Fulage – the latter of whom seem to have been Lafitau. See Meek, *Social Science and the Ignoble Savage*, 121. A later article on Smith and Lafitau which draws heavily on Meek is Blaney and Inayatullah, 'The Savage Smith and the Temporal Walls of Capitalism'.

appear, contrary to Hume's polygenism, to have held monogenist positions, but the question of the species is not at the forefront of their work. When Robertson could consider the 'savage Americans' missing pieces in a puzzle and exclaim that they 'fill up a considerable chasm in the history of the human species' and thereby 'completed the history of the human mind',[161] he had already bound the oneness of 'history' to the oneness of 'man'. The comparative operations were more explicitly used as a means to approach the historical origins of civil and commercial society, in a cross-temporal epistemic triangulation, primarily between the American 'savages', the Hellenic 'barbarians' and European civil societies. But, if the 'savage Americans' in this way could be considered to shed light on a previously obscure past, this view also entailed a number of questions. Following a recent work by Silvia Sebastiani, the problem for Ferguson and for the Scottish natural historians more broadly conceived, can be summarised as that of the *limits* to progress.[162] It is the problem, in other words, of the rhythms and paces of both historical development as well as what was perceived as stasis and stagnation. Both Ferguson's formulation of this problem and his response to it is articulated in the *Essay* through four concepts: 'the savage' and 'the barbarian' which on account of different relations to property make up different groups within the wider category of 'rude nations', which in turn gains its meaning proper in opposition to the civilised 'polished nations'. These concepts are, in the *Essay* as in the works of several other authors from this same period, intimately bound up with the now infamous 'four-stage theory' in which the steps of socio-economic development are delineated in the succession of four relatively neat categories, each defined by a dominant mode of social subsistence: 'hunting', 'pasturage', 'agriculture', and 'commerce'.[163] Each step taken both to inhere in the present, synchronously, and to represent a past stage of development, diachronously. The pairing of space and time which the trajectory of this 'geography of enlightenment' and civilisation enacts, 'contrasted modern civilisation with early savages stages, and polite Europe with the barbarous nature of rest of the world – including the southern and eastern European regions'.[164] But the divide between 'savage' and 'civilised' or 'savage' and 'polished', in Ferguson's terms, was also inscribed within the parameters of the Scottish national context itself.

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[161] William Robertson, quoted in Fenton and Moore, 'Introduction', cv.

[162] Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, 10. One of the primary references on the radicalisation of difference in Sebastiani's intellectual history is precisely Robertson's *The History of America*.

[163] The 'four-stage theory' is most often allotted its place of origin somewhere between Turgot and Smith. It is Meeks' claim that the image of the 'ignoble' savage played a determining role in some of the main traits of the four-stage theory. Meek, *Social Science and the Ignoble Savage*.

[164] Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment*, 170. On the differentiation of north-west Europe from the south and especially the east, Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilisation on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Standford: Stanford University Press, 1994), especially, 284–331.

When Ferguson wrote and published the *Essay,* the political climates across Scotland were still marked by the English and Scottish Union of Parliaments in 1707. Putting an end to its history of political independence, this agreement effectively turned the Scottish territory into a periphery governed from London, an event whose effects can be read as much in the fields of political and economic theory as in those of strategic manoeuvres on the part of side-lined Royalties and the eruptions of outright political resistance. Adam Smith's theory of progress, for instance, is only the most famous among a number of distinct reflections on the national gains and losses to be negotiated, as it balances out a loss of political autonomy with a gain in economic advancements. Several Scottish theories of the historical development of law, society, and economics fulfilled a double function similar to Smith's *Wealth of Nations* (1776), offering both the terms in which to analyse the current socio-political landscape and a prognosis to help navigate within it. Inscribed within these works are therefore also the tensions between Highlanders and Lowlanders, typically framed in terms of conflicts of interest between primarily urban and 'modern' Lowlanders, generally favourable inclined toward England, and the more rural and 'traditional' Highlanders, still in support of the now Catholic and deposed House of Stuart. With the complete annexation and the establishment of Great Britain, these simmering conflicts were famously ignited, culminating four decades after the Union of Parliaments, in the definitive defeat of the primarily Highlander Jacobite rebellion, gathered around 'the young pretender' Prince Charles Edward Stuart, at the battle of Culloden in 1746. This background of political conflict between Scots and Scots feed into the categories of the historical schemas proposed by the Scottish Enlightenment writers, who were aligned almost exclusively on the side of well-educated and relatively well-to-do Lowlanders.[165] In their particular terminology, 'civil society' is most often understood in opposition to historical stages in which no formal government has been instituted and in some cases comes to function explicitly as a synonym for the political and juridical institutions which make up a state. Fania Oz-Salzberger has rightly emphasised that, on the topic of civil society, the Scottish Enlightenment 'did not speak in one voice', as tensions and theoretical differences mark endeavours to theorise both the emergence and fundamental elements of civil society.[166] However, the term 'civil' also pitted, in a generalised manner, the educated, the well-mannered and the refined against the unpolished and the 'raw' or the 'rude', in a way that played up perceived differences between

[165] Fania Oz-Salzberger, 'Introduction', in Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), vii–xvi.

[166] Oz-Salzberger moreover places an emphasis on the complicated afterlife of the concept of 'civil society' in its German translations. See Fania Oz-Salzberger, 'The Civic Discourse and the Hazards of Translation: Ferguson's *Essay on the History of Civil Society* in Germany', in *Translating the Enlightenment: Scottish Civic Discourse in Eighteenth Century Germany* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, Oxford University Press, 1995), 138–66.

the characteristics of Lowlanders in opposition to those of the Highlanders.[167] In this way, the conditions of the Highlanders, with traditions bound up in clan-structures, largely became affiliated with those of 'savages' and 'barbarians', both ancient and across the Atlantic. In the discussion of either the corruptive or beneficial effects of commercial and civil society upon individual character traits, Ferguson's *Essay* can be counted among the more ambivalent assessments. Alongside a subtle but persistent insistence upon the historicity of virtues relative to different forms of social and political organisation and a warning against tendencies of societies to judge others by standards foreign to them, the *Essay* also expresses an allegiance to republican civic virtues. This allegiance demands a perpetual re-evaluation of the possibly corrupting effects of highly commercial societies: the becoming 'effeminate, mercenary, and sensual' of man.[168] In this context, 'savages' both near and far appear to have offered a counter-image to a moral threat considered pervasive within civilised societies, as traits corresponding to those found in Lafitau's first and most general characteristic of the 'savage American' as 'physically of a good constitution, strong and skilful',[169] 'well-tempered, proud and with good minds, quick perceptions, admirable memories'[170] is seen to be shared with those of the Spartans, and, ultimately, also brought to proximity with those of Scottish highland militias.

IV. The Songs of Savages: Baumgarten's and Herder's Lafitau

Much as it was the case in the Scottish reception of *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains*, its translation into German was also a transposition out of the context of generalised anti-ecclesiastic and anti-Jesuit polemics that had dominated its French reception.[171] As Andreas Motsch notes, the largely Protestant paradigm of the Enlightenment in Germany made for a much more explicitly positive reception-context for Lafitau's work:

> What influenced readers outside of France in the eighteenth century was neither the anti-Jesuit polemic

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[167] On the context and background for the jurisprudential and ethical role played by the term 'civil' in the Scottish Enlightenment, see Fania Oz-Salzberger, 'Civil Society in the Scottish Enlightenment' in *Civil Society - History and Possibilities,* ed. Sudipta Kaviraj and Sunil Khilnani, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2001, 64.

[168] Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 189 and 237. The gendering of civic virtues and the play between masculinity and femininity in the conception of 'savages' as 'manly' is striking in the *Essay* but not part of what I will discuss here.

[169] Lafitau, *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains*, vol.1, 89.

[170] *Ibid.*, 90.

[171] For the first half of this account of the reception of Lafitau in Germany which centres of Jacob Baumgarten, I have drawn extensively from Andreas Motsch, 'La réception des Moeurs de Joseph-François Lafitau en France et en Allemange au XVIII siècle ou Comment faire de Lafitau en éclaireur allemand' in *Représentation, métissage et povoir: La dynamite coloniale des échanges entre Autochtones, Européens et Canadiens XVI-XX siècles*, ed. Alain Beaulieu and Stéphanie Chaffray, (Quebec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 2012), 175–202.

nor even principally the ethnographical aspects of the text, but rather its quality as observer and historian of religion and non-religious human customs [*moeurs*] and their evolution. In this regard, it mattered little or not at all, that the author himself had been anchored within a theocentric vision of the world.[172]

Similarly to how Louis-Armand de Lom d'Arce, baron the Lahontan personally found refuge in Hanover and had been defended by Leibniz after his 1703 publication of the hugely popular and hugely derided *Dialogues Curieux entire l'Auteur et un Sauvage de bons sens qui a voyagé*, Lafitau's text found a home in Halle, centrum for the Prussian pietist Enlightenment.[173] A full translation of *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains*, including illustrations but omitting the title page and name of its author, was published as part of an encyclopaedic compilation of texts on the Americas titled *Algemeine Geschichte der Länder und Völker von America*. This work, in which Lafitau is only named in the preface, was compiled by the translator and statesman Johann Friedrich Schröter and the theologian Siegmund Jacob Baumgarten the older brother of Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten. Baumgarten the older was both immensely preoccupied with the current attempts to write universal world histories and a prolific translator and introducer of these texts. The project of translating one of the first attempts to unify the histories of Western Europe with those of other known cultures of the world (Georges Sand et al.'s 66 volumes *An Universal history, from the earliest account of time*, 1744–59) was undertaken by him under the title of *Überstzung der Algemeinen Welthistorie die in England durch eine Gesellschaft von gelehrten ausgefertigt worden*. What is striking about the inclusion of *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains* in the compilation of texts on the Americas is that it effectively serves as the introduction to pre-colonial America, as offering a view onto peoples as yet untouched by either civilisation or colonisation.

> The reading and the writing of history was in effect at the heart of Lafitau's project, just as it was at the heart of Baumgarten's. Though the terms employed are not absolutely identical, the principles and the primary lines of interrogation overlap in the most striking manner. The two determining elements of Baumgarten's historical thought were a conception of history as the manifestation of divine Providence and the rational interrogation of this same history according to the principles established by Wolff, such as that of non-contradiction. To reconcile the principles of religion with those of rationalism is then an objective to which both authors are wedded: history as the manifestation of divine providence is one of the principles they share, just as the idea of developing a rational interrogation of history.[174]

An altogether different reception of *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains* is however also to be found in this German context. In an undated fragment written by Johann Gottfried Herder,

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[172] *Ibid.*, 185 (my translation).

[173] See Sankar Muthu, *Enlightenment Against Empire* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2003), 24–31.

[174] Motsch, 'La réception des Moeurs', 198–99 (my translation).

'Fragment über die beste Leitung eines jungen Genies zu den Schätzen der Dichtkunst',[175] Herder describes *Moeurs des sauvages amériquains* as 'a compendium of the ethics and poetics of the savages [Wilden]',[176] and in this same capacity drew on the materials gathered by Lafitau for a collection of folk-songs (*Volksleider*) from around the world. That Herder herein emphasised a common authenticity of expression between the songs of the Iroquois and those of ancient Celts, similarities between the 'bard of Ossian',[177] the old Germanic tribes and the 'savages Americans', is what leads John Zammito to conclude that Herder shared with Lafitau the notion that,

> *synchronic* dispersal of cultural levels […] mirrored faithfully the *diachronic* evolution of human cultural levels, so that the juxtaposition of the 'primitives' (Hottentots and Hurons) with contemporary Europeans told the same story of human 'civilisation' that could be constructed from the sequence of historical cultures from the ancient Fertile Cresent to the *siècle des lummiéres*.[178]

This is surely a tendency within Herder's philosophy of history, but another and equally important lineage springs from Herder's appreciation of the carefulness with which Lafitau attempted to reconstruct the worlds of meaning and emotion particular to the Iroquois. What is most interesting in this German reception history, and what is of consequence to what follows, is the split which the reception introduces: between the construction of overarching teleologies and the immanentisation of teleologies to individual peoples. This divide can be discerned in the two primary points of reception: between Baumgarten and Herder, different trajectories open.

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[175] In Kälin's study of Lafitau, the connection to Herder is especially central. See Kälin, *Indianer und Urvölker*.

[176] Johann Gottfried Herder, "Fragment über die beste Leitung eines jungen Genies zu den Schätzen der Dichtkunst", in *Sämtliche Werke* vol.9, ed. Bernhard Suphan (Berlin: Weidmann, 1877–1909, reprinted Hildesheim: Olm, 1967), 542 (my translation).

[177] It is of course one of the great ironies of history that this work, taken as the authentic expression of ancient virtues of Caledonian heroes, was principally composed by James Macpherson (1736–96). For a reading of this poem as a narrative of counter-modernity, see Silvia Sebastiani, 'Barbarism and Republicanism' in *Scottish Philosophy in the Eighteenth Century, Volume I: Morals, Politics, Art, Religion*, ed. Aaron Garrett and James A. Harris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 323–60.

[178] John H. Zammito, *Kant, Herder, and the Birth of Anthropology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 236.

PART II

THREE CRITICAL MODELS

CHAPTER THREE

AN EDUCATION FOR COSMOPOLITANISM: KANT AND THE GEOGRAPHY OF UNIVERSAL HISTORY

Der Mensch kann nur Mensch werden durch Erziehung.
Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on Pedagogy,* 1803[179]

'Travel', wrote Immanuel Kant in the introduction to *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (1798),[180] 'belongs to the means of broadening the range of anthropology, even if it is only the reading of travel books [*Reisebeschreibungen*].'[181] Famously rarely leaving Königsberg, Kant, who lectured and published on anthropology and geography alike, was an avid reader of precisely such books.[182] The extent of his appetite for the genre was significant enough for Johann Georg Hamann to teasingly reveal his knowledge of this fact in an early letter: 'Since you have read so many travel descriptions [*Reisebeschreibungen*], I do not know if thereby, you have become credulous or incredulous.'[183] Half in jest, Hamann transformed the commonplace eighteenth-century issue of the dubious epistemic status of travel literature itself into a question of its ambiguous effect upon readers, asking whether such readings foster healthy scepticism or fortify gullible dispositions.

When today a reference is made to travel literature within the history of philosophy it is most often the second half of this dichotomy, the problem of gullibility, that is invoked – this especially if the purpose is to parcel out bigotry and leave the philosophical skeleton intact.[184] Within Kant studies, this has often meant that travel literature comes to be

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[179] AA IX:443.

[180] Henceforth, *Anthropology*.

[181] APPV, 232 [VII:120].

[182] In a footnote to the above remark, Kant emphasises that since Königsberg is both at the centre of Prussia and a centre for maritime commerce, a plurality of languages and customs pass through it such that one might still learn a great deal about human difference without ever leaving the city.

[183] Johann Georg Hamann letter to Kant 27 July 1759, quoted in William E. Stewart, *Die Reisebeschreibung und ihre Theorie im Deutschland des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1978), 182 (my translation).

[184] This is especially prevalent in the form of reconstructive readings in which Kant's racist biases do not in themselves constitute a problem to understandings of his concept of cosmopolitanism; as long as an argument for cosmopolitanism which does not include these biases can be constructed on the basis of the Kantian

considered as the site for a concatenation of a historically-specific set of presuppositions about non-Europeans, which may or may not be reflected in the dispositions of Kant the *person* but which need not be considered for their conceptual significance, either to Kant's philosophy or within Kantian philosophy. In this chapter, I question such a separation, emphasising instead the degree to which Kant championed the *critical* use of travel literature. I do so in order to follow the traces of travel literature within Kant's philosophy of history and thereby provide a new interpretation of the highly contested relation between, on the one hand, his writings on universal world history and cosmopolitanism and, on the other, those on universal natural history and the concept of race.

Kant's philosophy of history, in which the idea of a cosmopolitan world order was central to the full realisation of the predispositions of human reason, is inscribed not only in the most central texts on the topic of history: the essay 'Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim' (1784),[185] the 1785 two-part review of Johann Gottfried Herder's *Ideas for the Philosophy of the History of Humanity*, §83–84 in the *Critique of the Power of Judgement* (1790), 'Toward Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch' (1795),[186] and *The Conflict of the Faculties* (1798), but also, importantly, in the concluding remarks to *Anthropology*. This connection to the *Anthropology* and to what Robert Louden has called the 'impure ethics' – in which what is at stake is the efficaciousness of moral judgements among empirically existing human beings – is of more than simply passing significance. It is so, the following argues, since race for Kant is one among many factors that, from the perspective of impure ethics, might either obstruct or improve the capacity of human agents to act according to reason and assume their nature as rational beings.[187] This means that although the concept of race that Kant developed in key essays[188] might, strictly speaking, belong to a purely physical anthropology (something we today would understand as closer to the anatomical study of the human

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assumptions. These reconstructions – insofar as they see no need to even mention or critically engage the question of racism – are what Robert Bernasconi has referred to as the 'streamlined version of the history of philosophy'. Robert Bernasconi, 'Introduction' in *Race and Racism in Continental Philosophy*, ed. Robert Bernasconi with Sybol Cook (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 2.

[185] Henceforth, 'Idea for a Universal History'.

[186] Henceforth, 'Toward Perpetual Peace'.

[187] In *Kant's Impure Ethics*, Louden identifies what he calls Kant's 'impure ethics' out of a number of different texts in which Kant addresses not the pure but the empirical study of human nature. Therein, he identifies four major 'fields of impurity' – education, anthropology, history, and art and religion, – of which I will address the first three in what follows. Curiously, while Louden is eminently capable of drawing out the problematic inscription of the concept of race within these fields of impurity, he nevertheless backtracks considerably when it comes to the question of what this inscription means to Kant's moral universalism which, for Louden, remains untouched. See Robert B. Louden, *Kant's Impure Ethics* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 27–30 and 104.

[188] Specifically, 'Of the different races of human beings' (1775), 'Determination of the concept of a human race' (1785) and 'On the use of teleological principles in philosophy' (1788).

body),[189] its function as one of the schemas which mediates between the level of the human species and that of the individual human being also comes to bear on pragmatic anthropology and thereby on the philosophy of history. What this chapter demonstrates is that Kant considered there to be a natural-historical differential within the educability of human beings and that this differential translates into a fixation of the relation between populations of 'educators' and 'educated' in the processual perfection of the species as a whole which forms the heart of Kant's of universal world history. In foregrounding the significance of pedagogy, education, and ideas of (self-)formation for Kant's conception of the human species, it thereby becomes clear how the temporalisation of geographically-distributed difference (the object of study in the preceding chapter) within Kant's philosophy of history is both reproduced and rendered dynamic within the idea of the continued education of humankind as a whole.[190]

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[189] This early proximity of anthropology to anatomy and its relation to Kant's anthropology is account for in Claude Blanckaert, 'L'*Anthropologie* en France, le mot et l'histoire (XVIe–XIXe siècles)', in *Bulletins et Mémoires de la Société d'anthropologie de Paris* 1, no.3–4 (1989), 13–43.

[190] One translational question that arises from working with the English editions of Kant's writings on this topic asks: How is it possible to signify, that various German terms for 'all of man' potentially denote different forms of community: logical, natural historical, moral, political, or world historical? Kant refers alternately and in different texts to *Menschengattung*, *Menschengeschlecht*, *Menschheit*, and, finally, also at points to *Menschlichkeit*. I have at points decided to break with the standard translation, to maintain consistency within the terminology throughout this thesis. Out of the four terms, it is particularly *Menschengeschlecht* that poses a translational problem, since no obvious candidate for the translation of *Geschlecht* exists in English. Presumably because this term carries connotations of hereditary lineages, the standard translation in the Cambridge editions has been 'human race' (this is the case, for instance, in 'Toward Perpetual Peace'). However, in light of the fact that Kant has a specific concept of a *Menschenrace* (a human race), this to me appears to be an unfortunate choice. Moreover, while *Geschlecht* of course implies a natural historical linage, Kant never uses this term in his texts on the natural-historical determination of the concept of the human species and the concept of a human race. When *Menschengeschlecht* is used, I believe we should rather hear the connotations of peerage, dynasties, families, and kinship within the term, such that the generational aspect of it is not limited to its natural historical sense but includes the *political and social significance* of family lines. This insight is supported by the fact that when Kant uses *Menschengeschlecht*, in 'Toward Perpetual Peace', *The Conflict of the Faculties*, *Anthropology*, and the *Critique of Practical Reason*, it is with reference to the political and moral community of man. What other term might we then use in the translation? By process of elimination, we can note that since Kant employs *Gattung* for both logical and natural historical species, *Menschengattung* is best translated by 'human species', while 'human race' is best reserved for the actual natural historical concept of race. An objection to this choice has been raised by Stella Sandford, who has argued that to render the correspondences between the essays on race and the *Critique of Pure Reason* legible, *Gattung* should rather be translated as *genus*. However, I believe there may be further complications here, if the human being is considered not as a natural *genus* but as a rational *species*, indeed, the only rational species we have any knowledge of. For this reason, I have retained the use of 'human species'. As for *Menschheit* and *Menschlichkeit*, these are best translated as 'humanity' (both where the 'humanity' as opposed to 'animality' of someone is at stake and where it is a question of 'humanity as a whole') since Kant uses *Menschlichkeit* as a direct translation of the Latin *humanitas* in *The Metaphysics of Morals* §34 VI:456. This leaves only the option of translating *Menschengeschlecht* as 'humankind'. This is not perfect, but it has the advantage that 'kind' etymologically links with 'kin' and thus implies a sense of family and tribal relations, as well as bearing a trace of Middle English that contains a reference to sexed differences are also present in the German *Geschlecht*. I will throughout this piece be translating: *Menschengattung* as 'human species'; *Menschengeschlecht* as 'humankind'; *Menchheit* as well as *Menschlichkeit* as 'humanity'; and *Menschenrace* as (a) 'human race'. On the difficulties of

By bringing to the forefront the assumption of inequality inscribed within the educative relation and the function of this relation within Kant's philosophy of history, this chapter also places recent debates as to the significance of Kant's writings on race for his political and moral philosophy under a new light, particularly in regard to his views on the legitimacy or illegitimacy of imperialism and colonialism, and goes beyond the lacuna located between the natural and the moral significance of Kant's texts on race that these debates seem trapped within. One of the most authoritative voices in these debates is Pauline Kleingeld, who has convincingly shown that while Kant may have defended arguments supporting slavery and colonisation throughout much of his life, he can reasonably be said to have had 'second thoughts', at least on the legitimacy of settler colonialism, since he condemns this form of colonisation as a violation of cosmopolitan right in both 'Toward Perpetual Peace' and *The Metaphysics of Morals* (1797).[191] Furthermore, Kleingeld has also argued that Kant must have had comparable 'second thoughts' on the moral and intellectual significance of his natural historical concept of race.[192] These latter claims, however, are less convincing, I argue, precisely because the stability of a racialised differentiation between educators and educated signals otherwise. What can be said to have changed is merely Kant's view on the legitimate means for the promulgation of such an education. From this perspective, the nexus between Kant's racism and his concept of race is expressed not only in relation to the brute domination of slavery and colonial exploitation but also in the ideological conception of an educative function which can be fulfilled by softer powers, one that fundamentally assumes a relation of inequality up until the point where those who are to be educated can be said to assume their own maturity (*Mündigkeit*). This goes to the core of Kant's philosophy of history in which the institution of cosmopolitanism is premised on a passage through the state-form, and in which white Western European nations, as the generators of the socio-political models appropriate to the full realisation of the predispositions of the human species, form the privileged locus for historical dynamism. The education of the 'rest' of humanity that follows might employ a variety of means but the aim remains that of learning to adopt the 'appropriate' model.

To contextualise these arguments within contemporary discussions, the first section outlines aspects of what it means to read Kant today from the standpoint of the extended debate which his writings on race have spurred. Thereafter, sections two and three revisit

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translating *Geschlecht*, see Marc Crépon, 'Geschlecht', in *Dictionary of Untranslatables: A Philosophical Lexicon*, ed. Barbara Cassin, trans. Steven Rendall, et al. (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2014) 394–96.

[191] Pauline Kleingeld, 'Kant's Second Thoughts on Colonialism' in *Kant and Colonialism: Historical and Critical Perspectives*, ed. Katrin Flikschuh and Lea Ypi (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 43–67.

[192] Pauline Kleingeld, 'Kant's Second Thoughts on Race' in *The Philosophical Quarterly* 57, no. 229 (October 2007), 573–92.

Kant's concept of race, and the ways in which it broadly subtends the conception of a hierarchical order within the human species, in light of a textual and systematic account of the interrelation between physical geography, pragmatic anthropology, and pedagogy in his work. From this standpoint, a more specific focus on the education and educability of the human species is introduced in sections four and five and clarified according to the terminological matrix formed between 'education' as alternately *Erziehung* and *Ausbildung*, 'formation' as *Bildung* and 'culture' as *Cultur* within the *Lectures on Pedagogy* and in the *Anthropology* as well as within the *Critique of the Power of Judgement*. Finally, the treads are gathered in section six, which questions the function of two ideas of education in Kant's philosophy of history: that of the self-education of humankind and that of an 'education by nature'.

I. Reading Kant Today: (Re)Placing Race in the History of Philosophy

Every so often, an interventionist reading of the history of philosophy is produced such that the field into which it intervenes is forced to reassess, discard, or defend its basic tenets. For Kant studies, broadly conceived, Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze's 1995 essay 'The Color of Reason: The Idea of "Race" in Kant's Anthropology' can be said to have constituted just such a reading as it forced a reckoning with Kant's conception of race, and particularly with its place and function within his critical system.[193] In the decades that followed its publication, not only did the racially-charged, derogatory comments from *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* (1764)[194] become references for expositions of Kant's early, less than sound reasonings on 'national characters', but, more importantly, the image of Kant the universalist moral philosopher came to be confronted with that of Kant the theorist of race. What Eze brought back to public memory was the fact that Kant had intervened into eighteenth-century debates on the possibility of a systematic knowledge of organised living beings, with the proposal that the already prevalent division of the human species into four different races – 'the *whites*, the *yellow* Indians, the *Negroes* and the *copper-red* Americans' – could be scientifically grounded within a natural history of humankind (encompassed within a

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[193] Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, 'The Color of Reason; The Idea of "Race" in Kant's Anthropology', in *Postcolonial African Philosophy: A Critical Reader* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1997), 103–40. Following Eze's work, Bernasconi has been especially instrumental in pushing the question of race to the forefront of critical discussions of Kant's work. See, in particular, Robert Bernasconi, 'Who Invented the Concept of Race? Kant's Role in the Enlightenment Construction of Race', in *Race*, ed. Robert Bernasconi (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 11–36; Robert Bernasconi, 'Kant as an Unfamiliar Source of Racism', in *Philosophers on Race: Critical Essays*, ed. Julie K. Ward and Tommy L. Lott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 145–66; and, for a broader formulation of the philosophical, historiographical and notably pedagogical stakes of confronting Enlightenment racism, Robert Bernasconi, 'Will the Real Kant Please Stand Up: The Challenge of Enlightenment Racism to the Study of the History of Philosophy', in *Radical Philosophy* 1, no.117 (January/February 2003), 13–22.
[194] Henceforth, *Observations*.

physical and generative system of nature as opposed to a merely synchronic classificatory system).[195]

At least three elements are required, if we are to assess the significance of Kant's writings on race for the rest of his philosophical project: one, an understanding of Kant's concept of race as a natural historical category; two, an assessment of the possible connections between this 'scientific' conception and the racist comments to be found in some of Kant's writings (especially in the lectures); and three, an interpretation of the relation of both of these elements to the universalism of the critical moral and political philosophy.[196] Of course, both deep methodological and political differences are revealed in

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[195] Although Kant in his first essay on race does not exclude the possibility that there may be other races, these are the four for which he considered there to have been indisputable proof of their 'unfailingly hereditary' characteristics. The details of Kant's theory of race will be elucidated at later stage in this chapter. Kant, DCHR, 153.

[196] The primary focus of this chapter is the relation between Kant's writings on race and those on history and, thereby, his moral and political philosophy. Central, therefore, is the question of how a moral whole could arise from nature. It is accordingly not the intention to construct an argument for the influence which Kant's theory of race may (or may not) have had on critical philosophy considered more generally. However, if an argument for such an influence were to be constructed, it would benefit by building on the work of Jennifer Mensch who, in a highly innovative reading of both the three essays on race and *Critique of Pure Reason*, has suggested that Kant's claim that the critical system be considered one of 'the epigenesis of pure reason' should be understood as more than a merely metaphorical appeal to the model of epigenetic organismic development. In *Kant's Organicism*, Mensch argues that the 'use of the organic model had a deep methodological impact when it came to the critical system; indeed the system itself was conceived as a result of this model as an organic unity whose telic course of development could be described as a natural history of reason' (144). On such a reading, the objective validity of the categories of the understanding is grounded by how they originate in the germs and dispositions of reason and epigenetically develop therefrom. Such a reading places the writings on race – wherein Kant's most extensive discussions of different models of organic development prior to those of *Critique of the Power of Judgement* are to be found – in closer proximity to the *epistemological* aspect of the critical writings than is often assumed. It does so, because Kant's theory of race is where, prior to the *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, he most extensively reflects on the role of teleological reasoning and the use of the regulative ideas of purposive nature as well as where he proposes that by combining the perspectives of teleological and mechanistic causation the most scientifically fruitful approach to a natural history of the human species might account for its monogenetic unity (teleological) and environmentally occasioned racial permanence of difference (mechanistic). From the perspective onto Kant's works constructed by Mensch, a number of questions can be raised as to how and to what degree such a natural-historical divide in the species of man also translates into judgments of moral and cognitive difference, thereby disturbing the universality of the Kantian transcendental framework. In other words, does this entail a racialised transcendental? And, if this is the case, in which sense and to what effect? While Mensch only partially pursues the attendant political and social questions, Stella Sandford, reviewing *Kant's Organicism*, outlines how one might conclude that, 'in some sense, the theory of race is absolutely central to the supposed unity of the critical philosophy' (Sanford, Review: *Kant's Organicism*, 169). Such a conclusion must then ask what it would mean for Kant studies today if this proximity reveals a motivational force, one that asks whether 'the fundamental need of Kant's eighteenth-century reason was to provide a theory of race that, for theological reasons, affirmed monogenesis while, simultaneously, for other (social? political? psychological? economic?) reasons affirming the unique permanence of skin colour among other physiological characteristics; that is, that affirmed the unity of the human species whilst also affirming the disunity of the "races"?' (*ibid.*, 170). It is in this vein that Sandford elsewhere explores the possible link between the critical writings and the writings on race, lending further strength to the argument that the theory of race is 'the context in which the general problem of a natural system of nature and of the systematic unity of nature, beyond the aggregate of empirical knowledge, is first und fully addressed by Kant' (Sandford, 'Kant, Race, and Natural

the sometimes divergent views of exactly how these three elements are to be configured, especially in regard to the importance attributed to observing systematic distinctions drawn by Kant himself. This issue, dealt with in more detail in the following sections, is non-trivial insofar as it concerns the determination of whether and, if so, how the theory of race (wherein humankind and human races are the objects of a natural historical science) affects Kant's pure moral and political philosophy.[197]

Since Kant's proposal for a division of the human species into four races was paired with a number of assertions about an innate lack of industriousness in some non-white races and a general inferiority in the areas of art and science in all non-white races, his conception of race seems to stand in unbearable tension with his moral and political universalism.[198] As Kleingeld put it, one of the central questions following the reassessment of Kant's texts on race has therefore been whether we are today better off regarding him as an 'inconsistent moral universalist' or as a 'consistent inegalitarian'?[199] Perhaps predictably, this formulation both diagnosed and enforced a structural divide between accusers and defenders of Kant within the field of interpretation, a divide which was then largely carried over into ensuing

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History', 964). In this latter article, Sandford is however also adamant that the first set of questions to be asked cannot be whether Kant's critical philosophy as such is crypto-racist or even crypto-racialised, but rather how and in what manner the problem 'of the unity in diversity of the human species, which for Kant was solved with the determination of the concept of race and a theory of generation that depends on the principle of purposiveness' (*ibid.*, 952) informs the development of the critical philosophy. If the theory of race can be said to have informed the development of the critical philosophy, it cannot be dismissed as simply external to the critical project as such but becomes a problem to be engaged. See Jennifer Mensch, *Kant's Organicism: Epigenesis and the Development of Critical Philosophy* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2013); Stella Sandford, 'Review: *Kant's Organicism: Epigenesis and the Development of Critical Philosophy*', in *Critical Philosophy of Race* 3, no. 1 (2015), 167–70; and Stella Sandford, 'Kant, Race, and Natural History', in *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 44, no.9 (2018), 950–77.

[197] It is interesting to note that although anthropology (physical and as empirical psychology) certainly is not a priori and therefore belongs to what Louden classifies as 'impure' philosophy, such a categorisation is harder to sustain for the philosophy of history as a whole and especially for an essay like 'Idea for a Universal History', which, as discussed below, is fundamentally concerned with the determination of an idea of reason.

[198] A good account of this tension can be found in McCarthy, *Race, Empire, and the Idea of Human Development*, 42–68.

[199] Kleingeld, 'Kant's Second Thoughts on Race', 576. When the field is split in this manner, Charles W. Mills (along with Eze and Bernasconi) has typically been considered representative of the view of Kant as a 'consistent inegalitarian', arguing to the effect that Kant did not count all humans as fully human and that therefore not all humans would have been either subject to or included within the moral demands of the categorial imperative. For his most recent defence of this position see Charles W. Mills, 'Kant and Race, Redux', *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal*, vol.35, no.1–2, 2014, 125–57. In a more recent piece, Mills however also makes it clear that his critique of Kant was never *against* Kantianism in any straightforward manner. See Mills, 'Radical Black Kantianism' in *Res Philosophica*, vol.95, no.1 (January 2018), 1–33. For the view that Kant is best understood to have been an inconsistent moral universalist, Kleingeld, Louden, Thomas E. Hill and Bernard Boxill have all argued that while Kant in his pre-critical works expressed racist beliefs and while his theory of race might be regrettable, his moral philosophy as a whole also contains the universalist tenants necessary to counter these. See Thomas E. Hill and Bernard Boxill, 'Kant and Race', in *Race and Racism*, ed. Bernard Boxill (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 448–71, and Louden, *Kant's Impure Ethics*, 93–106.

stages of these debates, in which the possibility of a connection between changes within Kant's views on the legitimacy of colonisation and imperialism and a change within his conception of racial difference were drawn to the forefront.[200] In such debates it was again Kleingeld who first proposed that that Kant changed his position on race over the course of the 1790s such that, after 1792, he might well have retained the theory of racial differentiation within the human species but to all effects and purposes jettisoned the idea of a hierarchical order and, therefore, the practical-political significance of such a differentiation. For better or, as I would argue, for worse, this is a claim which has to a large extent come to form a central issue around which much of the debate turns and it is made on the basis of two combined factors. First, that the frequency with which Kant makes reference to an explicitly racialised hierarchy subsides in his later years.[201] Second, that although Kant gives no indication of having changed his position on these matters, we might use his changed position on the moral permissibility of colonisation and the practice of slavery to track a shift in his conception of the significance of race.[202] On Kleingeld's account:

> Kant gave up the hierarchical view of the races in the context of his elaboration of his political theory and theory of right. The time when he changed his views on race falls within the period during which

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[200] This is in a sense also the field into which this chapter falls. The literature here is still fairly modest and in a recent volume on Kant and colonialism, only two of the essays – Kleingeld's 'Kant's Second Thoughts on Colonialism' and Lea Ypi's 'Commerce and Colonialism in Kant's Philosophy of History' – take into account Kant's writings on race in relation to the question of colonialism while the rest largely isolate the question of race from that of colonialism. A modified version of Kleingeld's argument therein has been proposed by Ian Storey who claims that Kant's change of position on race, as detectable within his political philosophy, should be grounded in a fundamental methodology shift, such that a new account of strictly formal purposiveness would indicated a radically restricted scope of teleological judgements, in both world historical and natural historical contexts, from *Critique of the Power of Judgement* onwards. Storey's argument is initially convincing but as my discussion of §83-84 of CPJ will aim to show, ultimately questionable. See Kleingeld, 'Kant's Second Thoughts on Colonialism', 43–67; Lea Ypi, 'Commerce and Colonialism in Kant's Philosophy of History', in *Kant and Colonialism: Historical and Critical Perspectives*, ed. Katrin Flikschuh and Lea Ypi (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 99–126; and Ian Storey, 'Empire and Natural Order in Kant's "Second Thoughts" on Race', *History of Political Thought* 36, no.4 (winter 2015), 670–700.

[201] In what follows, I focus on how this plays out in the *Anthropology*. It is true that in his later years, Kant does not appear to have developed his concept of race further, nor to have elaborated what could ground a hierarchy amongst the human races in the same detail. Mark Larrimore, however, has pointed out that this might simply come down to the fact that he had no *need* to do so, since his older writings on race were republished in different forms in 1793, 1795, 1797, and 1799, just as the natural historical perspective which Kant had championed came to be developed by a number of other scholars, in particular Christoph Girtanner's *Über das kantische Prinzip für die Naturgeschichte* (1796), a summary and elaboration of Kant's three essays. See Mark Larrimore, 'Antinomies of Race: Diversity and Destiny in Kant', *Patterns of Prejudice* 42, no.4/5 (2008), 358.

[202] Where Kleingeld points to the fact that a change of mind on the importance of racial difference might be deduced from a demonstrative change in Kant's political views, even if he 'gives no indication of when or why he changed his views', Storey instead proposes that such a changed might be grounded in a fundamental shift of methodology from *Critique of the Power of Judgement* onwards, such that a new account of strictly *formal* purposiveness would indicated a radically restricted scope of teleological judgements, in both world historical and natural historical contexts. Cf. Kleingeld, 'Kant's Second Thoughts on Race' and Storey, 'Empire and Natural Order'.

his political theory and philosophy of right underwent significant transformations, in the wake of the French Revolution. Examples of other important developments in Kant's political theory around this time are his notion of citizenship, his republicanism, and the concept of cosmopolitan right. Kant was never generous in explaining to posterity the genesis or transformation of his views, and thus we may never know the precise circumstances of his change of mind.[203]

Kleingeld argues that Kant's introduction of cosmopolitan right in 'Toward Perpetual Peace' and *The Metaphysics of Morals* reveals that he *must* have had 'second thoughts' on the idea of a racial hierarchy among human beings. In particular, she argues, this is so because Kant in these texts condemns what he calls 'the *inhospitable* behaviour of civilised, especially commercial, states in our part of the world' since 'the injustice they show the *visiting* foreign lands and peoples (which with them is tantamount to *conquering* them) goes to horrifying lengths' and likewise condemns the so called 'sugar islands' as 'that place of the cruellest and most calculated slavery'.[204] That is, while Kant in 'Idea for a Universal History' may have implied an outright colonial or imperial course of historical development with the remark that it is likely that 'our part of the world' will 'someday give the law to all the others',[205] Kleingeld concludes that this no longer appears to be a plausible interpretation of his philosophy of history as it is articulated after 1792. This may be, but as Bernasconi has argued, the case made for a changed position on the idea of a racialised hierarchy becomes rather thin when we consider the fact that Kant, in a 1792 lecture course on physical geography, *both* reasserted his idea of a hierarchy among the races *and* critiqued what he called the 'trade in Negroes' as 'morally reprehensible'.[206]

While Kant no doubt over the course of his life changed his mind on a great deal of things and a sensitivity to such changes are welcome, the persistent drive to exonerate the later Kant from the faults of the younger on these issues seem suspiciously tinged with a reluctance to fully assess the extent to which Kant's conception of the unity of the human species also included the idea of its racial differentiation. Another interpretational strategy might therefore be to eschew the premise of a straightforward divide between an inconsistent moral universalism and a consistent non-egalitarianism and instead inquire into the construction of Kant's universalism itself, in order to pose the question of whether the perceived depth of a contradiction between universalism and racism might in fact cover over a racist universalism and this calls for rethinking the very concept of universality.[207] This latter

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[203] Kleingeld, 'Kant's Second Thoughts on Race', 584.

[204] TPP, 329–30

[205] IUH, 119.

[206] Bernasconi is referring to the course of 1792, of for which the student notes now referred to as the Dohna-Wundlacken 2 give a detailed account. See Robert Bernasconi, 'Kant's Third Thoughts on Race' in *Reading Kant's Geography*, ed. Stuart Elden and Eduardo Mendieta (Albany: SUNY Press, 2011), 304.

[207] While this approach has had, unsurprisingly, hardly any traction within Kant studies, its history predates

approach forms part of a both more subtle and more difficult attempt to rethink modern political epistemologies and the conceptual conditions for emancipatory thought on a global scale and, as such, its stakes extend beyond a critical engagement with Kant's political philosophy. A confrontation with Kant cannot, however, simply be disposed with since Kantian discourses of the universal form an unavoidable part of the landscape of contemporary political thought.

II. Kant's Concept of Race

If, as Bernasconi has argued, the invention of a concept coincides with that articulation and demarcation of said concept which made it possible for others to subsequently debate and question its scientific status, then Kant might hold the very dubious honour of having 'invented' the modern and 'scientific' concept of race.[208] Such an argument is important since it challenges the claim that Kant's casual racism is reducible to the expression of a set of common prejudices that circulated at the time and is therefore irrelevant to the merits of his broader philosophical project.[209] This deferral to a set of common prejudices is most often made with the proviso that Kant was merely relaying information to be found in the travel literature of the age. But, not only was Kant himself at several instances at pains to warn his readers (and students) not to uncritically assume the veracity of the various reports from missionaries and explorers, he also, in his review of Herder's *Ideas for the Philosophy of the History of Humanity*, explicitly characterised the epistemological problem which contradictory accounts posed for attempts to form scientific arguments on their basis:

> [W]orking with a mass of descriptions dealing with different lands, it is possible to prove, if one cares to do so … that Americans and Negroes are relatively inferior races in their intellectual capacities, but on the other hand, according to reports just as plausible, that their natural potentialities are on the same level as those of any other inhabitants of the planet.[210]

many of the debates that that unfolded therein. For a broad outline of this argument see Étienne Balibar, 'Racism as Universalism', *Masses, Classes, Ideas* (trans. James Swenson), New York and London: Routledge, 1994, 191–204; and Étienne Balibar, 'Ontological Difference, Anthropological Difference, and Equal Liberty', *European Journal of Philosophy* 28, no.1 (March 2020), 1–12. For two discussions which situate Balibar's argument in relation to Kant's conception of cosmopolitanism, see James Ingram, *Radical Cosmopolitics: The Ethics and Politics of Democratic Universalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 68–76, and Todd Hedrick, 'Race, Difference, and Anthropology in Kant's Cosmopolitanism', *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 46, no.2 (April 2008), 245–68.

[208] Bernasconi makes this argument in accounting for Kant's discussions of Carl von Linné's logical system of nature and Georges-Louis Leclerc Buffon's natural history on his theoretical intervention into the emerging field of racial science, particularly as it influenced Johann Friedrich Blumenbach's theory of race. See Bernasconi, 'Who Invented the Concept of Race?'.

[209] This casual racism is most explicit in the early OFBS and in the lectures on physical geography from this same period (which were later included in the highly contested 1803 edition of the *Physical Geography* edited by Rink) but it continues in the lectures on anthropology well into the 1780s.

[210] Kant, RJGH, 139.

This simply illustrates that while Kant, out of necessity, had to rely on the 'mass of descriptions dealing with different lands' for empirical knowledge of regions outside the reach of his immediate vicinity (like all practitioners of Enlightenment natural philosophy preoccupied with the planetary perspective on human nature), he also advocated a cautionary and critical use of such descriptions.[211] That he further devoted significant parts of both his writings and his lectures to developing the theoretical means with which to explain both the natural historical unity of the human species *and* natural differentiations in this species and that he did so by way of a concept of race, means that we should at the very least interrogate the extent to which the casual racism is enabled, supported, or enforced by the pseudo-scientific discourse of race that he developed.[212]

At the heart of such an inquiry lie three essays on the concept of race, which Kant published between 1775 and 1788 as contributions to what he considered to be the still nascent construction of a 'system of natural history' and the generation of organisms.[213] Their date of publication – with the first essay published in the midst of the 'silent decade', the second after the publication of the *Critique of Pure Reason* and the last in the same year as the *Critique of Practical Reason* – makes it impossible to isolate, at least chronologically, the significance of these texts to a set of reflections carried out in a so-called 'pre-critical' period.

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[211] I believe this perspective is significantly lacking in Werner Stark's otherwise careful reading of a passage of the *Physical Geography* that, for Stark, only seemingly indicates Kant's endorsement of a racial hierarchy. After comparing the different manuscripts and transcripts that Friedrich Theodor Rink may have used when compiling his 1802 edition of the *Physical Geography* with other extant manuscripts and transcripts, Stark concludes that when a passage comments on all the degrees of perfection to be found in humanity the 'lowest of all is part of the American races' then this 'is to be understood primarily as a reflection of travel literature' and that we therefore 'can neither presume nor insinuate any pejorative intention' (91). Overall, Stark's 'dismantling' of the case for taking serious not only the concept of race but also the racism of some of Kant's writings clearly embodies what we might call the 'philologists' defence' of Enlightenment racism, which consists in a number of avoidance strategies for excluding the significance of race to the history of philosophy. Such strategies proceed roughly as follows: i) blame the time (here the repetition of statements generally in circulation within travel literature) (91); ii) blame the distortions of an editor (here Rink) (96); iii) blame an earlier (less enlightened) philosopher who is merely being cited (here Hume) (92); iv) blame the translation (here German to English) and a lack of attention to the nuance (here between the natural and cultural connotations of *Menscheit* and *Humanität*) (93); and v) blame the interpretation (here the reader who misses the systematic distinction between anthropology and geography as the significant contextual divide through which Kant's concept of race must be understood and who therefore has disqualified themselves from making assumptions about Kant's position on race or the possible relations between his philosophy and his racism) (97). See Werner Stark, 'Historical and Philological References on the Question of a Possible Hierarchy of Human "Races," "Peoples," or "Populations" in Immanuel Kant: A Supplement', in *Reading Kant's Geography*, ed. Stuart Elden and Eduardo Mendieta (Albany: SUNY Press, 2011), 87–102.

[212] The point here is not that racism did not exist before the scientific concept of race but that this was a racism which was not sustained by a rigours system of classification and a scientific concept of race. Likewise, theories of hereditary differences and especially of the 'purity of blood' go back at least as far as the persecutions of Jews, Muslims, and others with 'heretical' ancestry in fifteenth century Spain. On this point see Bethencourt, *Racisms*.

[213] OUTP, 200.

Moreover, the centrality of the arguments found therein to the development of the regulative ideas of natural purposes and a purposively organised 'system of nature' also renders any such isolation untenable from a systematic perspective.[214]

In all three of the essays, Kant followed what he called 'Buffon's rule', arguing that all humans, despite synchronically notable and classifiable differences in their appearances, belong to one and the same line of descent [*phylum*] since even members belonging to different classes of physical appearance can produce fertile offspring.[215] Races, in turn, names those classes defined by *unfailingly* hereditary characteristics that have developed over the course of generations, under the prolonged influence of different climatic conditions upon the original predispositions [*Anlage*] and germs [*Keime*] in the human *phylum*.[216] Kant's theory is that four basic climatic environments (cold and humid, cold and dry, hot and humid, hot and dry) would, as humans migrated to populate all of the Earth, have activated a determinate 'unfolding' of germs and predispositions that, once developed, settled each race into a form suited for the conditions of life corresponding to the region of the world dominated by this climate.[217] What at first seems to be a merely mechanist account of this activation, in the course of Kant's works on physical geography gradually develops into the conceptualisation of purposive nature, which can be seen to have 'willed' 'that human beings should populate the entire Earth. All animals have their special climates, but human beings are to be found everywhere. Human beings are not to stay in a small region, but to spread out across the entire Earth.'[218] Where the first humans would have held the potential for all later developed racial characteristics, once a certain set of germs settled into their form this form would consecutively have rendered dormant all other potentials. Unlike mere *varieties* in

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[214] Sandford, 'Kant, race, and natural history'.

[215] ODR, 84.

[216] DCHR, 155. In the first iterations of this theory, there is an operative distinction between germs [*Keime*] as the ground of a determinate 'unfolding' that effects the particular parts of an organism and natural predispositions [*natürliche Anlage*] as the ground of a determinate 'unfolding' of the relations between parts and their size. However, as Phillip Sloan has shown, when the question concerning the purposive development of organisms is taken up in the *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, Kant, likely influenced by Blumenbach, no longer uses the term *Keime* and instead appears to have reconfigured his theory of race to centre on *natürliche Anlage*, which, in turn, takes on a more dynamic role within this theory. See Phillip Sloan, 'Performing the Categories, Eighteenth-Century Generation Theory and the Biological Roots of Kant's A Priori', *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, vol. 40, no.2 (April 2002), 229–53.

[217] Extensive work has been done on the extent to which Kant relied on preformationist or epigenetic theories of organismic development and on the possible changes in his view – that is, if the full potential for development was inherent in the original predisposition or if the very potentiality for development may have changed over the course of several generations. See Immanuel Kant, *Kant and The Concept Race: Late Eighteenth-Century Writings*, trans. and ed. Jon M. Mikkelsen (New York: SUNY Press, 2013). On the shifts in Kant's own position on preformation and epigenesis, see John H. Zammito, 'Kant's Persistent Ambivalence Towards Epigenesis, 1764–1790', in *Understanding purpose: Kant and the philosophy of biology*, ed. Philippe Huneman (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2007), 51–74.

[218] LA, Friedländer, 215.

the species (say, the synchronically notable and also classifiable differences in eye colour or hair colour) Kant therefore considered racial characteristics to persistently preserve themselves *and* to invariably 'beget half-bread young in the mixing'.[219] What is important to note here, is that as much as the concept of race refers to a process of differentiation from a common origin, what it truly names is the result and the arrestation of this process, the fixation of the species into four different races: 'the *whites*, the *yellow* Indians, the *Negroes* and the *copper-red* Americans'.[220] On Kant's understanding then, racial characteristics, in these essays primarily skin colour, entailed a permanent fixture within each race. We might therefore ask if it is only physiological and anatomical differences that are fixed in this manner?

Kleingeld points out that while the first two of the three essays seem to focus almost exclusively on the 'physical theory of race', the last of them, 'On the use of teleological principles in philosophy', in addition decidedly includes elements of 'moral characterisation' that inscribed within the physical theory of racial differences a schematism for a hierarchical order in the capacity to reason and assume moral agency.[221] The central passage that supports this concerns the question of trans-climate migration *after* the full development of a certain set of natural predispositions. Migration after the point of full development, so Kant argued, is counter to the purposiveness of nature. Is this not confirmed, he asks, by those cases

> where Indians or Negroes have attempted to expand into northern regions? – Those who were driven there have never been able to bring about in their progeny (such as the creole Negroes or the Indians called Gypsies), a sort that would be fit to be sedentary farmers or manual workers.[222]

In other words, a sort that would have not only the outer and physical requisite to live in such a region but also the demeanour and character which suits the kind of work required for the reproduction of life in regions in question. In the footnote to this passage, Kant cites a famous anti-abolitionist text which, much like Hume's, state that even freed black slaves seem to lack the incitement to 'engage in a business which one could properly call *labour*'.[223] The conclusion Kant draws from these observations is that just as there are 'externally visible' differences in the development of predispositions, so there might also be 'inner predispositions' which just as little as the external ones are transformed in the course of trans-climatic migrations.

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[219] ODR, 85 and DCHR 149.

[220] While Kant does not exclude that there are other races these are the four for which Kant considers there to have been indisputable proof that their characteristics are 'unfailingly hereditary'. DCHR, 153.

[221] Kleingeld, 'Kant's Second Thoughts on Race', 581.

[222] OTUT, 209.

[223] *Ibid.*

> [I]n addition to the *faculty* to work, there is also an immediate drive to activity (especially to the sustained activity that one calls industry) which is independent of all enticement and which is especially interwoven with certain natural predispositions; and that Indians as well as Negroes do not bring any more of this impetus into other climates and pass it onto their offspring than was needed for their preservation in their old motherland and had already received from nature.[224]

In a similar manner, the interplay of climatic conditioning and the fixation of a certain developmental path of natural predisposition is also mobilised to explain why the 'copper-red Indians' are 'too weak for labour, too indifferent for industry and *incapable of any culture* [*unfähig zu aller Cultur*]'.[225] Since, for Kant, all 'experience' pointed to the fact that the Americas had been populated through migration, he considered it plausible that the original predispositions of these peoples first developed in a southern climate before developing *in an opposite* direction, following migration, ultimately rendering the American race unsuited to *any* existing climate. This is the explanation given for why their race 'ranks far below even the Negro, who stands in the lowest of all the other steps that we have named as differences of the races'.[226] What it makes clear, is that a capability to enter into a process of culturation and the faculty to work form part of Kant's conception of racial difference, something that will, in turn, come to be of significance to his understanding of the capacity of humans to act in accordance with reason. To better understand how this is so, we will however have to go further back, and considered some of Kant's earlier reflections on the unity and differentiation of the human species, since the simple assumption of a hierarchical order amongst human beings within Kant's writings precedes his explicit theorisation of the concept of race.

III. *Terrestrial Humanity Before the Concept of Race*

Kant was as much a teacher as he was a writer and a public intellectual, and his lectures have in recent years become increasingly central to new interpretations of his work, with critical editions of student transcripts alongside Kant's lecture notes and manuscripts making these materials more readily available. This has especially been true for the lectures on geography and anthropology, which, prior to Kant's publication of the essays on race, was where he in distinct and yet related manners constructed ideas of the human species as an object of knowledge. Where physical geography merely *included* the study of humankind from the perspective of what nature makes of it, anthropology centred on the human being from the perspective of what humans as a freely acting beings make, can make, and ought to make of

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[224] *Ibid.*
[225] *Ibid.*, 211, [AA. VIII:176] (my emphasis).
[226] *Ibid.*, 211.

themselves.[227] What united these two fields and modes of inquiry – physical geography and pragmatic anthropology – was less the subject or object on which they respectively turned and more the manner in which this knowledge was to be put to use. Together, physical geography and anthropology served as the propaedeutic to what Kant alternately called a pragmatic *Kenntnis der Welt*[228] and pragmatic *Weltkenntniß*:[229] a knowledge of the world that was to provide the means for orienting oneself prudently within it. It is a mode of knowing both nature as a whole and the human being as a both natural and cultured being, that implies not only a theoretical acquaintance with these objects but also an understanding of how to put such knowledge to use:

> Knowledge treated pragmatically is knowledge of the world [*Weltkenntniß*] and helps to form or educate [*bilden*] a man of the world [*Weltmann*]. As the world, we take (1) Nature, (2) human beings. One opposes these to each other, because the human being is the sole freely acting being on the Earth's surface. Nature and freedom are opposed to each other. In physical geography we consider nature, but in anthropology the human being, or human nature in all its situations. These two sciences constitute cognition of the world [*die Weltkenntniß*].[230]

For these reasons, Kant emphasised that his courses were not meant to serve narrow academic ends but might more suitably be considered part of an education for life. While the opposition between freedom and nature evoked here remains central, the mode of its articulation is not static but constantly negotiated and interrogated, conceptualised and re-conceptualised, both as it pragmatically relates to how humans are to orient themselves within a world and, as discussed below, as a theoretically-posed question of the purposiveness (the capacity to act according to ends) of nature itself in part two of *CPJ*, 'The Critique of Teleological Judgement'. If, as Holly Wilson has remarked, the relationship between Kant's

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[227] APPV, 231 [AA: VII:119]. As Reinhard Brandt notes, this definition – especially the focus on what humans *ought* to make of themselves – means that the *thematic* of the anthropology borders on and overlaps with that of the moral philosophy even if it, as an empirical discipline, does not systematically belong to philosophy. That anthropology is *pragmatic* means that it does not do justice to the last part of the definition which is properly speaking the concern of pure moral philosophy. Reinhard Brandt, 'The Guiding Idea of Kant's Anthropology and the Vocation of the Human Being', in *Essays on Kant's Anthropology*, ed. Brian Jacobs and Patrick Kain (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 85. There has also been much debate over the systematic interrelation of the lectures on geography, those on anthropology and those on empirical psychology. Holly Wilson, who has argued that, for Kant, anthropology formed a part of a specifically *cosmopolitan* philosophy, has also helpfully suggested that a distinction can be made between the 'origins' of the anthropology lectures and where they 'arose' from: 'the anthropology lectures arose out of the psychology lectures, but had their origin in the physical geography lectures. Kant's banning of psychology from metaphysics initiated the movement toward an independent series of lectures on anthropology, but the intent and content of the anthropology lectures finds its origin in the physical geography lectures, which were initially given fifteen years prior to the start of the anthropology lectures.' Holly L. Wilson, *Kant's Pragmatic Anthropology: Its Origin, Meaning and Critical Significance* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2006), 3.

[228] ODR, 97 [AA II:443]

[229] APPV, 97 [AA VII:231].

[230] LA, Pillau, 261.

Anthropology and his philosophy of history remains somewhat uninterrogated then, I would argue, the connection of his lectures on physical geography and pedagogy to his philosophy of history is almost entirely overlooked.[231] The following discussion therefore serves two primary functions: first, it accounts for what respectively characterised the perspective of physical geography and of pragmatic anthropology onto human beings and, second, it reflects on the manner in which ideas of a hierarchical order amongst humans were articulated prior to the development of the concept of race. Out of this I argue that, from the very beginning, Kant's conception of terrestrial humankind included the idea of an educative relation amongst the populations of the Earth.

Through most of his extensive teaching career (totalling 49 semesters between 1757–96) Kant offered a highly innovate lecture series on physical geography. As he understood it, physical geography was the descriptive and empirical science of all the 'natural characteristics of the globe and what is found on its surface: the seas, dry land, mountains, rivers, the atmosphere, human beings, animals, plants, and minerals'.[232] For all of these courses, Kant had been granted exceptional permission to teach directly from his own manual; the book which was later gathered out of his notes for these courses forms one of the most porous texts in the Kantian corpus.[233] Herein, reports from missionaries, travellers, and explorers are compiled alongside ancient and modern treaties on the Earth; with some of the ethnocentric bigotry that is reproduced and sanctioned in these texts as common knowledge also occasionally commented on and evaluated with varying degrees of critical sense. And, as Michèle Cohen-Halimi remarks, in this manner the *Geography* accommodates several discourses of geographical science and continuously oscillates between an encyclopaedic endeavour to synoptically organise a view of the whole of knowledge of terrestrial humanity and the emergent critical project that questions the authority of tradition and that judiciously seeks to parcel out the assumed from the known.[234] The purpose of the geography lectures

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[231] Wilson, *Kant's Pragmatic Anthropology*, 41. A notable exception to this claim, which Wilson does not appear to have considered, is Raphaël Lagier's detailed analysis of Kant's conception of the human species and that concept of race, which considers the overlaps of racial knowledge, anthropology and history. See chapter three of Raphaël Lagier, *Les races humaines selon Kant* (Paris: PUF, 2004), 165–87.

[232] Kant, 'Plan and Announcement of a Series of Lectures on Physical Geography', in *Kant: Natural Science*, ed. Eric Watkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 388.

[233] Kant's lectures on physical geography were first published in 1802 in a highly contested edition by Friedrich Theodore Rink. There has been much discussion of Rink's editorial skills, or lack thereof, but in what follows I will not dwell extensively on what are primarily philological issues here. Werner Stark has demonstrated that for the latter half of the physical geography – which contains 'Particular Observations Concerning What is Found on The Earth' – Rink reproduced the lecture manuscripts from the first years in which Kant taught physical geography, supplementing these by inserting a reference to Christoph Girtanner's *Über das kantiche Prinzip für die Naturgeschicte*. See Stark, 'Historical and Philological References'.

[234] Michèle Cohen-Halimi, 'Le Géographie de Königsberg', in Kant, *Géographie*, trans. Michèle Cohen-Halimi, Max Marcuzzi, and Valérie Seroussi (Paris: Aubier, 1999), 14.

was therefore in part 'to make a more certain knowledge of believable travel accounts, and to make this into a legitimate academic course of study'.[235]

Although Kant throughout his life stressed the difference between the description and the history of nature and, in the first instance, characterised geography as a description 'according to space', whereas natural history was a description 'according to time' or 'narratives', each of his distinctions are highly precarious.[236] The descriptive science of the planetary whole found in the *Geography* is itself full of histories, such that the relation of geography to (natural) history might best be described as is one of mutual convergence and divergence. The two tend toward each other but are not strictly speaking overlapping:

> History and geography extend our knowledge in relation to time and space. History concerns the events that have taken place one after another in time. Geography concerns phenomena that occur simultaneously in space. The latter has several names, depending on the different objects with which it is concerned. As a result, it is variously called physical, mathematical, political, moral, theological, literary or mercantile geography. The history of occurrences at different times, which is true history, is nothing other than a consecutive geography, and thus it is a great limitation on history if one does not know where something happened, or what it was like. History is thus differentiated from geography only in relation to time and space.[237]

A complete systematic knowledge of geography is rendered possible and impossible by the inclusion of history since Kant, as Max Marcuzzi notes, 'posits that geography is susceptible of achieving a systematic form insofar as its object is the entire Earth. Then, he affirms that it is only complete when it integrates becoming, and in moving into history, which is impossible: it is only complete (as a system) in moving into that which makes it impossible (as a system).'[238] It is within this highly complex theoretical terrain that the first essay on race, which announced the 1775 lectures on physical geography, took shape. As objects of physical geography, human beings are first and foremost terrestrial beings. They are one kind among the many forms of life within the planetary whole and thus are considered in the light of their subjection to climatic environments and the conditions of life imposed by the terrains they occupy. As described in the 1756 announcement of the series, the aim of lectures dedicated to the human species was to provide a view of and compare the visible differences in shape and colour of humans in various regions of the Earth.[239] This section of physical geography, focused on the human species, was to be a physical anthropology, but a rigorous physical anthropology was, for Kant, possible only as a history of nature. This meant that

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[235] Wilson, *Kant's Pragmatic Anthropology*, 9.
[236] PG, §3, 447.
[237] PG, §4, 448-449 (AA IX:161).
[238] Max Marcuzzi: 'Writing Space Historical Narrative and Geographical Description in Kant's Physical Geography' in *Reading Kant's Geography*, ed. S. Elden and E. Mendieta (Albany: SUNY Press, 2011), 120.
[239] Immanuel Kant, 'Plan and Announcement of a Series of Lectures on Physical Geography', 393.

the restriction to the perspective of what nature makes of the human already is tenuous within the *Geography* itself, as is clear from the fact that in later iterations of the course elements of ethnography or *Völkerkunde* informed the addition of a moral and political geography of terrestrial humankind. In the announcement of his lectures during the winter semester of 1765–66, Kant emphasised that,

> [t]he consideration of these things is at once very important and also highly stimulating as well. Unless these matters are considered, general judgements about man would scarcely be possible. The comparison of human beings with each other, and the comparison of man today with the moral state of man in earlier times, furnishes us with a comprehensive map of the human species.[240]

For Kant the cartographer of the human species, this map could not be drawn in a purely synchronic manner and history and geography should therefore be considered confluent in two senses. First epistemologically, because, without a foundation in geography written history becomes a narrative unmoored from what secures it as a true description of changes over time, 'little more than a fairy story'.[241] Second, insofar as the composition of the Earth affects the formation of territorial divides, trade routes and national industry. The description of those 'reciprocal interactions of moral and natural forces' which establish the conditions of 'states and nations throughout the word' is, properly speaking, the prefiguration of important elements in what will eventually be named 'universal world history'.[242] That is to say, even if in a systematic division physical geography was supposed to merely include the study of humankind from the perspective of what nature makes and had made of it, another perspective soon grew out of it which would come to form the centre of pragmatic anthropology: that of what humans as a freely acting beings make of themselves. History in turn forms the terrain on which these two sides cannot stringently be held apart. In this manner, the science of what nature makes of human beings,[243] began to migrate into the science of what human beings make of themselves, and what they make of what nature has made of them. Pragmatic anthropology and pedagogy quickly became its necessary supplements.

Reading his early lectures on physical geography alongside *Observations*, it is also clear that Kant took it as a given that some hierarchical order prevailed amongst the different

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[240] Immanuel Kant, 'M. Immanuel Kant's announcement of the programme of his lectures for the winter semester 1765–1766', 299.

[241] *Ibid.*

[242] *Ibid.*

[243] In the later essays on race as well as in the philosophy of history, this is expressed explicitly as a question concerning what *purposive* nature makes out of humans. Strictly speaking, Kant has not at this point articulated the idea of purposive nature, but we might of course ask if it is not in some sense inscribed within the idea of natural predispositions.

groups of people populating the Earth. In the so-called Holstein *diktat* of the lectures on physical geography from c.1757–59 – in which the first speculations as to the causes of difference in skin colour are also to be found – a section devoted to the different 'innate' characteristics of humans across the planet expressly connects an idea of a hierarchy amongst the populations of the Earth with that of an educative relation between them:

> The inhabitant of the temperate zone, especially in its central part, is more beautiful in body, harder working, more witty, more moderate in his passions, and more sensible than any other kind of people in the world. Consequently, these people have always taught [*belehret*] the rest [of the world], and vanquished them by the use of weapons.[244]

In this early lecture note, the outlines of a view wherein a climatic conditioning favoured one portion of humanity over all others is inscribed. What is interesting in this and infrequently commented on is that the the view onto humankind which the lectures on physical geography afforded – one of the human being as a rational *animal* and as having naturally-determined characteristics and capacities – is also to be found in the concluding sections of Kant's *Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens* (1755). In the tradition of Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle's *Conversations on the Plurality of Worlds*, Kant therein proposed a speculative argument for the existence of life on other planets and a number of conjectures as to what would characterise the intellectual capacities and bodily shapes of such lifeforms.[245] The context for these speculations was a set of claims about mechanical causation and the interrelations of mind and matter. Their aim was to sketch what might reasonably be ventured about living beings on other planets, based on the placement of these planets in the solar system and therefore on their distance to the heat of the sun. The hierarchy *amongst* humans is here prefigured by one amongst the speculative class of rational beings populating the solar system, a figure which Kant would repeatedly return to. Since the human being is that known factor against which Kant constructs the analogical reasonings which served to characterise other rational lifeforms, there is indeed a crypto-physical geography of humankind inscribed within this text and we find here the first hints of what will later be explored in great depth first in the lectures on physical geography, then in those on

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[244] This passage is also to be found in the latter half of Rinks' edition of Kant's *Physical Geography*. See PG, 577 [AA XXIV: 97].

[245] Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle, *Conversations on the Plurality of Worlds*, trans. H.A. Hargreaves (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990). This work of popular philosophy from 1686 proposes 'conjectures' on the basis of natural scientific theories in much the same way as Kant would come to do. But where Fontenelle based his reasonings largely on Cartesian physics, the basis of Kant's conjectures was Newtonian. Like Fontenelle, Kant draws a parallel between the validity of making claims about beings on other planets and claims about human being in regions of the world previously unknown to Europeans. The imaginary of space-voyage already at its points of inception deeply intertwined with that of colonisation.

anthropology, and on pedagogy; namely, the several layers to that task which a sensuous being endowed with reason is faced with in the constant struggle with and against its mere animal nature.

> Earth and perhaps also Mars (so that we are not deprived of the miserable consolation of having companions in misery) alone lie in the dangerous middle zone where the temptation of sensual delights has a strong power to lead astray against the domination of the spirit which, however, cannot not deny the capacity by which it is in a position to resist them if it did not rather please its sluggishness to allow itself to be carried away by them, where there is thus the dangerous mean between weakness and strength, where precisely the same advantages that raise him above the lower classes place him at a height from which he can sink infinitely far beneath them again.[246]

What in this early cosmological speculation is a minor aside will become, in the philosophy of history and in the theory of education, a central issue, that is, the idea of the capacity to *learn* being premised on a preliminary disciplining of one's natural inclinations. And while the concrete theory of man and 'the limitations that his ability to think rationally and the motion of his body that obeys this ability would suffer as a result of the constitution of the matter to which he is bound and which is proportionate to the distance from the Sun'[247] reads like a historical curiosity today, what remains interesting is how this theory mirrors Kant's conception of a hierarchical order wherein humankind occupies the middle tier as a class of more or less perfected beings with reason:

> Human nature, which occupies as it were the middle rung on the ladder of beings, sees itself as being between the two extreme limits of perfection, equally distant from both ends. If the idea [*Vorstellung*] of the most sublime classes of rational creatures that inhabit Jupiter or Saturn arouses their jealousy and humiliates them by the knowledge of their own baseness, then they can be satisfied again and comforted by the sight of the low stages on the planets Venus and Mercury, which are lowered far below the perfection of human nature. What an amazing sight! On the one hand, we saw thinking creatures among whom a Greenlander or Hottentot would be Newton, on the other hand, those who would admire him as an ape.[248]

Although Kant takes care to note that the moral implications and conclusions to be drawn from these claims should be considered no more than mere speculations, the theme which they announce – of the human a being as one which struggles against its nature to be moral and which has a moral obligation to do so – reverberates both within the lectures on anthropology and pedagogy and within the philosophy of history. Because humans have reason – and here it is worth stressing that both 'the Greenlander' and 'Hottentot' *are* included in this class – they have a moral obligation to live by the laws of that reason. What

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[246] UNHTH, 306.
[247] UNHTH, 306.
[248] *Ibid.*, 301 [AA I:360].

follows are questions as to whether *some* human beings naturally struggle more or less in this manner and whether the capacity to learn how to 'resist' temptation to mere sensuous satisfaction is distributed equally among all groups of humankind. In *Observations*, Kant approvingly summarises a passage from David Hume's 'Of National Characters' discussing the inferiority of the 'Negroes of Africa', in a manner which indicates that it is precisely the capacity to resist 'sluggishness' and thereby to assume a form of industriousness that Kant, at least in these early years, considers to have been differentially distributed. Hume's argument, which concerned the insufficiency of an exclusively climatological explanation for differences among humans, used the example of black Africans *removed* from their countries and forced into slavery to underscore the persistence of certain characteristics. 'Mr. Hume', writes Kant,

> challenges anyone to adduce a single example where a negro has demonstrated talents, and asserts that among the hundreds of thousands of blacks who have been transported elsewhere from their countries, although very many of them have been set free, nevertheless not a single one has ever been found who has accomplished something great in art or science or shown any other praiseworthy quality, while among the whites there are always those who rise up from the lowest rabble and through extraordinary gifts earn respect in the world. So essential is the difference between these two human kinds, and it seems to be just as great with regard to the capacities of mind as it is with respect to color.[249]

The racism of this passage is not just encapsulated in the callousness with which it instrumentalises the transatlantic slave trade for its argumentative purpose, but clearly also lies in the idea of the difference in kind between those who categorically are or are not able to raise themselves above their given conditions and thereby demonstrate that, amongst their kind, some have 'extraordinary gifts'. Such considerations become crucial if we want to assess the highly contested inscription of race within Kant's pragmatic anthropology.

Every winter semester between 1772–96, Kant offered a lecture course on anthropology, understood as the systematically formulated doctrine of the knowledge of the human being. These lectures on pragmatic anthropology would have been as much of a novelty to the students of Königsberg as those on physical geography. In accordance with common lecturing practice of the time, during the first years they were based primarily on a printed textbook, in this case the third part of Alexander G. Baumgarten's *Metaphysica* and, specifically, the chapter concerning 'empirical psychology'. Initially, Kant used the *Metaphysica* to articulate his own theory of the three principal faculties of the human mind: cognition, the feeling of pleasure and displeasure, and desire. By the mid-1770s, however, these lectures had expanded to include a second part focused on anthropological 'characters' whose content consisted of materials previously included in the physical geography. Therein, the

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[249] OFBS, 59 [2:253].

capacity to form a 'character' is described as something akin to a fourth faculty, one whose purpose is the modulation of the other three, such that the formation of character is the formation of a characteristic mode of employing and restraining the three other faculties.[250] It is in this sense, that the *Anthropology* is a study of the human being from the perspective of what humans as a freely acting beings make, can make and ought to make of themselves.[251] With some variation, reflections on the characters of persons, of men and women, of national communities and the four human races, and of the human species as a whole, formed the content of this second half of the lecture series for as long as it ran and these reflections are likewise reproduced in the *Anthropology*, the textbook Kant published in 1798 on the basis of his notes.[252] Because of the relative brevity of the entry therein on race, many commentators have concluded that Kant, at least when gathering his notes into book form, had come to the conclusion that racial difference did not as such play a role in what humans can make of themselves.[253] I will now turn explicitly to the question of education and educability, to show why this might be a conclusion drawn all too quickly.

IV. The Educability of the Human Races

In the 1770s, Kant was also charged with delivering a course on pedagogy, which, by Prussian decree, had been made mandatory at all universities. While Kant does not mention these lectures in any of his outlines of the two parts that make up pragmatic knowledge of the world – anthropology and physical geography – some of the questions raised by these lectures overlap significantly with those of the anthropology, especially as they concern the character of the human species. A defence can therefore be mounted for viewing Kant's lectures on pedagogy as an extension to those on anthropology, as a set of practical experimental meditations on the principles for making the best use of what nature makes of humans. In the lectures on anthropology, the Enlightenment goal of human perfectibility through education is nowhere more apparent than in the 1775–76 transcripts of the *Anthropology Friedländer*. While observations regarding the specifically human need for

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[250] Werner Stark, 'Historical Notes and Interpretive Questions about Kant's Lectures on Anthropology', in *Essays on Kant's Anthropology*, *Essays on Kant's Anthropology*, ed. Brian Jacobs and Patrick Kain (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 27.

[251] APPV, 231 [AA: VII:119].

[252] For Kleingeld's argument that he no longer supported an idea of a hierarchy among the human races, it is important that these differences do not make a difference to what 'man can make of himself'. It is true that Kant in the preface to the *Anthropology* writes that 'even knowledge of the races of human beings as products belonging to the play of nature is not yet counted as pragmatic knowledge of the world, but only as theoretical knowledge of the world' (APPV, 232). Does this mean that race is not at stake in the anthropology? The answer to this question to a large extent depends upon how one interprets the 'not yet' of the above quote, a point to which I return below.

[253] See for instance Kleingeld, 'Kant's Second Thoughts on Race' and Storey, 'Empire and Natural Order'.

education (*Erziehung*) are scattered across the transcripts and notes for the anthropology lectures, the *Anthropology Friedländer* stands out for its concluding section 'On Education' or 'On Upbringing', which connects the problematic of how to provide a determinate concept of the character of the human species with a number of observations as to the importance of pedagogy for 'the improvement of humanity toward its perfection'.[254] This is hardly surprising, given that Kant's first set of mandated lectures on pedagogy stem from this same period, as does his written support of the Philanthropinum Dessau, an experimental school whose founder, Johann Bernhard Basedow, authored the *Methodenbuch* (1773) on which Kant's lectures on this topic were based.[255] Kant's praise for Basedow's institute was grounded largely upon the manner in which it explicitly brought into accord an idea of the vocation of the human being, not only with a notion as to the role of education in bringing about the conditions for a fulfilment of this vocation but more significantly with a comprehensive plan for the determination and application of the most suitable methods such an education might be carried out according to.[256] These lectures that, like the end of the *Anthropology* and 'Idea for a Universal History', contain several extended discussions of Rousseau's critique of the distorting effects of culture upon human nature, circle around the questions of how natural predispositions might best be either restrained or put to use for civil and civic purposes. In other words, they consider how humans as beings with a natural potential for reason can be given the best possible education to allow them to assume the task of becoming actual rational acting and thinking beings and contribute to the formation of the species as a whole. In this regard, *Lectures on Pedagogy* touch on one of the central aspects of Kant's philosophy of history, namely the idea that those natural predispositions whose end is the use of reason and which among terrestrial animals are particular to humans, do not develop instinctively within a closed circuit (as Kant considers mere animal predispositions to do) but are both ungrounded and open-ended.[257] Two primary consequences can be drawn from this assumption, one which Kant very openly pursues in 'Idea for a Universal History' and one which is more implicitly at stake but which is nonetheless crucial for grasping the schematising function of the concept of race in Kant's philosophy of history. First, when measured against the immense space of possibility which

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[254] LA, Friedländer, 250–55.

[255] In the summer of 1780 Kant would be forced to instead use his colleague Friedrich Samuel Bock's *Lehrbuch der Erziehungskunst für christliche Eltern und künftige Jugendlehrer*, published that same year, as the textbook for this course. See Manfred Kuehn, 'Kant on Education, Anthropology, Ethics', in *Kant and Education: Interpretation and Commentary*, ed. Klas Roth and Chris W. Surprenant (New York: Routledge, 2012), 56.

[256] This is clear from the praise of the institute in Kant's 1775–76 lectures on anthropology, LA, Friedländer, 251.

[257] IUH, 109–10; APPV, 424.

this open-ended development entails, each individual human existence is dwarfed by its finitude. An absolutely central aspect of Kant's philosophy of history is therefore the idea that whereas each individual animal may realise its species determination and fully develop its natural predispositions, no individual human being can do so and it is only at the level of the species that the full development of the natural predispositions of terrestrial reasoned beings can be accomplished.[258] Second, that the non-instinctive character of the development of these predispositions renders crucial different modalities of inter-generational (and, as argued below, inter-racial as well as inter-national) transmission in the relay of perfection. Each generation must learn, develop and teach, form and be formed, such that in a long sequence of generations, humans may overall become continuously better able to fulfil the vocation [*Bestimmung*] of their species: to live in accordance with their rational nature.

Nowhere does Kant assume that this process is unwavering, fully continuous, or grounded in the ultimate goodness of human nature. The fabric of history, he writes, seems 'woven together out of folly, childish vanity, and often also out of childish malice and the rage to destruction'.[259] What is more, since one generation might lose what had been gained by previous ones and leave only a 'seed of enlightenment' to be recovered at a later point, the progress toward the perfection of the species is 'only fragmentary (according to time) and offers no guarantee against regression'.[260] But this does not render education and formation as such any less crucial to Kant's conception of universal history. What it does is rather to heighten the importance of what is best understood as a notion of 'educability': the very capacity to *learn*, to take form, and to shape a 'second nature' for oneself, which to Kant, as Manfred Kuehn has noted, is not just *an* important human characteristic, but 'the most important one of all'.[261] Educability is not a term Kant uses, but it is implied by those numerous formation processes that are central to both Kant's anthropology and his philosophy of history. Caught in a difficult to translate German terminological matrix, *Erziehung*, *Ausbildung*, and *Bildung* refer back to educability as their joint condition of

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[258] This is a point of dispute in Kant's critique of Herder and in Herder's reply to Kant's critique. Where Herder finds the idea that perfection happens in the species and not out of the individuals relation to the species concept, Kant, contrary to this, emphasises that in that case, 'species' would be a merely logical category whereas 'if "the human species" signifies the *whole* of a series [*Reihe*] of generations going (indeterminably) into the infinite (as this meaning is entirely customary), and it is assumed that this series ceaselessly approximates the line of its destiny [*Bestimmung*] running alongside it, then it is not to utter a contradiction to say that in all its parts it is asymptotic to this line and yet on the whole that it will coincide with it, in other words, that no member of all the generations of humankind, but only the species will fully reach its destiny. The mathematician can give elucidation here; the philosopher would say: "The destiny of humankind is on the whole a *ceaseless progress*, and its completion is a mere idea, but very useful in all respects – the idea of a goal to which we have to direct our endeavors in accordance with the aim of providence."', RJGH, 142.

[259] IUH, 108 [AA VIII:18].

[260] APPV, 421 [AA VII:326] (translation modified).

[261] Kuehn, 'Kant on Education, Anthropology, and Ethics', 66.

possibility.[262] The possible conceptual distinctions implied by these terms within Kant's writings, are difficult to track, both in the original, since the meaning of each is not entirely consistent, and even more so in English translation, wherein a tendency to treat them as relatively interchangeable makes it almost impossible to identify subtle differences which partake in conceptual distinctions. Where *Erziehung* and *Ausbildung* for the most part respectively imply different forms of child rearing and concrete education[263] – being taught either customs, manners, skills, or knowledge – *Bildung* is most often used in a broader sense, to imply either different individual processes of formation or numerous processes of formation taken together as a whole.

In the *Lectures on Pedagogy* and in *Anthropology*, Kant distinguishes between three predispositions whose end is the use of reason, each of which corresponds to three different forms of educative requirements and correspondingly three endpoints for their development: a technical predisposition whose telos is skill [*Geschicklichkeit*]; a pragmatic predisposition whose telos is prudence [*Klugheit*]; and a moral predisposition whose telos is morality. The process of the development of each of these predispositions is in turn called 'cultivation' [*Kultivierung*], 'civilisation' [*Civilisirung*] and 'moral formation' [*moralische Bildung*] or simply 'moralisation' [*Moralisierung*] .[264] This threefold division is also the refrain according to which, in 'Idea for a Universal History', it is emphasised that while the age of Enlightenment may be both cultivated and civilised, it is far from moralised.[265] Against this background, a scale of the fourfold aspects of an education according to each predisposition, also allows a glimpse of the theory of the educability of human beings as such: that one must learn first of all to become disciplined enough to restrict one's animal nature and learn to learn. This much is clear from the fourfold differentiation of the levels of education found in the *Pedagogy,* which spells out how one must first learn:

1) How to become self-disciplined, so as to 'prevent animality from doing damage to humanity, both in the individual and in society. Discipline is therefore merely the taming of savagery'.[266]

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[262] Kuehn alludes to the transcendental function of 'educability' but does not develop the conceptual distinction between the formation and the education of the species. *Ibid.*

[263] In the 'Essays regarding the Philanthropinum', Kant uses the term *Ausbildung* practically analogously with the use of *Erziehung* in *Lectures on pedagogy*: as the unifying term which implies a number of different modalities of an educative process, including ''discipline', 'training', 'instruction', 'schooling'. EP, 102; LP, 437.

[264] APPV, 418-419 [AA VII:322-333] LP, 444 [AA IX: 449-450].

[265] 'We are *cultivated* in a high degree by art and science. We are *civilized*, perhaps to the point of being overburdened, by all sorts of social decorum and propriety. But very much is still lacking before we can be held to be already *moralized*.' IUH: 116.

[266] LP*,* 444 [AA IX: 450].

2) To become *cultivated*. This is the process of learning different skills and of becoming *skillful*, the shaping of a faculty for *carrying out* a purpose one has set oneself. It does not concern or dictate what concrete ends are worth pursuing but fundamentally concerns the procurement of the means for carrying out ends. Because there are a multitude of ends, there is likewise a multitude of skills and the determination of *which* skills are to be learned largely depends on ones future rank in society and on what one has a natural predisposition for.

3) To become *civilized* or acquire the capacity to act *prudently*. This is the acquisition of the prerequisite knowledge for navigating human societies in accordance with established manners. It is this form of knowledge which the anthropology in part is meant to convey in its focus on 'national character', such that students might be better placed when faced with manners different from their own. This is the realm of what we might call 'cultural differences' in Kant.

4) To nurture the predisposition to become moralised. This last step differs in character from the others in that one cannot, properly speaking, be *taught* to be moralised. It is something a moral agent does *freely*. The function of education here is rather to foster a good *disposition* toward moralisation, such that the human being will 'choose nothing but good ends', which is to say ends that 'are necessarily approved by everyone and which can be the simultaneous ends of everyone'.[267]

In the so-called *Menschenkunde*, a text composed on the basis of anthropology lectures given in the early 1780s, one of the starkest racial hierarchies mapped out by Kant, is articulated precisely in the vocabulary of *Bildung* as a formative process that breaks with mere natural inclination. Therein, the differentiated capacities of the different races to enter into such processes on their own incentive is precisely what is at stake, and the different levels overtly repeat the different levels of education outlined above:

1) The American people acquires no culture [*Bildung*]. It has no incentives; because affect and passion are absent in it. They are not in love, thus they are also not fertile. They hardly speak at all, do not caress one another, also do not care for anything, and are lazy, they paint their faces in an ugly manner.

2) The Negro race, one could say, is exactly the opposite of the American; they are full of affect and passion, very lively, talkative and vain. They acquire culture, but only a culture of slaves; that is, they

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[267] LP, 444 [AA IX: 450].

allow themselves to be trained. They have many incentives, are also sensitive, afraid of beatings, and also do many things out of honour.

3) It is true that the Hindus have incentives, but they have a strong degree of composure, and they all look like philosophers. Despite this, they are nevertheless very much inclined toward anger and love. As a result they acquire culture in the highest degree, but only in the arts and not in the sciences. They never raise it up to abstract concepts; a great Hindustani man is the one who has gone very far in deceit and who has a lot of money. The Hindus always remain as they are, they never bring culture further, although they began to cultivate [*bilden*] themselves much earlier.

4) The white race contains all incentives and talents in itself; as a result it must be considered in a bit more detail. Information concerning it is given above. Whenever any revolutions have occurred, they have always been brought about by the whites, and the Hindus, Americans, and Negroes have never participated in them. All of Europe, the Turks, and the Kalmucks belong to the white race. Under the whites one could make the division of the Oriental and Occidental kinds [*Schlages*].[268]

This hierarchy that divides those who do not acquire *Bildung*, those who can be formed but only into slaves, those who shape themselves according to highly refined forms but who stagnate there, and those who shape themselves according to all the natural predispositions for reason reflects a differentiation in the educability of the different human races. The centrality of capacities, limitations, and stagnations within different strata of *Bildung* is crucial for any attempt to situate the natural historical characterisations of races in relation to the universal world history of peoples. That some are *incapable of Bildung* – as a result of the development of their germs and predispositions – essentially entails that they have not been able to develop the means for restraining and reshaping their natural inclinations. It is not, then, that Kant considered there to be different forms of transcendental frameworks for different races, nor that he considered other races to be devoid of reason as such. But what he did maintain was that something in the *natural historical* determination of each of these groups of humans either aggravated or tamed those 'deficiencies' which cause *all* humans, as animals with rationality, to fall short of the demands of reason. In the published *Anthropology*, Kant explicitly ties such a deficiency – not in reason or the understanding as such but in the way in which it is exercised or executed – to questions that concern civil and therefore political maturity:

An understanding that is in itself sound (without mental deficiencies) can still be accompanied by deficiencies with regard to its exercise, deficiencies that necessitate either a *postponement* until the growth to proper maturity, or even the *representation* [*Stellvertretung*] of one's person through that of another in regard to matters of civil nature. The (natural or legal) incapacity of otherwise sound human beings to use his *own* understanding in civil affairs is called *immaturity* [*Unmündigkeit*].[269]

[268] Immanuel Kant, *Menschenkunde*, in *Lectures on Anthropology*, ed. Allan W. Wood and Robert B. Louden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 320–21.
[269] APPV, 315 [AA VII 208].

This is the reason educability forms the prism through which we should be reading the essays on race, and why we have to carry that consideration through to the philosophy of history. Because this is where race come to matter and has consequences in a conception of a restricted capacity to impose the constraints necessary to educate *oneself* which entails either a postponement of self-representation or infinite guardianship. Which of the two scenarios outlined are we then presented with in the philosophy of history?

Since Kant considered the teleological end of history to be the transformation of a 'crude natural capacity for moral discrimination' into an actual moral regard for duties and rights and, with it, the transformation of a 'pathologically compelled agreement to form a society finally into a moral whole',[270] what we have to ask is, are such transformations predicated on postponing the self-legislation of peoples considered dependent on an educational process? Or, are they predicated on a perpetual state of representation in which guardianship of the cosmopolitan whole is entrusted to a select population? Both appear to be possible because they present, to my view, two primary interpretational options for understanding, in the *Menschenkunde*, the fourfold difference in the educability of the human races – between those who acquire no culture; those who can be trained; those who acquire culture to the highest degree; and those who acquire both culture to the highest degree *and* the capacity to abstractly conceptualize it. Through the first of these interpretational prisms, the fixation at a certain moment of the development of some germs and predispositions over and above others entails that for *some* races, no process of cultivation or education is at all possible. This would seem to entail a number of sinister consequences in terms of the idea of a permanent social and political organisation of the world under white supremacy.[271] Through the second, the limitation in educability is not to be understood as permanent *tout court* but as a limitation of what, within each race, those who belong thereto can *make of themselves*. That is, as something which, through the proper training and education from those who have already acquired a certain base level of cultivation, might be impart to them. Where some of Kant's statements seem to hint at the first option, a note concerning the *global* prospect of a historical progression of the human species toward perfection, found among the loose sheets of teaching notes for Kant's anthropology lectures, hints at the latter:

> The Oriental nations [*orientalischen Nationen*] would never on their own accord –
> We must seek the continuous progress of humankind toward perfection in the occident, and from there its dissemination around the Earth [*Verbreitung auf der Erde suchen*].[272]

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[270] IUH (2007), 111 [AA VIII:21].

[271] This is largely the interpretation which ensues from the argument presented in Tsenay Serequeberhan 'Eurocentrism in philosophy: The case of Immanuel Kant', *The Philosophical Forum* 27:4 (1996), 333–56.

[272] Kant, Refl.1501, [AA XV:788-89]. Erich Adickes, the editor of Kant's this part of Kant's *Nachlass*, dates this reflection to a period between 1775–83. A similar diagnosis of the stasis of 'Oriental peoples' is found in the

There are two important aspects of this brief reflection, which enlists 'Orient' and 'Occident' for equally demographic and geographic purposes. First, with the idea of a divide between Oriental and Occidental nations, Kant is not making a claim to a racial difference but to a difference *within* the white race, between those peoples united into civil wholes within the Middle East and North-East Eurasian regions, on the one side, and those in Western Europe, on the other.[273] Does the fact that no other race is mentioned in the context of this question mean that, by default, white humanity constitutes the population that guides progression in history? And, further, that the issue at stake is merely *which part amongst them* are the forerunners? Or, do racially determined differences not make themselves present in a manner, which concerns the political organisation of the world?

Second, the passage is ambiguous with respect to the concluding reference on the *dissemination* of progress toward perfection – most notably with respect to the *means* of dissemination. The following inquiry into the function of geography within Kant's philosophy of history takes its cues from such ambiguities, since these are the issues through which its peculiar *globality* enters the frame, guided by the idea that 'whole scope of all the peoples on Earth […] will gradually come to participate in progress'.[274] The question of the *dissemination* of the continuous progress of humankind toward perfection 'around the Earth' can fruitfully be treated in conjunction with Kant's anthropological perspective on the education of humankind in the philosophy of history.

V. The Teleological Function of Culture

There are three textual sites that are key for developing an understanding of the full significance of the claim that some groups within the human species have no or a limited capacity for *Bildung,* to Kant's philosophy of history: first, the *Anthropology*; second, the essays on universal world history; and third, because of its centrality to the core arguments of both the essays on race and those on history, the *Critique of the Power of Judgement*. The central claim in 'Idea for a Universal History' is that if the perspective of humankind as a species is

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lecture transcripts from the anthropology Friedländer (1775/76), the anthropology Pillau (1777/78) and in *Menschenkunde* (c.1781/82). The first sentence is ambiguous and it is unclear if it is poorly formulated, unfinished, or both. In his comments on this passage, Bernasconi translates '*Die orientalischen Nationen würden sich aus sich selbst niemals*' as: 'The oriental nations would never improve themselves on their own'. Bernasconi, 'Will the Real Kant', 18.

[273] This is clear from the way in which the Oriental–Occidental divide is drawn in the context of Kant's discussion of racial difference in the lecture transcripts from the courses on anthropology: 'All of Europe, the Turks, and the Kalmucks belong to the white race [and] under the Whites one could make the division between Occidental and Oriental kinds [*Schlages*]'. Kant, *Menschenkunde*, 320–21.

[274] CF, 304.

assumed, history can become rationally comprehended through the regulative idea of an 'aim of nature' that works itself out therein – this claim is repeated in the appendix to 'Toward Perpetual Peace' where it concerns nature's 'guarantee' for the arrival at peaceful cosmopolitical co-existence among the states on Earth. Kant grounds this claim on two related presuppositions. The first concerns natural teleology, that '[a]ll natural predispositions [*Naturanlagen*] of a creature are determined sometime to develop themselves completely and purposively [*zweckmäßig*]'.[275] The second concerns human finitude and, as already discussed, entails that these predispositions are never fully realised within a single individual but only in the species. As Henry E. Allison has emphasised, neither those natural-organic predispositions that account for its development in determinate ways, nor the opposition of the species' and individual's realisation of these predispositions can be considered anything other than dogmatic if taken in separation from the analytic of teleological judgment in *Critique of the Power of Judgement*.[276] In the analytic, teleological judgments are explicitly stated to function as a supplement to causal explanations. They 'serves us as *one more principle* for bringing nature's appearances under rules in those cases where the causal laws of nature's mere mechanism are not sufficient to allow us to do so'.[277] In this manner, 'the thread of natural purposiveness connects the cosmopolitan politics in Kant's philosophy of history through the transcendental apparatus, to the 'situated' man of the anthropology, and the thread carries the tension between the two'.[278] The distinction between discipline and cultivation evoked in the *Critique of the Power of Judgement* is subsumed under the concept culture as, respectively, the 'culture of discipline [(*Cultur der Zucht (Disciplin)*]' and the 'culture of skill [*Cultur der Geschicklichkeit*]',[279] in precisely those sections wherein the perspective changes from a natural-historical system of nature to a historical system of world history. The context for this shift is a discussion of what Kant calls the ultimate and final purpose of nature, a distinction which in itself requires a little explanation. The purposiveness of nature as a whole is expressed in the maxim for judgment: 'Everything in the world is good for something or other, nothing is gratuitous'.[280] Judgements about the purposive structure of nature as a whole are not based on something given to us in experience (unlike our

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[275] IUH, 109. [AA VIII:19]

[276] Henry E. Allison, 'Teleology and History in Kant: The Critical Foundations of Kant's Philosophy of History' in *Kant's Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim*, ed. Amélie Rorty and James Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 28.

[277] CPJ, 236, [AA V: 360]

[278] Storey, 'Empire and Natural Order', 696. Storey's argument for the continued weakening of the epistemic status of teleological judgements is insightful in many ways, but it seems to fail to consider that the practical relevance of such judgements as *ideals* might be more consistent than their theoretical relevance.

[279] CPJ, § 83, 319 [AA V: 431–32]

[280] *Ibid.*

judgements regarding organisms which only become possible mediated through a concept of reason). Judgements regarding nature as a system of purposes are derivative, dependent on a transfer of our assumptions regarding the *contingency* of organisms to the contingency of the 'world as a whole'.[281] Here we have moved from a judgment regarding the purposiveness of an inner form to that regarding the purposiveness of an existing being for something else. It is in the specification of the manner and conditions under which we can judge nature as a system of means and ends – grass as purposed for oxen, oxen as purposed for man – that the distinction between final and ultimate ends of nature is brought to the fore and that the place of man within the system is attributed a special point of reference.

The distinction between the ultimate purpose and the final purpose (end) of nature rests on their respective placements, internally and externally, to the system of nature as a whole. When we regard something as a natural purpose, when we consider organisms, these can be taken either as organised according to an end internal to the thing itself (each organism making up a specific part–whole relation), or they can be considered as a means serving something else, as a link in the chain of external purposiveness (each organism a part of a whole). In the former, we might consider the organism as such to be a 'final purpose', that is, 'a purpose that requires no other purpose as a condition of its possibility'.[282] In this sense it is an unconditioned purpose. But, as a link in the chain of purposiveness, each organism also appears conditioned as a purpose for something else. Indeed, from the perspective of nature as a whole, taken as one purposive system, we cannot locate 'any being that could claim the distinction of being the final purpose of creation'.[283] The *idea* of this system, leads us beyond the world of sense so that the unity of a supersensible principle must be considered valid not merely for 'certain species' of natural beings but for the whole of nature as a system. This idea of a final purpose was introduced as the *scopus* (goal or aim) of nature. Insofar as nature is not directly conceived of as a self-conscious system, the purpose must be considered as ascribed to it from without and as one that itself lies beyond nature, as a supersensible beyond the limits of experience.[284] The final purpose, that which serves nothing else as a means, is identified as the moral vocation of mankind, 'the highest good in the world'.[285] The Kantian teleology of history is a development of the formal

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[281] *Ibid.*, §75, 281. In the dialectic of teleological judgement, when treating teleological versus mechanistic explanations of nature, Kant denies that probability has any relevance, since 'we are concerned with judgements of pure reason'. But this is specifically in the context of a discussion about the intending subject, not about the ideas of purposiveness as such. See, *ibid.*

[282] *Ibid.*, §84, 322.

[283] *Ibid.*, §82, 313.

[284] *Ibid.*, §67, 258; Allison 'Teleology and History in Kant', 35.

[285] CPJ, §84, 323.

conditions for the realisation of this aim.[286]

As the bearer of a moral vocation and the final (moral rather than natural) end of nature, it is also in relation to mankind that the ultimate end or purpose of nature is to be defined. This ultimate purpose 'here on Earth' is at one point defined as: 'the purpose by reference to which all other natural things constitutes a system of purposes'.[287] In this manner, the structure of Kant's teleological system is organised with ultimate reference to a single point internal to the system. This point in turn has a final reference to a supersensible outside, beyond the bounds of experience.[288] An important caveat, here, is that the reflective character of teleological judgements means that they, by taking our discursive (conceptual and intuitional) cognitive apparatus into consideration, assert only that the way *we* (beings that share transcendental conditions of experience) can conceive of organisms is in terms of final causes, *Endursachen*.[289] Not that this must, beyond our capacity for cognition, be the case. But *that* we judge in this manner means that internal to these judgements 'man is the ultimate purpose of creation here on Earth, because he is the only being on Earth who can form a concept of purposes and use his reason to turn an aggregate of purposively structured things into a system of purposes'.[290] Embedded within the system of purposes, Kant conceives of human beings as the prime perceiver of it as a form of unification.

That humankind has the capacity and, indeed, the subjective necessity to judge teleologically but also the capacity to *act* in accordance with a concept or an idea, prompts Kant to ask further what it is 'within man himself that is a purpose and that he is to further through his connection with nature'.[291] What purpose, in other words, might we, through the optics of teleological systematisation, detect nature as furthering through and in man as a species? Kant answers this question through reference to 'what produces in rational beings an aptitude for purposes' – a point from which a rupture from nature is effectuated as 'culture'.[292] It is important, here, not to prematurely substantialise the idea of culture since

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[286] While the issue isn't at the forefront of the *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, there is a specific temporality to the ideas of purposive structures because the idea of an end determines the means working towards it.

[287] CPJ, §83, 317.

[288] The question of intentionality is thereby projected onto to supersensible: 'The purposiveness that we must presuppose even for cognising the inner possibility of many natural things is quite unthinkable to us and is beyond our grasp unless we think of it, and of the world as such, as a product of an intelligent cause (a God).' *Ibid.*, §75, 282.

[289] *Ibid.*, §82, 316.

[290] *Ibid.*, §82, 314.

[291] *Ibid.*, §83, 317. On the surface, this clashes with the strong assertion in Kant's moral philosophy that humans are to be considered as ends in themselves, never as a means. But if the final aim is moral then these sections can be understood as an attempt to understand how nature might indirectly work towards a moral aim. See Henry E Allison, 'Freedom, Happiness, and Nature: Kant Moral Teleology (CPJ §§83–4, 86–7)', in *Kant's Theory of Biology*, ed. Ina Goy and Eric Watkins (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 221–38.

[292] CPJ, §83, 319. This assertion is part of the extended debate with Herder over what constitutes the purpose

what is primary, for Kant, is the cultivation process rather than its endpoint.[293] This means that, once again, the educative substrate to the idea of cultural progression becomes absolutely central.

Culture, then, is conceived of as having an explicit teleological function for nature and is the highest *natural* purpose. The split introduced into the category of culture – between a culture of skill and a culture of discipline – is central here. Where a culture of skill signifies the formation of both the will to realise an end and the actual practical skill that would give one a capacity to do so, a culture of discipline signifies the development of the ability to tame the immediate demands of one's desires and inclinations and marks the divide between animal and rational being. It is what raises the human being above 'mere animal instinct'. Culture, then, is twofold: the capacity to set an end and the capacity to restrain impulses in order to work toward that end. It is the discipline of animality within *all* humans. The natural impulses (hunger, tiredness, etc.) guide us insofar as they remind us that we must take care of our bodies, but this does not mean we should allow them to rule over us. To have a culture of discipline is to not subject oneself to the 'despotism of desire', but to resist or give in according to what the 'purposes of reason' require.[294] These two culturation processes interact, in history, in intricate ways. Where a culture of discipline is said to have a 'civilising if not moralising effect' on humankind, a culture of skill is, at first sight, most central to Kant's teleology of history. It is through skill that the material conditions for the formation of certain societal structures come into being, structures that are, for Kant, central to the study of history.[295] A culture of skill is understood to be necessary to reach the stage where the condition for nature to achieve its final aim, *Endabsicht*, is achieved: 'a specific form of freedom enabling constitution' with 'lawful authority within a whole called civil society'. The stability of this constitution, in turn, is secured only in 'a *cosmopolitan* whole, a system of all

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of man. Already in the review of *Ideas for the Philosophy of the History of Humanity*, Kant critiqued Herder's notion that happiness might be said to make up this purpose. Kant's contra-argument is based on three points, that are discussed in greater depth in the *Critique of the Power of Judgement*. Firstly, that since the concept of what constitutes happiness is inherently bound to the specific circumstances of each individual, the realisation of happiness is depended on the individual conception of the meaning of the term and there is therefore no lawfulness to its purposiveness. Secondly, because of the difficulty of achieving happiness, it is never a *state* that is definitively reached: 'for it is not his nature to stop processing and enjoying at some point and be satisfied'. And thirdly, because nature in man, his dispositions (the mania for domination and the mania for possession), either works against happiness and, thereby, nature as such would not be able to achieve is purpose if it was human happiness, or, if it is the goal of nature, nature would be doing a really poor job at achieving it. Kant, CPJ, §83, 318 (AK 430–31).

[293] For a more detailed account of Kant's idea of culture as the ultimate end of nature see Pauline Kleingeld, *Fortschritt und Vernunft: Zur Geschichtsphilosophie Kants*, (Würzburg: Köngingshauser und Neumann, 1995) 44-47.

[294] CPJ, §83, 319.

[295] Discussed above in relation to the essays 'Idea for a Universal History' and 'Toward Perpetual Peace'.

states that are in danger of affecting one another detrimentally'.[296] In this way, the teleology of universal history is understood as the manner in which nature, in and through human kind, works toward a moral end. But, the culture of skill out of which the cosmopolitan whole is generated rests first on the culture of discipline, without it, the culture of skill cannot, so to speak, get off the ground. Where no self-restraint exists, no skills can be developed.

VI. Two Ideas of Education in Kant's Philosophy of History

Much of what is here addressed as the context of race, educability, and moral predispositions has a prehistory in a neighbouring issue within Kant studies; namely, the problem of how to conceive of historical moral development from within the framework of Kantian ethics.[297] Rarely, however, has the concept of race or the essays and lectures that relate thereto been taken into consideration within this particular literature. In part, this is because such texts, as already mentioned, are frequently considered to fall within the purview of the natural, not moral, ends of human beings. However, since moral development concerns both how the development of a moral predisposition, rather than morality itself, can be furthered and how one might conceive of the relations between moral and natural determinations, such a strict division, as this chapter has endeavoured to argue, is theoretically unsatisfactory.

In the third part of the essay 'On the Common Saying' (1793), Kant makes an appeal to the *duty* to improve the conditions for moralisation on behalf of posterity, as a duty to morally educate others, such that the predisposition towards morality is advanced and one therefore makes good on the practical assumption that since 'humankind is constantly advancing with respect to culture (as its natural end) it is also to be conceived as progressing toward what is better with respect to the moral end of its existence.'[298] This accord (and potential discord) between different forms of technical, pragmatic, and moral progression is likewise at the heart of the philosophy of history as it is inscribed in the final sections of *Anthropology*. By turning to the anthropological perspective on these issues, it is possible to demonstrate how Kant maintains a racial differentiation within the notion of educability.

As Kant outlines in the *Anthropology*, in accordance with his other explorations of the concept, universal world history concerns humankind not as 'all of the individuals (*singulorum*)' but at the level of the 'species as a *whole*, that is, *collectively* (*universorum*)'[299]. The

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[296] CPJ, §83, 320 (AK 433).

[297] It is this perspective which Pauline Kleingeld's study of Kant's philosophy of history places particular emphasis on. See Kleingeld *Fortschritt und Vernunft* and Pauline Kleingeld, 'Kant, History, and Moral Development' in *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 16, no.1 (January 1999), 59–80.

[298] OCS, 306.

[299] APPV, 423.

'idea' of universal world history thereby describes a developmental process guided by purposive nature, wherein a set of world political and economic conditions are established such that humans may overall and generationally be better able to fulfil the vocation (*Bestimmung*) of their species: to live in accordance with their rational nature and fully develop the technical, pragmatic, and moral predispositions (*Anlagen*) of reason. Again, universal world history is the history of the establishment of the conditions under which humanity might become not only 'cultivated' and 'civilised' but also 'moralised'. There are two central steps to this process: the establishment of a lawfully organised civil whole *and* the establishment of lawfully organised relations between different civil wholes. As such, universal world history is the history of the establishment of a globe-spanning juridical order in which the anarchy of inter-state relations is replaced by a lawful system regulating external relations between states. Since Kant readily admits that this process can be fluctuating, the assertion that history unfolds according to an end of nature is best understood as a practically motivated assumption, meant to orient political and moral agents toward the general improvement of the conditions of humanity. It is an assumption which further entails that a future historian might at some point be able to *write* a systematic and teleologically organised history of the civil constitutional and internationally legislative steps taken to ensure the continued approximation of humankind to its vocation.[300] The famous cosmopolitan whole – the establishment of which Kant at various points describes as the cessation of an international state of barbarism – is, what would allow for sustained peaceful co-existence on Earth, such that individual states might be free to undertake that 'long inner labour […] for the formation [*Bildung*] of its citizens', which the final step toward the moralisation of human beings requires.[301] The arrival of both the writer and the object to be written about, of both the historian and cosmopolitanism, may be hoped for because the full development of natural predispositions in humankind might be working itself out through what otherwise seems to hinder the establishment a peaceful global social order: a particular predisposition to social antagonism, or what Kant called *unsocial sociability*.[302] Through the expression of this predisposition in war, Kant writes, nature drives humans 'after many devastations, reversals,

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[300] On Allison's reading, the idea of reason that is the 'idea' of universal world history with a cosmopolitan aim is explicitly a *theoretical idea* guiding historiographical practice and not a practical ideal presumed as a guide for action. While it is true that it *implies* its future use as a theoretical idea whose function is to orient how 'a philosopher might conceive this history in the endeavour to attain a synoptic comprehension of it', I do not here consider this to be its primary function, nor do I believe Kant did so. This is attested to by the conclusion to the essay on universal world history, where Kant writes that the historiographic aspect is only a *small* motive for the attempt to produce such a history (namely for attempting, not to write it, but to bring it about). Allison, 'Teleology and History in Kant', 24.
[301] IUH, 116 [AA VIII:26].
[302] *Ibid.*, 111 [AA VIII:20].

and even thoroughgoing exhaustions of their powers [...] to what reason could have told them even without much sad experience: namely to go beyond a lawless condition of savages and enter into a *Völkerbund*'.[303] Where humans fail to better themselves, nature may step in with a harsher education, forcing a disciplinary process from which improvement might proceed.

This is given greater specificity in the second part of *The Conflict of the Faculties*, where it signifies the history of the political and legal union of *peoples and states*, a history that concerns the 'totality of human beings united socially on Earth and apportioned into peoples (*universorum*)'.[304] Where natural terrains, habitats and, local environments influence the development of inherent predispositions that defined the determinate terrestrial elements for the distinction between different races, the different collective character of ethnic groups is here woven out of and revealed within a shared language, social norms, mores, and religion as unified within a separate political state and, therefore, occupying a definite geographic territory. 'By the word *Volk* (*populous*)', Kant writes in the *Anthropology*, 'is meant the number of human beings united in a region, insofar as they constitute a whole. This number, or even a part of it that recognises itself as united into a civil whole through common ancestry, is called a nation (*gens*).'[305] It is law, the domain of validity as well as its enforcement, which unifies a moment of internal heterogeneity within a people so as to establish a harmonious set of external relations. To see how this plays out, we might momentarily consider the division Kant introduces in *The Metaphysics of Morals*, between active and passive citizenship.

While the only qualification for being a citizen is being fit to vote, the criteria of being fit to vote comes with several conditions, the first and foremost being the *independence* of the one who is to vote. This independences of the citizen, consists in him 'owing his existence and preservation to his own rights and powers as a member of the commonwealth, not the choice of another among the people'.[306] Because this is *not* the case for the majority of the people united under common laws, Kant introduces a split between active and passive citizenship. In the example provided, we get a fuller sense both of the distribution of active and passive citizenship and of what is entailed by 'independence'. Among those who cannot be said to be independent, Kant names: all women, minors, apprentices in the service of merchants or artisans, domestic servants (though not civil servants), artisan workers without their own shop, and private tutors. For some of these (women, minors, apprentices, and domestic servants) their passive citizenship is partly grounded in their being dependent on

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[303] *Ibid.*, 114 [AA VIII:24].
[304] CF, 297 [4:79].
[305] APPV, 407.
[306] MM, 314.

others for food and protection. For this reason, they lack 'civil personality' and their existence is, as Kant puts it, 'mere inherence'.[307] However, for this group, the problem is not primarily a question of their 'independence'. The lack of civil personality should be understood in reference to one of the attributes of the active citizen. Writing of the essential 'civil equality' among active citizens, Kant describes this as the state of 'not recognising among the *people* any superior with the moral capacity to bind him as a matter of right in a way that he could not in turn bind the other'.[308] In light of this passage, the lack of civil personality is best understood as reflective of an inscription within *unequal* moral relations, where the husband, father, or master has the capacity to 'bind' in a way that is not symmetrical equalled. In short, those lacking civil personality are considered minoritarian citizens under the custody of others. The second group in the example (artisans without workshops, farmers without land and teachers without public schools) are what Kant calls 'underlings' (*Handlanger*) of the commonwealth and more concretely illustrate what is meant by a lack of 'civil independence', since the conditions under which they can sustain their existence entails a *direct* dependence upon a *specific* other, whose influence might come to dominate over them. By way of example, in contrast to the workshop-owner, who mediates his business through the market to a *number* of clients, the artisan, who has to regularly seek out clients and be engaged directly, comes 'under the direction or protection of other individuals' and therefore cannot be said to possess civil independence.[309]

While all are *technically* citizens under the commonwealth, not all are citizens in the technical sense. The divide between active and passive citizenship ensures a division between those who are voting citizens, therefore able to participle in the authorship of the law, and those who are merely 'associates' of the constitution. What is important in this is that the distribution of active and passive citizenship is not settled once and for all. In fact, part of the *reason* for Kant making explicit that the category of citizenship extends to all the subjects of the law while at the same time introducing a divide between active and passive citizenship – rather than, say, retain a distinction between citizens and non-citizens – is precisely to keep open the possibly for a change in this distribution. To this effect, the only real limitation that this paragraph posits concerns the safeguarding of the formal possibility for *anyone* to change their standing in society and thereby to move from passive to active citizenship (this presumably also entails that active citizenship can be *lost*):

> Whatever sort of positive laws the citizens might vote for, these laws must still not be contrary to the

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[307] *Ibid.*
[308] *Ibid.*
[309] *Ibid.*

natural laws of freedom and of the equality of everyone in the people corresponding to this freedom, namely that anyone can work his way up from this passive condition to an active one.[310]

Of course, this leaves open a question as to whether both the lack of 'civil personality' and the lack of 'civil independence' can be overcome, or if there is a divide within the dived between active and passive citizens such that some, after all, would be considered to be irredeemable trapped within the category of passive citizenship. One might suspect that the latter could be the case for women and people of colour for, while children eventually grow up and apprentices eventually graduate, sex and race are categories of identity that, for Kant, implied unfailingly hereditary characteristics.[311] For the sake of the present argument, what needs to be emphasised is that the movement from passive to active citizen and the conditions under which this movement can be carried out are the fundamental issues which, in the philosophy of history, are transposed from individual citizens to an organised social whole before being elevated to the level of inter-state relations in the idea of cosmopolitanism.

The cosmopolitan whole that Kant envisioned, the 'progressive organisation of citizens of the Earth into and toward the species as a system that is cosmopolitically united',[312] entailed a conception of cosmopolitan law that joins the two traditional dimensions of public law – constitutional law (which codifies and legislates over the citizen-sovereign relation within a delineated territory) and international law (which codifies modes of engagement between sovereign bodies as well as between individual citizens from different states) – as the third dimension that related to as members of a universal state of humankind.[313] Cosmopolitan law is the law of world citizens, irrespective of their homeland.[314] But, just as in the case of national citizenship, while the 'boundaries of right are determined by Kant's distinction between internal and external relations, and although the distinction itself is conceptual, it can be given content only anthropologically'.[315] What,

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[310] MM, 315.

[311] Since the concern here is the notion that one must be *educated* to citizenship, I am not going to expand upon questions of citizenship and identity. This point has garnered significant attention in secondary discussions of Kant's political philosophy, especially as regards the place and moral worth of women. In it in relation to this topic, Kleingeld gives a full discussion of Kant's bias against women and argues that contemporary inclusions of gender-neutral language when we are trying to get at Kant's *own* position blurs this bias and therefore renders us less equipped to deal with it as a problem. See Pauline Kleingeld, 'The Problematic Status of Gender-Neutral Language in The History of Philosophy: The Case of Kant', *The Philosophical Forum* 25, no.2 (winter 1993), 134–150. Unfortunately, in light of the excellence of this article, it does not seem that Kleingeld is willing to accept that an analogous argument might be produced in relation to Kant's *racial* bias.

[312] APPV, Handschrift addition, 429.

[313] TPP, 324.

[314] Soraya Nour Sckell, 'A Cosmopolitan Law Created by Cosmopolitan Citizens: The Kantian Project Today', in *The Palgrave Kant Handbook*, ed. Matthew C. Altman (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2017), 596.

[315] Hedrick, 'Race, Difference, and Anthropology', 256.

then, does this mean for the porous relation between a Kantian conception of race and of nation?

One striking feature of the *Anthropology* is that while it only briefly addresses the pragmatic significance of race, it extensively treats the subdivision of the national character of European nations that sit under the category of white racial lineage. One possible explanation of this exclusionary focus is found in the extended citation from the *Menschenkunde* discussed above, wherein the transition from a discussion of race to a discussion of nationality is effected through the conclusion that since 'the white race possesses *all* motivating forces and talents *in itself* […], we must examine it somewhat more closely.'[316] Another possible explanation is that while national characteristics specifically are said to be derived primarily from cultural distinctness, this is the case *only* for those nations in which a certain level of cultural development has been reached – in this sense, Kant writes that it is only to the French and the English that national character proper can be attributed. For all others, a mixture of natural and cultural determinations, of national and racial limitations and potentials, will guide what such a people can make of themselves. In other words, their non-inclusion in the *Anthropology* reflects a highly normative set of assumptions inscribed within the idea of what a true national character is composed of, with only a fraction of the world's population truly qualifying as such.[317] And yet, Kant does specify, again and again, that what is special about humankind as opposed to other living species is that the entire species progresses in perfection. Despite serious consideration of the racism and race theory enveloped within this teleological conception of history, this is what causes scholars like Louden to conclude that the

> ideal of a truly universal moral community where all people count remains the most important single legacy of Kant's ethics […] Kant's writings in anthropology and empirical ethics do not tarnish this legacy. On the contrary they show us what we need to do to make it real. At the same time the underlying vision of gradual moral universality in these texts also reveals that the true intent of Kantian anthropology lies somewhere between transcendental and merely empirical concerns. In his lectures on anthropology Kant is not trying to make good on the ambitious claim that all philosophical questions are at bottom anthropological questions concerning the human subject but neither is he simply engaged in a descriptive account of human cultures. Rather his aim is to offer the species a moral map that they can use to move toward their collective destiny.[318]

Insofar as this describes a conception of what *Kant* considered the function of his *Anthropology* to be, this is a both perceptive and apt description. But, by downplaying how a racial dimension co-determines the questions of moral development, with which both Kant

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[316] Kant, *Menschenkunde,* 321.
[317] Louden, *Kant's Impure Ethics*, 90.
[318] *Ibid.*, 106

and Louden are wrestling, questions concerning the politics of race are ignored rather than addressed. The view that 'only some' will progress to perfection and others remain behind or forever stuck (women, other races than whites) contradicts Kant's continuous insistence upon the progress of the entire human species. This is partly what transfers the pedagogical question of education and the educators onto the relation between races and genders (whites become the educators of non-whites, men the educators of women). Indeed, since the *whole* of the species is at issue while a part is particularised, the question of an educative relation across the species forcefully imposes itself. Summarising the characterisation of humankind in the *Anthropology*, we find the following statement:

> The sum total of pragmatic anthropology, in respect to the vocation of the human being and the characteristic of his formation [*Charakteristik seiner Ausbildung*] is as follows. The human being is destined by his reason to live in a society with human beings and in it to cultivate himself, to civilize himself, and to moralize himself by means of the arts and the sciences. No matter how great his animal tendency may be to give himself over passively to the impulses of ease and good living, which he calls happiness, he is still destined to make himself worthy of humanity by actively struggling with the obstacles that cling to him because of the crudity of his nature. *The human being must therefore be educated to the good*; but he who is to educate him is on the other hand a human being who still lies in the crudity of nature and who is now supposed to bring about what he himself needs. Hence the continuous deviation from his destiny with the always repeated returns to it.[319]

As this makes clear, education has a crucial, but not straightforward, role to play in the philosophy of history since at least two operative ideas of an educative journey are to be found therein. That of the immanent education of humankind and that of an 'education [*Erziehung*] from above'. As mentioned, Kant had, in *The Critique of the Power of Judgement* also described the latter as an 'education by nature', and he here goes on to specify that this education is 'salutary but harsh and stern in the cultivation [*Bearbeitung*] of nature' and 'extends through great hardship and almost to the extinction of the entire race'.[320] The first, most straightforwardly recognisable educational relation is that between different generations *and* different peoples, the transmission of certain models for thinking and for learning to orient oneself within the world. Here, Kant encounters, restates, and recognises the problem of the education of educators as one of the greatest challenges faced by humankind. As he noted in the *Lectures on Pedagogy*, 'two human inventions can probably be regarded as the most difficult, namely the arts of government and education'.[321] That humans are fallible means that no educator could ever teach perfectly according to the ends of reason:

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[319] APPV, 420 (my emphasis).

[320] *Ibid.*, 423. This sentence is a reworking of one found in *The Critique of the Power of Judgement,* where Kant writes that in regard to the discipline of our inclinations, 'we find nature acting purposively, for it strives to give us an education [*Ausbildung*] that makes us receptive to purposes higher than those that nature itself can provide.' CPJ, §83, 321. [AA V:433].

[321] LP, 441.

the problem of moral education for our *species* remains unsolved even in the quality of the principle, not merely in degree, because an evil tendency in our species may be censured by common human reason and perhaps also restrained, but it will thereby still not have been eradicated.[322]

In effect, what amounts to any form of progress here is the process of the improvement of the conditions for an education, aiming at generational moral improvement. As such, moral improvement is in no way secured and progress by no means certain, but it is more likely that if good education is in place, better citizens and more moral human beings will develop.

This is also clear in *The Conflict of the Faculties*, where the problems of a philosophy of history capable of predicting the progression of the human species are refracted through the problem of education.[323] The immanent idea of education is herein divided into two models. One in which education comes from below (from individuals that improve themselves and then go on to improve the social and political whole), and one in which the form and principles of education are imposed from the top down. Kant is unequivocal in his support of this latter model, writing that the general education of a people – a condition for their becoming not only good citizens but also good human beings who can improve and take care of themselves – depends on a training which is not the prerogative of families alone but should be carried out at state-level policy.[324]

> The whole mechanism of this education has no coherence if it is not designed in agreement with a well-weighed plan of the sovereign power, put into play according to the purpose of this plan, and steadily maintained therein; to this end it might well behove the state likewise to reform itself from time to time and, attempting evolution instead of revolution, progress perpetually toward the better.[325]

When compared to the early texts on Basedow's Philanthropinum and on Enlightenment experiments in educational methods, it seems clear that Kant actually became increasingly agnostic as to the extent to which national improvements of education could be the key to the uninterrupted progression of the human species toward the better. This is where the second idea for an educative journey comes to supplement that of an immediate educational relation. It is an equally complex issue and one which Kant also treats in both *The Conflict of the Faculties* and in the *Anthropology*. Essential in both texts is the exemplary function of an established constitution *and* the notion of the unsocial sociability of humankind. The idea here is that, once a constitution in accordance with reason and the universal principles of legality has been instantiated, it will play the role of exemplary model in history henceforth.

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[322] APPV, Handschrift addition, 422.
[323] CF, 308 [AA VII:93].
[324] *Ibid.*
[325] *Ibid.*

As exemplary, such a constitution will not, once it has entered the world as phenomena, 'be forgotten, because it has revealed a tendency and a faculty in human nature for improvement such that no politician, affecting wisdom, might have conjured out of the course of things hitherto existing, and one which nature and freedom alone, united in humankind [*Menschengeschlecht*] in conformity with inner principles of right could have promised.'[326] Although the actual course of social and political developments fluctuate because regressions and progressions are dependent on the free acts of individuals and their varying capacities to restrain their animal nature and to live morally in relation with one another, once the example is set as a standard, it remains a point of orientation.

The means and dynamism which drives a move from 'international barbarism' to a lawful cosmopolitan whole, lies in the conflictual natural predisposition whereby humans as a multitude *cannot do without each other* and yet *cannot help but be objectionable to each other*. This is encapsulated in the idea that war amongst civil wholes is 'like a mechanical device of Providence, where to be sure the struggling forces injure each other through collision, but are nevertheless still regularly kept going for a long time through the push and pull of other incentives'.[327] War, which impedes progress by the way in which it funnels funds away from the task of educating each population and which is, Kant states, unquestionably one of the greatest evils, nevertheless serves a purpose insofar as it drives nations toward the formation of a cosmopolitan whole. This is both 'a regulative principle: to pursue this diligently as the destiny of humankinde, not without grounded supposition of a natural tendency toward it'[328] and the point at which Kant's philosophy of history becomes most clearly a historical theodicy.

The second idea pertains to the possible means of *spreading* this example across the globe, to all the populations of the Earth such that, eventually, a move from 'international barbarism' to a lawful cosmopolitan whole can be effectuated. This is both where the twofold expression of humankind's 'unsocial sociability' – war and commerce – become central as the dynamic and conflictual forces in a universal world history toward cosmopolitanism *and* where the two ideas of education in Kant's philosophy of history come to interact in complex manners. Though Kant seems to have wavered on the degree to which commercial sociability might either quell or incite conflict,[329] he remains unwavering on the view that war – though it may in the short term impede progress by the way in which it funnels funds away from the task of educating each population and is in this and other regards to be considered,

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[326] *Ibid.*, 304 [AA VII:88].
[327] APPV, Handschrift addition., 425.
[328] *Ibid.*, 427 (with minor amendments).
[329] Ypi, 'Commerce and Colonialism', 99–126.

unquestionably, one of the greatest evils – serves a purpose from the projected standpoint of the whole of universal world history insofar as it drives nations toward the formation of a cosmopolitan whole.[330] It is, in other words, a part of that 'harsh and salutary' education through which purposive nature pushes humankind to continuously shape itself and develop its predisposition to reason. Though Kant cannot sanction colonisation from the standpoint of his moral or political philosophy, in the philosophy of history it appears as a part of this very same history of the harsh education of humankind. In this history, one part of humanity seems retrospectively to have been entrusted with the immanent education of those who have not of themselves been able to progress. And while Kant's philosophy, prospectively, is the open-ended development of the predispositions for reason, the cosmopolitan ideal which is thought to best support this endeavour, remains profoundly marked by an assimilationist tendency, as the Kantian philosophy of history traces its geography from a white European centre and around the globe.

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[330] TTP, 319 and APPV 427.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE EUROCENTRISM OF *WELTGESCHICHTE*:

HEGEL AND THE CRITIQUE OF

COSMOPOLITANISM

But it is the state that first supplies a content that not only lends itself to the prose of history but also helps to produce it.
G.W.F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, 1830[331]

In Kant's treatment of the idea of the vocation of the human species, he continually returned to the problem, thrust upon reason, of the existence of the 'happy inhabitants of Tahiti' who, never visited by more civil nations [*gesittetern Nationen*], had been destined to live for thousands of centuries in their tranquil indolence'.[332] An altogether different primary imaginary of difference is inscribed within G.W.F. Hegel's philosophy. For him, it was the ancient civilisations of the East and their political, artistic, religious, and philosophical traditions that the system of philosophical science, in some form or another, had to pass through in order to fulfil its encyclopaedic ambition. Hegel's image of difference is, at least in this regard, internally more complex that Kant's, shaped out of numerous studies of particularly Indian and Chinese texts.[333] And though Hegel's erudition on these topics was decidedly second-hand – as he, unlike the Humboldt brothers, lacked both the motivation and the language-skills necessary to undertake such work himself – it was a form of erudition nonetheless.[334] This chapter examines how Hegel's philosophical world history, the history

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[331] PWHCE, 115.

[332] Kant, RJGH, 141.

[333] Hegel's (in)famous dismissal of black Africa and of the Amerindian populations notwithstanding.

[334] In an 1822 letter, written during his first course on philosophical world history, Hegel stressed that he was exceedingly 'occupied with the Indian and Chinese sphere, absorbed in quarto and octavo volumes'. According to Karl Ludwig Michelet, the first editor of Hegel's collected writings, a heavily annotated and self-composed compendium of excerpts from especially French and English works on 'the Orient' had formed the basis for the narrative developed in the course of these lectures. Unfortunately, this compendium does not appear to have been preserved. In the case of Hegel's work on India and the concept of Indian philosophy – which was informed by the then-general eclipse of an earlier Sinophile impulse, as reflected in Leibniz's work – an extensive mapping of both the materials that were in circulation generally and the material Hegel would most likely have consulted can be found in Ignatius Viyagappa, *G.W.F. Hegel's Concept of Indian Philosophy* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1980). See also Aakash Singh Rathore and Rimina Mohapatra, 'Hegel's Indological Sources and the Standard Interpretation', in *Hegel's India: A Reinterpretation, with Texts*, ed. Aakash Singh Rathore and Rimina Mohapatra (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2010), 14–22. As regard's Hegel's concept of China,

of world spirit, set the terms for the envelopment of the world outside of Europe within his encyclopaedic system and what this might mean for the legacies of Hegelianism.

Of all the heirlooms left to us by Hegel, his conception of philosophical world history is without doubt one of the most commonly disputed. It is also one of the most commented upon aspects of Hegel's philosophy outside of the disciplinary bounds of philosophy narrowly conceived, perhaps matched only by the master–slave dialectic. But where the isolation of the fourth chapter of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* was re-read constructively, during the twentieth century, as the ground for thinking problems of recognition, misrecognition, and structural inequalities inscribed within the formation of self-consciousness,[335] references to the final sections of *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, the philosophy of objective spirit in the *Encyclopaedia*, and the lectures on the philosophy of world history have, more often than not, been almost exclusively critical. This is the case insofar as extracts from these texts often function as metonyms for all that might be misguided in Hegel's philosophy; the equation of world history with the self-realisation of spirit as unsustainable absolute idealism, and the 'true theodicy' which redeems the 'slaughter-bench of history' the sign of Hegel's apologism for both the present state of the world and for past suffering. When it comes to the question of its Eurocentrism, an analogous operation has transformed the very idea of Hegelian philosophy into a metonym for much that is wrong with critical theory.[336] Such a twofold metonymic reduction, a reduction that circulates more readily than perhaps it should, might lend some truth to Walter Kaufmann's assertion that Hegel's philosophy of history, because it is so well known, 'in the more demanding sense of that word, […] is scarcely "known" at all'.[337] To 'know' in Kauffman's sense of the word (a decidedly *Hegelian* sense of the word)

see Robert Bernansconi, 'China on Parade: Hegel's Manipulation of His Sources and His Change of Mind', in *China in the German Enlightenment*, ed. Bettina Brandt and Daniel Leonhard Purdy (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 165–80.

[335] Of course, many of these were mediated through Alexandre Kojève's famous emphasis on the master–slave dialectic in his Heidegger-infused lectures on the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Judith Butler's *Subjects of Desire* partly mapped the trajectory of the master–slave dialectic in France after Kojève but largely leaves out of the linage which runs through Frantz Fanon and the shift of terrain onto that of racism and (im)possible intersubjectivity between colonized and colonizing subjects. See Judith Butler, *Subjects of Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987). A brief overview of the influence of Kojève's reading of the master–slave dialectic upon Simone de Beauvoir, Frantz Fanon and Luce Irigaray can be found in Alison Stone, 'Hegel and Twentieth Century in French Philosophy' in *The Oxford Handbook of Hegel*, ed. Dean Mayer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 697–717.

[336] This was the explicit contention of Robert Young's *White Mythologies*. A similar critique forms the subtext to Amy Allen's recent reckoning with Jürgen Habermas's and Axel Honneth's versions of Frankfurt School Critical Theory, arguing that they cannot be de-colonized while retaining a commitment to an essentially Hegelian 'imperialist meta-narrative' which subtends their conception of normative grounding. See Amy Allen, *The End of Progress: Decolonizing the Normative Foundations of Critical Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016).

[337] Walter Kaufmann, *Hegel: Reinterpretation, Texts, and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1965), 15. In *The Open Society and its Enemies* (1941), Karl Popper produced a polemicist reading of Hegel's philosophy of right and philosophy of history as the philosophical prefiguration of twentieth-century totalitarian political

means more than just familiarity with the abstract outlines of the concept of world history as, in Hegel's words, 'progress of the consciousness of freedom'[338] or with the four sequential moments of spirit's development according to an 'Oriental', 'Greek', 'Roman', and 'Germanic' principle. Rather, to know in the substantial sense amounts to the rare production of a reading that constructs a relation between the historical present of the reading itself and the relevant texts in their context. For a time, the famous and infamous 'end of history' thesis constituted the primary conceptual site for re-readings of this kind.[339] Arguably, the distinct but related issue of Hegel's Eurocentrism might be said to do so today since, as the global continually imposes itself as a problem to be thought, no serious engagement with philosophies of history can disregard those questions which emerge from the overlap of epistemic and political concerns which characterise the problem of Eurocentrism. Conversely, philosophical discussions of Eurocentrism seem almost inevitably to circle back toward a confrontation with Hegel and the afterlives of Hegelianism in critical theory. It is within this circle that the chapter here unfolds, as it reconstructs in order to complexify the intimacies of the concept of Eurocentrism to Hegel's philosophy of history. Since this reading of Hegel is preliminarily grounded on an examination of the centrality of critiques of Hegel's philosophy of history to the very construction of the concept of Eurocentrism, the chapter engages, on the one hand, a set of literatures *on* the concept of Eurocentrism and, on the other, Hegel's writings on the concept of philosophical world history and related

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projects, an iconic liberal critique that made it the primary target of Kaufmann's comments. In 'The Hegel Myth and its Method' Kaufmann explicitly took on Popper's textually piecemeal selections. Today of course, Kaufmann's characterisation will have to be taken as a truth with modifications, especially if we consider that there is a discrepancy between portraits of Hegel which use a polemic against his philosophy of history as the starting point for critical discussions of Eurocentrism more broadly considered and those explorations of Hegel's philosophy of history which are more internally situated within studies in the history of philosophy. I will discuss works in the former category in the following section. In the latter category, see especially Joseph McCarney, *Hegel on History* (London and NY: Routledge, 2000); Will Dudley (ed.), *Hegel and History* (New York: SUNY Press, 2009); and most recently Terry Pinkard, *Does History Make Sense? Hegel on the Historical Shapes of Justice* (Cambrigde MA: Harvard University Press, 2017).

[338] PWHCE, 86.

[339] As is the case for the master–slave dialectic, Kojève is a central mediating point in this reception history, although his own position on the matter of *when* precisely the end of history was to be located shifted considerably over the years, as he admits. See Alexander Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, trans. James H. Nichols (New York: Basic Books, 1969), 159–62. Peter Osborne's *The Politics of Time* has a useful discussion of the presuppositions and dead ends of three versions of the identification of the present with the end of history: Fukuyama's 1989 orthodox Hegelian identification of the historical present with the realisation of reason in the institutions of a liberal 'world order' after the fall of the Berlin Wall; Niethammer's cultural conservative and pessimist equation of the historical present with the annihilation of reason as freedom and therefore of reason *tout court* (*post-histoire*); and the Marxist–Hegelian conception of the end of history as a *goal* immanent to the historical present. See Peter Osborne, *The Politics of Time* (London: Verso, 1995), 36–44. For a more recent assessment of the end of history thesis, its precursors in Enlightenment philosophy and in particular its reception history, see Eric Michael Dale, *Hegel, the End of History, and the Future* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

passages from his broader oeuvre. Such material offers a wealth of themes broached and questions posed, much more than can be fully mapped within one chapter.[340] Rather than attempt any such mapping, the exegetical work is oriented by the inscription of the figure of the Earth as a space of inhabitation and relation in the philosophy of spirit, for two reasons. Since 'the Eurocentric' is best understood not in opposition to the global but as a particular conception both of 'globality' and of the 'becoming global' of the modern world alike, what should be questioned is the uneasy non-identity of the figure of the planet with the 'world' of world spirit.

The reading begins, therefore, with the idea of a 'planetary life of man' in the first paragraphs of the philosophy of subjective spirit and in the manuscript pages that contain what Hegel called his account of the 'the geographic foundation of history' in the lectures on the philosophy of world history. These two textual sites are of particular interest when read in conjunction, because they show how the concept of race is inscribed and circumscribed in Hegel's concept of philosophical world history. From this basis, it is argued that, for Hegel, philosophical world history in the philosophy of objective spirit not only systematically occupies the place of the Kantian idea of a cosmopolitan world-whole, but also – as the history of the actuality of objective spirit – functions as the medium through which the abstract character of this idea is critiqued. After examining the exposition of international law (*das aüßere Staatsrecht*) in *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* and the transition to philosophical world history, this chapter concludes with an interrogation of the status and function of the concept of 'world' in philosophical world history and of how world history is supposed to effectuate the transition to absolute spirit. This analysis adds another layer to the articulation of Eurocentrism in Hegel's philosophy, since it concerns the construction of the standpoint from which intra-worldly and inter-national comparisons are carried out.

I. Reading Hegel Today: The Parameters of Eurocentrism

'Eurocentrism', a somewhat polysemic signifier, is most critically potent when specifically articulated in relation to concepts of history. This is the perspective from which the subtle and sometimes difficult to determine difference between simply being 'centred on Europe' and 'Euro*centrism*' stands out most clearly. It is in naming and opposing the ramifications of

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[340] Although they touch upon the problem of Eurocentrism in interesting ways, the following foregoes a discussion of the link between Hegel's conception of the 'right of heroes' to formalise and thereby found a social whole and what Ranajit Guha calls the 'right of conquest'. Likewise, the consequence of seeing a necessary connection between *Geschichte* and *Historie*, the 'internal link' between 'what happened' and 'the narrative account of what happened', as revelatory of the divide between peoples with and without history will not be discussed either. These aspects are the central point of reference in Ranajit Guha, *History at the Limit of World-History* (New York: Columbia University Press 2002), 43–44.

a specific conception of the geographic trajectories of global historical development that Eurocentrism gains critical traction, and, as such, not every preoccupation with motifs, events, concepts, or narratives that exclusively refers to Europe and its history necessarily comes accompanied with the superiority complex named by this term. What critical analyses of Eurocentr*ism* have brought into focus is the ideological character of a set of presuppositions which culminate in the idea that historical dynamism – in questions of morality, socio-economic development, artistic innovation, or political and technological progress – essentially is European.[341] The designation of Europe, and, more broadly of 'the West', as the originary territory of modernity came as the corollary to this multifaceted localisation of historical dynamism, and consolidated the imaginary of an exceptional European civilisation that, through inherent features, came to possess historical priority over all other sites of political organisation, cultural production, religious and social life.[342] On its basis, the passage to modernity for all non-Western societies or communities was understood to practically translate into the imperative of a transformational passage through 'Westernisation'.[343]

It is in relation to the above conception of Eurocentrism that Hegel's philosophical world history has played a significant role as an emblematicly Eurocentric philosophy of history. To elucidate the construction of the concept of Eurocentrism therefore entails an assessment of this critique of Hegel. Inversely, to reconstruct the parameters and central aspects of the question concerning Hegel's Eurocentrism also implies an account of the concerns and aims that animate such a critique and these point beyond a narrowly philosophical scope, to the critique of social relations. To begin with the latter of these, the stakes can most clearly be gauged from Samir Amin's *Eurocentrism* (1988), which argued that Eurocentric theories of historical development served eminently political functions within the context of the globalisation of capitalist social relations. This was the case initially in philosophies of history that functioned as so-called justificatory discourses of European colonial and imperial projects but also, importantly, after formal decolonisation, in the conceptions of history underpinning economic theories of 'modernisation' through developmentalist foreign policies – the latter understood to instantiate a predominantly

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[341] The assumption in contemporary critiques of Eurocentrism, such as Dipesh Chakrabarty's, is that it is a problem which persists both in institutions and in discourse after the substantial terms on which it seems to be premised have been taken apart – that is, after faith in any substantially unified notion of progress dissolved in the face of historical atrocity and after the identity of 'the European' has been deconstructed at several turns.

[342] Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World*.

[343] On the remarkable fluidity of this category and the permeations between the idea of 'Europe' and that of 'the West' as discursive rather than geographic references, see Fernando Coronil, 'Beyond Occidentalism: Toward Nonimperial Geohistorical Categories' in *Cultural Anthropology* 11, no.1 (February 1996), 53.

economic rather than largely territorial imperialist tendency: 'Eurocentrism […] implies a theory of world history [une téorie de l'hisotoire universelle] and, departing from it, a global political project'.[344] For this reason, it is not simply the fallacies of a misguided theory that various critiques of Eurocentrism have sought to make manifest but, more importantly, its operationalisation as a lever of oppression and exploitation in different historical and geo-political circumstances. While the form of such critiques may vary – both according to disciplinary standards but often most notably according to the specific political geographies they invoke[345] – they all confront the idea of exceptional progress that subtends the view of Europe or 'the West' as more enlightened, civilised, or modern than Asia, Latin America, Africa, or the Middle East, with the repeated instances of colonial and imperial violence which this idea is thought to have been both premised upon and justificatory of. From this perspective, one sense in which to understand the objects of critiques of Eurocentrism is as the enduring misidentifications of the constitutional role of imperial or colonial domination of large parts of the world by European powers, within the history of capitalism, with a sense of inherent moral, political, aesthetic, and intellectual superiority.[346] In other words, the critical operation grows out of a corrective conception of modernity and the history of capitalism, colonialism, and so-called primitive accumulation. In the vocabulary of world-systems theory, the theoretical assumptions and historical misconceptions that went into constructing the idea of European historical priority ultimately amounted to a denial of the constitutive character of relations between European 'core' regions and globally distributed 'peripheries' in the formation of the modern world – in what might be called the isolationist prejudice of European modernity.[347] Following this pattern, critiques of Eurocentrism have tended to emphasise both the importance of these relations and the continued damning effects of the European colonial system, understood to have largely set the terms for the geographic expansion of the capitalist world economy. Indeed, one aspect of contemporary Eurocentric discourses might be characterised as the naturalisation and thereby de-

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[344] Samir Amin, *Eurocentrism* second Edition, trans. Russell Moore and James Membrez (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2009), 154.

[345] Particularly relevant here are the differences in national and regional registers between the critiques of Eurocentrism articulated from the standpoint of the colonial histories of India and Latin America and the critique of Orientalism which focused on the relation to the Middle East and the Arab world, as well as of the difference between these often nationally delineated (postcolonial national) regions and what can perhaps best be called 'transnational sites' that are necessary references for inquiries into the history of the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

[346] Enrique Dussel, 'Eurocentrism and Modernity: Introduction to the Frankfurt Lectures', in *The Postmodernism Debate in Latin America*, ed. John Beverley, José Oviedo, and Michael Aronna (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 65–76.

[347] See Giovanni Arrighi and Jason W. Moore, 'Capitalist Development in a World Historical Perspective', in *Phases of Capitalist Development: Booms, Crises and Globalizations*, ed. Robert Albritton, Makoto Itoh, Richard Westra, and Alan Zuege (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 56–75.

politicisation (most often through either cultural and racialised essentialisms) of existing systemic inequalities established and reproduced precisely through this very system.

To identify the historical and conceptual presuppositions of naturalisations such as those mentioned above, Amin's work summarised several years of preceding discussions on this topic and specified a set of criteria for the recognition of Eurocentric assumptions in socio-historical theory.[348] On this account, the misidentifications characteristic of Eurocentrism have, as malleable aspects of ideological formations, been characterised by four primary traits: i) the annexation of Hellenism to the imaginary of a strictly intra-European cultural and political inheritance-sequence; ii) an ingrained, if at points re-coded, racism that grounded ideas of trans-European cultural unity; iii) the interpretation of Christianity, also exclusively annexed to Europe, as the unifying principle which maintains this cultural unity with little regard to the history and politics of institutional religious life; and, finally, iv) the corresponding construction of a view of Europe's 'others' (in Amin's analysis, the near East and more distant Orient) in accord with both the racist foundations of cultural units and the static, ahistorical, conception of religion (and of Islam in particular).[349] While Amin primarily formulated this fourfold definition with a view to Max Weber's historical sociology, and the link formed therein between Protestantism and the concepts of modernity and rationalisation,[350] each of the four traits are important vectors for the critique of Hegel's philosophy of world history. Indeed, at the level of its content, they to a large degree encapsulate what is considered problematic therein: the primacy given to the Greek city-states as the site where consciousness of freedom first emerged in an organised community; the conception of a 'chain of tradition' running from ancient Greece to modern Europe; the latent philosophy of race inscribed in the natural determinations of each people; and the universal significance of protestant Christianity to the realisation of

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[348] There are of course other and more contemporary definitions to be found as well. Most recently and for their own purposes quite precisely, Alexander Anievas and Kerem Nisancioglu have defined Eurocentrism more expansively as a 'mode of inquiry' characterized by three interrelated assumptions about the nature and development of modernity: internalism, historical priority and linear developmentalism. On this account, Eurocentric studies adhere (intentionally or by feat of obliviousness) to a) a methodological internalism which sees the socio-cultural and economic changes of modernity as developed in dynamics set exclusively within geographic boundaries of Europe, b) an ensuing normative assumption of historical priority of 'Europe' or in some instances 'the West' over the rest of the world, such that the distinction between 'modern' and 'traditional' always produces the ideological others of Europe as lagging behind historically and finally c) the, as a consequence of these first two, predictive and thereby interventionist proposition that all societies must move through universal stages of historical development and thought these 'catch up' to more advanced societies. See Alexander Anievas and Kerem Nisancioglu, *How the West Came to Rule: The Geopolitical Origins of Capitalism* (London: Pluto Press, 2015), 4–5.

[349] Amin, *Eurocentrism*, 165.

[350] In essence, modernity as epochal signifier of the process of an increasing disenchantment and rationalisation of the world with primarily protestant Christian roots. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1904–05), trans. Peter Baehr/Gordon C. Wells (London: Penguin Books, 2002).

freedom paired with a strong divide drawn therein between peoples with and without consciousness of freedom, with and without history. Many of these traits, however, are also to be found in a number of other philosopher-historians from the same period. So how exactly are we to understand the fact that Hegel's writings have come to hold the dubious honour of constituting a privileged site of intervention insofar as the critique of the Eurocentric origins of modern social theory and political philosophy is concerned?

At least part of the answer lies in a reception history which lies beyond the scope of this chapter. That is to say, it is the continued importance of Hegel to critical thought which infuses the question of his Eurocentrism with relevance over and above that of other late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century thinkers. That Hegel offers such a powerful account of the historicity of freedom and of the relations between social practices and the conceptual forms these practices both are understood and can be contested through, is exactly the reason why his Eurocentrism is significant. Precisely for this reason, it is important not to isolate the philosophy of world history from the philosophy of objective sprit which precedes it, as has often been the case in critiques of Hegel's Eurocentrism. Textually, it is also important to avoid such an isolation because philosophical world history, as a discipline in its own right, was the last to be transposed into the system of philosophical science and its full development came years after the concept of 'word history' had first been systematically introduced in the 1817–18 Heidelberg *Lectures on Natural Right and Political Science* (*Naturrecht und Staatswissenschaft*)[351] and in the *Encyclopaedia* of 1817, in which the first iterations of Hegel's mature philosophy of objective spirit are to be found. Prior to their systematic introduction in the context of the 'philosophical science of the state', scattered references to world history, world spirit, and their importance for philosophical science as such appear in several important text; although the concept of philosophical world history is not properly developed until after their completion, references are to be found in certain passages of the 'Jena Drafts of a System' (1802–06)[352], the *Essay on Natural Law* (1803), and the *Phenomenology*

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[351] Discovered in 1982, these are also known as the *First Philosophy of Right*. The published edition of these lectures is based on the transcripts made by the law student Peter Wannenmann. G.W.F. Hegel, *Lectures on Natural Right and Political Science*, trans. J. Micheal Stewart and Peter C. Hodgson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[352] This is the title given to the collection of manuscripts and lecture notes for three consecutive lecture series delivered by Hegel in Jena in 1803–04, 1804–05, and 1805–06, assembled in the German as G.W.F. Hegel, *Jenaer Systementwürfe I–III*, in *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 6–8, ed. Klaus Düsing and Heinz Kimmerle (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag), 1975–76. In English, the second section of *Jena I*, the first philosophy of spirit, was published alongside the 1802–03 manuscript *System der Sittlichkeit* as G.W.F. Hegel, *System of Ethical Life and First Philosophy of Spirit*, trans. H.S. Harris and T.M. Knox (New York: SUNY Press, 1979). The second Jena system was published as *The Jena System 1804–5: Logic and Metaphysics*, trans. John W. Burbidge and George di Giovanni (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1986). Part three of *Jena III* is published in G.W.F. Hegel, *Hegel and the Human Spirit: A translation of the Jena Lectures on the Philosophy of Spirit (1805–06) with Commentary*, trans. Leo Rauch (Wayne State University Press, Detroit), 1983. The literature on the continuities and

of Spirit (1807). Of published works, it is only in the official accompaniments to the lectures on the philosophy of objective spirit that a narrative of the sublation of the particular universality of *Völkergeister* by the absolute universality of *Weltgeist* finds a place, and even here solely in outlines. This presents somewhat of an interpretational difficulty for readers today, one which has tended to reduce discussions of Hegel's Eurocentrism to the thorny question of the legitimacy of the textual base on which both critiques of Hegel's philosophy of world history and defences thereof can be articulated.

The philosophical transposition of world history into the encyclopaedic system was – as was the case with the histories of absolute spirit (art, religion, and philosophy) – effected not primarily by any written account, but in dictation and elaborations of lectures given during Hegel's Berlin years (1818–31). For all of the lectures on philosophical world history, auditor transcripts exists in several editions, but, in shifting through these transcripts, it is hard to determine precisely what can and what cannot be said to properly belong to Hegel, as opposed to his students or transcribers, since it is only in the case of the 1822–23 (also marked '28') and the 1830–31 introductions that fragments of Hegel's own manuscripts have been preserved. *Reason in History*, the most famous pseudo-Hegelian amalgamation to have come out of the lecture transcripts and manuscripts, is in this regard a good example of the more narrow sense in which his philosophy of history, in the history of its reception, constantly has balanced on the edge of distortion.[353] The problem of textual legitimacy

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discontinuities of Hegel's philosophical project whilst in Jena residence and teaching position has been ample following Karl Rosenkranz first published them under the title of *Didactic Modification of the System* (see Georg Lukács, *The Young Hegel: Studies in the Relations between Dialectics and Economics*, trans. Rodney Livingstone, London: The Merlin Press, 1975, 423ff.) but the main anglophone work remains H.S. Harris, *Hegel's Development: Night Thoughts (Jena 1801–06)*.

[353] The lectures on world history ran from 1822–23 and again in 1824–25, 1826–27, and 1828–29 with the final course of 1830–31 coming to its end just before Hegel's death. Several amalgamations of transcripts and manuscripts have since attempted to construct a book containing Hegel's 'philosophy of history' on their basis. The first complied edition, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte* was edited by Hegel's student Eduard Gans and based mainly on the later lectures. It appeared in 1837 as volume nine of the eighteen-volume edition of Hegel's *Werke* prepared and published by an 'association of friends of the deceased', the so-called *Freundesverinsausgabe*. It was then extended with materials from earlier lectures by Karl Hegel in a second edition from 1840. It was Karl Hegel's edition which in 1857 was translated into English by John Sibree as *The Philosophy of History*, the only English edition available for more than a hundred years. Not until 1975 did H.B. Nisbet translate the first volume to a 1917 four-volume edition of the *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte* edited by Georg Lasson which had been revised by Hoffmeister in 1957, published in English as *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History: Introduction*. A new edition, from which I will also be quoting here, is based on the more recent German critical editions of Hegel's work and was edited and translated by Robert F. Brown and Peter C. Hodgson in 2011 as *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, vol. 1. Herein the surviving manuscripts for both the 1822–23 and the 1830–31 introductions are printed, followed by a full lecture transcription of the 1822–23 course, based primarily on Karl Gustav Julius von Griesheim's fair copy of notes written during the lecture and Heinrich Gustav Hotho's transcript. A second volume with a full transcript of the 1830–31 lectures has been announced as underway but not yet published. A detailed publication history of the German editions can be found in Tim Rojek, 'Die Editionsgeschichte der hegelschen Geschichtsphilosophie.' in *Hegels Begriff der Weltgeschichte: ein wissenschaftstheoretische Studie* (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2017), 10–43.

therefore springs from the fact that, out of the written work that explicitly deals with philosophical world history, the bulk of the materials are to be found in manuscripts and lecture transcripts, while only the conceptual outlines included in three iterations of *Encyclopaedia* and in *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* constitute what has been called 'authoritative' published texts on the subject. Since for all other available sources the chance remains that displacements or simplifications might have snuck into the work of student transcriptions, or that Hegel himself might have intentionally simplified to accommodate different audiences,[354] a minimum of hermeneutical caution is required when reconstructing the philosophy of world history. For this reason, it has more often than not been the case that the defence of Hegel critiques those on the offence on the grounds of their lack of philological consideration, dismissing what are considered hyperbolic citational practices that isolate and emphasise the most offensive passages while ignoring others that seemingly contradict them. This issue is aggravated, no doubt, by the fact that the most damningly crude reasonings and offensive offhand judgements over the political systems and intellectual capacities of non-Europeans, are to be found in transcripts, remarks, and additions, rather than in the so-called authoritative texts. When compared to the authoritative texts, these lesser writings, it is claimed, should be given less weight, and the charge against Hegel be modified, or as it is often termed, the reading nuanced.[355] However, an objection constructed on this premise misses it's mark, at least if the issue is, as is here suggested, with the paradigmatic quality of Hegel's writings and the ways in which these qualities are reasserted in appropriations. For, if this is the case, we might ask if the difference between authoritative and non-authoritative texts is one that makes a difference? Is it not rather the case that, beyond any fixation on fictional positions which could properly be identified as 'Hegel's' alone, what should be considered the point of references are those works which the reception history developed in relation to? In this regard the additions, remarks, and lectures, because of their easily accessible character, seem to demand interpretation as much as the major published texts. That is to say, the force of one interpretation over others on account of its embodiment of what was authentically 'Hegel's position' dissolves when it is faced with the ricketier matter of the several layers of historical mediations which are at issue here.

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[354] The aspect of simplification is something Hegel himself emphasises at several points in the lectures, and it is clear, as Paul Ricoeur emphasises in his commentary on the philosophy of world history, that the categories with which Hegel explicates the teleological structure of spirit's self-realisation, the 'means', 'materials' and 'aims' of its realisation, are notably less complex than those categories with which Hegel discusses teleological structures in *The Science of Logic*. See Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative* vol.3, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 194ff.

[355] This is the case made by Sandra Bonetto, 'Race and Racism in Hegel: An Analysis', *Minerva: An Internet Journal of Philosophy* 10 (2006), 35–64.

That the knot between Hegelianism and Eurocentrism passes through precisely such layers is perhaps best exemplified in Enrique Dussel's description of what he calls the two paradigmatic approaches to understanding modernity as a historical phenomenon and periodising category. Dussel contrasts the 'Eurocentric-paradigm' to the 'planetary-' or 'world-paradigm', and characterises Hegel's work as the apotheosis of the former, the most developed philosophical expression of the notion that Europe had exceptional internal characteristics which allowed it 'to supersede, through its rationality, all other cultures'.[356] For Hegel, Dussel writes, 'the Spirit of Europe (the German Spirit) is the absolute Truth that determines itself through itself without owing anything to anyone'.[357] The subtext to this characterisation is to be found in Hegel's paring of a conception of the development of the principle of each national spirit as primarily determined by internal contradictions, and in the identification of the Germanic people as carrier (*Träger*) of the 'current stage' of world-spirit – out of which the central concepts of political modernity and the parameters for the comprehension of their truth are generated.[358] The developmental sequence that in the philosophy of world history runs from from the 'Oriental world' through to the 'Germanic world' is taken as the most crystalline expression of Eurocentrism as ideology: both an effectuation of Eurocentric misidentifications and the surface on which they becomes legible *as* ideological constructs. Moreover, in placing Europe, and more specifically what Hegel calls the Germanic nations, unequivocally at the centre of philosophical world history, Dussel presumed, that Hegel sees this particular shape of spirit as not only, retrospectively, the most 'advanced' stage of development of the concept of world spirit, but also, prospectively, as spatially totalisable to the level of the globe. Is this the case? That is, is Hegel's philosophy of world history not only isolationist, but also expansionist?

To answer this question, it is first worth noting that there are preciously few passages in Hegel's writings which explicitly address the dynamics through which the latter

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[356] Enrique Dussel, 'Beyond Eurocentrism: The World System and the Limits of Modernity', in *The Cultures of Globalization*, ed. Fredric Jameson and Masao Miyoshi (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1998), 3–4.

[357] Dussel's counter-proposal, for a planetary paradigm of the modern, is equally interesting insofar as it doesn't seek to do away with any and all ideas of the historical *centrality* of Europe in the emergence of modernity, rather it re-inscribes it in relations of disavowed dependencies with its co-constituted *peripheries* by drawing in particular on world-system theory's centre-periphery models of the capitalist world system. This second paradigm understands the specificity of European modernity as the 'management' of centrality: 'In other words, European modernity is not an independent, autopoietic, self-referential system, but instead is part of a world-system: in fact, its centre. Modernity, then, is planetary. It begins with the simultaneous constitution of Spain with reference to its "periphery" (first of all, properly speaking, Amerindia: the Caribbean, Mexico, and Peru).' *Ibid.*

[358] EPR, §347 and §354. This is the analysis indicated by the passages emphasized by Dussel in the lectures he gave in the Frankfurt Lecture Series and which later were published in *The Invention of the Americas: Eclipse of the 'Other' and the Myth of Modernity*, trans. Michael D. Barber (New York: Continuum, 1995), 21–26. An earlier version of what became the first chapter in this book can be found in Dussel, 'Eurocentrism and Modernity'.

expansionist process might unfold. Even the most notable exceptions to the predominant occlusion of the perspective of world-trade, inter-, and, trans-national politics in the philosophy of objective spirit – namely, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* §§246–48 which address the role played by colonisation in the reproduction of civil society and §§330–40 which, as the second moment of the development of the modern concept of the state, deals with international law and the relations between independent nation-states – have a radically restricted scope when it comes to the perspective of what could be understood as 'global relations'. The former because the concept of colonisation is introduced almost exclusively to articulate aspects of the internal dynamic between civil society and the state, in a view of the colonies as an expansionist mean to alleviate tensions produced by social polarisation in the 'fully developed civil society'.[359] The latter because the juridical relations between states, already restricted by Hegel to the essential form of the nation-state, are taken to be fully focalised in the question of war, with hardly any mention of either international private law or extra-national political institutions. Thus, in order to address the above question, the following focuses on how the planetary and the global is inscribed within Hegel's philosophy of history as a site, respectively, of inhabitation and relation. To do so, three moments in Hegel's philosophy of spirit are singled out: i) Hegel's treatment of the Earth in the philosophy of subjective spirit and it's relation to what he calls the 'geographical foundations of history' in the philosophy of objective spirit; ii) his critique of the idea of cosmopolitanism in §§330–40 of *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*; and iii) in the philosophy of world history as such, where the question becomes what possible relations are to be found between the concepts of world and globe.

II. *Telluric Determinacies: Race and the Emergence of the Universal Human*

Why start an examination of the inscription of a planetary perspective in Hegel's philosophy of world history in the *Encyclopaedia* philosophy of subjective spirit rather than in the philosophy of objective spirit and the moment of transition to the philosophy of absolute spirit? Because, as Robert Bernasconi among others has argued, by reading the philosophy of world history in light of the passages which concern the 'natural soul' as an object of anthropology, it becomes possible to assess the complex entanglement of racially determined differences with historically developed differences in Hegel's philosophy of world history.[360] Building from these claims, as the following argues, the importance of spiritually determined differences over and above natural differences in the philosophy of world history rests on an

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[359] EPR, §248, 269.

[360] Robert Bernasconi, 'With What Must the Philosophy of World History Begin? *On the Racial Basis of Hegel's Eurocentrism*', *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 22, no.2 (2008), 171–201.

already adjudicated divide in the populations of the Earth, according to how 'spiritualised' the relation, internal to a community, of its specific configuration of spirit and nature is.

This conjuncture of the philosophy of world history and the philosophy of subjective spirit is not simply an external imposition, forced onto the systematic development otherwise unfolding in the encyclopaedic. It follows Hegel's own interjections, since the concept of world history is repeatedly inserted within his exposition of the concept of the natural soul in order to better compare and contrast the latter with spirit. Thereby, these sections come to anticipates and subtend the later introduction of the idea of the 'geographical base of world history'. In this account, as in Hegel's philosophy more generally, the division between nature and spirit is crucial and never static.[361] Nature is always conceptualised internally to spirit, just as spirit as it sets itself apart from nature is already implicitly included therein.

The natural soul is the unity of all natural qualities and determinacies in general, taken as an object in abstraction from all spiritual determinations. It is, Hegel writes, a 'microcosm into which the macrocosm compresses itself'.[362] Within this microcosm, racial differences are those 'universal particularisations' and qualitative determinations that express 'the planetary life of man'. That is to say, race is constituted as the form of difference expressing, within the concept of the natural soul, the effects of concrete geological and climatic conditions within a 'territory where human beings congregate in large masses'.[363] Racial differences are, in other words, those determinations of the concept of the human species which Hegel considers to belong within a natural history of the Earth.[364] A subdivision of the 'Earth-individual' into four world-regions (*Weltteile*) of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America structures the distribution of racial difference into 'Caucasian', 'Mongolian', 'Negro', and 'Malayan/American'. This division (and the geographical differences it attests to) mirrors perfectly the one found in the manuscript on 'the geographical grounds of world history', in which the physical properties of the terrains on which world history unfolds and, just as importantly, those on which it does not, or at least has not, unfolded are delineated.[365] The question here is, just what kind of 'ground' geography, and therefore race, can be said to

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[361] There is of course no easy way to summaries Hegel's concept of spirit, but in what follows I understand spirit, in accord with Terry Pinkard's concise definition, as the sociality of structures of recognition. Terry Pinkard, *Hegel's Phenomenology: The Sociality of Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[362] PM, §391, 35.

[363] *Ibid.*, §393, 40.

[364] *Ibid.*, §392, 35ff.

[365] The primary sites in the philosophy of spirit where Hegel discusses spirit and nature in terms of the earthly or planetary life of humankind are in the philosophical anthropology and in the importance of the geographic base to the concept of the state. In the lectures on the philosophy of world history, it is in the appendix to the 1975 edition, 'The Natural Context or the Geographical Basis of World History', that this perspective is reintroduced. In the 2011 translation, the appendix has been inserted into the lecture transcript itself, to emphasize the systematic position of geography in Hegel's conception of the state. See PWHCE, n.55, 191.

provide in world history?

World history, according to Hegel's well-known formula, unfolds along a line of latitude from East to West and in this form, it does not (yet) encompass a planetary whole. Two primary divisions structure this circumscription: a continental and a climatic one. Continentally, that between the 'Old World' (Africa, Asia and Europe) and the 'New World' (the Americas). According to the continental division, Hegel argues that it is the terrain of the 'Old World' that is of relevance to philosophical world history, since the traces of ancient civilisations in Mexico and Peru provide no proper interpretative material for spirit – they are 'long gone' – and since the societies formed after European colonisation are still considered to be at the outset of their formation. What can at most be said of the 'New World', on the other hand, is that it is a 'country of becoming and of the future'.[366] The predominant geological features of the landscapes of each three remaining continents are presented from extreme birds-eye perspective: highlands encompassed by mountains (Africa), the antithesis between highlands and valley plains (Asia), and the alternation between mountains, hills, valleys and plains (Europe).[367] The specificity of Europe is found in the absence of any *one* overriding geographic principle and the higher complexity of forms of social organisation attributed to this continent is mirrored in a landscape where 'everything is individualised'.[368] Climatically, this division of terrain is matched by one of temperate zones, on the one hand, and tropical or frigid zones, on the other. Only in the temperate zones, specifically in the Nordic regions, are world historical peoples to be found. This is the basis on which Sub-Saharan Africa, characterised both by secluded highlands and pernicious humidity, is excluded from philosophical world history. On Hegel's account, it 'remains in its placid, unmotivated, self-enclosed sensuality and has not yet entered into history'.[369] It, too, is a continent of futural history. Both these topographical descriptions and the conceptual divisions generated on their basis would have been fairly commonplace among Hegel's contemporaries, but the manner of their incorporation into his philosophy of world history is quite specific. Hegel considers the determinative effects of the planetary natural environment on human social and intellectual existence to be of an always restricted but also *variable* scope among different communities. What is important is not so much the very fact of natural determination but rather the specific ways in which communities relate to those determinations that derive from the terrains they inhabit.[370] Therefore, for Hegel, the

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[366] On the intellectual history of the division between the old and the new world see Antonello Gerbi, *The Dispute of the New World*, trans. Jeremy Moyle (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010).

[367] PWHCE, 196

[368] *Ibid.*, 200

[369] *Ibid.*, 198

[370] Robert Bernansconi, 'Hegel at the Court of the Ashanti', in *Hegel after Derrida*, ed. Stuart Barnett (London

particularities of human communities are not grounded in first-nature racial determinations but in what he calls *second* nature, a concept that the below returns to in the discussion of *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*. Second nature is a form of spiritualised determination which appears nature-*like*, including customs and languages that humans orient themselves within *as if* they were natural givens. Second nature within a community can have an implicitly structuring function or it can become the explicit object of reflection (and transformation). This dimension is included in what Hegel considers to be a compliment to 'racial differences of humankind' [*Rassenverschiedenheitern des Menchengeschlecht*]', namely national difference, or 'differences in national spirit [*Unterschiede der Nationalgeister*]'. These are, in line with the etymological link between *natio* and *nasci* (to be born), those differences which express universal particularisations born out of common descent.[371] Neither of these *should* be directly inscribed in the conception of a people (*Volk*), since the particularity of each people is the particularity of a spiritual configuration, of differences generated out of the particular manner in which the spirit of each people sets itself apart from nature. Philosophical world history is, for Hegel, 'the necessary development, from the *concept* of the freedom of spirit alone'.[372] It is changes within the concept of spirit that the general concept of philosophical word history follows and purportedly displays. The spirit of a people has a history precisely insofar it is not strictly naturally determined, but is composed of its deeds, its religion, language, customs, laws, art, accomplishment, actions, and relations to other peoples: 'Everything is the work of a people […] and each people is only this work'.[373] While this characterisation of the spirit of a people deserves expanding, it is for now simply worth noting that despite the distinction, there are nevertheless also paragraphs in the philosophy of subjective spirit that blur the lines established between these three conceptions of difference, at several points lapsing into a crude geographical materialism that is short of mediations.[374] In the *Zusatz* to §393 in the *Encyclopaedia*, on planetary humanity and racial difference, world historical privilege seems irrefutably granted to white Europeans, at the very least chronologically:

> It is in the Caucasian race that spirit first attains to absolute unity with itself; here for the first time spirit enters into complete opposition to naturalness, apprehends itself in its absolute independence, breaks

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and New York: Routledge, 1998), 41–68.

[371] On the difference between the spirituality of a people and the naturality of a nation, and in particular of the relatively low importance Hegel ascribes to the latter, see McCarney, *Hegel on History*, 140.

[372] EPR, §342, 372.

[373] PWHCE, 159.

[374] It is in particular the case for a lot of the anti-black racism to be found here, such as when Hegel writes of black Africans that since the inner territories of the African continent is cut off from the sea, the inhabitants 'feels no urge to freedom and endures without resistance in *allgemeine sklaveri*', PM, 64.

free from the oscillation between one extreme and the other, achieves self-determination, self-development, and thereby produces world-history.[375]

The 'Caucasian race', for Hegel, is the first race in which spirit properly *breaks* from a natural determination and asserts spiritual domination over and above merely race-geographical nature, and becomes, as Rei Terada has perceptively remarked, post-racial in a manner which allows for a historical differentiation to emerge, rather than the nature-like reproduction of communities with great similarity amongst them.[376] While differences of geographic terrains and climatic conditions may constrict and condition spirit as natural universal substance (the natural soul), as forms of natural determination they are always mediated through spiritual ones. Taken for themselves, landscapes and climatic zones are therefore understood, in the philosophy of world history, as highly abstract explanatory categories.[377] From the standpoint of the philosophy of objective spirit, what is significant and what has determinative force proper, is not the natural environment as such, but how it effects the relation between spirit and nature. While geography might be able to give an idea of 'the ground on which spirit moves', it provides nothing more than this.[378] From the perspective of world history, what truly matters is how spirit relates to this ground: if and how it separates itself out from the natural ground and becomes conscious of its own relation to it. As such, it is precisely those peoples who Hegel considered 'too natural' that are excluded from history. Importantly, this is not directly an argument meant to justify or legitimate slavery or to provide a natural ground of differential right. 'Descent', Hegel writes,

> affords no ground for the entitlement or non-entitlement of human beings to freedom and to dominion. Man is implicitly rational; herein lies the possibility of equality of right for all men, – the futility of a rigid distinction between races that have rights and those that have none.[379]

But, this does not mean that race plays no role in the philosophy of world history. It just makes for a more complicated scenario, in which only those societies that have *overcome* their racial determination participate therein. Precisely a lack of such a conscious relation is what, for Hegel, separates so-called historical societies from ahistorical ones, since the community in which a 'natural' relation to its configuration of spirit and nature means that it also reproduces itself as if naturally since changes in nature are changes that do not change the concept of that which undergoes change. For this reason, Hegel calls it a manifold play of

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[375] PM, 42–43 (translation modified).

[376] *Ibid.*, §393, *Zusatz,* 47. Rei Terada, 'Hegel and the Prehistory of the Postracial', *European Romantic Review* 26, no.3 (2015). 289–99.

[377] PWHCE, 191.

[378] PWH, 152.

[379] PM, 40.

shapes that nevertheless remains wearisome and tedious, essentially a return back into the same.[380] In nature, the repetition of a cyclical process reveals the underlying persistence of classes and species (*Gattungen*) that retain stability in the midst of surface alteration. It is in this manner that the *Phenomenology of Spirit* can remark that 'organic nature has no history; it falls from its universal, from life, directly into the singleness of existence'.[381] While all humans live in a configuration of spirit and nature, the specific form of this configuration is what truly matters to the philosophical historian who tracks changes in the concept and consciousness of freedom. Harsh climatic conditions or disadvantageous terrains here entail a 'natural force so great that the spiritual aspect remains in identity with it and thus cannot position itself over against the natural; this separation and self-composure are inherently the first condition of a higher spiritual development'.[382] Conversely, in the favourable diversity of the European continent 'land here is such as to bring with it freedom from the forces of nature; here, therefore, universal humanity can emerge'.[383] Through a proper diversification of particular national forms of spirit, the concept of spirit is deepened within itself such that the particular can be recognised as the particular of a specific universal. Continental Europe, in this manner, is privileged as the site of inhabitation where the greatest spiritual individuation and differentiation could emerge. As Alison Stone has argued, this means that the difference between Europeans and non-Europeans for Hegel comes to be expressed in the *fact* that:

> Non-Europeans could not question such authorities [the authority of their specific mode of social organisation] because their cultures did not grasp freedom as including the moment of overcoming or setting-oneself-free from nature and the given. Because freedom was not grasped as including that moment of human separation from nature and the given, no contradiction was perceived in freedom being limited by nature, e.g., confined to people of certain castes, or by given states of affairs, e.g., customary authority and ritual. Non-Europeans lacked a critical motor to drive social change, hence lacked history proper – or indeed freedom as properly distinguished from unfreedom.[384]

In compliment to the privilege of inhabitation, another significant but less commented on geographical privilege is granted by Hegel to Europe as a site of relation, on account of its position in the divide between land and sea. As a space of acquisition, commerce, and communication, the sea 'separates lands but connects peoples' and is accordingly of word-historical significance. In the early lectures on the philosophy of right, the connection to the sea and the global scope of colonial trade-posts and empire formations is addressed in this

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[380] PWHCE, 108 and 154.

[381] PS, §295.

[382] PWHCE, 192.

[383] *Ibid.*, 204.

[384] Allison Stone, 'Hegel and Colonialism', *The Hegel Bulletin* 41, no.2 (August 2020), 262.

mode:

> In the past the Europeans (the Spanish and the Portuguese and the Dutch as well) went to foreign peoples with limited vision for which those peoples were inferior. Only beginning from the English, who started out from the human being as *thought*, was the entire world put into universal relation. The landlocked countries, which have no relation with any sea, remain stagnant and closed up in themselves. Needs and commerce give rise to a world interest. World history shows the sides of the ethical totality, world trade shows the sides of relation as such.[385]

Alongside the few paragraphs within *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, this passage is among the very few that points toward a conception of something like what today would be called 'globalisation' within Hegel's writings. With his mention of the 'sides of relation' and the figure of the planet as a relational space, the Earth becomes not just a site of inhabitation, but a space for the expansion of civil society, of geo-political forces and interrelations.

III. *Actuality and the Territory of Objective Spirit*

In order to uncover Hegel's conception of political terrains beyond that delineated by the territorial state, so central to *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, there are two different geographical orders to consider. First that of an intra-European international order that structures and is structured by interactions and formalised relations between different sovereign states. Second, the properly planetary space wherein the 'unity' of the European is set against the rest of the world. The first of these can be discerned in Hegel's engagement with two ideas prominent in discussions of natural law: that of cosmopolitan law and that of the state of nature. It is between Hegel's critique of the idea of cosmopolitan*ism* in the form of a merely abstract 'fixed position' and his critical re-appropriation, in the context of foreign politics and international law, of the idea of a state of nature that the parameters of this space within Hegel's philosophy of objective spirit becomes apparent. While what follows restricts the scope of the analysis primarily to the exposition of international law in *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, it is necessary to make a detour through an exposition of the concept of actuality within the philosophy of objective spirit. For, while we can only make proper sense of the critique of cosmopolitanism when it is grounded in the argumentative sequence that concerns juridical relations among sovereign states, this sequence – the critique of cosmopolitanism and the idea of a 'real' state of nature amongst sovereign states – makes little sense without at least a preliminary grasp of Hegel's concept of actuality. Furthermore, since the philosophy of objective spirit *as* objective spirit effectively culminates in these same passages, once philosophical world history is introduced

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[385] Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Right 1820,* quoted in Lucia Pradella, 'Hegel, Imperialism, and Universal History', *Science and Society* 78, no.4 (October 2014), 439.

and effectuates the transition to absolute spirit, this is also the place to question what functions the concepts of world history and world-spirit serve within the system of science. What should become apparent in the course of the analysis is the intimacy that the Eurocentrism of the philosophy of world history shares with the identification of the nation-state as the primary and ultimate point of reference for the philosophical exploration of 'reason as it actualises itself'. This means that at the crux of these issues – how Hegel characterises international relations and his ensuing critique of cosmopolitanism – is the question of actuality (*Wirklichkeit*) and reason (*Vernunft*) and, more specifically, the arbitration of what possess them and what the processes of actualisation adheres to. Notoriously, this is a question which in some sense is as old as the publication of *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* itself.[386] In an 1821 review of the work, the theologian Heinrich Paulus gave voice to one formulation of it, which is particularly pertinent to the problem of Eurocentrism. Commenting on the famous appropriation of a passage from Aesop's *The Braggart*, '*Hic* Rhodus, *hic* saltus', – used by Hegel in the preface to demarcate the difference between philosophy and the construction of 'mere' ideals such as, in his view, that of cosmopolitanism – Paulus asked:

> [W]here is the *Rhodus* on which the philosopher is supposed to perform his political dance? – Is it Germany, France, England or Spain? – But as already indicated, if any one of these realms or all of them together were to be designated as Rhodes, would not Switzerland, North America, The Ottoman Empire and practically all of Asia, be entitled to cry out that each of them is also an actuality, a Rhodes, and that this philosophy of right should demonstrate the jump (*saltus*) on the ground and soil of their actuality?[387]

In his review, Paulus probes at the problem of identifying the 'ground and soil', not just the territorial form but also the locality of actuality proper. We might further this by asking, if such a territory exists, how does Hegel legitimate the standpoint from which this is judged to be the case? The conception of actuality as such, the categorial pivot of the philosophy of objective spirit, must be the proper starting point from which to address these issues and, for this reason, the place to interrogate how actuality relates to reason. In order to understand

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[386] The question in the first instance was posed as *whether* the Prussian state by Hegel was considered as the actualisation of reason and thereby as the true reconciliation or whether this realisation of reason was 'still to come', effectively something to be achieved through *praxis*. On this see Jean-François Kervégan, *The Actual and the Rational: Hegel and Objective Spirit*, trans. Daniela Ginsburg and Martin Shuster (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), 209–12.

[387] H.E.G Paulus*,* quoted in Bernasconi, 'With What Must the Philosophy of World History Begin?', 172. The full review is reprinted in Manfred Riedel, *Materialen zu Hegels Rechtsphilosophie* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1975), 54–66. Hans-Christian Lucas remarks that 'the Eurocentrism of Hegel's philosophy finds in Paulus an early opponent, and an acute one' in his extended discussion of both Paulus' critique and Hegel's response. Hans-Christian Lucas, 'The Identification of *Vernunft* and *Wirklichkeit* in Hegel', *The Owl of Minerva* 25, no.1 (autumn 1993), 40.

what philosophising means in *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* and to understand the divide, outlined in its preface, between legitimate and illegitimate claims to the status of philosophical thought and to philosophical science, the importance of the speculative identity of rationality and actuality cannot be understated. This speculative identity, in Hegel's view, is what allows one to judge what *is* against the measure of the real possibility of what ought to be,[388] and is, with good reason, one of the most commented upon aspects of Hegel's political philosophy. This is especially true since one of the central speculative propositions of the work – 'What is rational is actual; and what is actual is rational'[389] – is what grounds the rigour of the philosophy of objective spirit as it conceptualises social orders as 'ethical life' and also what informs, with modifications, the use of Hegel's philosophy in the service of 'immanent critique'. However, precisely what its 'speculative' (rather than straightforwardly predicative) identity consists in cannot be fully comprehended within the context of the philosophy of objective spirit itself, since, as Hegel warns his readers at several points, 'the nature of scientific procedure in philosophy, as expounded in the philosophical logic, is here presupposed'.[390]

Philosophy, so Hegel writes in the opening paragraph to *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, is the work of grasping ideas as self-realising concepts, rather than the analysis of 'mere' concepts in their ideal interrelation. Mere concepts can be constructed out of the abstraction (and fixation) of any trait shared between any number of particulars, but to develop the idea out of the concept is to demonstrate not only that the concept *has* actuality but also how it gives itself actuality. While the argumentative demonstration of this process belongs to *The Science of Logic*, one crucial way Hegel explains this 'giving of actuality to itself' is in terms of the translation 'into *actuality* [of] what one is in terms of one's concept (as *possibility,* capacity [*Vermögen*], or predisposition)' through '*development* [*Ausbildung*]' or

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[388] There are numerous studies and discussion of Hegel's critique of the mere representations of the world as it 'ought to be' and of the Kantian *Sollen* as a 'ein Bloßes Sollen' (EPR, 88). As should be clear by my emphasis on the 'real possibility', it is the one-sided and antinomical character of the concept of freedom which the 'ought to be' accords with, rather than the 'ought to be' itself, that he critiques. Like all antinomies, it is 'based on formal thinking, which fixes upon and asserts the two moments of an Idea in separation from each other, so that both are lacking in truth and do not conform to the Idea.' (EPR, 87)

[389] EPR, 20. 'The meaning of the formula is to be understood approximately as follows: the self-developing reason and the likewise self-developing actuality are united in a developmental process in such a manner that this unity is to be understood not as the mere identity of what is identical, but only as the identity of what is identical and what is not identical, and identity that is differentiated within itself and reaches new unities'. Lucas, The Identification of *Vernunft* and *Wirklichkeit*, 32.

[390] EPR, §2, 28. I have decided to broadly limit the ensuing discussion of the 'scientific procedure in philosophy' to *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* and the lectures on the philosophy of world history in order to develop a fuller reading of the how the self-realisation of the concept should in context be understood. Where relevant and where the argument is developed, further reference is made to the *Encyclopaedia* and *The Science of Logic*.

formation and shaping.[391] The formative (and, we might add, educative) aspect is important here, because the context for this characterisation is the concept of the human being as free in the sense of self-determining. In their immediate existence (*Existenz*), humans are 'external to their concept' in the sense that while they may potentially be free and self-determining; it is only by exercising this capacity, by learning to exercise it and by recognising themselves as capable of doing this, that they coincide with their concept. While 'all humans' may potentially be free and self-determining, this means little provided there is no self-conscious comprehension of this potential, which happens only in its actualisation.[392] Moreover, it is 'the *concept* alone […] which has *actuality*, and in such a way that it gives actuality to itself'.[393] This means, first of all, that not everything which exists can be said to be actual, something that is also clear from the care Hegel takes in distinguishing actuality from the reality of empirical and contingent existence (*Realität* or *Dasein*) and concrete determinate existence (*Existenz*).[394] One significant consequence of this differentiation is that it makes clear that whatever *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* may be, it is not an attempt to show that the existing (Prussian) state is the embodiment of reason on Earth. What, then, is the specificity of actuality over and above contingent empirical existence and determinate existence? The actual is the immediacy of 'essence at one with its appearance'[395] and thereby a form of immediacy whose internal contradictions are more highly developed than is the case for both 'being' (*Dasein*) and 'existence' (*Existenz*):

> *Being* and *existence* presented themselves earlier as forms of the immediate; *being* is quite generally unreflected immediacy and *passing-over* into another. *Existence* is immediate unity of being and reflection, and hence *appearance* […] The actual is the positedness of that unity [the unity of essence and appearance].[396]

The unity of essence and appearance means that the concrete or determinate existence of what is actual depends on nothing 'behind' it on which to ground or explain either its being or its meaning, that which has actuality exists as its own essence immediately. Importantly, it is always the product of an *actualisation*, the process of spirit's actualisation. From this perspective, the *work* of philosophy is to demonstrate how the concept carries within it the

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[391] EPR, §57, 86.

[392] This is concept of the actuality of freedom as self-determination is in part what is problematic in the philosophy of history, the demarcation of large parts of humanity as only 'potentially free' because they're forms of society do not provide the form of social recognition in which the self-comprehension of freedom can be realised.

[393] EPR, §1, 25.

[394] EL, 214.

[395] SL, 339.

[396] EL, 214

determinations out of which it is engendered. This, however, only works because there is a similar movement in the opposite direction: only what can be shown to possess actuality is truly a philosophical concept and just as there are things in existence that do not possess conceptual necessity, there are also plenty 'concepts' that do not have actuality, that are empty abstractions or simple representations. From the standpoint of *philosophising*, then, what the identification of actuality and rationality amounts to is the work of discerning congruencies between the rational and the actual, 'an infinite process of adjustment between concept and being'.[397] In the 'Logic of the Concept', Hegel explicitly addresses the idea of the state with which *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* is concerned, especially the difference between particular, finite states and the idea of the state:

> Finite things are finite because, and to the extent that, they do not possess the reality of their concept completely within them but are in need of other things for it […] That actual things are not congruent with the idea constitutes the side of their finitude and it is according to this side that they are *objects,* each in accordance with its specific sphere […] That the idea has not perfectly fashioned their reality, that it has not completely subjugated it to the concept, the possibility of that rests on the fact that the idea itself has *a restricted content:* that essentially as it is the unity of the concept and reality, just as essentially is it also their difference; for only the object is the immediate unity, that is the unity that exists in itself. But if a subject matter, say the state, *did not at all conform* to its idea that is to say if it were not rather the idea of the state; if its reality, which is the self-conscious individuals, did not correspond at all to the concept, its soul and body would have come apart; the soul would have taken refuge in the secluded regions of thought; the body dispersed into singular individualities. But because the concept of the state is essential to the nature of these individuals [they are mediated through it just as it is through them], it is present in them as so mighty an impulse that they are driven to translate it into reality, be it only in the form of external purposiveness, or to put up with it as it is, or else they must perish. The worst state, one whose reality least corresponds to the concept, in so far as it still has concrete existence, is yet idea; the individuals still obey the power of a concept.[398]

This passage aptly underscores how the philosophy of objective spirit is also concerned with the power (the force to manipulate, shape, and determine) which conceptuality has in social reality because social reality, in some sense, already has a fundamentally conceptual character. The field of actuality in this view is the field of conceptual efficacy in social life.

IV. Cosmopolitanism or the Real State of Nature

For this reason, aspects of Hegel's philosophy of objective spirit might in fact be *helpful* for thinking Eurocentrism as a structural problem, though, as I will show below, with important caveats. In order to do so, we can turn to Hegel's engagement with the concept of cosmopolitanism in the context of his conceptualisation of international legal relations. This critique can be characterised as a delimitation of the real conditions of possibility for, and

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[397] Kervégan, *The Actual and the Rational*, xxvii
[398] SL, 673.

obstructions to, a cosmopolitan order, rather than as outright rejection.[399] Let's first consider how Hegel treats the idea of cosmopolitanism and the background to his critique. As discussed in Chapter Three, thirty years before the publication of the *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, Kant concluded those paragraphs in *The Metaphysics of Morals* which concern the state in its internal constitution and external relations by projecting the idea of legal binds among nations to something akin to a world-whole. 'Since the Earth's surface is not unlimited but closed', wrote Kant, 'the concepts of the right of a state and of a right of nations lead inevitably to the idea of a *right for a state of nations* (*ius gentium*) or *cosmopolitan right* (*ius cosmopoliticum*)'.[400] What gives rise to these conceptions are the effects of 'the spherical shape of the place they [all nations of the Earth] live in, a *globus terraqueus* [a globe of earth and water]'.[401] The determinate spatial limits of the Earth, in other words, affects the meaning of co-habitation among nation states:

> they stand in a community of possible physical *interaction* (*commercium*), that is, in a thoroughgoing relation of each to all the others of *offering to engage in commerce* with any other, and each has a right to make this attempt without the other being authorised to behave toward it as an enemy because it has made this attempt. – This right, since it has to do with the possible union of all nations with a view to certain universal laws for their possible commerce, can be called *cosmopolitan right* (*ius cosmopoliticum*).[402]

The community of possible physical interaction calls, within Kant's philosophy of right, for an account of a mode of regulation which might ensure that, at a minimum, all actual attempts of interactions not be met with hostility. When Hegel makes reference to this idea of cosmopolitan right (both insofar as this might refer to the rights of citizens and refer to the legal relations among nation-states), it is, on the whole in a profoundly critical sense. Already in the 1802–03 *Essay on Natural Law*, both the critique and its ground are clearly articulated. The problem with the cosmopolitan ideal is not so much that it is cosmopolitan as that it is a *mere* ideal;[403] as Hegel puts it, the 'vacuity of the rights of man or the equal vacuity of an inter-national state or a world republic' stem from the fact that they are

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[399] Robert Fine, 'Kant's theory of Cosmopolitanism and Hegel's Critique', *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 29, no.9 (2003), 609–30.

[400] MM, §43, 455.

[401] *Ibid.*, §62, 489.

[402] *Ibid.*

[403] In *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* there is also a second, slightly different argument against Kant's regulative ideal of perpetual peace among nations that places Hegel in line with Anne-Robert-Jacques Turgot and Scottish Enlightenment thinkers of civic virtues (Adam Ferguson in particular). Rather than focus on the formalism of the ideal, this second argument appeals to a philosophy of war wherein one of its justifications lie in the way it is seen to function as a preservation of the 'ethical heath of nations' by calling for actions that are oriented toward the protection of the unity of the state (universal interests) over and above the private preoccupations of individuals in civil society (particular interests). See EPR, §324, 361.

'abstractions and formal constructions'.[404] A radically different conception of what the philosophy of right entails is at the bottom of this highly critical characterisation of cosmopolitanism and cosmopolitan rights, one that is best understood in light of the centrality of the category of actuality to the philosophy of objective spirit accounted for above. The spatial delineation of the Earth only constitutes a realm of possible physical interaction and therefore does not pose a significant form of constraint upon the development of the philosophical conception of right, thus of the state that we find in *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*. The *existence* (*Dasein*) of right as something '*universally recognised*, *known*, and *willed*' has to be mediated in a concrete *willing* and *knowing* subject to have actuality and objectivity.[405] It is the lack of institutional frameworks that might act as such a subject that motivates Hegel's critique of cosmopolitanism as a mere ideal. Hegel comments on individual cosmopolitan rights, the rights of a *Weltbürger*, when he remarks that,

> I am apprehended as a *universal* person, in which [respect] *all* are identical. A *human being counts as such because he is a human being*, not because he is a Jew, a Catholic, Protestant, German, Italian, etc. This consciousness, which is the aim of *thought*, is of infinite importance, and it is inadequate only if it adopts a fixed position – for example, as *cosmopolitanism* – in opposition to the concrete life of the state.[406]

Like the abstract shape of the Earth, the idea of one human community has no any objective actuality within Hegel's system. 'All men' or 'world citizens' might be members of a class that share characteristics, but the forces which separate them as living individuals from one another are written into social life in a manner that overpowers the use of such terms as moral or political ideals. Without an institutional embodiment 'humanity' as a political concept is to Hegel nothing more than an artificially constructed unity. It is, in other worlds, an abstraction with no determinate content but a concept you can only arrive at precisely if you abstract from this content. To understand what, for Hegel, does constitute a determinate content and how this is expressed in the relation among nation-states, we can consider first the following summary: 'The nation state [*das Volk als Staat*]', writes Hegel, 'is the spirit in its substantial rationality and immediate actuality, and is therefore the absolute power on *Earth*'.[407] The state – essentially always a nation-state for Hegel – is both the ultimate authority and the most concrete actualisation of freedom in the realm of objective spirit. Herein lies both the rationale behind the rejection of a place for cosmopolitan law within a philosophical treatise on right and the use of the 'state of nature' as a concept-metaphor to describe the space of geo-political relations.

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[404] Hegel, 'On the Scientific Ways of Treating Natural Law' in *Political Writings,* 179.
[405] EPR, §209, 240.
[406] *Ibid.*
[407] *Ibid.*, §331, 366.

It might at first seem striking to note that Hegel describes the relations between states as comparable to the 'state of nature' wherein ultimately 'might is right', since the critique of arguments from the state of nature (whether presumed to be a state of harmonious natural and free co-existence or a brutal realm of brutal coercion) is a persistent trait within his writings. The state of nature in general means nothing to Hegel but the complete immersion of spirit into nature, a 'condition of savagery'.[408] Both in *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* and in the lectures on the philosophy of world history, he critiques the mobilisation of rational constructions and reconstructions of an initial human 'state of nature' within natural law as well as in conjectural histories for the illegitimate projection of an atomistic conception of the individual into a theory of the formation of society.[409] The idea of natural right in this sense, he maintains, contains an ambiguity, it might mean either that certain rights are 'given by nature' immediately, such as those ascribed to man in the state of nature, or that natural rights are those which are 'determined by the nature of the thing', which is to say, by the concept. The first sense is what Hegel is critical of, the notion that humans originally lived in a condition where certain natural rights prevailed, which the formation of society and political states infringed upon; a critique of the idea that organised community means a restriction of ordinary individual freedom and the sacrifice of their full exertion.[410] Since freedom, for Hegel, is precisely self-determination and the assertion of difference from nature, it makes little sense to discuss whether man was more 'free' in a state of nature or where legal restrictions could regulate the behaviours of individuals. Instead, it is *only* in the context of inter-state institutional relations that the idea of a state of nature makes sense, because states are conceived as true atomistic individuals.[411] Unlike the illusory, but not ineffective, individualist conception of human beings that abstracts from a myriad of both interpersonal and institutional mediating factors, states, so Hegel seems to claim, are truly self-sufficient wholes. In logical terms, the idea of the state is not subsumable as a species to

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[408] EPR*, §194, 231.

[409] In the lectures on the philosophy of world history, the primary object of critique is not Hobbesian or Rousseauist arguments from a state of nature (which do not make any claim to being accounts of the *actual* beginnings of history) but the investment of authority into Biblical scripture concerning an originary paradisiac condition of man – a revealed world of nature, a first true religion, and a perfect alignment of freedom and justice – from which humanity had since degenerated into a multiplicity of different religions. See Hegel, PWHCE, 111.

[410] PM, §502, 223.

[411] *Ibid.*, §333, 368. An extended discussion of his critique can be found in Hegel, 'On the Scientific Ways of Treating Natural Law', 110ff. We might ask if he is in fact unwittingly reproducing this same assumption of atomism at the level of international politics. It seems to be an assumption of the *reality* of the independence of states from one another – Hegel is explicit in that states are largely self-sufficient and can provide for their own needs – that makes him settle of the nation-state not only as the privileged but also, in effect, the only actor on the scene.

any higher genus but is the universal idea as genus.[412] Whereas several of the concepts at play in *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* have shifted position between genus and species relatively to other concepts, the state is only genus. What Hegel appears to suggest is that although there might exist notions of supra-state structures, these do not possess the same degree of 'the actuality of right'. Hence, there is no rightful seat of jurisdiction in disputes between states. It is a kind of 'realism' of the possibility that irreconcilable and non-sublatable differences of interest might destabilise the international order. From this perspective, the form of international law, as a mode of relation among independent states, is restricted to that of mutual obligation, because the enforcement of agreements between states is entirely dependent upon the will of each particular state and therefore ultimately a contingent matter:

> The principle of *international law* [*Völkerrecht*], as that *universal* right which ought to have international validity in and for itself (as distinct from the particular content of positive treatise), is that *treaties*, on which mutual obligations of states depend, *should be observed*. But since the sovereignty of states is the principle governing their mutual relations, they exist to that extent in a state of nature in relation to one another, and their rights are *actualised* not in a universal will with constitutional powers over them, but in their own particular wills.[413]

Without might, without an institutional capacity to *enforce* cosmopolitan laws, the claim that they should obtain remains, on Hegel's account, moralistic. It would then depend on the goodwill of states and be entirely contingent. When spirit finds itself dispersed into a multiplicity of particular universals – into a plurality of co-existing nation-states – there is no *objective* overcoming of their particularity which would preserve both the sovereignty of the state and it's particularity: 'A general confederation of nations [*Volkerverein*] for permanent peace would mean the supremacy of one nation, or it would mean there is only one nation (the individuality of nations suppressed), a universal monarchy.'[414] Since no international tribunal can dissolve the potential threat of a lapse into a state of nature among states – or organise the 'ceaseless turmoil' which exposes each state as an ethical whole to contingency[415] – this is in some sense as far as the philosophy of objective spirit goes: the comprehension of conflict as an always immanent treat to the modern system of states. In drawing this conclusion, Hegel seems to completely forego the perspective of the actuality of private as opposed to public international relations (international civil law). He does mention that commerce and the globalisation of trade 'derives its world-historical significance' from the combination of legal relations between distant countries (in the form

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[412] EPR, §259, 281f.
[413] *Ibid.,* §333, 368.
[414] Hegel, *Hegel and the Human Spirit*, 171.
[415] EPR, §340, 371.

of contracts) and the formative role (*Bildungsmittel*) such interactions have within a society, but he does not seem to consider that this might also conceptually imply the possibility of significant restraints conditioning the sovereignty of states.[416] As the concretisation of spirit, the world is, however, *more* than simply a diversity of particulars, which is to say finite, organisations of freedom that struggle (are at war) or co-orporate (trade) with one another. But, this 'more' is also generated out of the state-form and its history. It is in what Hegel calls the 'manifest [*erscheinende*] dialectic of the finitude of these spirits', that the spirit of the world, word-spirit or spirit which transcends even national particularity, produces itself.[417] But it does so not as a higher form of organised freedom, not as an empire, a supra- or transnational institution, but *through* time, in history which deals with 'what has taken place, thus with something contingent, transitory, and past.'[418]

Is it possible, like Paulus questioned, to *localise* this sphere of intra-state relations? Technically, it is the characterisation of necessary contradictions inherent to the modern state system and as such only *historically* localisable. This is then what the philosophy of world history is introduced to do. It is therein that an account of not just the relation between intra-European states but also the demarcation of this system against and as opposed to its planetary others is developed. On the one hand in the transcendence of objective spirit, and on the other in the globalisation of a specific order of objective spirit, as the following paragraph from the philosophy of world history makes clear:

> [A]ll the states of Europe relate to the outside world [*das Ausseren*] as a single unity. […] Up to now, the periods [of world history] involved relating to an earlier and a later world-historical people. But now, with the Christian religion, the principle of the world is complete […] The only relationship that the Christian world, as inwardly consummate, can have with the outside world is relative: and, regarding this relationship, it must be clarified that the outside world is intrinsically overcome. For the Christian world, this relationship to the outside is currently the world [of Islam] […] The Christian world has circumnavigated the globe and dominates it. For Europeans the world is round, and what is not yet dominated is either not worth the effort, of no value to rule, or yet destined to be ruled. Outward relationships no longer constitute epochs, are no longer the determinative factor; the essential revolutions occur inwardly.[419]

This twofold movement, of transcendence and dissemination, is what the following and final sections of this chapter will give an account of. The concept of *world* in philosophical world history is crucial to this analysis because the non-identity of world and globe is one of the most crucial insights generated out of the critique of Eurocentrism.

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[416] *Ibid.*, §247, 268. On this point, see Adrian T. Peperzak, *Modern Freedom: Hegel's Legal, Moral and Political Philosophy* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001), 582–83.
[417] *Ibid.*, §340, 371.
[418] PWH, 167.
[419] PWHCE, 463–64.

IV. The World of Worlds Shaped out of Freedom

World (*Welt*) has no one fixed meaning across Hegel's oeuvre but is mobilised in different contexts wherein moments of internality and externality, or dynamics of internalisation and externalisation, are at stake in the dialectic. This is not because world is simply what is 'outside' a knowing subject. Rather, there are also multiplicities within as well: the world of phenomenal encounters as well as the world of inward reflection; the worlds which spirit creates for itself and the world of nature. In common across these different contexts is that 'the world' is never simply assumed as something that exists in itself, not the world as an object of dogmatic metaphysical cosmology, but is always relationally positioned. In *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, the proper domain of a philosophy of right (objective spirit) is also called 'the world of spirit produced from within itself as second nature'.[420] It is, as discussed, a world of institutional and political constraints and possibilities that have no direct natural ground, but are instead generated out of the ways in which humans continuously set themselves apart from nature and relate to the manner in which they set themselves apart. It is a world that happens in a feedback loop, in what Karen Ng has called Hegel's idea of the 'double constitution' of the human being, a living being that always is more than living. The concept of the human species, and of spirit as human spirit, is characterised by the fact that 'the determination and activity of reason always expresses itself as double – self-conscious activities are actualisations, transformations, and explicit appropriations of basic life-activities, and the particular self-relation of self-consciousness is constituted by the fact it is a life that knows itself as life, a life that can consciously grasp and determine the conditions of its life'.[421] In the minimal philosophical anthropology thereby outlined, this continuous mediation of nature and second nature, it is the world as second nature, the historical specificity of the self-conscious activities which are actualisations of reason, which constitutes the overriding determining factor. It is this social world which also makes up the historically malleable substance of the individuals within it – insofar as individuality is shaped out of a negotiation with established customs, norms and formalised legal relations as well as with the specific ways in which the material reproduction of life is sustained. Crucially, the world of second nature is in every instance constructed under conditions of finitude, it is a temporal world. *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* ends in a form of philosophical history for precisely this reason. The deepest sense of 'right' is one that comprehends not just the *one* whole within which moral and political judgments have validity, but also the history of the

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[420] EPR, §4, 35.
[421] Karen Ng, 'Ideology Critique from Hegel and Marx to Critical Theory', *Constellations* 22, no.3 (September 2015), 396.

coming into being of this whole. Such a history is a history of the formation and destruction of determinative norms and institutions, not a historian's history but the history of the concept of freedom from the side of the self-reproducing structures which conditioned how it was conceptualised and lived *differently* at different times. As Hegel puts it, '[w]orld history as a whole is the expression of spirit in time'.[422]

The delineation of the groups that share these specific conditions – what produces social unity and is socially produced – are conceptualised in *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* as the nation-state. The state is the existence in the form of legal objectivity of this ethical substance, both for its members and for other states. This is what Hegel means when he writes that the nation must become a state to be recognised in its specificity and independence. This conception of the nation-state is intricately linked to that of philosophical world history. In this sense, philosophical world history it is both related to and separated from the kinds of universal history discussed in the heuristic typology of historiographical forms which forms the preface to the lectures on philosophical world history. These, which Hegel refers to as '*surveys of the entire history* […] *of the whole world in general*', are characterised, in their more felicitous variants, as those that aptly summarise and abridge the intricacies of historical sequences in favour of an all-encompassing account of the histories of states.[423] When the 1830 manuscript introduction opens with the assertion that the meaning of 'world history' does not need any further specification and that what is commonly understood by it will suffice for the purpose of the lectures, it is in all likelihood this state-centred synoptic and compilatory form of history writing which he has in mind.[424] But, as we have seen, since the philosophy of world-history is about the *worldly* shape of spirit, it is global neither in its actual scope nor in its pretences. This is the case precisely because the ethical world is totalised out of the concept of the state as nation:

> The *history* of this immersion of the world spirit within itself or – and this amounts to the same thing – this free development in which the Idea releases its moments (and they are only its moments) from itself as totalities, and in doing so contains them in that ideal unity of the concept in which real rationality consists [*besteht*] – the history of this true formation [*Gestaltung*] of ethical life is the concern [*Sache*] of universal world history.[425]

If anything inscribes an *implicit* reference to the 'whole world' it is the exclusivity of world spirit in that there is only one and that it resides in only one particular nation at any one time.

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[422] PWH, 128.
[423] PWHCE, 72.
[424] *Ibid.*, 78.
[425] EPR, §273, 308–09.

As totalities, these have an immanent historicity, their principles of internal development. Likewise, these totalities *as wholes* have historicity, they fade, are ruined and becomes *aged*; even if they do not disappear from the face of the Earth, they become reduced to instances of an earlier instantiation of world spirit. In this regard, the justification for both the focus on the state and the exclusivity of 'world spirit' comes out of the very concept of *philosophical* world history itself. That philosophical world history is the exposition of a sequence of '*ethical totalities*' – the 'Oriental world', 'Greek world', 'Roman world', and 'Germanic world' – means that each of these 'worlds' are to be understood as reflected totalities that map concrete social wholes, in which a specific configuration of the relation between first and second nature was or is dominant.[426] The state is a crucial focal point in this regard firstly, as mentioned, because it is the site for the objective expression of the social order and therefore also a – in fact, *the* – site for post-factual interpretation of what the constitutive elements of any given social order was. Secondly, the state as a conscious ethical institution is what forms a temporary bulwark against the ruin and destruction of time. It is the production of endurance on the territory of finitude. But the introduction to the philosophy of world history, which provides the abstract *concept* of philosophical world history, also makes it clear that however central the idea of the state is to this concept, it is neither the aim nor the ground of world history.[427] World history, rather, 'is the necessary development, from the *concept* of the freedom of spirit alone, of the *moments* of reason and hence of spirit's self-consciousness and freedom.'[428] To fully elucidate this point requires a more determinate account, first, of the concept of spirit and, second, of the specificity of the aspect of spirit summarised under the name of *Weltgeist* and its co-determinacy with that of *Volksgeist*.

In the lectures on philosophical world history, Hegel offers two concrete description of spirit, as it is expressed within an individual and as it is expressed by the spirit of a people, the latter of which is my primary concern here, in particular in view of how each people is said by Hegel to produce their world: 'When a people has objectified itself in its work, it has arrived at its satisfaction […] it has erected what it itself is as a work, as its world.'[429] In this manner, *Volksgeist* holds together the ontological unfolding of ethical substance, from the

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[426] That any form of history writing that does not coincide with the historical present in which it is written ('originary history') has to work by way of the construction of reflected totalities that attempt to grasp, from the present, the past in its difference is a point Hegel places emphasised in the 1822 manuscript introductory overview of historiographical forms. See PWH, 20.

[427] Gérard Lebrun in particular has de-emphasized the role of the state in philosophical world history, to instead place emphasis on the negativity of spirit and the full destructive force of world spirit, against which the state, on the 'territory of finitude', is no match. See Gérard Lebrun, *L'Envers de la dialectique: Hegel á la lumière de Nietzsche* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2004), 25.

[428] Hegel, EPR, §342.

[429] PWH (2011) Transcript, 160.

side of its objective development. This holding, containment, and delimitation has, or so is Hegel's claim, a principled existence or a principle of its self-development, it has 'a history'. 'World spirit' however, is both identical with and more than any one of the particular national social wholes. It always only finitely exists in its overlap with one particular *Volksgeist*. Insofar as it is 'in the world' world spirit is *nothing but* the national spirits it is being realised with: 'the world spirit transcends this particular form, but it must assume it as far as it exists'.[430] That, how, and at which moment world spirit nevertheless transcends these particular forms is the real object of philosophical world history; spirit which out of its own proper activity gains (absolute) knowledge of itself.[431]

The core of this definition of spirit is that a structure which can change within its very concept has no stable essence outside of the movement whereby it becomes different. That is a very particular kind of essence. It is one whose appearance primarily takes the form of the destruction of what it was before. If this process occurs in time, then there would be no unity in its being if it did not remember what it was before. As such, it would also not be able to know itself as a being that changes. To truly know this, it has to know both self-destruction and a means of preservation of what was destroyed. What it was before has to somehow be contained within it. There has to be a comprehension of how it is in time, not merely as the transitory passage of moments, of how the experience of what it was (the past), what it is now (the present), and that it can be differently (the future) is configured together. Becoming oneself through change must encompass both the actual process of changing, of becoming something through destruction, and, out what was destroyed, become something new. This change does not begin from scratch every time; although it happens from within destruction, the shaping of the concept is marked by what was before. Knowing that one is becoming through change requires, in other words, recollection. World spirit and philosophical world history is a work of recollection rather than simply memory because what matters to both is the activity of remembrance, rather than the static image of what was. When Hegel writes that the essence of spirit is self-consciousness, what is named is a constant movement of change within the concept and comprehension of change: 'Only if it is turned in upon itself can a subject have true reality. Spirit exists only as its own product'.[432] World history is spirit's self-portrait, if such a portrait could include all of those older selves that are no longer dominant, but which nonetheless determined what it became. It is 'the portrayal of the labour of spirit to arrive at *knowledge of what* it is *intrinsically*',[433] 'a

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[430] PWH, 53.
[431] EPR, §352, 372.
[432] PWH, 50.
[433] PWHCE, 87.

series of spiritual shapes that lead to the actualisation of the principle of spirit and that end in such a way that spirit grasps [comprehends] itself'.[434] And, contrary to the cyclicality of natural change (and of change in societies with a naturally overdetermined second nature), the changes in world history are changes within the concept of spirit. It is qualified as philosophical by feat of the 'application' of thought to historical studies, under the assumption that 'reason governs the world, and that therefore world history is a rational process'.[435] Philosophical history is the work to discern within the traces of what has happened, the traces of historical events and deeds, the immanent reason for why they took place when considered from the standpoint of their contribution to the overarching end (aim) of history: the consciousness of freedom. The consciousness of freedom here delineates the degree to which any given social configuration is able to grasp itself as such, to understand itself as a spiritually organised community. The state and the constitution function in the philosophy of world history as nodal points for a number of other spiritual activities: 'art, religion, and science, and therefore culture as such, can emerge only in a state'.[436] Because the universal 'for the first time' becomes actual in a state, it is a condition for the emergence of knowing and thinking, while custom is lived as the force of a universality that is only immediate, the immediate mode of the ethical. When custom is formalised in the state wherein laws exist – which are the universal in the form of knowing – the state actualises *a spiritually existing community*.

It is in this context that we find the first outlines of Hegel's stages of world history: world history as the consciousness of freedom: among 'Orientals', as the freedom of one; in the Greek *polis*, of some; and in the realisation of the Christian principle of the inherent freedom of spirit in humanity, of all. Each of these three are aligned, respectively, with the despotic, the democratic and the monarchical constitution. The first of these is to be found in the Oriental realm; the undivided substantial natural whole of a patriarchal society. In general, Hegel's here considers the distinctions between the secular, the religious and the moral to make little sense in regard to this world historical realm since the state is said to be a 'magnificent whole' against which no individual personal rights can be articulated.[437] Similarly, the divisions into social classes, divisions out of second nature, 'harden into a

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[434] *Ibid.*, 191.

[435] *Ibid.*, 79. Hegel carefully notes that, from the side of history, this is merely an assumption. For the philosophical deduction that grounds the claim that reason 'is itself the *infinite material* of all natural and spiritual life and the *infinite form* that activates this content' (*ibid.*, 79–80), he defers in both the philosophy of world history and in *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* to *The Science of Logic*.

[436] PWHCE, 180.

[437] *Ibid.*, §353, 377.

natural system of castes'.[438] This is substantial and natural spirituality, the state that 'only lives in its movement' but since the distinctions it does posit become 'fossilised' this movement becomes 'an elemental rage and deviation' – the force of natural destruction.[439] The Oriental world is geographically hemmed in along valley plains, the Chinese river valleys, the Ganges and Indus in India, and the Tigris and the Euphrates in the Middle East. These three sites provide the ground of natural determinations (the geological terrain and the climate) of the Chinese, Indian, and Persian spirits of peoples. For each, the connection among them is 'only for the concept, not in the phenomena.'[440] That is, no *historical transition* occurs in the *geographical traversal* across 'the Orient'; China, India, and the Middle East are simply considered as the concretely one-sided expressions of the concept and no dynamism between actuality and conceptuality can account for move from one to another. This is also why there is no focus on single spirits of peoples (which does not exist as such) but is, rather, a collection of the indistinctions among those who, as a whole, are considered to make up the elements of the 'oriental world'. Similarly, Hegel provides no definite chronological demarcations. This is because the social world in the Orient is not temporalised for Hegel – it exists *as if it was nature*. Properly speaking, the chronological sequence only begins after world history has reached Greece, the point from which the continuity of development is established. But even here, specific events are scarce (apart from those few which are 'epoch making'); it is, instead, the texture of an age that Hegel seems set to decipher and transpose into conceptual form. In this second world historical realm, the Greek, Hegel sees the emergence of the principle of personal individuality, but only its emergence. This realm is free ethical life. Decisions of the substantial will of the state are understood to be mediated through a power that stands outside it as fate, and the care for the particularity of needs is allotted to slaves, not incorporated as a part of the free organisation of the community.[441] Although, in the Greek polis, the consciousness of freedom emerges incompletely, it does so with a distinct harmonious congruence between the concept of freedom and its lived actuality. It is among the Greeks that '*some* are free'.[442] Slavery as an institution is central to this stage of Hegel's argument, since the 'beautiful freedom' of the few was premised on it and such knowledge of the freedom of spirit and of man is restricted by its dependence upon the servitude imposed on humanity.[443] The third world historical realm, the Roman, is the 'infinite diremption of ethical life'. It is the production of a difference between abstract

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[438] *Ibid.*, §355, 378.

[439] *Ibid.*, §355, 378.

[440] *Ibid.*, 291.

[441] *Ibid.*, §356, 378f.

[442] *Ibid.*, 87.

[443] *Ibid.*, 88.

universality and private self-consciousness. The Roman empire is the demise of the harmonious unity of the individuality of ethical life for the people subsumed under it, such that individuals 'sink' to the level of private persons, citizens that have equal status through formal rights.[444] The fourth world historical realm is the Germanic. This is the full articulation of the negativity of spirit, its loss of self and world which took place in the Roman realm. This absolute negativity of spirit is the '*turning point*'. Here spirit grasps the *infinite* positivity of its own inwardness: the unity of the finite and the infinite, or as Hegel also puts it 'of divine and human nature'.[445] There are several stages to the internal development of the Germanic principle. The inwardness of the principle of the unity of the finite and the infinite reveals its content to actualise it in a secular realm of individuals held together by 'emotions, loyalty and companionship' which nevertheless is still 'ethical barbarism'. It is barbaric in that it has not arrived at the thinking of its mode of social and political coherence, and likewise with the intellectual realm. While its content is 'the truth of the spirit within it' this content has not been though and is lived as sheer religious imposition and command.[446] These two realms, the worldly and the spiritual, are both rooted in the unity of the idea. Their struggle is at the same time the becoming *insubstantial* of their difference, as 'the spiritual realm brings its existence' into secularity as representational thought and the 'worldly realm' refines and develops into the rationality of right and law. For absolute spirit, their difference is insubstantial:

> In the *state*, the self-consciousness finds the actuality of its substantial knowledge and volition in organic development; in *religion*, it finds the feeling and representation [*Vorstellung*] of its truth as ideal essentiality; but in *science*, it finds the free comprehended cognition of this truth as one and the same in all its complementary manifestations, i.e. in the *state*, in *nature*, and in the *ideal world*.[447]

It is among the Germanic nations that the intervention of Christianity finally brings about consciousness of the inherent freedom of spirit in humanity, the most proper nature of human beings is freedom of spirit. The gradational narrative of the coming to realisation of the character of human beings passes through religious feeling (innermost region of spirit) and then 'to incorporate this principle into secular existence was a further task whose solution and application would require a long and arduous labour of cultural formation [*Bildung*]'.[448] It is understood that being something from the outset might still require enormous work to recognise oneself as being this. There is no automatic organisation of the

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[444] *Ibid.*, §357, 379.
[445] *Ibid.*, §358, 379.
[446] *Ibid.*, §359, 380.
[447] *Ibid.*, §360, 380.
[448] *Ibid.* (with minor amendments).

world according to the principles of freedom and reason, only the continued attempts to shape the world according to them. The series of these attempts is the long process of history itself and this is what philosophical world history is the attempt to illustrate. But how precisely is this philosophical world history supposed to *effectuate* the transition to absolute spirit within the system?

To answer this question, we can turn to the opening of the final edition of the *Encyclopaedia Logic*, where Hegel issues a warning: the deduction of the structure of philosophical knowing – the abridged version of which this so-called 'lesser' logic contains – takes place within a generalised dislocation:

> […] *we long for an* ordinary notion, *one that we are* already *familiar with; consciousness feels as if, together with the mode of representation, the very ground, where it stands solidly and is at home, has been pulled from under it. Finding itself displaced into the pure realm of the concept, it does not know* where *in the world it is.*[449]

For this reason, it will in all likelihood be a disorienting experience for its readers. There are several reasons for this, not least being that philosophical knowing (or speculative knowing) is absolute, it assumes that the dissolution of the distinction between the subject and the object of knowledge has been achieved.[450] This distinction is the mark of finite knowing, which is always determined in relation to what it knows or, which amounts to the same thing, limited by it. The phenomenological standpoint of absolute knowing is achieved at end of the *Phenomenology*, once natural consciousness arrives at the point of *knowing itself* within and as identical to spiritual and thus social self-comprehension: '*Pure* self-recognition in absolute otherness'.[451] The structural comprehension of speculative knowing is the outcome of *The Science of Logic*. In the pure realm of the concept, it self-generates, differentiates itself internally, and *knows* itself as such. Part of what it knows is that it must enter into existence and not only as the abstract conception of being with which the *Logic* began, but concretely, in the world of nature and the world of spirit. The *enactment* of speculative knowing in the form of the systematic representation of these wholes is the philosophy of nature and the philosophy of spirit. Its result is the *known* speculative idea: 'standing directly at the centre of all things […] standing directly at the midpoint of all science and art, so that all things lay open to humanity as an intelligence'.[452] Relocation comes only at the end, when the centre can be affirmed.

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[449] EL, 1830, §3R, 27.

[450] Or rather, it presupposes that this has been achieved for consciousness in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

[451] PS, 14.

[452] PWHCE, 153.

This relocation comes as a result of self-comprehension, which Hegel also calls the 'self-interpretation', that is the 'being and principle' of (absolute) spirit. The self-interpretation of spirit is ongoing, since the completion of each act of comprehension produces a difference internal to spirit, a new conception of itself that is actualised and in turn comprehended. It is spirit working to comprehend itself as the completed act of comprehension.[453] As Hegel put it, the completion of an act of comprehension is at the same spirit's alienation (*Entäußerung*) and transition.[454] As it comprehends what it itself is, spirit assumes a new and 'higher' shape. This activity is simultaneously a self-liberation from the limiting form of natural immediacy that spirit necessarily assumes in its actualisation. This, however, is not only a matter of world history, but of an interplay between the history of world spirit and the histories of absolute spirit. During the exposition of world history, there is a moment where the concept appears to be torn in two directions. One develops the view of the spirit *of* the world insofar as it manifests itself in the political history from which the dynamic of the historical demise and emergence of states could be culled.[455] By contrast, the second view of it as 'spiritual actuality in its entire range of inwardness and externality' indicates that the field opened by the philosophy of world history has a much more expansive content.[456] The latter is what anticipates the introduction of absolute spirit into the system through the form of art, religion, and philosophy. Comparing this exposition in *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* with that of the *Encyclopedia* and other lecture courses, it is apparent that the systematic incorporation of art, religion, and philosophy as forms of absolute spirit into the system *itself* constitutes a form of philosophical history. Each of these forms, and their corresponding lecture courses, might each more aptly be understood as the philosophical history of art, the philosophical history of religion, and the philosophical history of philosophy. In each case, it is the history of the achievement of their concept that is at issue; it is the realisation of the concept of art, religion, and philosophy, respectively, and the philosophical comprehension of these realisations into these concepts within Hegel's own system. How, then, are we to understand the relation of these forms to one another and, ultimately, to philosophical world history? This question gains in complexity if, as Walter Jaeschke insists, they are *not* to be read as the sequential construction of the 'stages' in the history of absolute spirit (from art in Greece to the Christian dogma of the triune God and

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[453] EPR, §343, 372f. The latter seems to be the strictly contemplative reading. The emphasis on 'going out of itself' might rather point to the fact that sprit has changed its concept and actualises this new concept to then again comprehend its difference.

[454] *Ibid.*, §343, 372f.

[455] *Ibid.*, §340, 371.

[456] *Ibid.*, §341, 372.

the sublation of its representational content in philosophy) but rather as the partial histories of the one absolute spirit.[457]

This question gains in pertinence if we consider world history in its narrower articulation as political history or the history of *states*. The coming to self-consciousness of absolute spirit occurs in the *recollection* of the stages of the development of its principle (self-comprehension) which also constitutes the necessary moments in the development from the concept of the freedom of spirit. These stages and moments run in a sequence of four to which four world historical realms correspond.[458] In each, a national spirit develops according to *its* principle. The first stage is that of substantial spirit, spirit in itself. From the perspective of objective spirit this is 'individuality [*Enzelheit*] submerged in its essence'. The second stage is that of substantial spirit which comes to know itself as such. From the perspective of objective spirit, this is 'beautiful ethical individuality [*Individualität*]. The third stage is that of 'self-absorption' of the knowing being for-itself until it is purified into abstract universality that comes to stand in opposition to the spiritless objective world. The fourth stage is the transformation of this latter spiritual opposition, the return into substantiality of spirit, such that 'spirit attains its truth and essence in its own inwardness and becomes at home in and reconciled with the objective world'.[459]

The philosophy of world history knows that Europe is not all there is, that the 'European spiritual community' is not the only place where the sociality of reason manifests itself. And yet, it unequivocally places this 'community' at the centre because *it is the point from which the centre as such is affirmed*. This is clear from the way in which Hegel in the 1830–31 manuscript introduction comments on the then-current debates on comparisons of cultural forms; in particular, the different ways of understanding both the writings of Confucius as a form of philosophy and the comparisons of Homeric and Indian epic poetry. The crux of this matter lies in what Hegel perceives as the formalism of most attempts at such comparisons. The form of science is the attempt to determine what is *essential* and to disregard that which is not; within the philosophical science of world history, what determines that which is essential is the consciousness of freedom and the determinate phases of its development. To comprehend, in its *universal aspect*, a determinate whole, nothing less than a world historical realm can be what is at stake for Hegel. The categories

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[457] Walter Jaeschke, 'World History and the History of Absolute Spirit', in *History and System*, ed. Robert L. Perkins (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 193–221.

[458] EPR, §352, 376. In this paragraph there is a possible ambiguity: each principle is realised by a 'concrete configuration' in a 'world historical realm' which is not strictly speaking or necessarily the same as a national spirit. I have not found any passages which elucidate this within Hegel's own writings. It might simply be that a 'world historical realm' is the realm of that people which has world historical significance at any given time.

[459] EPR, §353, 377.

through which cultural products are comprehended, 'genius, talent, moral virtues, moral sentiments, and piety can be encountered', so he emphasises, 'in every region, under all constitutions, and in all political circumstances'.[460] There are a multiplicity of works and all are generated out of human spiritualised nature in a wide variety of circumstances. 'But if this means that the distinctions that arise out of the self-consciousness of freedom are unimportant or nonessential in relation to the above mentioned qualities, then [with such a claim] reflection remains tied to abstract categories and waives any claim to determinate content because they provide no principle for it.'[461] The elaborate comparative works of the age (Schlegel's *Sprache und Weisheit der Indier* and earlier Christian Wolff's *Oratio de Sinarum philosophia practica*) are conditioned, to Hegel, by the very culture of abstraction; highly trained at finding formal analogies they may well be the work of cultured minds (minds that can self-reflectively think abstractly are cultured minds) but these comparisons contain, so Hegel argues, nothing that is 'solid or rational' and cannot provide any principle for the determinate content of the abstract categories which they employ. These categories cannot be applied abstractly, in a manner that disregards the specific social structures in which the work as emerged. Each work is the self-reflection of a social whole and only as such can it be 'read'. Hegel is therefore not in these passages objecting to corporativism as such, but is rather attempting to eschew what he perceived as a certain formalism of aesthetic and moral judgements. The plane of comparison for him could only be world history itself which is not concerned with the *moral* standpoint, but belongs to 'a higher plane than that to which morality belongs'.[462] The place of aestheticism and morality, and of questions which belong to these spheres, can only be articulated in a dynamic between the individual or work and the ethical life that shaped them and within which they move. In world history, those who pushed back against progress may even, in Hegel's words, have been nobler than those who facilitated the progress that the new shape of spirit necessitated. A changing of the whole of a legal institutional framework happens when it has already been 'relinquished' by spirit. This is why 'world historical deeds' are not judged to be such on account of their *moral* worth or juridical legality, but, instead, are justified 'from the standpoint of the [larger] world'.[463] The necessary relationship between world historical deeds or acts and the principles of world history 'already constitute the judgement', and for this reason world history (and the study of it) can abstain from making moral judgements.[464] Hegel's eurocentrism from this perspective

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[460] PWH, 140.

[461] PWHCE, 120.

[462] *Ibid.*, 121.

[463] *Ibid.*, 122.

[464] *Ibid.*

consists in the fact that he both powerfully argues for the *situatedness* of all interpretation and at the same time affirms that philosophical world history – the product of a specific spiritual configuration – can comprehend 'the sum total of all possible perspectives'.[465]

That there are several layers to the Eurocentrism of Hegel's philosophy is what makes it such as a fruitful site for thinking about the nuances and different problematics articulated *within* this concept. That is, if Hegel has become the name for an ideological structure while simultaneously allowing for this structure to be named, a return to Hegel might give us a more precise articulation of the problem of Eurocentrism. Such Eurocentrism has, in this chapter, been accounted from a twofold perspective: from the side of the exclusivity of the concept of freedom as configured out of spirit as self-determination out of nature and reflection on this determination in conceptual form; and in the assumption of the absolute standpoint of judgment wherefrom the enunciation of absolute universality is produced. Because the criticality of the concept of Eurocentrism lies not just in naming a misguided idea about the moral superiority or historical progressiveness of 'Europeans' but in the way in which this idea is inscribed within the texture of political organisations, rights distributions, trade relations, and economic dependencies, Hegel's position in relation to this concept is the paradoxical one of being someone who provides valuable tools for thinking the efficaciousness of ideas and the thinker who himself most strongly embodied the very thing which his philosophy can be used to critique. At the same time, the bind between Hegel and Eurocentrism is further complicated by the fact that Hegel's philosophy of objective spirit – because it fundamentally concerns the efficaciousness of conceptuality in social life – also forms a powerful conceptual reservoir for thinking about the ways in which the world might *actually* be (or have been) Eurocentric. That is, if, as Hegel believed, the *work* of philosophy is to demonstrate how the concept carries within it the determinations out of which it is engendered, it is difficult to leave Hegel behind altogether. Understood in this sense, Hegel's account of colonisation as a way for the state to try and tame tensions produced in civil society, need not be read as an endorsement (though in Hegel's own terms that would be a coherent position)[466] but can be understood as the assessment of real contradictions inherent in the knots and imbrications between state and economy. Attempts to follow through on this critical potential within Hegelian thought, can be located in the long lineage of Marxist-

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[465] PWH, 30.

[466] 'Hegel's argument for colonialism is of the 'civilizing mission' family. Effectively, his defense is that colonialism benefits most those who fare worst under it—colonized peoples—by civilizing and bringing them freedom [I would add here, a concept of freedom] that they cannot access without passing through colonial subjection. For Hegel, colonialism and the advancement of freedom go hand-in-hand.' Allison Stone 'Hegel and Colonialism', 11.

(anti-colonial) Hegelians.[467] Where the Kantian model embodied the normative projective ideal of a cosmopolitanism to come, Hegel's philosophy of history instead produced a geopolitical imaginary lodged within the present. It is as such that it should be encountered and countered.

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[467] It is by following this line of reasoning that Hegel's importance to anticolonial thought can be emphasised, prominent among which were of course *Marxist* anti-colonial thinkers such as C.L.R James (especially in *Notes on Dialectics*) and to a degree also Frantz Fanon in *Wretched of the Earth*. Timothy Brennan has made the case that the philosophy of objective spirit is anti-colonial per se, but as I argue here in the conclusion, the exclusivity of Hegel's conception of freedom as configured in separation from nature paired with the vindication of the absolute standpoint for the enunciation of universality makes this a largely untenable claim. Timothy Brennan, 'Hegel, Empire, and Anti-Colonial Thought', in *Oxford Handbook of Postcolonial Studies*, ed. Graham Huggan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 142–61.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANOTHER PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY,
ANOTHER COSMOPOLITANISM:
THE BROTHERS VON HUMBOLDT

Deutschheit ist Kosmopolitismus mit der kräftigsten Individualität gemischt.
Novalis, letter to Friedrich Schlegel, 1797[468]

In contemporary discussions of cosmopolitanism, one can sometimes get the impression that, from a historical perspective, the Enlightenment revival of the idea was univocally Kantian. That it, in other words, came solely as the corollary to Kant's moral universalism and that, in the final instance, the merits and limitations of cosmopolitan politics are to be decided on the same grounds as that of the merits and limitations of Kant's universalism and the problematic inscription of racial-differences within his regulative idea of universal world history. But, as much as the tensions internal to the Kantian idea of cosmopolitanism were and are significant, another idea of cosmopolitanism occupies an equally important political and theoretical position. This 'alternative cosmopolitanism' entails both an implicit critique of the 'epistemology of ignorance'[469] attributed to Kantian universalism and the explicit affirmation of cultural plurality as inherently valuable. Contrary to the paradigmatically Kantian idea of cosmopolitanism, its discursive origins are not easily delimited to one set of canonical texts. More nebulously, it is premised on a different philosophical cosmology, wherein a mediation of the philosophy of history with a philosophy of language produces a different conception of political and moral universals and therefore also the grounds for a different conception of the cosmopolitan ideal.

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[468] Novalis, *Werke IV: Briefe und Dokumente*, ed. Ewald Wasmuth (Heidelberg: Verlag Lambert Schneider), 367.
[469] The idea that ignorance constitutes not a neutral epistemic terrain but, as substantive practices of sanctioned and socially acceptable practices of ignorance, is an expression of structural inequality has been much explored within contemporary social epistemology. See, for instance, Linda Martín Alcoff, 'Philosophy and Philosophical Practice: Eurocentrism as an epistemology of ignorance', in *The Routledge Handbook of Epistemic Injustice*, ed. Ian James Kidd, José Medina, and Gaile Pohlhaus Jr. (London and New York: Routledge, 2017), 397–408; Linda Martín Alcoff, 'Epistemologies of Ignorance: Three Types', in *Race and Epistemologies of Ignorance*, ed. Shannon Sullivan and Nancy Tuana (Albany: SUNY Press, 2007), 39–58.

It is the aim of this chapter to demonstrate that within the writings of the Alexander and Wilhelm von Humboldt these aspects are to be found and, for this reason, the brothers can together be considered – within a series of what might be called 'cultural cosmopolitanisms' – to constitute an emblematic site for the articulation of an extant 'alternative cosmopolitanism' in the emphatic sense. This argument proceeds in three steps. First, the rationale for considering the genealogical roots of an alternative cosmopolitanism as traceable to *both* Humboldt brothers is provided through a set of broader reflections on what it means to read their works today as, in some sense, part of a shared oeuvre. Then, I locate the specificity of their cosmopolitan ideal, as seen against other cultural cosmopolitanisms, by emphasising the linguistic schematism that Wilhelm von Humboldt's philosophy of language introduces into the concept of culture. I argue that by mediating the concept of culture with that of linguistic difference, this cosmopolitanism displaces but does not expel the problematic concept of race analysed within the first two models. This displacement is expressed within an ineluctable tension in Wilhelm von Humboldt's conception of language and linguistic difference; within his writings on language and on history, the elements of both a culturalist egalitarian tendency and a tendency to re-affirm the supremacy of certain cultures on the basis of a hierarchical classification of languages are to be found. Furthermore, even when specifically emphasising the former of these tendencies, I suggest that if the Humboldtian alternative is to be considered more than a moral ideal in the Kantian sense, the significance of Alexander von Humboldt's meta-political writings on colonial modernity and the politics of racial difference, in particular the explicit practical-political commitment to the abolition of slavery, are as central to the cosmopolitan project as the philosophy of language and culture that it is conceptually articulated within.

I. Two Brothers, One Science: Reading the Humboldt Brothers Today

The proposal to read the two Humboldt brothers together and the claim that both the idea of an alternative cosmopolitanism and that of an alternative philosophy of world history can to be discerned out of the intellectual interplay between them, resonates with a recent tendency in Humboldt scholarship. It is only within the last decades that scholars have begun to consider the potentials of reading the two brothers as part of a shared outlook or even as forming something akin to a joint research programme, beyond the intellectual division of labour between the 'human' and the 'natural' sciences which hitherto has often been projected onto their respective works; or more precisely put, between the *geisteswissenschaftliche* perspective of the older brother, Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835), and the *naturwissenschaftliche* perspective of the younger brother, Alexander von Humboldt (1769–

1859).[470] While my reconstruction of the Humboldtian idea of cosmopolitanism and the philosophy of world history that it stands in a dynamic relation to, contributes to this line of research, it also, in a sense, demands it if the limits and aporias proper to these idea are to be grasped in their full depth. Conversely, to hold the two siblings apart and to understand their works as separate projects has allowed for a delineation which simply casts the older as the Prussian patriot and the younger as the globetrotting cosmopolite. In line with such a delineation, suspicions of nationalism and appraisals of cosmopolitanism can be held safely at a distance from one-another. The indefeasibility of this type of division, historically as well as conceptually, was already remarked upon by Friedrich Meinecke in his 1908 *Cosmopolitanism and the National State* which focused precisely on the interrelation of universal and national ideals in the context of the emergence of the modern German idea of the nation-state. Commenting on the widespread notion that a fundamentally cosmopolitan orientation within political philosophy in the eighteenth century was displaced by a nationalist turn in the early nineteenth century, Meinecke noted that:

> The current view is that an epoch of cosmopolitan thinking preceded the awakening of the national idea and of the idea of the national state in our country also. If we should demonstrate no more than that in this study, we shall have said nothing new. However, this same view also sees cosmopolitanism and national feeling as two modes of thought that mutually exclude each other, that do battle with each other, and that supplant each other. Such a view cannot satisfy the historical mind that has a deeper awareness of circumstances and that insists on a thoroughly detailed demonstration of every stage in the evolution of ideas.[471]

An approach refusing a straightforward or settled antithesis between nationalism and cosmopolitanism is needed if both the potentials and the pitfalls of the Humboldtian cultural-linguistically coded alternative cosmopolitanism are to be displayed.[472] This is

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[470] There has been, in recent years, increasing focus on the exchanges between the brothers. In emphasising the importance of thinking them together, I thus draw on this tendency, which in Germany has been spearheaded by Jürgen Trabant's focus on the importance of their interactions for the 'second birth' of European philology and by Ottmar Ette's insistence on the idea of their shared translational and dynamic research programme. See Jürgen Trabant, *Traditionen Humboldts* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1990); Ottmar Ette, 'Languages about Languages: Two Brothers and One Humboldtian Science', *HiN - Humboldt im Netz. Internationale Zeitschrift für Humboldt-Studien* 19, no.36 (2018), 48–61; and the essays gathered in *Les Fréres Humboldt: L'Europe de l'esprit*, ed. Bénédicte Savoy and David Blankenstein (Paris: De Monza/Paris Sciences et Lettres, 2014). Peter Hanns Reill has proposed a parallel argument for overcoming the projection of a stark divide between the natural and the human science internally to Wilhelm von Humboldt's work through an emphasis on the importance of Enlightenment vitalism to his construction of a 'science of culture' but does not take into particular account the interplay between the two brothers. See Peter Hanns Reill 'Science and the Construction of the Cultural Sciences in Late Eighteenth-Century Germany: The Case of Wilhelm von Humboldt', *History and Theory* 33, no.3 (October, 1994), 345–66.

[471] Friedrich Meinecke, *Cosmopolitanism and the National State*, trans. Robert B. Kimber (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1970), 21.

[472] Wilhelm von Humboldt is, with good reason, a key figure in Meinecke's study. Meinecke treats him: first, as the *intellectual* who in the late eighteenth century contributed to the nationalisation of the universal; and, second,

especially the case because, in light of the displacement of the question of racial hierarchies from natural onto cultural-linguistic registers, some have argued that a commitment to cosmopolitanism (in this case cultural cosmopolitanism), by its mere presence, contradicts and thereby rules out a 'crypto-racism' in the philosophy of language.[473] This form of argumentation both occludes an understanding of the intimacy which concepts of race have with those of nationality and fails to account for what is best understood as the dynamic tensions between ideas of universal humanity and national particularity in the case of the alternative cosmopolitanism at stake here. The fraught interrelation between these two is what I will foreground here, and it is best achieved from the perspective of *both* Humboldts.

This is not to deny that they, each in their own right, form towering figures in cultural history and in the history of the sciences. Wilhelm von Humboldt's work in philology and cultural linguistics are landmarks of nineteenth-century philosophies of language and it is furthermore nearly impossible to give an account of the institutional politics of the German university reforms in this same period without mention of the role he played therein, as statesman and as a key figure in the founding of the University of Berlin. Similarly, Alexander von Humboldt's travel writings and natural historical studies, his treaties on the description of the physical universe, and his historical and political reports from Venezuela, Cuba, Mexico and Ecuador, all form important points of references for an understanding of early nineteenth-century views of the Americas, on the question of slavery, and the mistreatment of indigenous populations by colonists and missionaries, as well as on the status and conception of earlier South American and Mesoamerican civilisations. A brief overview of the, for my purposed, most important aspects of their individual works will make apparent their convergences, overlaps and shared presuppositions. For Wilhelm von Humboldt this means an assessment of the conjuncture of historical and linguistic research trajectories; for

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as the *statesman*, a key figure navigating the European post-Napoleonic landscape of power-politics wherein ideas of national autonomy and ideas of a universal European federation were not mutually exclusive but rather the sign of a *different* cosmopolitanism, one premised on an idea of a community of organic national units strategically directed against what was considered to be a an essentially French abstract universalism. See Meinecke, *Cosmopolitanism and the National State*, 34–48 and 140–47.

[473] This appears to be the point that Michael Forster implicitly makes when he argues that it is, *pace* Hans Aarsleff, illegitimate to characterise Wilhelm von Humboldt's philosophy of language as 'crypto-racist' *because* he also expressed a belief in the 'moral dignity of – and need to respect – human variety in all its differences' and, with Alexander, argued against the scientific character of colour-based racial classificatory schemas. While I don't necessarily believe the linguistic transposition of race renders it 'crypto', Aarsleff is correct to characterise as an expression of racism the tendency to hierarchise languages according to the degree to which their grammatical form is suited to, as Wilhelm describes it in a letter to two American colleagues, 'giving the mind the habit of methodical reasoning and for the development of all the intellectual forms of man'. For all the justified critiques of Aarseff's overemphasis on the importance of Condillac and the French Idéologues to Humboldt's philosophy of language, he at least *names* a problem which Forster (and many others) are all too eager to explain away. See Hans Aarsleff, 'Introduction' in OL, lxii–lxiii.

Alexander it means an assessment of the status of his scientific expedition to the Americas and the view it offers onto colonial modernity.

As the brother most explicitly concerned with universal and world history, Wilhelm, in a 1793 letter to Karl Gustav Brinkmann, noted that in his view there was 'no object as interesting as the philosophy of history'.[474] His approach to this object was, however, fundamentally heterodox and oriented by an attempt to overcome the impasses into which he considered the predominant philosophies of history to have been led, particularly, by their reliance on too abstract a conception of the human species. To this effect, a preoccupation with the study of languages – practically in the acquisition of foreign languages and theoretically within the nascent discipline of linguistics – was continuously matched in the course of his intellectual life by a preoccupation with the study of history – in particular ancient Greek but also contemporary European. In the same period as his first published essay on language, *On Speaking and Thinking* (1795–6), set the parameters for what would be a life-long investigation into the relation between linguistic difference, spiritual difference, and the synthetic force of speech, he also composed *The Eighteenth Century* (1797), a portrait of the age that attempted to situate the period through an emphasis on the importance of national character, as the individuality of human communities, for the paths of historical development. And while a view of his published works might initially lead one to assume that the study of history was replaced by the study of languages,[475] a number of unpublished drafts and sketches for essays show that the methodological and epistemological questions which the former had provoked persisted as a steady undercurrent, explicitly discussed in the famous 1821 address to the Prussian academy, 'On the Historian's Task'.[476] In these largely methodological treaties, emphasis is placed on the importance of taking into account, within the study of history, both a strict natural history of the human species and the linguistic multiplicities through which humanity has expressed itself in the form of national individuality. As the following attempts to show, the culmination of these reflections are to

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[474] Wilhelm Humboldt, letter to Karl Gustav Brinkmann, 19 December 1793, in *Wilhelm von Humboldts Briefe an Karl Gustav Brinkmann*, ed. Albert Leitzmann, (Leipzig: Karl W. Hiersemann, 1939), 72 (my translation).

[475] The most well-known works on language include both the concrete analysis of specific languages, such as the famous study of the Basque language (research for which was carried out at the turn of the century and which eventually was published in 1821), the *Essay on the Languages of the New World* (1812), *On the Grammatical Structure of the Chinese Language* (1826), *On the Languages of the South Sea Islands* (1828), and more general theoretical reflections on the prospects and parameters of the newly emerged discipline of comparative linguistics such as *On the Comparative Study of Language in Connection with the Various Epochs of the Development of Language* (1820), *On the Emergence of Grammatical Forms and Their Influence on the Development of Ideas* (1822).

[476] In addition to a number of concrete studies such as 'Latium und Hellas' (1806) and 'Geschichte des Verfalls und Untergangs der griechischen Freistaaten' (1807–08), it is 'Betrachtungen über die Weltgeschichte' (1814) and 'Betrachtungen über die bewegenden Ursachen in der Weltgeschichte' (1818) that particularly demonstrate a continued preoccupation with the philosophy of history. These texts are discussed in greater detail to below.

be found in the first volume of his *On the Kawi Language on the Island of Java*, the theoretical introduction to his unfinished analysis of Austronesian languages (posthumously published between 1836–39, with the introduction also published independently and prefaced by Alexander von Humboldt in 1836).[477] In this introduction, titled 'Über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues und ihren Einfluss auf die geistige Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts', or 'On the Diversity of Human Language Structure and Its Influence on the Spiritual Development of Humankind',[478] the parallel trajectories of linguistic and historical lines of inquiry are persistently woven together, because the linguistic theory found therein 'is at the same time [a] theory of society and history'.[479] The result is a sprawling and tension-filled mediation, wherein the philosophy of language is made to pass through a philosophy of history, and the philosophy of history made to pass through a philosophy of language. The Humboldtian linguistic intervention into the philosophy of history, which, in truth, makes it a philosophy of the cultural-linguistic determination of worldviews, is at the theoretical crux of the idea of an alternative cosmopolitanism at stake here.

This intervention is directly inscribed within the cosmology proper that Alexander von Humboldt wrote late in his life. The planetary perspective of the popular-scientific work *Cosmos*, written between 1843–44, heavily relies on *On Language* for its discussions of the place of human existence within a dynamic world of multiple natural forces. The influences between the brothers, however, flowed in both directions. From the materials which Alexander sent home from his scientific expedition to the Americas, Wilhelm produced his first theories as to the significance of the grammatical structures of the languages indigenous to the Americas. In the case of the brothers von Humboldt, the intimate relation between travel literature and philosophy of history is mirrored within their familial connection. The character of Alexander's expedition therefore deserves a few words of its own.

In 1799, Alexander and his French travel companion, the physician and botanist Amié Bonpland, set out for what would become a five-year voyage to the Americas. With nearly impossible-to-obtain passports, granted by the Spanish King Carlos IV, and with funds to sustain their scientific expedition taken out of Alexander's inheritance, they were able to visit Spain's American colonies, entry into which had until then been policed with extreme caution by the Spanish Crown. After a brief stop on Tenerife, the transatlantic expedition took them first to Cumaná in modern-day Venezuela, where they moved inland along the Orinoco and Quasisquare rivers, those parts of the journey whose narrativisation have most forcefully

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[477] The introduction to *On the Kawi Language on the Island of Java* is sometimes known as the Kawi Introduction, but will, henceforth, be referenced to by its English title, *On Language*.
[478] Translation modified.
[479] Jürgen Trabant, 'Vanishing Worldviews', *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 53, no.1 (January 2017), 22.

mythologised the image of them both as great European explorers. From December 1800 to March 1801, they visited the island of Cuba, before making their way to regions of South America that today comprise Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. In March 1803, the expedition arrived by sea from Lima to Acapulco in the viceroyalty of New Spain. From his base in Mexico City, Alexander made numerous voyages inland and ultimately stayed in New Spain for close to a year. The final leg of the journey brought Bonpland and Alexander to Cuba once more and then briefly to Philadelphia where they met with Thomas Jefferson. In August 1804, the expedition arrived in Bordeaux and Alexander returned to Paris.[480]

To each of these locations, Alexander brought a wealth of scientific measuring instruments and a carefully composed notation-apparatus out of which his published diaries would be composed. Attempting to record his surroundings in their fullness, he tracked the botanical environment, the geographical and geological lay of the land, as well as the peoples who inhabited it: their customs and manner as well as the political and economic conditions under which they lived. The aim was the production of a *Totaleindruck*, a complete impression, of each site, encompassing both natural and cultural phenomena. This research would be transposed into an exceedingly voluminous chronicle: an *opus americanum* on the environmental, political and historical terrain of the Americas. Published in French between 1805–39, the series consists of 30 volumes in sum. Some seven of these make up the *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain* (originally published in five volumes between 1808–10) and the *Political Essay on the Island of Cuba* (originally published in two volumes between 1825–26). These two essays, along with *Views of the Cordilleras and Monuments of the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas* (originally published between 1810–13), contain his most explicit anthropological and socio-political observations, but, it must be remembered, also bore a particular status as part of the colonial archive of the Americas.

Alexander's ability to sustain the costs of the expedition to some degree freed the scientific efforts and cartographic ambitions from the direct colonial drive to acquire wealth in the New Continent. Instead of premising the expedition on the promise to deliver roadmaps for the extraction of precious metals, he and Bonpland could prioritise constructing theories and collecting empirical data with which to comprehend the cosmos. In itself, this did not raise their expedition above an inscription within the practicalities of colonial exploitation. Although it is clear from Alexander's texts that he was sympathetic to indigenous populations and outraged by the brutality of plantation slavery, his expedition, like all European scientific expeditions to the Americas, was inextricably

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[480] For a detailed account of both these travels and the relation between the research carried out there and the way it feed into the *Cosmos* book see Laura Dassow Walls, *The Passage to Cosmos: Alexander von Humboldt and the Shaping of America* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2009).

conditioned by unavoidable colonial infrastructures and power relations. What is important here is that besides the general fascination generated by the ground-breaking botanical, zoological, and even anthropological observations of Alexander's publications, it was particularly the *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain* which made his travel writings hugely popular among a wide European audience. As the editors of the revised 1825–27 French edition noted: 'All those who were in charge of colonial administration … recognised the necessity of consulting Mr. Humboldt's works.'[481] It became especially important among those foreign investors looking to do business in Mexico after its independence in 1821, as it provided the first systematic assessment of the state of the country's silver mines. Moreover, his exceedingly precise cartographic representations of the area in the end quite literally provided the maps for where to find them.[482] Regardless of explicit intentions, parts of the work carried out during their expedition can therefore be considered to have helped provide the conditions for a new and primarily economic mode of colonial exploitation in the Americas, at the very moment where many of the colonies were at the brink of achieving independence.[483] That is, they can be considered to have helped create the conditions for what in contemporary parlance would be called neo-colonial exploitation. So, while it is true that Alexander and Bonpland enjoyed some relative scholarly freedom and, moreover, they were not bound to deliver their results exclusively to the Spanish Crown, this, at best, points to an ambivalent colonial heritage. The uneasy existence of cultural pluralism within an unevenly structured world, which forms the problem to be reckoned with within the Humboldtian alternative cosmopolitanism, is in this manner expressed within this very expedition. This is not the least of the reasons why Alexander's political essays are interesting today, as they contain his understanding of the complexities of the expedition's position within a historically uneven and world-wide field of political and economic forces.

The most significant aspects of Alexander's writings for the concept of alternative cosmopolitanism are therefore to be found not in the natural-scientific treatises but in his analysis and discussions of the economy, political landscape and colonial history of the

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[481] Editors' Preface, PEKNS, 5.

[482] Likewise, the *Political Essay on the Island of Cuba* also contains extensive discussions of how and where a canal might be built such that ships would not have to navigate around South America but could pass through. Here Alexander imagines state and private companies forming a corporative to sustain the massive costs of such an endeavour. A form of postcolonial power discrepancy sustained through control of infra-structure. For a brief discussion of the details of the British reception of the *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain*, see Vera M. Kutzinski and Ottmar Ette, 'All the Bumps in the Road', in PEKNS, xviii.

[483] This is the focal point for Mary Louise Pratt's reading of the expedition as marking the point of an 'reinvention' of the Americas, arguing that Alexander's opening up of South and Latin America to a wide European audience also spelled the moment of a new and more in-land territorial phase in the search for raw materials by a 'capitalist vanguard' and in the rivalry for seizure of overseas territories. Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 109–40.

Americas. With these texts, Alexander proved himself to be an early and keen observer of how the politics of colonial modernity formed a decisive aspect of the becoming-global of the world. As a 'historian of America', his meticulous portraits of the Spanish colonial viceroyalties make it apparent that a cosmopolitanism with a moral commitment to cultural plurality remains fearfully impotent if it is not paired with an understanding of the transnational economic and political conditions that produce inequalities among 'cultures'.

The scientific trajectories of the two brothers overlap not only in their biographical details or in their frequent references to one another within their writings, but also, and much more significantly, at the conceptual and epistemological level. Something like a Humboldtian research programme begins to appear once it is recognised how their works are conjoined by their commitment to the public responsibility of the sciences, conditioned by a philosophy of education and *Bildung*, and their insistence that scientific inquiry be premised upon the onto-epistemological primacy of interaction and dynamism.[484] This programme is shaped by three basic yet decisive insights. Firstly, no full truth can be ascertained monolingually (be this of 'scientific' or of 'natural' languages) and therefore translations form not just an auxiliary or communicational compliment to science but one of its presuppositions. Secondly, knowledge is always constructed out of moving parts and science therefore has to be dynamic in nature. And finally, scientific presentation both depends upon and should aim towards globality and must work at the construction of a properly planetary conception of totality. Alexander's *Amerikanische Reisetagebücher* explicitly registered the fundamental axiom for this conception of science with the brief note: 'everything is interaction'.[485] The idea that everything not only interacts but *is* interaction was for Alexander crystallised in the highly combinatorial theoretical model found in his *Cosmos*, in which simple causal chains were displaced by an expansive 'general interlinkage, not in a simple linear direction, but in a web-like, intricate interweaving'.[486] Something very similar can be said of Wilhelm's study of languages, wherein metaphors of weaving and of organismic interrelation figuratively translate a conception of language in which primary

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[484] Ette, 'Languages about Languages', 50. The following summary of the basic outlines of what could be called a Humboldtian research programme is indebted to Ette's proposals in this article.

[485] The context for this expression – a German interruption into what is otherwise a French text – was that of a set of climatological and geological reflections that today have an ominously prophetic quality to them: 'L'évaporation, causeé par la chaleur, produit le manque d'eau et de rivieères, et le manque d'évaporation (source principale du froid atmosphe´rique) augmente la chaleur. Alles ist Wechselwirkung.' A. Humboldt, quoted in Ottmar Ette, 'Everything is interrelated, even the errors in the system: Alexander von Humboldt and globalization', *Atlantic Studies* 7, no. 2 (June 2010), 115.

[486] The physical history and the physical description of the universe here merge into a 'allgemeine Verkettung, nicht in einfacher linearer Richtung, sondern in netzartig verschlungenem Gewebe'. See A. Humboldt, *Kosmos. Entwurf einer physischen Weltbeschreibung.* vol. I, 1845, 33. The reissued English translation from 1848 carries no trace of this methodological inscription in the corresponding pages. Cf. CAS, vol.1, 34–35.

importance is placed upon the reciprocal affection between the individual and the universal, between language users affecting language and language forming its users. In an early letter to Karl Gustav von Brinkmann, which proclaimed Wilhelm's wide-ranging ambitions of scientific and educational reform, we glimpse how such a view of interaction paradoxically both entails hyper-anthropocentrism and explodes the limits of a 'merely human' perspective.

> A complete restoration of the sciences, and even more, of all human endeavours, has been needed for centuries, and the necessity grows with each year [...]. The most important step toward this restoration is to bring unity to all human striving, to show that this unity is the human person, indeed, the inner human person, and to describe to the human person how he affects everything beyond himself, and how everything beyond himself affects him, and from this, to depict the state of humankind [*den Zustand des Menschengeschlechts*], to conceptualise its possible revolutions, and to explain to the extent possible, its real ones.[487]

The pure anthropocentrism which situates the unity of all science within the concept of man as that which 'affects everything beyond himself' can be neatly held in place only if the second half of this sentence is ignored, namely that 'everything beyond himself affects him'. That *everything* beyond man affects him entails that while man is central, he is himself ex-centric. This eccentricity of man *as* man was, as I will show later, both to be found in the relation of the human organism to its physical environment, and, most significantly expressed in the intimacies of language and thought. This intimacy underlies the Humboldtian linguistic re-coding of the concept of culture central to the idea of cultural cosmopolitanism today, and thus is the starting point of my subsequent discussion. To show this, a brief consideration of the varied landscape of cosmopolitani*sms* will demonstrate the importance of Wilhelm von Humboldt's philosophy of language in this regard.

II. A World of Cosmopolitanisms

In its historical context, the 'alternative cosmopolitanism' of the brothers von Humboldt is not 'alternative' by virtue of being the sole response to a monolithic Kantian cosmopolitanism. Rather, a range of what can arguably be called different cosmopolitan*isms* circulated in Germanophone learned milieus of the period. Such a historical pluralisation of the idea of cosmopolitanism has been one way to displace onto less reductive conceptual grounds that seemingly endless stalemate of between primarily nationally bounded culturalist essentialism and liberal rights-based cosmopolitan universalism that emerged within the

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[487] Wilhelm Humboldt, letter to Karl Gustav von Brinkmann, 18 March 1793, quoted in Ette, 'Languages about Languages', 55, (translation modified).

multiculturalism debates throughout the 1990s.[488] Since it is not obvious whether this stalemate has since been overcome, a reminder that we might want to distinguish between different conceptions of what a political and moral commitment to ideas of cosmopolitanism entail remains timely, especially since they often rest on different conceptions of morality, legality and politics itself.[489] Between legal cosmopolitanism and the idea of a universal right to have rights, international federative cosmopolitanism, cultural cosmopolitanism, market cosmopolitanism, and romantic cosmopolitanism, there are as many differences as there are overlaps.[490] Within this typology, the Humboldtian intervention falls within a linage of so-called cultural cosmopolitanisms, wherein Johann Gottfried Herder and Georg Forster can be counted as the most important and influential early figures.

Broadly conceived, this form of cosmopolitanism can be distinguished from other articulations by virtue of three defining and mutually interdependent characteristics: one, a critique of unreflective ethno-centrism; two, an emphasis on the incommensurability of value-judgements formed within different cultures; and three, an explicit affirmation of cultural pluralism. Taken together, they inscribe the perspective of collectives ('nations' or 'cultures') within the otherwise primarily individualist perspective of rights-based and moral cosmopolitanism.[491] Unsurprisingly, the concrete shape which this form of cosmopolitanism will take, depends almost entirely upon on the conception of 'culture' brought to bear on the cosmopolitical commitment. For this reason, there is an immense cleft between Forster's cultural cosmopolitanism – with a primarily environmentally-determined conception of national cultural difference – and any contemporary re-actualisations of this idea. Between them stand the mediation of the concept of culture through that of linguistic identity and difference. The importance of this mediation places the Humboldtian cosmopolitanism in closer proximity to Herder than to Forster and thus closer to the tensions which can be found in Herder's writings, between a linguistic-cultural 'nationalism' and a commitment to

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[488] Another, perhaps more urgent, debate has been the investigation of non-European cosmopolitanisms, which has increasingly been a point of the orientation in research on cosmopolitanism post-2000s. See Carol A. Breckenridge, Sheldon Pollock, Homi K. Bhabha, and Dipesh Chakrabarty (ed.), *Cosmopolitanism* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002).

[489] In this sense, Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins' anthology on 'real existing cosmopolitanism' as a *cosmopolitical* field wherein different cosmopolitical ideals circulate, remains very much actual today. See Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins (ed.), *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998).

[490] Pauline Kleingeld, 'Six Varieties of Cosmopolitanism in Late Eighteenth-Century Germany' in *Journal of the History of Ideas,* 1999, 505–24. Importantly, Kleingeld does not consider the years after 1800 since she considers the early nineteenth century to be marked first of all by the rise of nationalist and patriotic discourses. While it of course is true that this period saw the rise of nationalism, this delineation nevertheless causes her to overlook what can be considered the most important theoretical site from which to think an 'alternative cosmopolitanism' in the form of a 'cultural cosmopolitanism' today, namely that of the brothers Humboldt.

[491] *Ibid.*, 518.

international justice.[492] The specificity of the Humboldtian intervention therefore stands out all the clearer, if the contrast between Forster and Herder is first taken into account.

Well known as a naturalist and anthropologist who published (amongst other things) accounts of his travels with James Cook between 1772–75 and a series of critiques of Kant's anthropological theories (in particular the concept of race found therein), Forster was an important early interlocutor for both of the Humboldt brothers. The idea of cosmopolitanism which he championed grew out of the conviction that global cultural homogeneity would lead to an impoverishment of the intellectual and artistic endeavours of humankind.[493] In many ways, the views that Forster expressed in his writings on the many different peoples of the Earth can be described as one that pairs a natural universalist perspective with a cultural particularistic one. The principal idea of his late theoretical essays is that the essential predispositions (*Anlage*) for reason, imagination, and feeling are shared by all humans, and that planetary differences of climate, geographical terrains, and conditions of life have led, over time, to a differentiation in the cultural expressions of these predispositions:

> What man [*der Mensch*] could become, he has everywhere become in accordance with the local conditions. Climate, location of towns, height of mountains, direction of rivers… have sometimes favoured him from one side, sometimes limited him from another and influenced his physique as well as his moral behaviour. In this way, he has nowhere become everything, but everywhere become something different.[494]

Contrary to Kant, with whom he carried out a public discussion on the concept of race, Forster found this diversity to be inherently valuable. In correspondence with this idea, Forster attempted to adopt specific methodological doctrines for the study of cultural differences within his earlier travel relations. With the intention to systematically describe the material aspects of cultures as well as the political systems, religions and customary practices of the peoples he observed, his work partook in the then-prevalent desire to render travel writings scientific.[495] In *Cosmos*, Alexander noted precisely this distinctive aspect of Forster's scientific career: 'With him a new era of scientific expeditions began with the goal of comparative ethnology (*Völkerkunde*) and regional geography (*Länderkunde*).'[496] The central

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[492] Herder the proto-nationalist is well-known whereas the vindication of Herder the cosmopolitan has only happened in recent years, in line with the work to develop an 'alternative' cosmopolitanism' in the form which I am discussing here. See, especially, Michael Forster, *Johann Gottfried Herder: Philosophical Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Sonia Sikke, *Herder on Humanity and Cultural Difference: Enlightened Relativism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); and Muthu, *Enlightenment Against Empire*.

[493] Kleingeld, 'Six Varieties of Cosmopolitanism', 515.

[494] Georg Forster, 'Über lokale und Allgemeine Bildung' (1791), quoted in *ibid.*, 516.

[495] For the notion of 'travel as science' see Sergio Moravia, 'Philosophie et geographie a la fin du XVIIIe siècle'.

[496] CAS, vol.II, 71.

questions in this regard were those of the standards for evaluating and comparing different peoples. As a proponent of the early anthropological ideal of objectivity and suspension of prejudice in the study of extra-European ways of life, he emphasised the importance of investigating the individual character of each people as a whole, without prematurely subjecting it to a cross-cultural theory of spiritual development and without classifying it in relation to European conceptions of reason and morality. On this account, stages of development were to be measured solely within each culture, according to the degrees of inner richness and differentiation. This meant that rather than by the application of a universal standard in relation to which civilizational progression could be measured, the very notion of complexity came to be the formal criteria of comparison. Projected to a global level, it is in the combination of a commitment to the essential moral equality of all human beings with a concern for national cultural plurality that Forster's cosmopolitanism lies. Politically, this form of cosmopolitanism is therefore compatible with international federative cosmopolitanism, if the latter remains protective of cultural pluralism.

Although he did not have the first-hand experience of the world that Forster did, these aspects resonate within Herder's writings. If anything, Herder took the critique of ethnocentrism even further, arguing in *Letters for the Advancement of Humanity* (1793–7) that:

> There is no such thing as a specially favoured nation (*Favoritvolk*) on Earth… there cannot, therefore, be any order of rank… the negro is as much entitled to think the white man degenerate as the white man is to think the negro as a black beast… Least of all must we think of European culture as a universal standard of human values. To apply such a standard is not just misleading; it is meaningless. For 'European culture' is a mere abstraction, an empty concept. Where does, or did, it exist in its entirely? In which nation? In which period? Besides, it can scarcely be posed as the most perfect manifestation of man's culture, having – who can deny? – far too many deficiencies, weaknesses, perversions and abominations associated with it. Only a real misanthrope could regard European culture as the universal constitution of our species. The culture of *man* is not the culture of the *European*; it manifests itself according to place and time in *every* people.[497]

Furthermore, against what he considered a false idea of universal values – values that could be called 'universal European' values – Herder adopted the notion that an understanding of the substantial differences between peoples is predicated upon the understanding of the differences between languages. As such, it would not be an overstatement to say that the fundamental insight orienting the mediation of the philosophy of history with a philosophy of language in *On Language* had already been formulated by Herder in his *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*.[498] In 1784, the same year Kant published his *Idea for a Universal*

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[497] Johann Gottfried von Herder, *Letters for the Advancement of Humanity*, quoted in *Herder on Social and Political Culture: A Selection of Texts*, ed. F.M. Barnard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 24.

[498] In many ways *Ideen* is, like the *On Language*, the sprawling culmination to many years of writing on this very same topic. The multi-volume work was most notably, in this regard, preceded by *Auch eine Philosophie der*

History with a Cosmopolitan Aim, Herder both reiterated his earlier critiques of the evaluation of different societies through purportedly common standards of perfection and proposed that the very act of cultural comparison passes through comparison between languages:

The finest essay on the history and the diverse character of the human understanding and heart would be a *philosophical comparison of languages*: for in every language a people's understanding and character is imprinted.[499]

In line with this view, humanity is, so Herder argued, best conceived of not immediately from the side of universally shared human traits or as an abstract universal moral ideal, but in terms of the plurality of its distinct expressions: in ways of living, of experiencing the world, and of assigning value to certain practices.[500] In forming this argument, Herder, like Forster and later Wilhelm, did not use the term 'culture' ('*Cultur*' or '*Kultur*') in the plural, in the sense of 'different cultures', but writes instead of the plurality of different nationally specific ways in which humankind expresses conceptions of virtues and ideals, of what a just community, a good life, and happiness looks like at different points in history and in different places on Earth.[501] National individuality rather than cultural difference dominates Herder's discourse. In strongly organicist metaphors, Herder details how each of these nationally delineated ways of life make up an internally coherent and unified whole, incommensurable to all others and in principle of equal value. There is therefore not a definitive way to judge the superiority of one nation over the other, and this central point might be called Herder's thesis of the moral

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Geschichte zur Bildung der Menschheit: Beitrag zu vielen Beiträgen des Jahrhunderts that, ten years earlier, had both ironically critiqued and contributed to the fad for writing philosophies of history. For a discussion of this text, and for an elegant reflection on the difficulties which Herder's ironic style poses to interpretations of his work, see Bertrand Binoche, 'Herder in 1774: An Incomplete Philosophy of History' in *A Companion to Enlightenment Historiography,* ed. Sophie Bourgault and Robert Sparling (Leiden: Brill, 2013) 189–216.

[499] Herder, *Werke*, vol. 6, quoted in Forster, *German Philosophies of Language*, 106 (translation amended).

[500] Eva Piirimäe, 'Herder and Cosmopolitanism' in *Critique of Cosmopolitan Reason: Timing and Spacing the Concept of World Citizenship*, ed. R. Lettevall and K. Petrov (Bern: Peter Lang Publishing, 2013), 196–97.

[501] Neither Forster, Herder, Kant nor Wilhelm von Humboldt use 'culture' in the sense of 'different cultures'. As discussed in Chapter Three of this thesis, in Kant's *Critique of the Power of Judgement*, '*Cultur*' is distinguished from '*Zivilisierung*'. To be cultured in this sense is to be able to restrain oneself, to act on rational purposes and to resist the 'pathology' of desire and natural determination in a way which does not necessarily entail a social conception of man. To be civilized, to the contrary, is the social property of wishing to share one's pleasure in certain objects with others. For these terms in Kant and Herder, see Raymond Geuss, 'Kultur, Bildung, Geist' in *Morality, Culture and History, Essays on German Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 34. That Herder does not use the term 'cultures' in the plural is also noted by Jörg Fisch, 'Zivilisation, Kultur', in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland* vol. 7, ed. Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, and Reinhardt Koselleck (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta Verlag, 1992), 711. When Wilhelm writes of civilisation and of culture in *On Language*, it is clear that in his view, they are different means toward the *homogenisation* of the world: 'Civilisation and culture gradually sublates the glaring contrasts of peoples, and still more successful is the striving for the more universal moral form of a more deeply penetrating and nobler cultivation.' OL, 34–35.

incommensurability of different universalisms.[502] Importantly, for Herder this moral incommensurability thesis did not entail the incomparability of nations as such. Rather, it poses inter-national comparisons as a *problem* for the philosophy of history. Herder's own approach to this problem found its cue in the notion that national communities – and with them national identities – are recognisable by their linguistic commonalities, since it is within a specific language that traditions are formed and in turn gives form to the people. It is this intuition that guides the mediation of the philosophy of history with a philosophy of language.

III. *Another Philosophy of Language, Another Philosophy of History: Wilhelm von Humboldt's Linguistic Intervention*

To construct the parameters for a philosophical comparison of languages and to lay bare its theoretical presuppositions is precisely the task which Wilhelm von Humboldt sets for himself in *On Language*, whose title moreover names the deeper motivation behind this mode of comparative linguistics: to assess the influence of language structures on the spiritual development of humankind. Moreover, the two elemental fusions that the Humboldtian linguistic intervention into the philosophy of history is premised upon – the intimacy of thinking with linguistic articulation and the intimacy of national character with national linguistic characteristics – also formed the very backbones of the German Romantic philosophies of language, for which Herder equally stands as an early model. It would, however, be a mistake to see in Humboldt's writings and in his concern for language merely the site wherein a philosophy of language – already developed in its most notable aspects by Herder – came to be filled in with the empirical study of a plurality of languages and thus of linguistic differences.[503] The question of what precisely constitutes a *philosophical* comparison – of both the matrix and the proper units of comparison – is in this case as important as the very idea of comparison itself. In dialogue and discussion with Friedrich Schlegel's 1808 philosophical study of Sanskrit in *On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians*, Wilhelm proposes that what should be compared are grammatical structures, not individual words or phonemes as Herder primarily seems to have believed. In an essay on linguistic comparison, Wilhelm makes clear a point that will be iterated at several moments in *On Language* and which will also function as one of the methodological presuppositions for the study as a whole:

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[502] For a discussion of the psychological, empirical and normative aspects of Herder's incommensurability-thesis, see Muthu, *Enlightenment Against Empire*, 223–24.

[503] This is the clear tendency in Forster's *German Philosophies of* Language, 112–13.

> Languages are the true images of the modes in which nations think and combine their ideas. The manner of this combination, represented by the grammar, is altogether as essential and characteristic as are the sounds applied to objects, that is to say, the words.[504]

Because languages are in some sense living wholes, since their nature is revealed not in their isolated elements but by how they each operate syntheses of judgement, the essential problem faced by anyone who wants to study them scientifically is how to proceed from analytic reason, which parcels languages as an objects into units of analysis, to a grasp of the 'life' of the object at hand. Languages, as Wilhelm famously held, were not finished works or products (*ergon*) but living activities (*energeai*) that at every moment must be brought to life within 'the ever-repeated work of the spirit of making the articulated sound capable of expressing thought'.[505] To truly understand a language, what must be confronted is its grammar, its way of producing meaningful statements in living and recorded discourses of speaking human beings. Moreover, when he argues that each language is a *Weltbild* and a *Weltansicht*,[506] that the diversity of human languages is 'not one of sounds and signs but a diversity of worldviews',[507] both a singular image of the world and a specific viewpoint onto the world, he is not only making a point about the genealogical primacy of language – the primary basis for both Herder's and Johann Georg Hamann's largely empiricist metacritiques of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*.[508] What he does is to render the transcendental plane immanent to language itself, that is, to introduce a linguistic schematism into the constitution of the objects of experience. This is a way to historicise the transcendental through a focus on the socially malleable and therefore historically transformable linguistic structures which it is shaped within. The plasticity of language then becomes, the mark of the historicity of the transcendental. It is within the context of this displacement that the tension between two conceptions of linguistic difference in Wilhelm's philosophy of language are to be found: one which tends toward a view of each language as an individual, to be explored with a view to determine its singular character and one which tends toward a historico-comparative typology of languages more or less fit for the synthetic operation of thought. There is split, in other words, between two tendencies present in Humboldt's philosophy of language: one that opens the road to attempts to think cross-cultural comparison through the comparison

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[504] W. Humboldt, 'An Essay on the best Means of ascertaining the Affinities of Oriental Languages' (1828), *Gesammelte Schriften* vol.6 1827–1835, edited by Albert Leitzmann (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1907), 80.

[505] OL, 49.

[506] He writes, for instance, 'there resides in every language a characteristic world-view' and 'What is created from the world-outlook reacts back upon the language'. OL, 60, 140.

[507] Wihelm von Humbdolt, quoted in Trabant, 'Vanishing Worldviews', 26.

[508] 'In Speech alone awakens slumbering reason: or rather, the bare capacity of reason, which of itself would have remained eternally dead, acquires through speech vital power and efficacy.' Herder, *Outlines for a Philosophy*, 87

of languages without an axiological overdetermination and one which (p)re-inscribes a hierarchy of cultures within the classification of the different languages of the world.[509] It is only by emphasising the former and by adding to it the explicit anti-slavery arguments made by Alexander – which will be discussed later in this chapter – that one can claim that 'the Humboldt Brothers together developed a historical anthropology that sought to appreciate every human group on its own terms, for none were in any meaningful sense 'superior' or 'inferior' to any other'.[510] How, then, does this split appear within the philosophy of language, and how does it therefore also come to be at stake in Humboldt's mediation of the philosophy of history with his philosophy of language?

IV. Two Roads in Wilhelm von Humboldt's Philosophy of Language

That the transcendental field is rendered immanent to language, entails that languag*es* can no longer be viewed as mere mediums through which thinking becomes communicable and exteriorised in speech. To think at all is to move within a specific language, to the extent that thought *only* happens in language and that *only* that which can be expressed linguistically can be thought. As Wilhelm von Humboldt phrases this insight: 'language is the formative [*bildende*] organ of thought' and, as such, 'thought and language […] are inseparable from each other'.[511] But while the inseparability of thought and language is therefore a fundamental presupposition of any investigation into the nature of either, they are not for that reason assumed to be simply identical. Rather, from the perspective of Wilhelm's linguistics,

> the true precondition of any kind of intellectual activity is ultimately the formative power of language which, as *Sprachform*, precedes the contingent linguistic manifestations of which it is the ideal essence […] Language, as a form, becomes the very structure of thought, an a priori structure. Thought is once again conditioned by language, but this time in a framework in which language is seen as the carrier of the a priori structures of subjectivity.[512]

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[509] As often happens, this has meant that a lot of interpretational effort is put into adjudicating which of these two tendencies are revelatory of Wilhelm von Humboldt's 'true' philosophy of language. Along these lines, Donatella Di Cesare argues that while Wilhelm creates a typology of languages, he is fundamentally disinterested in the effort to hierarchically classify them. Cleaving typology from classification, she argues that the former is integral to his utterly new philosophy of language and the latter merely an external remnant of traditional conceptions of linguistic difference. The more truthful approach, in my view, would be to attempt to account for the presence of both within one and the same *oeuvre*. See Donatella Di Cesare, 'The Philosophical and Anthropological Place of Wilhelm von Humboldt's Linguistic Typology', in *Leibniz, Humboldt, and the Origins of Comparativism*, ed. Tuillo de Mauro and Lia Formigari (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1990), 160.

[510] This is how Walls describes the cosmopolitanism of the Humboldts. She does not, however, consider how this cosmopolitanism stands in tension with other aspects within the Humboldtian philosophy of language. See Walls, *The Passage to Cosmos*, 174.

[511] OL, 54 [GS VII, 53].

[512] Lia Formigari, *Signs, Science and Politics: Philosophies of Language in Europe 1700–1830* (Amsterdam and

Languages are neither entirely subjective nor entirely objective, but 'objectively active and independent, precisely in so far as it is subjectively passive and dependent'.[513] No language has a permanent abode outside of its usage and it must always be brought to life by an individual speaker who in turn both shapes and is shaped by the language spoken. In the final instance, *On Language* mediates the philosophy of history with a philosophy of language by continually triangulating the national character of a people, its expression in linguistic form, and the individual freedom of inventiveness within the limits of the semantic and grammatical schemas of a given language.

It is however important to maintain that this mediation does not simply collapse language and history. In *On Language*, Wilhelm's notion of the 'the historian's task' – the deceptively simple 'presentation [*Darstellung*] of what has actually happened'[514] – provides a model for the 'task of the linguist': to produce a presentation not just of the component parts of language but of the concrete conditions under which humans attempt to reach reality through linguistic forms.[515] The deeper motivation for the analogy between the tasks of the linguist and historian arises from the historical and linguistic objects themselves, which demand a reconfiguration of the relation between the empirical and philosophical. What these tasks attest to is the need for philosophy not simply to compliment itself with empirical research, but further to be shaped in a passage *through* empirical research in order to secure its proper objects as totalities. That is, for the philosophy of language to pass through a more highly developed empirical study of languages and for the philosophy of history to pass through more conscientious empirical study of history. The rationale behind such a reconfiguration, can be gleaned from two early sketches for texts on world history, 'Considerations on World History' and 'Considerations on the Dynamic Forces in World History,'[516] which also outline Wilhelm's conception of an alternative philosophy of history.

Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1993), 171–72.

[513] OL, 53.

[514] OHT, 58. This essay is widely considered one theoretically foundational for the development of modern German Historicism and therefore as a text which places Wilhelm von Humboldt at a distance from earlier 'philosophies of history'. It also in many ways shares Dilthey's later concerns with the development of a 'critique of historical reason'. This section argues that Wilhelm's essay is, rather, an attempt to realign the relation between historical research and philosophical construction within *another* philosophy of history.

[515] For the 'task of the linguist', see OL, 27 [GW VII, 20] (translation modified). While Humboldt does not use the same terms – *Geschäft* for the language researcher, *Aufgabe* for the historian – the cross-reference within *On Language* to precisely the lecture on the historian's task supports my interpretation of the two as non-trivially aligned.

[516] From these early sketches to the later more developed form to be found in 'On the Historian's Task', there is an important line of enquiry, not broached here, that centres on the concept of *force* and in particular the role of vital forces in world history. In 'Considerations on World History' and 'Considerations on the Dynamic Forces in World History' alike, two orders of force obliquely conjoin within Wilhelm's idea of humanity. It is

Two overarching themes – which will also reappear both in 'On the Historian's Task' and in *On Language* – meet in these texts: that of correctly determining the concept of the human species such that it might guide the conceptual apparatus of the philosophy of history, and that of adjudicating the character of and relations between two orders of dynamic forces in history, those of nature and of freedom. In these early sketches, Wilhelm is at pains to distance himself from 'philosophical world histories' and the 'so-called history of humanity [*Menscheit*] and its culture' which he understands as highly fictionalised depictions of an incremental development from savagery towards increased perfection. His ambivalence toward Kant's conception of universal world history indicates the predicament he sees the philosophy of history to be caught within:

> There exists more than one attempt to bring under a single point of view the individual, scattered, and seemingly random events of the world history and to derive them from one another according to a principle of necessity. Kant did this first, most systematically and most abstractly and several others have followed in his tracks. All so-called philosophical histories are attempts of this kind and the obsession with presenting observations about history has nearly displaced history, at least in the historical sense. [517]

Kant's idea of universal world history is, in a sense, to Wilhelm both an ideal and the perfect image of the problem with philosophies of history. Its systematicity, although admirable, is ultimately flawed since its starting point was too abstract. Wilhelm's critique is, therefore, specifically of a conception of history which would orient itself toward an abstract ideal of perfection rather than the richness of individual forms.[518] The counter to this tendency is found in a new conception of the human species, one which does not fall prey to what Wilhelm considers an overly intellectualist bias, wherein an idea of the social or individual perfectibility and perfection of the abstractly human imposes a unilateral schema onto the history of humankind. In these early texts, he situates his reworked concept of the human species in the concrete natural-historical terrain where life unfolds and within the natural universe as a whole. In 'On the Historian's Task', the linguistic perspective joins the natural-historical conception of the human species, in a text that oscillates between rejecting and

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oblique both in the sense that it is hard to determine precisely how Wilhelm von Humboldt approaches this question and insofar as it seems that the most convincing account to be constructed out of what he writes on this issue is that he leaves it, in a Kantian manner, as something which is simply beyond the bounds of our experience. In my reading of these I have drawn on Jean Quillien, 'Introduction' to Guillaume de Humboldt, *La tâche de l'historien* (Lille: Septentrion, 1985), 7–43.

[517] W. Humboldt, 'Betrachtungen über die bewegenden Ursachen in der Weltgeschichte', in *Gesammelte Schriften* vol.3 1799–1818, ed. by Albert Leitzmann (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1904), 360 (my translation).

[518] 'dass man die Vollendung des Menschengeschlechts in Erreichung einer allgemeinen, abstract gedachten Vollkommenheit, nicht in der Entwicklung eines Reichthums grösser individueller Formen sucht.' W. Humboldt, 'Betrachtungen Über die Weltgeschichte', in *Gesammelte Schriften* vol.3 1799–1818, ed. by Albert Leitzmann (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1904), 358.

accepting the philosophy of history as an intellectual endeavour. With this text, it becomes clear that,

> [t]o comprehend the diversity of human nature, one must begin by comprehending the diversity of human language. For Humboldt, the value of comparative linguistic study resides in its use toward understanding man; it is a need that arose from his anthropology.[519]

The study of human differences – of the differences between modes of thought, political practice and artistic expression – depends on a preliminary investigation of the characters of different languages. Any attempt to capture the characteristics of a specific people will therefore be entirely amiss if it fails to comprehend what is distinctive of the language in which its self-conception is formed and reflected. Additionally and inversely, a deeper understanding of a specific language requires knowledge of the cultural whole within which it is alive. Ultimately, however, the careful warnings we find in 'On the Historian's Task' against the imposition of a priori schemas as explanatory devices in historical expositions, is not a full displacement of the philosophy of history but a way to emphasise how one might do history better – and, thus, how one might do the philosophy of history better. Practically, the work of the historian proceeds in two directions, accompanied by two separate sets of commitments. The first is the critical mode, which aims to determine the procedure for finding, among all strains of transient and temporal human activities, the facts out of which a historical narrative will be constructed: a source critical as well as self-critical endeavour in the suspension of pre-judged conclusions. The second is the mode of connecting and presenting the facts, which demands insight into how events are connected, an insight irreducible to any single fact.[520] The latter is the commitment to finding and presenting the essence of history, not in a single idea but in its multiplicity. The problem, as Wilhelm frames it, is that as much as it must be assumed that ideas are operative in world history, and as much as 'universal history cannot be understood without world governance [*Weltregierung*]',[521] we possess 'no special faculty for inquiring into the plans of world governance'.[522] Not directly perceptible, they are also not 'made up', not fantastical – the ideas which organise universal history 'originate in the mind through contemplation of these events [the mass of events] undertaken in a true historical spirit.'[523] How precisely this is supposed to happen largely remains mysterious within this texts. Ideas are described as accessible, in some sense, in that

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[519] Cesare, The Philosophical and Anthropological Place', 162.

[520] OHT, 62.

[521] *Ibid.*, 67.

[522] *Ibid.*

[523] *Ibid.*, 64.

they are attached to phenomenal objects and 'can be perceived in them like non-corporeal beings which one never perceives unless one leaves the realm of phenomena and enters mentally into the realm where they originate'.[524] And although Wilhelm states that it is without doubt that ideas exist, and that certain phenomena cannot be explained without them since they cannot be explained according to the laws of nature, he also does not specify which phenomena he has in mind. Instead, he ventures the proposal that this kind of idea manifests, or 'externalises', itself into the course of events, either in the form of *trends* in which many particulars are affected by something general or in the creative energy that exceeds the conditions out of which it arose. In the latter case, the ideal of Greece holds a special place, since it is regarded as the site where the multiplicity of different individualities were brought to active corporation through a division into different nations and cities beautifully reunified. What emerged among the Greeks was the *very idea of national individuality* as an aesthetic ideal. In a passage from *On Language* that approaches Greece with many of these questions, this is extended to the idea that it is the Greeks that place their individuality into ideal form and thus spiritualise themselves in such a way that later generations can form a relation to this spirit rather than to the 'historical Greeks'. This is the reason, in Wilhelm's view, for the special place allotted to the Greek national spirit in the history of man. Out of the Greek example, it becomes possible to recognise in others that there must be an 'idea' according to which their history and character are to be understood, while such an understanding at each instance must pass through the comprehension of the linguistic forms, the semantic and grammatical schemas, of the people in question. It is here that we can begin to appreciate the outline of the two separate tendencies in both the philosophy of history and the philosophy of language. For the philosophy of history, there is a split between the emerging-historicist intuition that historical phenomena always are to be interrogated as individuals (according to their specific idea) and the expansively systematic approach that would afford a view onto the multiple possible realisations of these ideas in their possible interactions, ordered according to degree of internal development. From both perspectives: 'The goal of history can only be the actualisation of the idea which is to be realised by mankind in every way and in all shapes in which the finite form may enter into union with the idea.'[525]

A similar split between a tendency toward individuation and one toward classification in the study of language is revelatory of the two possible avenues for thinking cultural-linguistic difference: one that enables cross-cultural comparison through linguistic

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[524] *Ibid.*, 67.
[525] OL, 70.

comparison without axiological overdetermination, and one that (p)re-inscribes a hierarchy of cultures within the classification of world languages. In the latter, the superiority that natural-historical classifications of race assigned to white Europeans is displaced into and recoded as linguistic superiority of some linguistic community over others.[526] Typically, such a hierarchy in early comparative linguistics had taken form on the basis of a primary distinction between literary and non-literary linguistic communities, but in Wilhelm's case matters were more complicated, since he considered such a divide to have primarily a heuristic function. The heuristic function of this distinction should be underscored, because he, unlike many contemporaries, does not appear to have considered literacy a mark of intelligence, but simply a trait which, if lacking, would contribute to the difficulty of truly understanding a people's national character:

> With people among whom we can discover the marks of their individuality only in the particular elements of their language, we are seldom ever able to project a coherent picture of what is peculiar to them. Although this is everywhere a difficult task, it becomes possible only where nations have set down their world views in a more or less extensive literature and imprinted on their language in *connected discourse.*[527]

Wilhelm's point, here, is that the absence of literacy does not necessarily reflect greater simplicity within the languages in question, but causes the one studying them to assume a greater uniformity than is actually the case. 'We do not recognise', he writes, 'their distinguishing traits, because they are not conveyed to us by the medium that would enable us to see them.'[528] The tension between a non-hieratical and hierarchical thought of linguistic difference is nevertheless unmistakable. The former is found in the several assertions to the effect that '[t]he *difference of character* among languages need not necessarily consist, therefore, in any absolute *advantage* of one over any other'[529] and that 'every language contains the whole conceptual fabric and mode of presentation of a portion of mankind'.[530] Among all the worlds languages, 'we cannot, unless the facts imperatively demand it, presuppose a *gradual progress* since every significant enhancement appertains, rather, to a peculiar creative force'.[531] Similarly, he outright rejects the division between *cultivated* and *uncultivated* languages, and especially the view that *because* some peoples are more cultivated, so are their languages. In these instances, he argues instead that the causal relations in this case are much more complex than what can be captured within such a division. Every language, moreover, contains within

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[526] Cesare, 'The Philosophical and Anthropological Place', 161.
[527] OL, 153
[528] *Ibid.*
[529] *Ibid.*, 156.
[530] *Ibid.*, 60.
[531] *Ibid.*, 32.

it 'a *totality* corresponding to the range of untrammelled human capacity for cultivation, from which everything particular that humanity encompasses can be created, without alien assistance'.[532] In the many different linguistic paths, 'the human mind is always capable of producing something great, and both fruitful and inspiring in its reverse action upon the mind itself. These particular points decide nothing however, as to the *advantages* that languages have over one another.'[533] From this perspective, typological division can only be generated *out* of the comparison of languages, it cannot be the basis on which they are compared. But, it also seems clear that Wilhelm's intuition was that *when* such a typology was constructed, it would be possible to determine the lesser and higher degree to which a language facilitated rational thought. Here, he relied on and developed Schlegel's distinctions between *inflected* and *isolating* languages, with the assumption that some languages – namely those inflected such as Sanskrit and Greek – have a greater capacity to facilitate the formation of thought: 'That nations of happier gifts, and under more favourable circumstances, possess languages superior to others, lies in the very nature of the case.'[534] Similarly, Humboldt writes of imperfect languages whose coarseness produce weaker grasps of finer points:

> The Chinese structure, however we may explain it, is obviously founded on an imperfection in the making of the language, probably a custom, peculiar to that people, of isolating sounds, coinciding with an insufficient strength of the inner linguistic sense that calls for their combination and mediation.[535]

This difference between languages and their suitability for rational thought is however, decidedly one of degree, not of ontological character. This is partly the case because of the space left open for poetic and philosophical innovation of individual language usage. Since the development of languages happen in a dynamic interchange between the language structure and the creativity of the language user, language itself can, on this view, be stretched, expanded, and even morphed in different attempts to grasp truth. The poetic force of individual language use also opens an avenue out of an otherwise oft-noted problematic aspect of the concept of culture mediated with linguistic difference; namely, that it conceives of languages and cultures alike as closed totalities and therefore largely foreclose the perspective of hybridity and points of encounter. Such an enclosure is a danger for both tendencies present in Wilhelm von Humboldt's work, so while the passage to the properly 'alternative' cosmopolitanism undoubtedly goes through the practical affirmation of the equality of all cultures regardless of their national-linguistic modes of expression, this in

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[532] *Ibid.*, 33.
[533] *Ibid.*, 146
[534] *Ibid.*, 27.
[535] *Ibid.*, 206.

itself could just as easily entail a cosmopolitan accommodation of nationalised cultural essentialism. Moreover, the moral affirmation of equality needs its political counterpart in the intervention into the politics of racial difference in colonial modernity, for which the work of Alexander von Humboldt provides key insights.

V. Alexander von Humboldt: Race in the Currents of an Anti-Colonial Cosmopolitanism
'Die gefährlichste Weltanschauung ist die Weltanschauung derer, die die Welt nie angeschaut haben.' These words – for which an English approximation might be phrased as 'the most dangerous worldview, is that of someone who has never taken the world into view' – have often been attributed to Alexander von Humboldt. Regardless of their true or apocryphal status, they aptly summarise the premise of Alexander's alternative cosmopolitanism, which entails the willingness to explicitly relativise the systems of value and modes of life from within which one forms judgements. Following this statement, encounters with difference dissolve any particular worldview's absolute claim to universality. To this effect, Alexander's publications from his long expedition in the Americas warned at several points against the ethnocentrism of many prior texts on the region, which denigrated Amerindian forms of life, languages and cognitive capacities:

> [O]ne must be infinitely circumspect in criticizing what one might call the moral and intellectual disposition of peoples from whom we are separated by the multiple barriers that arise from differences of language, customs, and manners. A philosophical observer finds inaccuracy in what has been published on the national character of Spaniards, French, Italians, and Germans in the middle of civilized Europe. How could a traveller stranded on an island, or who had lived in a distant country for some time, presume to judge the different faculties of the soul and the prevalence of reason, wit, and imagination of other peoples?[536]

In her portrayal of Alexander as an anti-colonial cosmopolitan, someone for whom the cosmos was to be understood as a constantly changing and reciprocal sets of causal relations, Soraya Nour argues that true comprehension of the cosmos required the passage through different and difficult-to-access worldviews. As such, a particular cosmopolitanism – such as the alternative cosmopolitanism I have sketched here, one which includes not only the respect for universal human rights but also the recognition of the equal worth of different forms of life – comes to form an ethico-political condition for comprehending the cosmos, as it can only truly be understood through the recognition of multiple perspectives.[537] In a

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[536] PEKNS, 249. Humboldt returns to such cautions several times within this text and further develops the point that the misery travellers today might observe among indigenous populations should be taken as the expression of the devastating effects of colonial repression and years of subjection to ideological re-education by missionaries rather than as that of any innate characteristics. See 236–37 and 254–57.
[537] Soraya Nour Sckell, 'Le cosmos et le cosmopolitisme d'Alexander von Humboldt', in *Le Soi et le Cosmos*

world where there are real imbalances in how different perspectives are valued, this condition, for Alexander von Humboldt, translated into a critique of the colonial system of exploitation and cultural dominance.[538] Where his critiques of colonial institutions retained a partially diplomatic tone in his published travel writings, his private diaries from the expedition offer a much more frank assessment:

> the very idea of a colony is an immoral idea, it is the idea of rendering one country subordinate to another, of a country in which only a certain degree of prosperity is allowed, in which industry and enlightenment should only be propagated up until a certain point. For beyond this point, the mother country – so popular belief has it – would gain less. Beyond this mediocrity, the too powerful and too self-reliant colony, would seek its independence. Every colonial government is a government of mistrust [...]. Safety is sought in disunity, divisions between castes are ratified, the hatred and dissensus between them encouraged and unity by marriage forbidden just as slavery is protected because the Government may one day, when lacking all other means, resort to the cruellest of all, which is that of arming slaves against their masters, of having them cut their throats before seeing their own so cut, which will always be the end of this horrible tragedy. Jobs are only given to those who have come in hunger exile from Europe, these are allowed to publicly despise the natives of the Colony. People who suck the blood of the Creoles are sent over, and these talk incessantly about the goods they have abandoned to settle in a land where everything displeases them, where the sky is not blue, where meat has no taste, where everything is despicable and yet they do not leave [...]. European governments have been so successful in spreading hatred and disunity in the Colonies that the pleasures of society are almost unknown there. (Guayaquil, Ecuador, 4 January–17 February, 1803.)[539]

Here, it is not a matter of designating better or worse colonial governments – as was seen, for instance, in Protestant propaganda advancing the colonial claims of North-European powers against the Spanish colonial regime – but of a more radical critique of colonial governance as such and of the hypocrisy of those who would try to justify their ends in ideas of the paternalist guidance of so-called lesser races:

> Nowhere in the world should a European be more ashamed of being so, than in the Islands, be these French, English, Danish or Spanish. To debate which nation treats the blacks with most humanity is to make a mockery of the word humanity and ask whether it would be gentler to slit open a person's stomach or to skin them.[540]

Clearly what lies at the heart of these issues is the question of modern slavery and of race as the cipher of difference most forcefully mobilised in the justifications of its institutionalisation within the plantation economies of the colonial system. Before his travels,

d'Alexander von Humboldt à nos jours, ed. Soraya Nour Sckell and Damien Erhart (Berlin: Duncker and Humblot, 2015), 23.

[538] Nour, 'Le cosmos et le cosmopolitisme d'Alexander von Humboldt', 18.

[539] Alexander von Humboldt's personal journals were written in both German and French, with this passage originally in French. A. Humboldt quoted in Nour, 'Le cosmos et le cosmopolitisme d'Alexander von Humboldt', 31 (my translation).

[540] A. Humboldt, quoted in Sandra Rebok, 'Alexander von Humboldt's Perceptions of Colonial Spanish America', *Dynamis* 29, 54 (my translation).

Alexander had, at the University of Göttingen, been a student of Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, whose work on the concept of race both rivalled and was informed by that of Kant.[541] (In)famously, it was Blumenbach who proposed that the white race might be considered the primeval type from which other races, as he phrased it, had degenerated.[542] In Blumenbach's classificatory system, the human species had, through various processes of degeneration, been diversified into five separate races. As both Blumenbach and Kant understood it, the central issue which such classificatory schemas posed to the sciences of man was whether and how they could be said to correspond to anything like a true system of nature. In other words, could the principle of categorical division be grounded in natural divisions, or would it always remain an arbitrary imposition in the face of innumerable degrees of differentiation in human appearances? For his part, Alexander clearly considered it an organisational artifice without scientific basis, however these racial differences were determined. In considering man's place within the natural universe in the conclusion of the first volumes of the *Cosmos*, he notes that while the variation among humans customarily designated by 'the somewhat vague appellation of "*races*"' has been the focal point of much debate, 'it is impossible to recognise in the groups thus formed any true typical distinction, any general and consistent natural principle'.[543] Instead, two different avenues, one explicit and one implicit, can be discerned within his writings. The first follows closely Wilhelm's work on languages, such that a more fine-grained classificatory device might identify the 'relations existing between races and languages'[544] to effectively address the numerous contemporary questions about the intellectual and cultural differences between races in terms of more complexly articulated differences between national-linguistic communities. The second eschews questions concerning the scientificity of the concept of race altogether, to instead analyse the politics of racial difference and its inextricability from the history and institutions of the transatlantic slave trade in the colonies and former colonies. The first of these approaches concludes the first volume of the *Cosmos*, which largely consists of extended quotes and summaries of *On Language* paired with a more outspoken commitment to the moral equality of all humans and a natural historical monogenism. In a cosmos of many different linguistic worlds, Alexander emphasised that '[w]hile we maintain the unity of the human species, we at the same time repel the

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[541] See Bernasconi, 'Who Invented the Concept of Race', 11–36; and Chapter Three of this thesis.

[542] Although the term 'degeneration' means, to Blumenbach, something like development away from an original specimen, and not explicitly a deterioration.

[543] CAS, vol.1, 353. With a focus on these passages, Antenor Firmin's anti-Gobineau war-machine of an argument relies on the authority of Alexander von Humboldt the scientist to support his own deconstruction of the concept of race in *De l'égalité des races humaines* (Paris: 1885).

[544] CAS, vol.1, 358.

of superior and inferior races of men'.[545] It is precisely the practical commitment to countering ideas of white superiority – one that positively becomes a commitment to the equality not only of each individual but of the worlds to which they belong – which leads to the second perspective onto questions of race in Alexander von Humboldt's writings, that of its socio-political reality.

This perspective is overwhelmingly present in the *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain* and the *Political Essay on the Island of Cuba*, wherein discussions of the conditions of life imposed on the indigenous populations after the Spanish conquest and of the unjustifiability of slavery are weaved into both geographic and socio-economic analyses. Constructed out of personal observation – visits to mines, factories, and plantations – as well as from statistical materials drawn for the colonial archives of the major cities Alexander had visited, these volume-long essays attempt to provide complete impressions of the current conditions of these Spanish colonies, including outlines of the historical dynamics by which such conditions had been brought about. With these studies, he challenged the common view of the Americas as inherently inferior, degenerate, and underdeveloped continents, culturally, botanically, and zoologically – a view that is found in G.W.F. Hegel's contemporaneous writings which, in turn, echoed Cornelius de Pauw's earlier paradigmatic articulation of this position in *Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains* (1771).[546] In line with the more general critique of colonisation found in his notebooks, Alexander seems to turn this view on its head, seeking to display through import–export tables, production statistics, and analysis of the conditions for agricultural production how the colonial regime actively under-develops the colonies. With this, he showed himself moreover to be a keen observer of both the complex terrains on which tensions between creole independence movements (some of which had already proved successful) and European powers were refracted into the questions concerning the abolition of slavery, and of the very explicit ways in which proximity to whiteness in the colonies formed the significant determining factor for personal rank. In the *Political Essay on the Kingdom of New Spain,* which Alexander in his dedication to Charles IV described as a 'statistical essay' on the Mexican territories, race figures not primarily as a scientific category, but a legal and socio-political one, operationalised in a finely tuned system of social control:

> In a country governed by whites, the families reputed to have the least amount of black or mulatto blood [*sang nègre ou mulâtre*] are naturally the most honoured […] In the Americas, the degree of whiteness

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[545] In the footnote to this exclamation he adds: 'The very cheerless, and, in recent times, too often discussed doctrine of the unequal rights of man, and of slavery as an institution in conformity with nature, is unhappily found most systematically developed in Aristotle's *Politica*'. *Ibid.*

[546] See Gerbi, *The Dispute over the New World.*

of the skin determines a person's rank in society. A White man [*Blanc*] who rides barefoot on horseback takes himself for local nobility. Colour even establishes a certain equality between men who, as is the case wherever civilisation is little advanced or backward, complacently refine the prerogatives of race and origin. Whenever a local man has an argument with one of the titled lords of the country, he is frequently heard to say, 'Could you possibly think that you were whiter [*plus blanc*] than I am?' Consequently, it is of great interest for public pride and respect to estimate accurately the fractions of European blood that one assigns to the different castes.[547]

Whiteness here becomes a matter of social convention ratified by law, rather than a natural given, as is attested to by the comments on those court processes through which mix-race families of some economic means could request (and often were granted) the status 'white'. 'These declarations', Alexander wrote, 'do not always correspond to the judgement of the senses.'[548] It is at the intersection of these two modes of conceptualising difference – one that centres linguistically-mediated cultural difference without an axiological overdetermination and one that centres the efficaciousness of legal and political orders that ratify and enforce precisely a hierarchy among humans – that the real strength of the Humboldtian alternative cosmopolitanism lies, even if, as will now be demonstrated, the latter aspect is inscribed within the analysis of colonial practice rather than explicitly articulated.

The diagnostics of institutionalised racism in the colonies turns into direct critique in the later *Political Essay on the Island of Cuba* which is, in essence, a complex argumentative machine aimed at persuading readers that the colonial institutions of slavery did not constitute a 'necessary evil', as its defenders liked to claim.[549] It does so according to rhetorical strategies that in turn emphasised the economic benefits of gradually phasing out slavery,[550] the political threat posed by the potential revolts of immiserated slaves, and finally the moral indefeasibility of slavery as an institution which denies the fundamental insight that as

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[547] PENKS, 289–90

[548] 'One sees very dark-skinned Mulattos [*Mulâters très basané*] who have skilfully whitened themselves [*se faire blanchir*] (this is the vulgar expression). When a person's skin colour is too contrary to the solicited judgment, the petitioner is satisfied with a somewhat problematic expression. The judgment then reads that "such and such individuals may consider themselves white [*que se tengan por Blancos*]".' *Ibid.*, 290.

[549] PEIC. The version quoted from is based on the French 1826 edition in two volumes.

[550] It would be interesting to consider the degree to which Alexander in these economic and political lines of reasoning is making a parallel case to that of the French Physiocrats in the late-eighteenth century, where the recognition that the mistreatment of slaves was not *profitable* and that the potential destabilisation of the colonial system apparent after the Berbice slave revolt in Dutch Guyana in 1763, called for serious reforms among slave-owners if control over the colonies were to be secured. There are clear overlaps in the arguments presented, to the degree that one might consider Alexander as providing the empirical base (the statistics and political-economic data of the West Indian colonies) for these very same arguments, especially since the Haitian Revolution of 1791–1804 would have rendered the strategic-political case for reform even more prescient. While a few sources remark on the 'influence' of the Physiocrats upon Humboldt's conception of wealth as generated out of agriculture, I have not found any that explore this angle further. For the case of the Physiocrats and their anti-slavery arguments, see Duchet, *Anthropologie et histoire au siècle des Lumières*, 160–68.

humans 'all alike are designed for freedom'.[551] And while he goes to great pains to convince the reader that Spanish reforms may have already ensured that the form of slavery which he witnessed was not the harshest existing in the colonies – and, moreover, that the lot of the enslaved varied widely according to which form of work they were bound to – the reasoning underlying these lines of argument is that no degree of paternalist care for an enslaved population could make up for the absolute evil of slavery.[552] As the essay draws to an end, it is clear that while it may have been directed at a general public – as part of Alexander's extensive *opus Americana* – the intended audience for its interventionist agenda was not European learned circles but those who, within the colonies themselves, had the power not only to declare but also to realise the reforms.[553] The distance between metropoles and colony mirrors that between ideal and reality in as much as the leadership of European governments,

> will have no effect if landowners, colonial assemblies or *legislators,* do not adopt the same views and do not act accordingly to orchestrated plans, whose final end is slavery's cessation in the Antilles […] all these regulations, created with the best of intentions, are easy to evade. The plantations isolation renders their enforcement impossible.[554]

To Alexander, nothing must have seemed better suited to counter those notions according to which plantation economies by necessity required slave-labour than the minutely detailed portrait of the current state of Cuba: the composition of its territories and of its population, its capacities for agricultural production, its imports and exports as well as how all these factors compared to that of the other Antilles (in particular British Jamaica), Mexico, and Brazil. To this effect, the main parts of the text carefully constructs the economic and political case against slavery through a synoptic and systematic analysis of amply provided tables, tracing demographics, tax overviews, and colonial goods revenue. These tables were clearly constructed with the premise that every rational consideration of the given materials would lead the reader to conclusions similar to his own: that the only reasonable course of action for lawmakers and authorities would be to let the 1820 British abolition of the official slave-trade be followed by the abolition of the institution of slavery as such:[555]

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[551] CAS, vol.1, 358.

[552] PEIC, 143, 144 and 153.

[553] The insight that Alexander's arguments would have the most powerful effect if they convinced those in the colonies did not escape the attention of local creole elites in Cuba. The 1827 Spanish translation of the *Political Essay on the Island of Cuba* was banned upon publication.

[554] This line of reasoning again resonates with the Physiocratic insight that economic policy is to be implemented according to careful considerations of local conditions. Colonial assemblies and *legislateurs* should be granted a privileged place in the decision processes surrounding the transformation of the colonial system from one based on slave labour to one based on wage-labour because they 'understand the locales, know how to calibrate the means of improvement to each island's mores, customs, and circumstances'. PEIC 145, cf. 152.

[555] While certainly progressive, Alexander is no revolutionary on these issues: 'I offer the following as the most urgent subjects for colonial legislators: enact laws that fix the numbers of female blacks, and of blacks in relation

> The slave trade is not only barbaric; it is also unreasonable, because it fails to achieve its end. It is like a current of water that one has channelled across a great distance to the colonies, where the water does not reach the soil for which it had been intended. Those who keep repeating that only black slaves can cultivate sugarcane seem unaware that there are 1,148,000 slaves in the Antilles Archipelago, and that only five or six hundred thousand of them produce all the colonial crops in the entire Antilles.[556]

Foreshadowing this economic line of reasoning is a carefully detailed demographic analysis of the Caribbean islands – based on tables horizontally divided according to the territories in question and vertically divided according to the categories of i) 'whites', ii) 'free people of colour, mixed, and blacks', and ii) 'slaves'. This, in part, attests to Alexander's keen awareness that, in a context wherein the politics of racial differences were so all-pervasive, the very fearfulness which informed the brutality that maintained the power of whiteness, might itself be leveraged in the case against slavery. To commence the reform of the slavery system, so he argues, might quell the trepidations of those who in the Haitian Revolution of 1781–1804 saw the terrifying prospect of a slave-revolt supported by the free people of colour amongst themselves:

> In all of the Antilles, men of colour (black and of mixed race, free and enslaved) add up to 2,360,000 or 83 percent of the total population. If the laws in the Antilles and the legal status of people of colour do not change for the better soon and if we continue to talk without acting, political supremacy will pass into the hands of those who have the power of labour, the will to emancipate themselves, and the courage to endure long privations. This bloody catastrophe will occur as a necessary result of circumstances without any involvement on the part of Haiti's free blacks, who will not have to abandon the isolation in which they have lived up to now. Who would dare predict the impact that an African Confederation of the Free States of the Antilles, situated between Colombia, North America, and Guatemala, would have on the politics of the New World? The fear of this eventuality no doubt affects the spirit more than do the principles of humanity and justice […] The spirit in which even the earliest censuses (such as the one of 1775) were undertaken, using rubrics of age, sex, race, and states of civil liberty, deserves the highest praise. What was lacking were only the means for doing them properly. One sensed that the inhabitants' peace of mind depended in part on knowing the occupations of black people, that is, their numerical distribution on sugar plantations, on the farms, and in the cities. In order to remedy the evil of slavery, to avert public dangers, and to console the unfortunate members of a race that suffers and is feared more than anyone cares to admit, it is necessary to clean out the wound. There are restorative forces in any intelligently lead social body – as there are within an organic body –, and with those one can eradicate even the most ingrained of evils.[557]

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to each other, for each sugar plantation; grant freedom to every slave who has served 15 years and every black woman who has raised 4 or 5 children; emancipate both under the condition that they work a certain number of days for the plantation's profit; give slaves some of the net profits to incentivize their interest in the growth of agricultural wealth; and set aside a certain amount of public funds in the *budget* for buying slaves' freedom and improving their lives.' *Ibid.*, 145.

[556] *Ibid.*, 118.

[557] *Ibid.*, 68. Alexander also belonged to the minority of European intellectuals of the time who considered the Haitian revolution in a positive light

These different lines of argument, which seek to convince from several angles, converge in the concluding paragraphs of the *Political Essay on the Island of Cuba*, where the forceful moral case against slavery and for its abolition is articulated in a more directly personal register, emphasising the obligation of one who has 'witnessed up close the torment and degradation of humanity, to bring the laments of the wretched to the ears of those who have the power'.[558] The institutionalisation of barbarism in modern slavery is to Alexander von Humboldt ample evidence that history does not progress toward greater perfection in the sense of moral improvement. Rather, it presents a complex landscape within which reasoned intervention ultimately decides within the field of multiple possible outcomes. This is not the least of the reason why, by reading Alexander and Wilhelm von Humboldt's work together, the lineages of both an alternative cosmopolitanism and an alternative philosophy of history can be discerned. From the standpoint of Wilhelm von Humboldt's work alone, his conceptualisation of cultural-linguistic difference of course points forward to a rich tradition of cultural anthropologies, wherein Franz Boas, Claude Lévi-Strauss, and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro mark distinct but related propositions for how to navigate and theorise in a world of difference.[559] Wilhelm von Humboldt's conception of culture and cultures, however, has to be mediated with Alexander von Humboldt's conception of the politics of colonial modernity. Alexander's meta-political writings on colonial modernity and the politics of racial difference demonstrate, through their explicit commitment to the abolition of slavery, that if the ideal for an alternative cosmopolitanism with a positive valuation of cultural-difference is not to run aground on its incapacity to fathom the significance of real power differentials, then a comprehension of what produces such inequalities must ultimately be considered as important to this cosmopolitanism as the philosophy of language and culture that it is conceptually articulated within. Taken together, their works point toward a thinking of what Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbin's called the *cosmopolitical*: 'an apposite term for this global force field of the political' treated as a continuously mutating 'field of political, economic and cultural forces in which nationalism and cosmopolitanism are invoked as practical discourses'.[560] Then, the alternative cosmopolitanism looks not just like

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[558] *Ibid.*, 144.

[559] Matti Bunzl, 'Franz Boas and the Humboldtian Tradition' in *Volkgeist as Method and Ethic*, ed. G. W. J. Stocking (Madison and London, University of Wisconsin: 1996). With good reason, Bunzl does not include de Castro's work in this article, but the ontological turn in anthropology and the perspectivism which de Castro has spearheaded, arguably falls within the linage of cultural anthropologies which he does consider as 'Humboldtian'.

[560] Pheng Cheah, 'Introduction Part II: The Cosmopolitical – Today', in Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins (ed.), *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 31.

an abstract ideal of cultural co-existence, but also, properly speaking, a cosmo*politics* that, within a field of contested universalisms, seeks to practically construct the common.

CONCLUSION

Philosophy in general, as long as it was at all useful, was also a doctrine of society, except that ever since it consigned itself without demur to societal power, philosophy must professedly isolate itself from society; the purity into which philosophy regressed is the bad conscience of its impurity, its complicity with the world.
Theodor W. Adorno, 'Progress', 1962/64[561]

To think that philosophy, however much it might aim to purify itself, springs from a complicity with the world, is to embrace an altogether more complicated conception of what constitutes the 'history of philosophy' than what is typically understood as such. To pursue this path, is in part to ask of the history of philosophy that it become altogether more *historically* informed but also that it expands its conception of what precisely constitutes *philosophy*, since it is largely still the case that,

> [h]istorians of philosophy tend for the most part to isolate Locke, Kant and Hegel from the historical realities which nurtured them and to which they responded. Furthermore, whole volumes of their works are disregarded. In short, the basic rules of good history are disregarded. For largely historical reasons, the study of the history of philosophy in the English-speaking world has much more to do with maintaining its philosophical legitimacy in the face of the very narrow conception of philosophy that came to prominence in the period immediately after the Second World War than with meeting the standards that would establish its credentials as history.[562]

To render explicit, critically examine, and question the geopolitical imaginary of philosophy is in this regard an indispensable if not in-itself sufficient component of the work still to be done, especially, today, in response to calls to 'decolonise' universities, disciplines, and curricula. Notably, it is one way to counter that prevalent tendency to minimise instances of Enlightenment racism or bigotry within the philosophical canon, which argues that these are merely the expressions of an unreflected transmission from so-called 'travel literatures'. A

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[561] Theodor W. Adorno, 'Progress' in *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchphrases* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 148.
[562] Bernasconi, 'Will the Real Kant Please Stand Up', 15.

more thoroughgoing analysis of precisely the degree to which the emerging consciousness of an increasingly globalised world was shaped by a host of different literatures whose conditions of production were inextricable from the colonial and imperialist projects of the age, destabilises this impulse to brush off inconvenient truths. Understood in this sense, it is to the interrogation of the geopolitical imaginary of philosophy that this thesis has endeavoured to contribute. The temporalisation of geographically coded differences that herein was questioned with respect to the construction of savagery as primitivity would need, as part of this broader inquiry, to be supplemented by that aspect of the geopolitical imaginary of philosophy that concerned not just not just perceived 'others' of civilisation as such but just as importantly *other* and *older* civilisations, with India, China and the Persian Empire as particularly important figures. To pursue this path is to enter the terrain of the 'pre-history' of the formation of Orientalism properly speaking; to question not just the construction of the idea of primitivity but also those of stagnation and immutability.

That an emphasis on the geopolitical imaginary of philosophy need not flatten the field into a uniform conception of colonial ideology can be seen from how each of the three critical models constructed in this thesis point to different pathways out of the conjuncture in question. They each articulated different philosophies of history and in turn project different ideas about the geopolitical world order, its reality and normative horizons. If not just philosophy but also critical theory more broadly is to continue to draw strength form its own history, we might do well to measure both the tensions internal to and between each of them.

APPENDIX ONE

REINHART KOSELLECK, 'FROM "*HISTORIA UNIVERSALIS*" TO "WORLD HISTORY"'*

* Reinhart Koselleck, 'Von der "historia universalis" zur "Weltgeschichte"', an extract from the entry 'Geschichte, Historie' by Odilo Engels, Horst Günther, Christian Meier and Reinhart Koselleck in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, Band 2. E–G, Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, und Reinhart Koselleck (hsg.), Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1975, 686–91. Translated by Marie Louise Krogh. All referencing follows Koselleck's.

With the transformations of nature and of sacred history into one generalized historical process, the very concept of history [*Geschichte*] was elevated into a fundamental concept of human experience and expectation. To specify the outcomes of these shifts, the expression 'world history' [*Weltgeschichte*] was particularly accommodating.

In regard to the purely terminological history, the transition from 'universal history' [*Universalhistorie*] to 'world history' [*Weltgeschichte*] was fluid and completed without a heavy emphasis on the transition itself. In the eighteenth century, the terms could perfectly well be used alternately. The expression *uuerltgeskíhten* had already been coined by Notker (d.1022) – who employed it in relation to divine providence – but the word did not catch on at that point.[563] The first examples of *Historia universalis* are not found till much later and, when such a work did appear in 1304, it was soon given the more appropriate title of *Compendium historiarum*.[564] Histories of this world, which attempted to gather the sum of individual histories under a pretence to universality did not, in Borst's words, emerge until the worldview of the Christian people of God had been shattered.[565] Once the conquests overseas were under way and the unity of the church disintegrated, published universal histories intended

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[563] *Notkers des Deutschen Werke*, ed. Edward H. Sehrt and Taylor Starck (Halle: De Gruyter, 1952), 33.
[564] See Arno Borst, 'Weltgeschichten im Mittelalter?' *Geschichte Ereignis und Erzählung,* ed. Reinhart Koselleck and Wolf-Dieter Stempel (Munich: Fink, 1973), 452.ff.

to register and unify this new and heterogeneous experience began to pile up. In this seventeenth-century context, the previously lost word, 'world history' or *'Weltgeschichte'*, reappeared, possibly under the influence of Sir Walter Raleigh's *History of the World* (1614).[566] In Stieler's 1691 dictionary of the German language, there is an entry on *Weltgeschichte/historia mundi,* sive *universalis*[567] and in the eighteenth century other hybrid forms, such as '*Universalgeschichte*' or '*Welthistorie*' readily followed.

In spite of these terminological variations, the increased pervasiveness of the expression *'Weltgeschichte'* attests to a profound conceptual change. An indication thereof was already to be found in the German translation of that essay wherein Voltaire set out to discredit the idea of providence in history: *'Essai sur l'histoire général'* which in its 1762 German translation became '*Versuch einer allgemeinen Weltgeschichte*'.[568]

The plural form of 'world histories', such as we find it in collections of the *most remarkable world histories* [*merkwündigsten Weltgeschichten*], had long since been naturalised into the sense of worldly (that is, secular) histories, at the very least since the end of the seventeenth century.[569] For this reason Chladenius could, in 1752, assert that: *Common world history is therefore only about the deeds of humans, while the great deeds of god are to be found in revelation.*[570] Precisely this antithetical delineation of the *human world* as a region of meaning, lent a greater impact to the newly emerged expression than to the more traditional 'universal history' [*Universalhistorie'*].

The worldly thematic [*Weltbezogene Thematik*] proliferated, and consequently needed an adequate concept. In 1773 the *Teutsche Merkur* noted how *peculiar* it was that, *in the last two to three years*, so many universal histories [*Universalhistorien*] have been written,[571] and Schlözer, one of the writers of these histories, in that same year remarked that the *concept of world history* [*Weltgeschichte*] remained vague and indeterminate. If it was to be allotted the fundamental position which it deserved, a *plan, a theory and an ideal for this science* had to be developed.[572]

Already in 1785, little more than a decade later, could Schlözer retrospectively declare that: *universal history* [*Universalhistorie*] *was formerly nothing but 'a hodgepodge of some historical data'* which the theologian and the philologist had used as an *auxiliary science*. With world history [*Weltgeschichte*], it was another matter. In the title of Schlözer's works it was printed as *World-*

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[566] Sir Walter Raleigh, *The History of the World*, (London, 1614).

[567] Stieler, *Der Deutschen Sprache Stammbaum und Fortwachs* (1691; edition from 1968), 1747.

[568] Voltaire, *Essai sur l'histoire générale et sur les moeurs et l'esprit des nations depuis Charlemange jusqu'au nos jours,* 7 vol. (1756) translated to German as *Allgemeine Weltgeschichte, vorin zugleich die Sitte und das Eigene derer Völkweschaften von Carl dem Großen bis auf die Zeiten Ludwigs XIV. beschrieben werden,* 4 Bde. (Dresden 1760/62).

[569] Joh. Christof Gatterer, *Handbuch der Universalhistorie nach ihrem gesamte Umfange,* Bd. 1: Nebst einer vorläufigen Einleitung von der Historie überhaupt und der Universalhistorie insonderheit, 2. Aufl. (Göttingen 1765), 127ff.

[570] Chladenius, *Allgemeine Geschichtswissenschaft* (1752).

[571] 'Schreiben aus D... an einen Freund in London über den gegenwärtigen Zustand der historischen Litteratur in Teutschland', *Teutsche Merkur,* vol. 2, 1773, 262.

[572] A.L. Schlözer, *Vorstellung Seiner Universal-Historie,* vol. 2 (Göttingen, Gotha 1773).

History [*WeltGeschichte*], since he still preferred this typography which flagged the composite character of the concept: *to study world-history is to think the entirety of the changes of the Earth in continuity and connection with those of humankind* [*MenschenGeschlechts*]*, in order to fundamentally come to know the current state of both.*[573]

Schlözer thereby named the two criteria which distinguished the new world history: it was concerned spatially with the whole of the globe and temporally with the entirety of humankind. The interrelation of the two was to be comprehended with a view to account for and explain the present. Following suggestions from Gatterer and Herder, Schlözer even took a step further and paved the way for Kant,[574] in criticizing the old universal historical *sum of all special histories,* as a mere *aggregate,* in order to make way for the new *system of world-history.* At a higher level of abstraction, this system made claim to a higher degree of reality. It mediated small and grand causes, such that world history itself became *philosophy.* Above all, it sought to distinguish the *real connection* [*RealZusammenhang*] of events from their *temporal connection* [*ZeitZusammenhang*], since, despite their mutual interdependence, one cannot be reduced to the other. From this duality stems the difficulties of presentation [*Darstellung*], which Gatterer had already pointed to,[575] and which had to be overcome for the global interdependence of modern history to be comprehended. *Chronological* and *synchronic* points of view, or, in modern terms, diachrony and synchrony must complete and complement one another, if world history is to be organised according to immanent criteria. The four divinely prophesied Monarchies then became superfluous and new epochs instead were considered to arise from the importance of either *primary* or *secondary* peoples to world history itself. As Gatterer pointed out, only *revolutions mattered, not the particular history of the King and regent, nor even all of their names. This is in fact the history* [*historie*] *of the major events, of revolutions old or new that may concern humans and peoples directly or concern their relation to religion, state, science, art and craft.*[576]

The new field of meaning had thereby been delineated and with this renunciation of transcendence, humankind [*Menschengeschlecht*] was for the first time appealed to as the presumed subject of its own history in this world. How helpless did the definition offered by Sulzer in 1759 then seem: *when it comes to individual events, universal history* [*Die allgemeine Geschichte*]*, Historia Universalis, of all times and all peoples cannot be anything but very brief. It therefore*

[573] Schlözer, *Weltgeschichte* (1785) B.1, 1. 71.

[574] Gatterer, 'Vom historischen Plan' in *Allgemeine historische Bibliothek*, vol. 1 (1767), 15 -89. Herder, *A.L. Schlözers Vorstellung seiner Universal-Historie* (1772), Kant, 'Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht' (1784).

[575] Gatterer, Vom historischen Plan, 66f.

[576] Gatterer, 'Einleitung in die synchronistische Universalhistorie' (Göttingen 1771), 1f.

cannot possess the same usefulness as a detailed and elaborative history [*Historie*].[577] Thirty years later, Köster would summarise both the debate which in the intervening period had ensued as its results, in the 'German Encyclopaedia' (1790). The relation between general and specialised history [*allegemeiner und spezieller Historien*] is relative to the definition of their subject areas [*Gegenstandsbereichte*] and therefore *ambiguous… There is however also another universal history* [*Universalhistorie*], *which simply goes ones that name or which is also called universal world history* [*allgemeine Weltgeschichte*]. It concerns the whole of humankind [*Geschlecht*] and the Earth [*Erdboden*] as its field of action [*Aktionsfeld*]. It demonstrates why humankind [*das menschliche Geschlecht*] became what it really is, or what in each period [*Zeitraum*] it was.[578]

Toward the last third of the eighteenth century, a certain consensus formed around the idea that world history [*Weltgeschichte*] in this sense was a leading science, if one that was still to be written. In Kant's words, its Newton or Kepler had yet to be found.[579]

However, this same author simultaneously asserted that only at this very point in time had it become possible to write such a world history, an indication of precisely that modern experience which developed out of 'world history'. Herein lies the actual superiority, the advantage in experience [*Erfahrungsvorsprung*], over the ancients.[580] The constitutional changes and that spread of Europe across the globe in which world trade became every more entangled, meant that it was no longer possible to write the individual history of a state since the real connections were pervasive throughout. At points, it seemed as if *the whole of world history gradually dissolved* into that of European trade.[581] A 1783 dissertation written in Mainz could begin with the emphatic and a-syntactical assertion that: *Humankind* [*Das Menschengeschlecht*] has come to a point where, through well-known revolutions, the walls which separated parts of the world [*Weltteil*] and peoples from peoples have been torn down and the individual divisions of humans have flown together into a great whole, animated by a spirit [*Geist*] – and so also history [*Geschichte*] – the world is a single people and there is for this reason also a single universal world history [*eine allgemeine Weltgeschichte*], which must be treated in a useful and influential manner. History [*Geschichte*] gradually educates people for universal cosmopolitan citizenship, it expands to world history. *This is a truth which is itself grounded in history.*[582]

The self-referential modern concept of history sought its empirical support in 'world history' [*Weltgeschichte*]. This was the field of action [*Aktionsfeld*] of humankind as that

[577] J.G. Sulzer, *Kurzer Begriff aller Wissenschaften und anderen Theile der Gelehersamkeit* (1759), 35.

[578] Köster, ‚Art. Historie' in *Deutschen Encyclopädie*, 651, 654.

[579] Kant, 'Ideen'.

[580] Büsch, Encyclopädie (s. Anm. 347), 123; vgl. ebd., 133. 165. Ferner Halle Bd.1 (1779), 537.

[581] Georg Forster, *Die Nordwestküste von Amerika und der dortige Pelzhandel* (1791) Bd. 2, 287.

[582] Nikolaus Vogt, *Anzeige, wie wir die Geschichte behandelten, benutzten und darstellen werden* (Mainz 1783), 3.ff

hypothetical subject which only in its open temporal extension could be conceived of as one. In parallel to world historical designs, numerous anthropologically motivated guides to the history of mankind therefore also appeared.[583] What history lacked in terms of present fulfilment, the future was expected to deliver in compensation. *The true ideal for such a history, no longer a simple aggregate of all particular and special histories, has only been sketched in modern times*, as Krug writes of Kant, since the history of humanity should properly speaking be defined as the history of human culture.[584]

Schiller's famous question in his Jena inaugural lecture in 1789 'What is, and to what end do we study, Universal History?' briefly and magnificently summarised all the arguments which made of world history the primary science of all experience and expectation. Just as modernity [*die Neuzeit*] with and in 'progress' learned to conceptualise itself as 'modern' [*ein neue zeit*], so it also assured itself of its spatio-temporal totality with and in 'world history'. Therefore the expression, as a precondition and boundary determination of possible experience, also became a structural feature of any possible history: *All histories are only understandable through world history and in world history*[585] or, as Novalis more consistently phrased it: *Every history must be a world history and only in relation to the whole of history is a historical [historische] treatment of an individual matter possible.*[586]

The new concept hat gained a self-enclosed claim to totality, which excluded competing explanatory models. In 1805 Friedrich Schlegel could therefore open his 'Lecture on Universal History' with the phrase: *Since all science is genetic, it follows that history must be the most universal, the most general and the highest of all sciences.* Insofar as it is concerned with human history, it is simply called *history*. [587] It was 'world history' which, in the age of the French Revolution, assigned a guiding function to the concept of history which it was never to lose again. In 1835, Marx and Engels noted in their remarks on German ideology: *We know only a single science and that science is history.* It envelops nature and man. *Neither side can be separated from the other: as long as humans exist, history of nature and history of humans will mutually condition one another.*[588] 'History' was only conceivable as both natural and human history, that is, only as world history, so that the meaning of each is both abolished and preserved within that term.

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583 Friedrich August Carus, *Ideen zur Geschichte der Menschheit*, Nachgel. Werke, Bd.6 (Leipzig 1809), 10ff.

584 Krug, *Enz.* Bd.1, 66.

585 Heinrich Luden *Ueber den Vortrag der Universalgeschichte,* Kl. Aufsätze, Bd.1 (Göttingen 1807), 281; Schiller, 'Was heißt und zu welchem Ende studiert man Universalgeschichte?', SA Bd. 13, 418. Vgl. Eberhard Kessel, Ranke, 'Idee der Universalhistorie', Hist. Zs. 178 (1954), 269ff.

586 Novalis, *Fragmenten und Studien*, Nr.77 GW Bd. 3, 566.

587 Schlegel, *Vorlesung über Universalgeschichte* (1805/06), SW2. Abt., Bd.14 (1960), 3.

588 Marx and Engels, *Die deutsche Ideologie*, MEW Bd. 13 (1962), 18.

The all-encompassing world historical representations lost their force after Ranke's major '*Gesamtkonzeption*', partly because the historical-critical method increased the demands placed on scholars and thereby promoted a greater specialisation and partly because the interminability of all history itself increasingly mounted objections to universal designs in history.[589] In any case, these representations for the most part remained unaware of the idea that Europe's world history – in the sense of Hans Freyer's concept of *Weltgeschichte Europas*[590] – only began in the 20th century and then gradually passed over into 'world history as such'. The horizon of expectation which the concept exposed in the eighteenth century is thereby changed but not transcended.

In its reception history, the only consequential attempt to wrest world history from its processual and ever-renewed singularity has been Oswald Spengler's attempt to derive the coming fall of the West [*Abendland*] from a cyclical process in a natural morphology of world history, of the world as history.[591] The extent to which his structurally analogous pluralist cultural cycles will affect the future of world history, is for the time being an open question.

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[589] Ernst Troeltsch, *Der Historismus und seine Probleme* (Tübingen 1922, Berlin 1962), 652, 706; Wilhelm Dilthey, 'Einleitung in die Geisteswissenschaften, 1922, Ges.Schr. Bd.1, (Leibzig, Berlin, 1922) 93ff.
[590] Hans Freyer, *Weltgeschichte Europas,* (Wiesbaden 1948).
[591] Oswald Spengler, *Die Untergang des Abendlandes* (München 1922).

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