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Philosophy Shelved: Philosophy's Displacement in the Library

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Philosophy Shelved: Philosophy's Displacement in the Library

By

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M.A., Stony Brook University, 2016

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An abstract of
A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies of Emory University
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Abstract

Philosophy Shelved: Philosophy's Displacement in the Library
By Kyle Tanaka

This dissertation examines the theoretical framework undergirding the application of the term "Philosophy" to materials in academic libraries. It does so to consider in what ways the use of the term "Philosophy" norms the discipline and practice of philosophy. Predominantly operating under Library of Congress Classification (LCC) and Subject Headings (LCSH), indexing works as philosophy is supposed to enable library patrons to identify materials of interest or relevance, whether that be for edification, research, or whatever else. Here, I argue that LCC/LCSH incline library users towards understanding "Philosophy" within a Eurocentric historiographical paradigm. That is, scholarship in philosophy is understood as contributing to a repository of Eurocentric discoveries in the history of ideas. Further, I argue that by presenting philosophy in this way other approaches to philosophy are fragmented, disjointed, and marginalized. There is thus a systemic disincentive to approach philosophy outside of the institutionalized mode. After beginning with a survey of how philosophers read texts in the history of philosophy (Chapter 1), the first part of the dissertation (Chapters 2, 3, and 4) consider the basis for the historiographical approach in both library and philosophical contexts. The second part (Chapters 5 and 6) gives examples of reading and doing philosophy otherwise, emphasizing the ways in which non-historiographical approaches cannot productively draw from existing classification. The final chapter (Chapter 7) reflects on the norming effects of the library in the context of contemporary U.S. academic philosophy.

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Contents

Abbreviations

ALA   American Library Association

ACRL   Association of College & Research Libraries

CLW   Cataloger's Learning Workshop

DDC   Dewey Decimal Classification

FRBR   Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records

IFLA   International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions

LC   Library of Congress

LCC   Library of Congress Classification

LCSH   Library of Congress Subject Headings

LIS   Library and Information Science

MARC   Machine-Readable Cataloging

OCLC   Online Computer Library Center (originally Ohio College Library Center)

SEP   Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy

SHM   Subject Headings Manual

Introduction

A purple bearded iris, a rhizomatous perennial[1]

Πολυμαθίη νόον οὐ διδάσκει

— Heraclitus, B40

This project is an intersection, a crossing between two of my perennial philosophical interests. One is an interest in labels. Growing up as gay and mixed-race, raised in a Buddhist but not especially religious household, I grew wary of using such labels as self-identifiers. I was—and continue to be—annoyed at the way in which once such labels were known, I too was taken to be "known." Suddenly, upon revealing such information, my tastes and my disposition could be explained: I was that way, I

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[1] Ralphs_Fotos, *Iris*, May 24, 2018, May 24, 2018, https://pixabay.com/photos/iris-iris-flower-sword-lily-family-3385748/.

like those things because of who I was—no further explanation necessary. Having spent over a decade in higher education, I still marvel at the way in which members of the academic community are "known" by gender, race, socioeconomic status, grade, major, etc. At the same time, such labels have their place and their use. Telling another person I am gay can just as often open up possibilities for how we engage with and understand one another; it can create new modes of interaction that, without such a label, we might not ever discover. The question, for me, is thus why we are called upon to identify ourselves (and things generally) using the labels we do. How are such labels created and sustained? Why do they retain importance or relevance? What consequences follow from the use of such labels (and by whom)? How does this situated character affect how we should react to and understand them?

The second interest is with philosophy. What does it mean to "do philosophy" or "be a philosopher"? I am not sure I have answers to those questions, but their insistence and recurring nature has been of use. These questions pop up again and again—in new contexts, with new interlocuters—revitalizing my interest in philosophy and attuning me to the possibilities of how it figures in to the lives of those who practice it. I suspect I am drawn to the sometimes-odd way in which philosophy can be both wholeheartedly inquisitive and deeply critical, reflective of my own tendency to oscillate between optimism and cynicism. That said, I often find the contexts in which philosophy is taught to pull me in quite another direction. Surrounded by an academic context in which I find myself positioned as "teacher" in a classroom where students often expectantly await the presentation of "knowledge," and as a "researcher" where I am expected to make "scholarly contributions," I find it difficult to preserve the open-endedness and ability to productively work with the ambiguity (rather than preemptively resolve or dismiss it) that draws me to philosophy.

There are many ways these interests have coincided for me, one of which is this project. Studying, teaching, and researching philosophy in a U.S. academic context has given me myriad opportunities to consider the ways in which institutions of higher education norm what it means to learn or do philosophy. Of particular interest for me is the academic library. Although it is not perhaps The Place to Go for research that it was prior to the internet, it remains a prominent and significant space of scholarly inquiry and discovery. That space is, however, governed according to rules: materials are classified and organized in particular ways, to facilitate particular kinds of encounters between readers and texts.

In that environment, what does calling something philosophy make possible? How does "philosophy" as a classification or heading rely upon ideas within philosophy, library and information science, and academia to differentiate philosophy from non-philosophy? What does it mean for a philosopher to use or to navigate such a system? What does navigating such a system do to the philosopher themselves? In short, what effects follow from how the library facilitates interactions between texts and readers?

Broadly, my claims here are twofold. First: the library norms philosophy through practices of organization and presentation. More specifically, it does so because the framework that dominates academic libraries—Library of Congress Classification (LCC) and Subject Headings (LCSH)—understands and categorizes philosophy according to Eurocentric historiographical principles. This framework, I argue, means that without critical and active intervention collection development and management (the curation of "Philosophy" titles) and discovery (the process of identifying relevant resources) slip into well-worn grooves of scholarship. In other words, there is an institutional and systemic bias against diversifying philosophy. Second: philosophical methodology is normed through scholarly inertia, to which the library contributes. That is, the institutionalization of a particular way

of doing philosophy inclines and incentivizes philosophers towards continuing that tradition. It does so through both academic/professional incentives (how one's work is received) and the positing of a default (determining what kind of work counts as "Philosophy proper").

I should note, briefly, that these claims are presented with a caveat. I do not take it that the library is the only or even the most significant site at which philosophy is normed. It is one among many. A fuller analysis would, to my mind, include pedagogical practices, academia as an institution, publishing practices, portrayals of philosophy in popular media and culture, and more. The library is a convenient way to examine mechanisms of norming, but by no means the only way such norming occurs.

I begin (Chapter One) with a case study examining how a range of philosophers read Descartes' "*Ego cogito, ergo sum*." Doing so introduces questions: why do such readings vary? What are philosophers attempting to do when reading a text from the history of philosophy, and why? The study shows that such approaches differ not just in methodology, but in purpose. Each reads texts from "The History of Philosophy" differently because each understands the value of doing so differently.

However, only a small range of these texts are identified by LCC/LCSH as readings of Descartes. Specifically, they only identify texts that employ historiographical methods. These texts equate understanding a text with understanding what an author intended to say. But why? Why is there systemic support for discovering *these* kinds of texts and not others?

Turning to both historical and contemporary texts in in Library and Information Science (Chapter Two) reveals the values and purpose of LCC/LCSH as a tool for discovery. Both were created to connect readers with texts that would be of interest to them. This, however, begs the question as to why LCC/LCSH think only a historiographical approach is of interest to philosophers. I then dig

deeper into this representation of philosophy (Chapters Three and Four) and show how such approaches draw from quasi-Encyclopedist values which task each discipline with discovering truths proper to their field.

I then pivot towards imagining what more inclusive forms of classifying and organizing philosophy might look like (Chapter Four). I begin by offering alternative foundations: thinking about philosophy and its history differently. Walter Benjamin, for example, argues for thinking of history as a kind of memorialization, and observes that what is present—or absent—in historical records tells a story about the culture doing the preservation. Reconsidering what it means to read and learn from history allows for different forms of understanding, in other words.

These different forms of understanding are concretized by examining the work of four authors: Edward Said, Christina Sharpe, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Martin Heidegger (Chapters Five and Six). With each (albeit in very different ways), we find analyses that show the intertwining of knowledge, culture, politics, and thinking. Exposing and questioning these foundations allows for new forms of learning and research, alongside deeper and more critical understandings of the situational nature of information.

I close (Chapter Seven) by examining how, by presenting philosophy as the Eurocentric history of ideas, LCC/LCSH reinforce a specific approach to philosophy that marginalizes other approaches. I do so in three parts, looking at LCC/LCSH's effects on library collections, research and discovery, and the idea of philosophy itself. Ultimately, I argue that new ways of thinking about and classifying philosophy are necessary for the discipline to become more equitable and inclusive.

The considerations, critiques, and challenges I offer here should be understood as part of broader discussions within Library and Information Science regarding bias in libraries and library classification. Discussions about bias within the library have a history, but how bias has been theorized—and what

authors have proposed as appropriate solutions—has varied. I cannot give an entire history of critiques and changes on the topic of library bias here, but I will present some of the more relevant moments from that history here to better situate this work.

In the library world, "neutrality" can refer to numerous issues and phenomena. It is, for example, often invoked in the context of collections and censorship; often enough, libraries are battlegrounds for contestation about what is important or acceptable in that community.[2] Materials deemed inappropriate for a library might never be added to the collection. Or, in some cases, they may be added but are exiled or marginalized by being placed under lock and key (Library of Congress's Delta collection) or in less easily accessed collections, requiring special permissions, open for limited periods, etc. (e.g. special collections, archives). "Neutrality" in this context is generally directed against such censorship; the American Library Association (ALA) has been especially vocal as a defender of the library as a space for inclusivity.

More salient to this project is neutrality and bias in the context of metadata creation, i.e. concerning how materials are classified and using what language. Starting especially in the 1960s and 70s, librarians raised questions about the terms being used to classify and describe materials. Authors from this period—including Sanford (Sandy) Berman, Joan Marshall, Celeste West, Steve Wolf, and others—argued that language used in metadata creation presupposes a particular audience and selects its words accordingly. As Marshall puts it, "The 'majority reader' and the norm, as far as LC [Library of Con-

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[2] This is even more so in recent years. The ALA's 2022 *State of America's Libraries* report found that 2021 was witness to 729 challenges to 1,579 book titles—the highest in 20 years (American Library Association, *The State of America's Libraries 2022: A Report from the American Library Association*, 27). Related high-profile events include the banning of the graphic novel *Maus* from a Tennessee school and the defunding of a Michigan library. Book challenging or banning of various degrees has also appeared in discussions of school or local/state government policy in places like Wyoming, Oklahoma, Virginia, South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, and Pennsylvania.

gress] is concerned, is white, Christian (often specifically Protestant,) male, and straight (heterosexual.)."[3] A number of publications appeared around this time that addressed these and similar issues: the books *Revolting Librarians* (eds. West and Katz, 1972) and *On Equal Terms* (Marshall, 1977), and the journals *Synergy* (1967), *Women Library Workers* (1969), *Sipapu* (1970), *Women in Libraries* (1970), and *Alternatives in Print* (1971).[4]

Perhaps the most thorough analysis to come out of this period is Berman's seminal and acerbic 1971 study *Prejudices and Antipathies*, which lays out in detail many of the biases in Library of Congress's subject headings. He identifies 225 headings as politically-charged and objectionable, including "Yellow peril," "Intelligence levels – Chinese" (along with Javanese, Jews, Negroes, and Shilluks), "Gipsies – Rogues and Vagabonds," "Underdeveloped areas," "Homosexuality – perversion," "Idiocy, Idiot asylums," and more. Berman also identifies headings that indicate expectations about who uses the library. "Religious education," for example, may not seem especially biased, but Berman notes its placement means it only concerns *Christian* religious education.[5] "Christian" is the expected, the default—anything else must be specified. Another example: the heading "Native labor" sounds relatively innocuous, but the heading actually applies to instances of colonialism and enslavement. Berman suggests the more transparent "Colonies – Labor and laboring classes" or "Labor and laboring classes, Colonial" instead.[6] You will not find such a label in use, however. LC opted for the whitewashed "Indigenous labor" supplemented by "Employees—[local subdivision]" instead. Both headings still erase precisely the point Berman was making, i.e. that these works understand their topics in terms of

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[3] Joan K Marshall, "LC Labeling: An Indictment," in *Revolting Librarians*, ed. Celeste West and Elizabeth Katz (San Francisco: Bootlegger Press, 1972), 46.

[4] This list is by no means comprehensive; for a more substantial treatment of the history of these publications, see Samek (2000).

[5] Sanford Berman, *Prejudices and Antipathies: A Tract on the LC Subject Heads Concerning People*, 1993 edn (Metuchen, N.J.: McFarland & Company, 1971), p. 71.

[6] Berman, 79.

colonial efforts and the subjugation of a native populace, and that they are hardly better than the original heading.

What these authors accomplished was twofold. On the one hand, authority terms—controlled vocabularies used in metadata creation—came under a particular scrutiny that continues to this day, especially with the Critical Cataloging movement. Library of Congress has updated many of the terms Berman and others identified as problematic, albeit at a very slow pace.[7] Other libraries (e.g. at Yale, Stanford, Penn State) have taken it upon themselves to update terms in the catalog that employ sexist, racist, homophobic, and other kinds of problematic language by replacing such terms. On the other hand, this kind of analysis laid the groundwork for deeper considerations of the ways in which libraries manifest and reinforce cultural ideas. More recent literature has focused on critical analyses of how classification presupposes an audience, that is, the impact and significance of the fact that headings and classifications are chosen based on an *expected* readership.[8]

This takes us up to the past few decades of library and information science, in which some authors have endeavored to consider other ways in which that "expectation" influences library users. Here, we are beyond questions of collection inclusion/exclusion or the use of problematic language. Instead, authors like Hope Olson, Melissa Adler, Emily Drabinkski, and others have written about subtler ways in which libraries participate in the regulation, dissemination, and normalization of behaviors and dis-courses. These kinds of questions and issues also gave rise to Critical Information Literacy (CIL), which draws from the work of Paolo Freire and Henry Giroux, Critical Race Theory, and critical

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[7] Knowlton (2005) provides an overview of which of Berman's headings were updated—although many others have been critiqued and proposed for deletion or alteration since then.

[8] It might be better to say rediscovered rather than recognized; this point will be taken up in more detail in Chapter 2. Progenitors of modern classification systems consistently noted that such systems were inherently invested in supporting discovery, and therefore needed to anticipate the interests of those who would use such a system. Generally speaking, this expectation focused on casual vs. academic/research reading interests. What the work of librarians in the 1960s and 70s did was to raise awareness of the ways in which this anticipation was informed by gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, culture, etc.

pedagogy to "Understand how libraries participate in systems of oppression and find ways for librarians and students to act upon these systems."[9] Historically framed, many of these works can be understood as responses to a wave of efforts in the 1980s and 90s to intellectually bolster library and information science, e.g. the 1989 American Library Association (ALA) report on information literacy, the creation of *Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records* (FRBR) in 1997 or the Association of College & Research Libraries' (ACRL) *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* in 2000.

Many of these discourses focus on the ways in which problematic ideas, especially those regarding race and sexuality/gender, are reaffirmed or reinforced by their institutionalization in library metadata. Olson and Schlegl propose these issues fall into five major categories: "[1] treatment of the topic as an exception, [2] ghettoization of the topic, [3] omission of the topic, [4] inappropriate structure of the standard, [5] biased terminology."[10] They discuss these categories by noting in what ways they participate in reiterating a particular cultural idea. For example, "treatment of the topic as an exception" refers to cases in which "headings […] that seem to express astonishment that such anomalous creatures should exist."[11]

I propose that beyond the reification and dissemination of ideas and topics, the library also participates in the norming of practices and methodologies. This is admittedly a more difficult issue to track as it is not tied to particular terms (especially LCC/SH terms). Nevertheless, I hold that the

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[9] Eamon C. Tewell, "The Practice and Promise of Critical Information Literacy: Academic Librarians' Involvement in Critical Library Instruction," *College and Research Libraries* 79, no. 1 (January 3, 2018): 11, https://doi.org/10.5860/crl.79.1.10.

[10] Hope A Olson and Rose Schlegl, "Standardization, Objectivity, and User Focus: A Meta-Analysis of Subject Access Critiques," *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (September 1, 2001): 65, https://doi.org/10.1300/J104v32n02_06.

[11] Olson and Schlegl, 67.

patterns of classification found in philosophy and maintained by library practices result in a systemic

disinclination to pursue or even envision more diverse philosophies and philosophical discourses.

Chapter I - *Cogito, Ergo…?*: Models of Reading

When a philosopher reads texts from the history of philosophy, why do they do so? What are they trying to determine? What are they hoping to find? These questions can be answered any number of ways, invoking ideas from discussions in history of philosophy scholarship, hermeneutics, the Analytic, Continental, and Pragmatist traditions, and more. Further still, within each area one can find a range of ideas, arguments, and priorities. It is, therefore, difficult to say why any given philosopher would read a text from the history of philosophy.

That said, it is still relatively common to situate most approaches to reading history on a spectrum relative to two poles. On the one side, we have the "history of philosophy" approach, which is typically understood as "mining" the history of philosophy for ideas that supplement contemporary philosophical issues. On the other, we have the "history of ideas" approach, which exposits historical philosophies for their own sake, rather than for the sake of addressing contemporary issues.

This division is often traced to Quentin Skinner's 1969 essay, "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas," in which he characterizes (and critiques) two responses to the question, "What are the appropriate procedures to adopt in the attempt to arrive at an understanding of the work?"[12] The first response he articulates focuses on "the text itself," aiming at "recovering the 'timeless questions and answers' posed in the 'great books.'"[13] The second, which Skinner calls "contextual reading," holds that "if it is true that an understanding of any idea requires an understanding of all the occasions and activities in which a given agent might have used the relevant form of words, it seems clear that

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[12] Quentin Skinner, "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas," *History and Theory* 8, no. 1 (1969): 3, https://doi.org/10.2307/2504188. Skinner is not the first to introduce such an idea; he himself both cites others he views as "predecessors," and as I indicate with select ideas, his views virtually copy Schleiermacher's articulation of hermeneutical projects.
[13] Skinner, 3.

at least a part of such understanding must lie in grasping what sort of society the given author was writing for and trying to persuade."[14]

One encounters this typology (in various forms and terms) again and again in considerations of the relationship between philosophy and its history. Rorty, Schneewind, and Skinner recharacterize these approaches as "history of philosophy" and "intellectual history," respectively, in the introduction to their edited 1984 volume *Philosophy in History: Essays in the Historiography of Philosophy*. They acknowledge that "Our previous description of these two genres has been a description of two impossibly ideal types."[15] Still, they hold, "We have tried to make them sympathetic caricatures, for we see both as limiting cases of efforts which are altogether praiseworthy."[16] More recently still, Mogens Lærke, Justin E. H. Smith, Eric Schliesser present a number of essays on the topic in the volume *Philosophy and Its History: Aims and Methods in the Study of Early Modern Philosophy*. In the volume's introduction, they observe:

> In the English-speaking world of philosophy at present there are two principal ways
> of thinking about [the relationship between philosophy to its history]. First, the history
> of philosophy is held to be a source of ideas and arguments that may be of use in
> current philosophy, and it is to be studied as a way of advancing in the resolution of
> problems of current interest. Second, it is supposed that the history of philosophy is
> to be studied and understood for its own sake and on its own terms, even when the

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[14] Skinner, 40. This point virtually copies Schleiermacher's conception of the hermeneutical project.

[15] Richard Rorty, J.B. Schneewind, and Quentin Skinner, eds., *Philosophy in History: Essays on the Historiography of Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 9.

[16] Rorty, Schneewind, and Skinner, 9.

problems of interest to the figures in this history have since fallen off the philosophical

agenda.[17]

The authors proceed to discuss the debate between the two camps, referring to the former as

"appropriationist" and the latter as "contextualists."[18] For contextualists, the goal of reading philoso-

phy is to determine as precisely as possible what exactly a philosopher intended to say. Even if such a

task is ultimately impossible, they still strive towards ascertaining "the correct historical account of

what the intentions of some past philosopher were."[19] For appropriationists, by focusing primarily or

exclusively on determining what a prior philosopher thought, a contextualist abandons any pretense

of contributing to contemporary philosophy. Against this position, the appropriationist holds that the

history of philosophy should be consulted insofar as it is useful to contemporary philosophy to do so.

To more concretely illustrate how these approaches read texts in the history of philosophy, let us

take some examples. I have selected a few texts that focus on Descartes' *cogito*, which will allow us to

see how, despite placing the same textual "object" under scrutiny, different scholars exposit the text

in substantively different ways. [20] To begin, these texts exemplify the history of philosophy/history of

ideas approaches; further on, I will present three more texts that challenge the fundamental idea at the

basis of both methodologies.

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[17] Mogens Lærke, Justin E.H. Smith, and Eric Schliesser, eds., *Philosophy and Its History: Aims and Methods in the Study of Early Modern Philosophy* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013), 1. Lærke et al. note that there is "a third approach more familiar from Continental philosophy, in which one's philosophical position is developed dialectically with a tradition that is often simultaneously constructed for that purpose" (3). They elaborate: "A Continental historian will not mine the past for usable nuggets, but will rather attempt to build on the past in a way that is both attentive to it and, at the same time, seeking to overcome its historically conditioned limitations" (3). Despite its mention, no essay of this sort is to be found in their volume. They do note, "As with the appropriationist, though, there is the lingering danger that this sort of scholarship does not do justice to the actual concerns of the historical figure whose work has selectively been called into service" (3).

[18] Lærke, Smith, and Schliesser, 1. Though it is not cited here, the editors likely have in mind the positions considered in Schneewind's *Teaching New Histories of Philosophy*.

[19] Lærke, Smith, and Schliesser, 2.

[20] The readings I present here reference the *Discourse on Method/Principles of Philosophy* phrasing ("*Ego cogito, ergo sum*") rather than the similar phrasings found in works like the *Meditations* ("*Ego sum, ego existo*") or *The Search for Truth by Natural Light*, ("*Dubito, ergo sum* […] *cogito, ergo sum*").

The texts I have selected are as follows:

- A sampling of introductory resources, including:
    - The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
    - Oxford Bibliographies
    - *The Cambridge Companion to Descartes*
- Anthony Kenny's *Descartes: A Study*
- Bernard Williams' *Descartes: The Project of Pure Enquiry*

Section 1 - Descartes' Life and Works

Let us start with some prominent reference sources for academic philosophy: the Stanford Ency-clopedia of Philosophy (SEP), Oxford Bibliographies, the *Cambridge Companion to Descartes*, as well as a classic of Descartes scholarship: Anthony Kenny's *Descartes: A Study of His Philosophy*. Each begins in a consistent way: with a historical introduction. From SEP: "René Descartes (1596–1650) was a crea-tive mathematician of the first order, an important scientific thinker, and an original metaphysician."[21] From Oxford Bibliographies: "There is no doubt that Descartes is one of the most influential and perhaps one of the most misunderstood philosophers of the modern era. In many ways, Descartes can be seen as kicking off the great era of philosophical system building at the beginning of the 17th century and continuing until David Hume destroyed these systems in one blow in the late 18th cen-tury."[22] From the introduction to the Cambridge companion: "Descartes is perhaps the most widely studied of all the great philosophers. Students in countless introductory courses find that their imagi-nation is captured by the lonely quest for knowledge described in Descartes' masterpiece*, the Medita-tions on First Philosophy*."[23] And, finally, from Kenny's first chapter ("Life and Works"): "René Descartes

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[21] Gary Hatfield, "René Descartes," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, January 16, 2014), https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2018/entries/descartes/.
[22] Justin Skirry, "René Descartes," Oxford Bibliographies, February 28, 2017.
[23] John Cottingham, *The Cambridge Companion to Descartes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 1.

was thirty-two years younger than Shakespeare and forty-six years older than Newton. He was born in 1596 in the village in Touraine that is now called La Haye-Descartes."[24]

The level of detail varies slightly here, but there is a noticeable theme: Descartes is first and foremost situated as a historical figure. We are given the years of his life, where he was born, his major accomplishments, and his historical significance. But let us look a little deeper: if these texts are examples of scholarly inquiry in philosophy, what exactly is the target of their research?

Hatfield's entry in the Stanford Encyclopedia is, as an encyclopedia entry, an introductory piece attempting to offer an overview. The first few paragraphs expand on this by citing Descartes' ideas, "A new vision of the natural world […] a world of matter possessing a few fundamental properties and interacting according to a few universal laws," and enumerating the "major works."[25] This preface leads into the first section (and five subsections) on Descartes' intellectual biography; section 2 addresses Descartes' philosophy in terms of "Philosophical development," i.e. how to account for apparent shifts in ideas across Descartes works' and how (or whether) those works should be divided into periods. Over 5,000 words in, section 3 is where we first start to see some engagement with Descartes' ideas themselves, rather than the historical context for those ideas.

No explicit argument is given for this approach, but by situating Descartes' ideas in this way, a connection is established. Because the analysis of the ideas happens after giving the historical context, the ordering itself implies one needs to first understand that historical context in order to be able to understand Descartes' ideas. This is not to say Descartes' ideas are unintelligible without such context, but it implies that better understanding is made possible through understanding the historical context

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[24] Anthony Kenny, *Descartes: A Study of His Philosophy* (1968; repr., New York: St. Augustine's Press, 1997), 3.
[25] Hatfield, "René Descartes."

in which those ideas appeared. This presupposition operates in Skirry, Cunning, and Kenny's respective works as well; each prefaces any consideration of the actual text or its ideas with historical context in the same vein.

Yet "historical context" is still vague. What each of these authors is interested in is how Descartes relates to a perceived philosophical tradition: his ideas are examined relative to how he inherits or modifies the ideas of his predecessors, engages with his contemporaries, or his influence on subsequent generations of thinkers.[26] Accordingly, historical situation is paramount because only with an understanding of such circumstances can Descartes' unique contributions be understood.

That this is an encyclopedia article from a prominent and peer-reviewed resource suggests a certain scholarly community surrounds this article. They may not agree with all its points, but its situation as a standard suggests the centrality of its themes, questions, and approach. A certain core of presuppositions is shared about the relationship between history, philosophical ideas, and understanding. In so doing, the boundaries of philosophical research are set up. If philosophical understanding is predicated upon the ability to situate a thinker in their historical context, then ensuring historically thorough and accurate research enables better understanding of the ideas.

This foundation is one that receives perhaps its most quintessential manifestation in Ranke's dictum that historians should portray history "the way it really was" [*wie es eigentlich gewesen*]. It also resonates with the earlier "history of philosophy" and "contextualist" approaches. Insofar as this dictum informs (implicitly or explicitly) philosophical research, then claims about Descartes' ideas are, ostensibly, not the view of the expositor *per se*, but objectively demonstrable. This is achieved through the presentation of historical documents that then support some claim about the ideas themselves. That

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[26] This way of making connections will be considered further in Chapter 3 and critiqued in Chapter 7, revolving around the implications of using "influence" as a way of teaching the history of philosophy.

Descartes is an "an original metaphysician" (Hatfield) or "can be seen as kicking off the great era of philosophical system building" (Skirry) is something proven by reference to historical sources testifying to these claims. More accurate and more probing research—research of the highest academic caliber, essentially—would therefore consist in ever-more-thorough searches for materials to either reinforce or to challenge such assertions. What would matter, then, is making the most accurate claims about Descartes qua historical figure.

Bernard Williams' *Descartes: The Project of Pure Enquiry* is a good example of the other approach, i.e. "history of philosophy," as opposed to the preceding "history of ideas." Indeed, Williams explicitly invokes this distinction, writing: "This is a study in the history of philosophy rather than in the history of ideas."[27] On the history of ideas, he elaborates: "For the history of ideas, the question about a work *what does it mean?* is centrally the question *what did it mean?*, and the pursuit of that question moves horizontally in time from the work, as well as backwards, to establish the expectations, conventions, familiarities, in terms of which the author could have succeeded in conveying a meaning."[28] By way of contrast—and to situate his own project—Williams writes, "The history of philosophy of course has to constitute its object, the work, in genuinely historical terms, yet there is a cut-off point, where authenticity is replaced as the objective by the aim of articulating philosophical ideas.[29] For Williams, what matters more than reconstructing an idea as its author intended to communicate it is reconstructing the philosophical idea found in the author's work in the most coherent manner possible. This, as Williams acknowledges, requires some sensitivity of the author's historical context in order to make the identification of the philosophical idea possible, but that identification is only supplemental to the philosophical analysis. As Williams puts it, he aims to represent the "philosophical argument" and

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[27] Bernard Williams, *Descartes : The Project of Pure Enquiry* (London: Penguin Books, 1978), xiii.
[28] Williams, xiii.
[29] Williams, xiv.

"philosophical concerns" in order to demonstrate "something historically and importantly true about his outlook."[30]

How does Williams go about this? At the outset, Williams' approach differs little; he begins with historical data: "René Descartes was born on 31 March 1596 in a small town near Tours, now called la-Haye-Descartes, where the house of his birth can still be seen."[31] After this introduction, however, Williams takes up a very different kind of project. Starting with Chapter 2, Williams examines Descartes' method of doubt. What sets Williams' analysis apart from the preceding examples are a willingness to assess Descartes' ideas and arguments in more contemporary language. Thus, Williams writes passages like the following:

> To gain some insight into that motivation, it will be helpful to leave Descartes's own line of argument for a while, and examine in our own terms a very basic model of the search for truth. Our concern will be how the search for truth can, in terms of that model, naturally turn into the search for certainty; but we must start with a prior question – whether the search for truth should be taken as the search for knowledge.[32]

What follows this passage is a consideration of what it means to doubt and to pursue knowledge. Williams observes, for example, that when we ask "Is *p* true?", "It is not all that obvious why one who wants the truth should want to *know*, at least if that innocent phrase implies that what he wants is to enter into a state of knowledge."[33] That is, given Descartes' preoccupation with certainty, to which methodological doubt (and the *cogito*) offer a solution, why would an enquirer wish for more than a basic state of truth, i.e. "if p, A believes that p, and if not p, A believes that not-p"?[34] That is, if the

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[30] Williams, xiv.
[31] Williams, 1.
[32] Williams, 22–23.
[33] Williams, 23.
[34] Williams, 23.

enquirer's belief corresponds to the state of the world as it is, why would the enquirer *also* want to know that that belief is true? "Why," as Williams puts it, "should he want any more?"[35]

This approach—and this question—are helpful for drawing a contrast. To answer it, a historiographer would turn to Descartes. Did he mention in the text or in other texts why this motivation would exist? If not, can we ascertain from the philosophical discourses of the time why this mindset would be presumed? Failing that too, can we determine what in Descartes' biography or psychology would lead him to present such an idea? For Williams, answers to such questions might be helpful to this analysis if they are already given, but their absence does not mean the project is at a dead-end. Instead, it means that we can imaginatively reconstruct a model that demonstrates the rationality of the approach—regardless of whether Descartes himself grounded the concern in such a way.

Williams himself does so by positing motivations for our enquirer. It is not just about having a belief (or beliefs) that happen to be true, but about "a method of acquiring beliefs which itself makes it likely that the beliefs [the enquirer] acquires by it will be true ones."[36] He goes on to elaborate additional points and questions that follow from this exposition, focusing especially on issues of belief, truth, and knowledge. The exact conclusions Williams reaches do not concern us here; what concerns us is that for Williams reading Descartes is a way to introduce both philosophical issues and some proposed means of addressing those issues. Williams' reading is relatively conservative, i.e. focuses on canonically central topics in philosophy (epistemology, especially), but other readings in the history of philosophy vein sometimes carry Descartes much further afield. One encounters such readings in collected volumes that bring a variety of historical figures to bear on contemporary issues, for example, which often bear the phrase "…which remain relevant to philosophy today" on their jackets.

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[35] Williams, 23.
[36] Williams, 25.

Both the history of ideas and history of philosophy models are (fairly) consistently indexed and well-represented by library metadata—the former perhaps a bit more than the latter. Where the library falls short, however, are in identifying those works which challenge the underlying valuation at work in this typology. Returning to the basis of this approach, Skinner's question is one of method: "What are the appropriate procedures to adopt in the attempt to arrive at an understanding of the work?" Its object is presupposed; Skinner does not define—much less reflect upon—why "understanding" ultimately means what he proposes, i.e., "That no agent can eventually be said to have meant or done something which he could never be brought to accept as a correct description of what he had meant or done."[37] This is, in other words, to define understanding as such exclusively in terms of whether the reader has understood what the author meant, i.e., what they intended.[38] Where the two approaches differ is only in terms of what one does with that intended meaning. For the historian of ideas, either the text is exposited for its own sake or, as Skinner has it:

> It is the very fact that the classic texts are concerned with their own quite alien problems, and not the presumption that they are somehow concerned with our own problems as well, which seems to me to give not the lie but the key to the indispensable value of studying the history of ideas. The classic texts, especially in social, ethical, and political thought, help to reveal—if we let them—not the essential sameness, but rather the essential variety of viable moral assumptions and political commitments.[39]

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[37] Skinner, "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas," 28.

[38] This notion will be examined in further detail, as well as in its connection to philosophy, via Schleiermacher in Chapter 3.

[39] Skinner, "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas," 52. Skinner seems woefully unaware of the irony of his own statement. That is, to be able to read a "classic text" in "social, ethical, and political thought" is already to submit the historical text to a contemporary framework of understanding—it is already contingent upon a historical tradition which determines the boundaries of those discourses, which texts count as internal or external to those canons.

For the historian of philosophy, such contextualizing is done only to better articulate the philosophical idea or argument one can find in the text. Ultimately, what makes the reading a text philosophy on this view is that such ideas are then evaluated (in terms of validity, soundness, etc.).

Moving forward, I will refer to both these approaches collectively as historiographical. This might seem inapt, since only the historian of ideas seems truly committed to a historiographical project. However, I believe such a grouping is appropriate. The history of philosophy approach does not fundamentally disagree with or challenge the history of ideas approach. It disagrees only insofar as what has been identified requires additional analysis to be called "philosophy." This is, as we will see, in contrast to the more substantive differences in the following texts.

Section 2 - Thinking Behind Thinking

Let us now turn to three very different examples:

- Martin Heidegger's "European Nihilism" from *Nietzsche II* (GA6.II)

- Luce Irigaray's "…And If, Taking the Eye of a Man Recently Dead,…" from *Speculum of the Other Woman*

- Enrique Dussel's *Philosophy of Liberation*

What is significant about each of these models of reading varies in each case, but they share some key features. First, none neatly falls on the history of philosophy/history of ideas spectrum as articulated by the preceding authors.[40] Second, none of these texts are presented as a reading of Descartes by library metadata.

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[40] Of these three, I believe Heidegger would say he does understand his reading as participating in reading the history of philosophy—but in his sense, i.e. as *Geschichte* not *Historie*. More on this in a moment.

First: Heidegger's reading. As with so many of the figures Heidegger engages, there is no single reading of Descartes that is Heidegger's definitive reading. His 1940 lecture "European Nihilism," however, is illustrative in this context because it thematizes reading historical figures in philosophy.[41]

For Heidegger, Descartes is the emblem of Modern European philosophy. Heidegger attributes Descartes with "the beginning of a new thinking, whereby the old order passes into the new and the ensuing age becomes the modern."[42] What exactly is so pivotal about Descartes? What typifies the "old order" as opposed to this new, modern age?

The answer to these questions is given by way of comparison: against Descartes' *cogito* Heidegger contrasts Protagoras's statement, "Of all things the measure is man: of those that are, that they are; and of those that are not, that they are not" (DK 80B1). Heidegger identifies a point of uncertainty in understanding this statement; what does "man" [ἄνθρωπον] mean here? That is, what is *anthropos* here such that it is that which "measures" beings and being? What would such "measuring" amount to? Heidegger cautions here that thinking through such a statement is difficult from our historical position; our own conceptions of, e.g. of "human," tend to anachronistically posit an interpretation in advance.

Reading Protagoras's statement means trying to think through something more fundamental. It means trying to think out of the circumstances and experience from which Protagoras would make such a statement, i.e. what it is that such a statement attempts to think through. Although, of course, the Greeks were not the first to develop a written language, Heidegger finds them uniquely remarkable insofar as their philosophy does not simply grapple with Big Ideas like being, justice, and truth, but

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[41] I would suggest that in some senses every one of Heidegger's readings (of Descartes or otherwise) is historical, i.e. frames understanding the philosophy/er in the context of a tradition of thinking. That said, some readings take up such a theme more explicitly than others.

[42] Martin Heidegger, "European Nihilism," in *Nietzsche. Volumes Three and Four.*, trans. David Farrell Krell (San Francisco, Calif.: HarperCollins Publishers, 1991), 97.

also needed to struggle with what it means to articulate such thoughts in language. How does one coin a term like *anthropos*? What would one have to have experienced and been thinking to create such a term? And, further, what would it then mean to use such a term in a statement like "Man is the measure of all things"?

To make this move is, for Heidegger, a foundational move of metaphysics. That is, it does not just think *about* terms in metaphysics, but draws from something more fundamental in order to establish a field (that can then be talked about, analyzed, debated, etc.).[43] This work of creating definitions, of laying the groundwork for what can be talked about and how, Heidegger terms an "essence of a fundamental metaphysical position."[44] It sets the rules of the game, what pieces and moves are allowed in this realm called "metaphysics."[45]

Particularly important here are the most basic, universal terms: being and beings. Protagoras's statement, again: "Of all things the measure is man." The human, *anthropos*, measures not in the sense of weighing, assaying, or judging, but by virtue of defining "things": of beings and, more broadly, of being. On Heidegger's account, the way in which this is done throughout the history of Western philosophy is through determination of four factors: "1. By the way in which man as man is *himself* and thereby knows himself; 2. By the projection of beings on Being; 3. By circumscribing the essence of the truth of beings; and 4. By the way in which each respective man takes and gives 'measure' for the truth of beings."[46]

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[43] This "something more fundamental" is, on my reading, *οὐσία* which in turn draws from what Heidegger will later call Beyng.

[44] Heidegger, "European Nihilism," 92.

[45] Although, as Heidegger himself points out, it is not yet called "metaphysics" as that name does not appear until Scholastic philosophy. Metaphysics, here, refers more to the sense in which Heidegger and, on Heidegger's account, Aristotle use the term, i.e. "first philosophy," philosophy concerning fundamental principles.

[46] Heidegger, "European Nihilism," 92.

Turning to Descartes, Heidegger examines the way in which the *cogito* makes a similar philosophical move. Although there is now a more established written history, i.e. a Western philosophical tradition, Heidegger sees Descartes as a decisive figure who creates "the foundation of metaphysics in the modern age."[47] Via the *cogito*, a new metaphysical position comes to dominate, a position in which the subject (*subiectum*) occupies a central position.

Ego cogito ergo sum. On its surface, such a phrase seems straightforward enough: I think, therefore I am.[48] But as Heidegger sought to tease out the meaning of *anthropos* with Protagoras, so here he teases out what it means to think. What, in other words, is "*cogito*" or its inflection, "*cogitare*"? Heidegger notes, sarcastically, "We translate *cogitare* with 'thinking' and thus persuade ourselves that it is now clear what Descartes means by *cogitare*. As if we immediately knew what 'thinking' means."[49]

With the meaning of *cogitare* in question, Heidegger turns to other passages from Descartes, in which he finds, "Descartes substitutes for *cogitare* the word *percipere* (*per-capio*)—to take possession of a thing, to seize something, in the sense of presenting-to-oneself by way of presenting-before-oneself, *representing*."[50] This is not just a simple exchange of one term for another. By making this comparison, Heidegger identifies a specific ambiguity. He observes that *perceptio* means both "*percipere* and *perceptum*, the bringing-before-itself and what-is-brought-before-itself."[51] *Cogitatio* has the same ambiguity, and on Heidegger's view this is neither an accident nor simply clumsy writing. Rather, both terms indicate a more fundamental interdependence; each implies both an action (representing) and an object (the represented). As he puts it:

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[47] Heidegger, 100.
[48] Or, as some translations have it: I am thinking, therefore I am.
[49] Heidegger, "European Nihilism," 104.
[50] Heidegger, 104–5.
[51] Heidegger, 105.

In the concept of *cogitatio*, there is a general stress on the fact that representing brings the represented *to* the one representing; that therefore the latter, *as* one who represents, in every case 'presents' what is represented, calls it to account; that is, grasps it and appropriates it for itself, seizes and secures it.[52]

Cogito, *cogitare*, or "thinking" thus means something more than general mental activity, consciousness, or something similar. Rather than merely identifying an activity, *cogitare* both implies and posits a representer, the one who is able to carry out "thinking." This may seem an obvious point (and, in a way, is precisely what enables Descartes to add the "*ergo sum*"), but for Heidegger there is further significance.

This further significance, as one might guess, concerns being. Heidegger writes:

[*Ego cogito ergo sum*] says that I am as the one representing, that not only is *my* being [*Sein*] essentially determined through such representing, but that my representing, as definitional *repraesentatio*, decides about the being present of everything that is represented; that is to say, about the presence of what is meant in it; that is, about its being [*Sein*] as a being [*Seiende*].[53]

What we find, then, is not simply that *cogito* implies the existence of a subject who does the "thinking," but that it actually *defines* what it means for a being to be. My existence is posited as a being before whom representations can come to be present as (represented) beings and, further, that my being [*Sein*] precisely consists in existing as this being.

The *cogito*, like Protagoras' statement, establishes a fundamental metaphysical position. It defines being and beings, certainly, but what makes Descartes so significant—and the standard bearer of

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[52] Heidegger, 106.
[53] Heidegger, 114. Translation modified.

Modern philosophy—is "that his thought remains the ground for subsequent thought."[54] In what way? The *cogito* "posits Being [*Sein*] as representedness and truth as certitude."[55] What is significant about this philosophical move for Heidegger is the way in which it foregrounds subsequent thought and inquiry into metaphysics. On his account, subsequent thinkers in Western philosophy then think of the question "How do beings come to be?" only by shuffling around different kinds of causes. Thus a question like "How did that table come to be?" is answered by reference to the process according to which it was made: in a factory, assembled from wood imported from this or that region, finished or stained by some process, in the context of global capitalism, within a consumerist society, etc. What is not asked is how the table came to be in this more originary sense, a la Protagoras or other Greek thinkers (on Heidegger's reading). What it means for a being to be—i.e. to be present, to be *there*—is presumed.

As is always the case with Heidegger, more could be said here. This examination, after all, takes place in the context of a consideration of nihilism, and more specifically Nietzsche's confrontation with the topic. I have broached neither of those topics explicitly here. The definition of representation Heidegger attributes to Descartes could also be connected to his thinking of being as "constant presence" in the *Ereignis* texts, or as anticipating his later thinking of the historical grounding of *technē*.

What is more significant about Heidegger's reading here is that he complicates the very idea of what it means to read a text as part of a history of philosophy or history of ideas. To elaborate: Heidegger frames his reading as understanding Descartes (or Protagoras, Nietzsche, etc.); we have explicit claims in that respect. Yet Heidegger has little regard—or even outright disdain—for readings that situate understanding in terms of identifying the idea(s) the author intended to communicate. This is because, for Heidegger, one can only define reading philosophically as understanding an author's

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[54] Heidegger, 101.
[55] Heidegger, 114.

"intent" if one reconsiders what "intent" means. If "intent" means something like a psychological desire or impetus to pass an idea on to a presumed readership, then the project of identifying such an intent is to do what he calls *Historie.* These readings approach the communication of ideas as if ideas were objects in neat little boxes—this one labelled "*cogito,*" that one labelled "methodological doubt"—that are to be carefully passed from a creator to recipients. In so doing, thinking becomes thought: we are given thinking only as an artifact. The character of thinking—as a struggle, an attempt—is obscured. However, if identifying the author's "intent" means to exposit the way in which an author's experience, represented by their struggle with language (i.e. their writing), indicates something fundamental about the structure of experience and evokes in the reader a kind of questioning that leads the reader towards asking questions about what and how beings are, then we are closer to the goal of Heidegger's reading.[56] Only understood in this way could one say Heidegger aims to understand an author's "intent."

The next two texts are significant because in them authorial intent is not directly challenged (a la Heidegger). Authorial intent is, instead, off wandering in the distance. For both Irigaray and Dussel, Descartes' thinking raises questions about why and how that thinking occurs. In Irigaray's case, this has to do with metaphysics, the masculine/feminine, and the other. In Dussel's case, this has to do with the geopolitical contexts of philosophers and philosophies. In both cases, there is a vague similarity to the approach of the historian of ideas, insofar as all take seriously the idea that what the philosopher communicates is affected by their circumstances. Where both Irigaray and Dussel differ, however, is in their conception of what count as relevant circumstances.

Descartes is one among many philosophical figures Irigaray examines in *Speculum of the Other Woman.* Starting with a lengthy opening essay on Freud, Irigaray proceeds to spend a few pages apiece

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[56] This idea will be considered in more detail in Chapter 6.

considering how thinkers ranging from Plato and Aristotle to Kant and Hegel have thought about "woman." It is in this series that Descartes appears—in the section entitled "…And If, Taking the Eye of a Man Recently Dead,…"

Before examining this section specifically, a few prefatory notes are necessary to contextualize the stakes and foci of Irigaray's reading. Both here and throughout her work (especially her subsequent work, *This Sex Which is Not One*), Irigaray examines the intertwining of a history of a masculine/feminine dichotomy and the grounding of an ontology of presence. For Irigaray, the delimitation of the "subject" has required jumping through conceptual hurdles to excise the Other who is always already implicated in the subject and who destabilizes the border between subject and Other.

In this vein, Irigaray notes that with Descartes' *cogito* "Saying 'no' to everything is the crucial way to be assured that one is really (like) oneself. Otherwise, there will always be doubts about what relates to the self and what to the other."[57] What Irigaray emphasizes as so curious about Descartes' account is the way in which the method of doubt and the grounding of the subject in the *cogito* belies a certain anxiety or instability. The subject is portrayed as a kind of victim; not the subject but object of a world: "In a flood of dreams or even of doubts in which he can neither swim nor wade,"[58] in which he cannot find his footing, and "such unending, recurrent suspicion paralyzes all activity."[59]

I take it that what is at stake is the relationship between the individual and the world and, more specifically, what claim one individual has upon the world relative to others. Perception and understanding "bump up," so to speak, against the representations put forth by others. As children, we learn

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[57] Luce Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman*, trans. Gillian C Gill (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 181. Irigaray's style of writing is idiosyncratic, and does not always make for neat quotations. I have tried, when possible, to introduce such quotes in a way they make sense for this project, but some of Irigaray's unusual style almost inevitably remains.
[58] Irigaray, 181.
[59] Irigaray, 181. Irigaray is not always explicit about what kind of situation, relationship, or network of concepts she has in mind. I do not see this as a flaw. I mention it here simply because as I proffer the following reading and comparisons, her writing stands aloof in such a way that I feel deeply uncertain that the way in which I understand the text is The Way It Should Be Understood (perhaps an Other that refuses systemization? Or at least one that does so more consciously).

that *thing* is a cat, and suddenly every four-legged creature is a cat until we are told, no, there is also something called a dog, an elephant, a tiger. We get older and encounter other kinds of claims: we are told an object we find repulsive is beautiful; we are told the exit sign in the art museum is not art, it is just a sign. And what are we to make of such propositions? How can we be sure that something is what we believe it to be when there is always the possibility that someone will intercede to tell us "No, that is actually…"?

This is the situation of uncertainty: of anxiety, suspicion, and doubt. And it is in reaction to this situation that a response arises: desire. The subject desires a foundation for itself "purged of all *childish* phantoms or fantasies or belief or approximations."[60] The subject wants to be *right*, and to know with certainty that it is right. To do so, he must found the world anew, purged of doubt. To accomplish such a task fully requires not just the removal of individual doubts, but the removal of *sources* of doubt as well: others.[61]

If others are the source of doubt, it is only through an autonomous act of self-founding that one can secure a basis that is safe from such disturbance. One must (re)create the subject, and one does so through the *cogito*. "The 'I' reifies itself, attests to itself in a reality that is eminent from the word go."[62] Everything else, everything outside that "I" must be suspended; "for this new 'subject' that enters the world again greedy for scientific power, and (other) fantasy, and (other) dream, disturbing

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[60] Irigaray, 181.

[61] I am unsure—one might say I have doubts—about the origin of doubt here. One can conceive, for example, of having doubts based on a contrast between an expected result and an actual one, i.e. doubt arising from a situation that does not involve an other (at least explicitly). That said, it is possible that the very structure of doubt is one developed in the course of interactions between child and parent/caretaker through, e.g., an expectation about how the parent will behave or react to the child that is not borne out. I do not know which of these—if either—Irigaray has in mind here. But for the purpose of this section, I am also not sure how much it matters.

[62] Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman*, 184.

the precision of his theoretical instruments, must be frozen."[63] It is always a matter of control, of forbidding those "external" elements that destabilize the foundation.

Irigaray's writing throughout this section drips with wry sarcasm, and of this "autonomous" subject she asks, "'I' think, but about whom? About what? And, in some manner, what for?"[64] Ironically, even as the *cogito* attempts to excise all doubt, its very composition indicates a basis beyond itself. The very need for methodological doubt, the *cogito*, and all that follows attests to an Other outside and prior to the ostensibly autonomous, newly inaugurated "subject."

On Irigaray's reading, this is precisely why Descartes introduces—and needs—God. While a typical reading would hold that God is the epistemological foundation for securing the reality of an external world, Irigaray notes God also fulfills quite a different function: "*I think, therefore God is*: infinite being who at every moment gives a new impetus to the formation of my subjectivity."[65] God is the Other, but now created by the subject. "God is, but it is the 'I' that by thinking has granted him that essence and existence that the 'I' expects from God."[66] The subject thus creates a God who, in turn, creates what Irigaray calls the "infinite bonus" of the world.[67] Because the world has been founded in the subject, the subject always already "knows" what it will encounter; to remove doubt is to also remove surprise, mystery, and allure. God therefore functions as that which again makes possible something—a direction, a purpose, a meaning—that escapes the machinations of the subject.

In sum, Irigaray's approach to reading Descartes and understanding the *cogito* asks both how the *cogito* responds to a form of anxiety about the world and how the philosophical basis of that anxiety ultimately shapes the steps of both methodological doubt and its resolution in the *cogito* and God. As

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[63] Irigaray, 185.
[64] Irigaray, 186.
[65] Irigaray, 186.
[66] Irigaray, 187.
[67] Irigaray, 187.

she puts it, "All this has been conceived and reconstructed on the basis of the certainty I had that my representation was the only firmly established value, the only thing that could not fail me in this world where everything I feel is perpetually the slave to change."[68]

It is worth noting, too, that Irigaray's reading is highly historical—but in a different way than historiography. For Irigaray, Descartes is a figure in a history that continually exiles the Other, woman. So much of the history of Western philosophy's thinking of being and presence, so much of the search for certainty and Truth, amounts to a kind of panicked response about the intertwined, dynamic, ambiguity of things. By reading Descartes in a psychoanalytic fashion (i.e. what is Descartes so afraid of and why?), she exposes the ways in which Western philosophy has fetishized presence (the figure of the phallus).

The third and final reading I will offer here takes up reading Descartes in, again, a very different manner. Enrique Dussel's *Philosophy of Liberation* thematizes the geopolitical spaces in which philosophy occurs and participates and, in this context, how Descartes becomes a figure of European imperialism.

To begin, encountering Descartes with Dussel requires yet another framing. For Dussel, philosophy is always born in a political space and, as he puts it, "I am trying, then, to take space, geopolitical space, seriously. To be born at the North Pole or in Chiapas is not the same thing as to be born in New York City."[69] This is to say that philosophy always unfolds in a political space, and the character of that space matters for both what it means to do philosophy as well as what kinds of claims philosophy makes.

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[68] Irigaray, 189.

[69] Enrique D Dussel, *Philosophy of liberation*, trans. Aquilina Martinez and Mary Christine Morkovsky (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock, 2003), 2.

This is particularly the case concerning claims of existence. Questions like "What is truth?" or "What is existence?" take on very different tones, connotations, and ultimately meanings depending on whether one is writing from political exile in Mexico or the comfort of a private office in the U.S. Dussel writes, "Spatially central, the *ego cogito* constituted the periphery and asked itself, along with Fernandez de Oviedo, 'Are the Amerindians human beings'?"[70] In this context, the claim to exist—to be "human"—is one with political consequences. To be human or, for that matter, to be a being that can be recognized as making a legitimate claim to be human, is to insist "I am, I exist" in a very different register than the epistemological.

With Dussel's reference to Oviedo, we already see two sides to philosophical claims. The center, here represented (though by no means exclusively) by Oviedo, uses a sort of weaponized synthesis of epistemology and ontology. It is as a Spaniard, a European, and a scholar that Oviedo can pose the question, "Are Amerindians human beings?" To the extent that he is taken seriously, Oviedo is able to effectively suspend the humanity of indigenous Americans simply by putting their status in question. The very geopolitical status of the questioner means that the nature of the question is not abstractly philosophical, but one already shot through with political consequences. With the periphery, however, we can see philosophy operate in a different manner. Against the claim of the center, which puts the very existence of the periphery into question ("Their problems are not *real* problems," understood in a moral or political sense, take your pick), the periphery is forced by virtue of their relation to the center to make a counterclaim. Here, as Dussel puts it, "The philosophy that has emerged from a periphery has always done so in response to a need to situate itself with regard to a center."[71]

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[70] Dussel, 3.
[71] Dussel, 3.

Peripheral philosophy thus makes its claims vis-à-vis a center which "ends by thinking it[self] to be the only reality."[72] For Dussel, then, "reality" or "being," are not primarily to be understood as abstract metaphysical concepts, but conceptual political tools for delineating between those who properly, fully "are" (i.e. who matter, who are or could be citizens, who count as human) and those who are not. Looking at Aristotle, for example, Dussel writes, "The European Barbarians were not human, because they were unskilled; nor were Asians human, because they lacked strength and character; slaves were not human either; women were halfway human and children were only potentially human."[73] Dussel emphasizes the definition becomes prescriptive: one either can be or fully is human only if one possesses *logos*. This, in turn, informs the way in which one is recognized and dealt with by a political system.

Against the claim of a center which relegates outsiders to the status of nonbeing (irrelevant, unimportant, insignificant), the (peripheral) philosopher challenges the status quo. As he puts it, "Distant thinkers, those who had a perspective of the center from the periphery, those who had to define themselves in the presence of an already established image of the human person and in the presence of uncivilized fellow humans […] these are the ones who have a clear mind for pondering reality."[74] Another way to understand this is to say that metaphysics is a kind of insistence.[75] It is not merely an abstract attempt to account for what exists, but a proclamation of "*I* exist, *we* exist" pace a more politically central space framing the periphery as "non-existent."

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[72] Dussel, 4.

[73] Dussel, 4.

[74] Dussel, 4. I am unsure to what extent Dussel is being hyperbolic here, but the dichotomous picture Dussel presents (center::oppression/periphery::liberation) seems to me to grant rather too much epistemological privilege to the "distant" (i.e. peripheral) thinkers.

[75] Metaphysics arising from the political periphery, in any case. Dussel maintains a distinction between "real" philosophy and pseudo-philosophy that casts professional philosophy in none too flattering a light: "Philosophy, when it is really philosophy and not sophistry or ideology, does not ponder philosophy" (3).

It is in this context we encounter Descartes. Though today Descartes is typically regarded as a major figure of European philosophy—perhaps even *the* European philosopher—Dussel notes that Descartes, at the time, wrote "From peripheral France."[76] Thus, for Dussel, "Before the *ego cogito* there is an *ego conquiro*; 'I conquer' is the practical foundation of 'I think.'"[77] This does not, of course, mean such ideas are to be found explicitly in Descartes work, and indeed one is hard-pressed to find Descartes attributing any explicit political agenda to the *cogito*. That said, one does not need to find any such claim in Descartes' writing for Dussel's claim to be true.

The European most fully "is": they are the apex of reason, humanity—God's will on earth.[78] Thus Dussel claims, "*Homo homini lupus* is the real—that is, political—definition of the *ego cogito* and of modern and contemporary European philosophy."[79] For Dussel, what is at stake in Descartes' *cogito* is understanding what it means to claim "I am." The proclamation is always already contrasted with those who, implicitly or explicitly, "are not" in the view of the center.

Philosophies are not static: "Little by little [philosophy] gravitated toward the center in its classic periods, in the great ontologies."[80] Descartes' *cogito* shifts from the proclamation of a philosophically-marginalized France to the tool of imperialist European colonial powers. This is connected to what Dussel calls "colonial philosophy." Descartes becomes weaponized, an emblem of the brilliance and profundity of the European tradition of philosophy, contrasted again with the apparently lackluster, underdeveloped, or otherwise unphilosophical Others: "These colonized philosophers had forgotten their past. The Arab world did not return to its own splendid philosophy dating back to the ninth

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[76] Dussel, *Philosophy of liberation*, 4. Dussel leaves it unclear in what way(s) he conceives of Descartes or France as "peripheral." He may be referring to Descartes as a *chevalier* of reason or natural science pace still-prevalent Scholasticism (e.g. Thomism, Scotism) which found many of its most notable advocates in Italy or German-speaking countries, but I am uncertain of his exact reference.
[77] Dussel, 3.
[78] Dussel, 8.
[79] Dussel, 9.
[80] Dussel, 2.

century. India was ashamed of its sages and so was China."[81] In this context, philosophy operates as a kind of colonial propaganda: philosophy belongs to Europe. It not only touts its figures (Plato, Descartes, Kant, Hegel) as the most philosophically profound, through omission or dismissal it sanctions the marginalization of philosophy found outside the center.

This is to say that philosophy always already presupposes and occurs in what Dussel calls a world: "World is the totality of beings (real, possible, or imaginary) that exist because of their relationship to humankind."[82] "Philosophy" appears only in a world. And although we can understand the existence of what Dussel calls "real things" as entities that are separate from our own existence (shoes, ships, sealing wax), we first and foremost experience the world as suffused with meaning.[83] This being the case, a claim to existence is first and foremost a claim in the context of the world. Riffing on his earlier New York/Chiapas point, Dussel reiterates:

> To be born among pygmies in Africa or in a Fifth Avenue neighborhood in New York city is the same thing—as far as being born is concerned. But it is to be born into another world; it is to be born spatially into a world that predetermines—radically, though not absolutely—the orientation of one's future *projyecto*.[84]

Accordingly, Dussel concludes that one can neither understand the *cogito* as purely an abstract philosophical thought experiment nor even as a monumental moment in the history of European

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[81] Dussel, 12.
[82] Dussel, 23.
[83] Dussel, 23.
[84] Dussel, 25. "*Proyecto*" here references the German (and especially Heideggerian) *Entwurf*. Sticking with Heideggerian language, we might say here that Dussel is making the point that although ontologically many of the phenomena under consideration are the same, ontically it matters quite a lot how those possibilities come to be formed and learned.

philosophy. Instead, one must understand what it means to ask such questions, undertake such projects, and proffer such analyses happens in the context of a world that situates such activities in advance as meaningful.

Looking back, we have roughly five models of reading philosophically. The first two are historiographical, defining understanding a text in terms of identifying what the author intended to communicate. Where they differ is only in the "what next": the historian of ideas exposits (at most) for the sake of identifying what Skinner called "alien ideas," so strikingly different from our own that it gives us pauses and invites us to reflect on our own historical circumstances. The history of philosophy model, meanwhile, appreciates the work of the historian of ideas, but thinks at least *some* assessment of those ideas is appropriate, if what one is doing is to be considered philosophy.

The next three models, though significantly different from each other, are united in their rejection of the history of ideas/history of philosophy dichotomy. Each lays the groundwork for us to encounter Descartes in a different way, leading us to see very different sides to the *cogito*. It is, I think, tempting to make a distinction between the former and latter group by positing a difference between readings that are *about* a figure vs. readings that *invoke* a figure. On such a view, the historiographical readings of Descartes are about Descartes proper, whereas the others—Heidegger, Irigaray, and Dussel—simply invoke Descartes to slot him into their respective projects. This view is affirmed in many ways by the language of historiographically-oriented readings, which often claim that their reading simply *is* Descartes. Full stop. And to the extent that claim is challenged, it is done so by demonstrating that, no, in fact the reading presented is not Descartes after all.

Historiographical work of this kind likes to emphasize that it allows one to see the author "as they are." I will argue this point in more detail throughout this work (especially in Chapter 4), but what such historiographical approaches ignore or downplay is the extent to which their work is already

framed by a broader narrative that bestows meaning and significance to their research. That is, the historiographer does not read Descartes for the sake of reading Descartes, but reads him because he is "significant," "original," etc. Why? Because his writings helped shape the history of philosophy. And why is it important to know that? Or to record that? I think, on this point, most historiographical readings are vague, appealing to nebulous notions of "intellectual history" or the value of being exposed to "challenging, different ideas" (as Skinner does). Both grounds defer to even more undefined ideas: why would it be valuable to teach or to research "intellectual history"? Or, if it is about ideas that challenge, why are such ideas so corralled to a narrow canon of topics, texts, and figures? Why, in short, is it so important to research and present an author like Descartes "as he was"?

I do not mean to suggest these questions go unanswered, or that no author engaging historical philosophical figures has bothered to reflect on such things.[85] My point, rather, is that quite often in the teaching, learning, and research of philosophy such questions go unasked. And, I would suggest, part of the reason they go unasked is because we are often inculcated into philosophy in that way. We do not ask because we do not need to, and insofar as we benefit (we get good grades, praise and accolades, teaching positions, etc.), orienting ideas can—and do—go unquestioned.

This point carries us back to the about a figure/invoking a figure distinction. To claim that a historiographical reading of Descartes *is* Descartes is revealing. For despite the quasi-objectivity of the language, when we consider the historiographical cluster of readings, we do not find a pure "is," devoid of any biases or interests. Instead, we find Descartes *as* contributor to the history of European philosophy, originator of methodological doubt and the *cogito*, herald of the age of Modern European philosophy, and so on. The reading in fact presupposes a narrative within which what matters—the

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[85] As we will see in Chapter 3, Kenny's work takes up this theme more explicitly—though not entirely satisfactorily.

telos of research in philosophy—is establishing as precisely as possible what he contributed to the history of philosophy, i.e. his quintessential ideas and to what extent he influenced others.

Yet the word "is" remains, presenting Descartes as if *that* understanding and *that* significance is the only objectively valid one. We can, however, understand the "is" in a different manner—as normative, rather than objective. This way of using "is" is ubiquitous, but not always apparent. For example, I could say "*Everything, Everywhere All at Once* is a good movie." Such a claim is evaluative, based on my interpretation of personal and cultural criteria determining what counts as "good" and to what extent the film exhibits such traits. In a similar vein, I might say "La Mei Zi is a good restaurant," but implicitly such a judgment is based upon my subjective taste; it is not an objective fact. That said, phrasing matters. I did not say "I think La Mei Zi is a good restaurant," or "In my opinion, La Mei Zi is a good restaurant." Both statements more explicitly acknowledge the subjective basis of the judgment and express the same sentiment, but they have different rhetorical effects. If I claim that a restaurant *is* good, this carries a different weight than saying "*I* think this restaurant is good."

This "weight" is contingent upon multiple factors, especially positionality. I must have the confidence that my statement will be more or less accepted, and the view (rightly or wrongly) that we share some criteria of value.[86] It is, in other words, reliant upon my perception of the world and our positions in it. Thus, making a claim using "is" rather than more tentative or cautionary language does not necessarily indicate objectivity as much as the ubiquity, centrality, or widespread acceptance of the evaluative paradigm within which my view is grounded.

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[86] The point concerning confidence is, I think, part of why especially Western, white, cis, affluent men feel so comfortable in proclaiming their views and valuations as if they were universally true.

Coming back to the study of philosophy, we can say that what the claim to representing Descartes "as he is" or his philosophy "as it is," despite a grounding in an as-yet-indeterminate evaluative paradigm, is only possible when the paradigm within which such a reading occurs is so ubiquitous that one does not need to justify it. The "is" indicates the mainstream status of historiographical methods in philosophy.[87]

This, in turn, has repercussions for how philosophy develops as a discipline. The "is" enables a circumvention of justification. A Heidegger, Irigaray, or Dussel might have to justify their reading of Descartes as "legitimate" against accusations that the whole project is biased from the outset. Or, for that matter, that it is "not philosophy." A historiographical reading faces no such questions. To the extent that bias enters such conversations, it operates only at the level of individual readings. Bias is merely a concern when it "distorts" the objectivity of the reading, not with the aim of the reading as such.

How and why a mode of reading situates itself as objective, desirable, or as paramount within a discipline is a broad question to which one could offer many answers. As tempted as I am to take these all on, I will here more modestly constrain myself to one site. Which takes us back to the library.

To what extent, or in what way(s), does the library participate in the normalization of a historiographical conception of what it means to do philosophy? This question carries us to a more detailed examination of the library as an academic institution.

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[87] I think, too, it is worth mentioning the fetishization of a certain idea of "objectivity," which stresses empirical method while thoroughly suspending any questions about the significance of its activity.

Chapter II - To "B" or Not to "B": Classifying Philosophy

Section 1 - Contextualizing Libraries: Or, "Information Science"

> Libraries are not simply the storehouses of books. They are the means of organizing knowledge and […] of controlling that knowledge and restricting access to it. They are the symbols of intellectual and political power, and the far from innocent focus of conflict and opposition. It is hardly for reasons of simple security that so many of our great libraries are built on the model of fortresses.
>
> — Mary Beard

At first glance, libraries seem like the ultimate manifestation of democratic ideals. In many ways they are: in the U.S. they predominantly operate on principles of access and inclusion, and the American Library Association Library Bill of Rights' first statement of policy is "Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation."[88]

Yet it is not clear that the library is as accessible as it seems. I am not referring to issues of physical access, censorship, or the exclusion of certain titles; rather, prevailing classification practices fail to equitably enable diverse modes of philosophical research. This is because library classification and organization affect the ability of library readers and users to find materials relevant to their needs. By classifying and organizing its materials, a library establishes a space of usage, one that indicates the principles and purposes of that space.

As an analogy: an art gallery does not contain "objects" randomly strewn about: it contains art. Only those objects deemed "art" (bracketing whatever that might mean) are included in the gallery

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[88] American Library Association, "Library Bill of Rights," Text, June 30, 2006, http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill.

qua art. These objects are organized and displayed for the gallery visitor: one is there to view the art, not to smell it, eat it, or paint over it. Viewing art in the way the gallery expects is not mandatory, of course; it is not an imposed necessity. Nevertheless, there are norms: one will be asked to leave (or be removed forcibly) if there is too much deviation from the expected way of receiving the art. We could examine other spaces with this idea in mind: a pantry contains ingredients, a toolbox contains tools, a store contains products, etc. In each case, what we find is that the space and the items in it anticipate a certain kind of user of its objects. Or, more accurately, there is a certain range of expected users and usages.

When it comes to academic libraries, the expected user is the researcher.[89] Insofar as an academic library claims to promote research, it explicitly seeks to collect and organize materials in a way that facilitates research. This task orients the library qua library; from mission statement to cataloging to acquisitions to programming, this task suffuses the library ethos. Succinctly, a library is not merely a collection of anything and everything. As A. Broadfield put it, "The collector *as* collector simply collects, and does not promote scholarship."[90] The librarian curates and organizes; the librarian shapes the library according to what they think a researcher will need—they "promote scholarship."

This is a broad charge. What a researcher needs varies widely depending on the discipline. Further, different areas, methods, and topics within any given discipline make supporting research a strategic decision: which kinds of research is a library best able to support? and which kinds are stymied, thwarted, or neglected?

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[89] I use the words "library" and "libraries" throughout this work to generally refer to U.S. academic and research libraries since the latter phrase is none too pithy. Via context or explicitly, I mark when my analysis shifts between different kinds of libraries.

[90] A Broadfield, *A Philosophy of Librarianship* (London: Grafton, 1949), 8.

To even begin to answer these questions would require extensive knowledge of a field, so I restrict myself to my own: philosophy.[91] In so doing, we find that philosophy itself is philosophically at stake in the library. Whatever philosophers think philosophy is (a contentious issue, to be sure), it is library catalogers who decide whether a book will be classified as "philosophy" or not (and, if not, where it resides instead). Works are passed through an intellectual sieve: libraries employ classificatory schemes in order to render them manageable, i.e. organizable and findable. This decision can be informed by philosophers, of course, but it is filtered through the library context. How, then, is philosophy rendered into Philosophy? What effects does this classificatory schema have on philosophy? What kinds of research benefit from such schemata?

Within the context of the academic library, dominated by Library of Congress Classification and Subject Headings, philosophy is understood as a field of research analogous to other fields: art history takes up art as its domain, physics takes up the study of matter, biology takes up the study of life, and so on.[92] The predominant paradigm is that libraries contain information—an apropos term given the field of librarianship itself is often framed as information science. Information, of whatever type, is then understood as the foundation for research, and better research depends on the availability of the best relevant work, i.e. the best information. To be a philosopher in this context, therefore, means doing research contributing to the body of scholarly work in the field called "Philosophy." Organization of Philosophy would then assume this definition and instantiate it through classification. "Philosophy" thus presumes a relatively continuous tradition of scholarship of philosophers, perhaps working in different areas, but united under a single banner.

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[91] Which, to be frank, I would not even claim I have extensive knowledge in (although I would also be suspicious of any individual who does claim to have extensive knowledge in philosophy). Nevertheless, I think I am familiar enough with its intellectual topography to chart some of the difficulties.

[92] Although I frequently mention both in the same breath in this work, there is a difference between LCC and LCSH. The former designates a particular book's position in the overall LCC system via a call number, e.g. HQ1208 .B352 2009. LCSH names subjects that may or may not have an associated call number range.

But what does "information" mean here? And what would "best information" mean in philosophy? This is less a question about information or knowledge (i.e. epistemology) and more about what is presumed in library practice. For the moment, the question is simply this: what do libraries presume is philosophy?

Let us look at some examples. The previous chapter examined Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy*, but where are the resources I cited located? The following list gives LCC call numbers followed by their subject headings:

- Descartes, *Descartes: Selected Philosophical Writings*: B1837 .C67 1988
  - Philosophy
- Kenny, *Descartes: A Study of His Philosophy*: B1875 .K43
  - Philosophy - Descartes, René, -- 1596-1650.
- Cottingham (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to Descartes*: B1873 .C25 1992
  - Descartes, René, 1596-1650.
- Williams. *Descartes: the Project of Pure Enquiry*. B1875 .W56 1990
  - Descartes, René,1596-1650
  - Philosophy
- Heidegger, *Nietzsche*: B3313 .V663 H45 2009
  - Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm, 1844-1900
- Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman*: HQ1154 .I7413 1985
  - Feminism; Women -- Psychology;
  - Women and psychoanalysis;
  - Femininity (Philosophy);
  - Sex (Psychology)
- Dussel, *Philosophy of Liberation*: JC585 .D87313 1985
  - Liberty;
  - Liberation theology;
  - Philosophy and religion

There are a few noteworthy points about these works. First and foremost, only historiographical works are proximate to Descartes' work itself; Heidegger remains in the Bs, but grouped with secondary literature on Nietzsche, i.e. neither with Descartes nor the rest of his own works (found mostly in B3279). Irigaray, meanwhile, finds herself displaced all the way to the HQs, "Women – Feminism," a subset of the Hs (social sciences). Dussel is also displaced, into the JCs, "Political Theory. The State.

Theories of the State – Purpose, functions, and relations of the state," a subset of the Js (political science). All of these contain commentary on Descartes and the *Meditations*, as we saw; each could justifiably be placed far closer to the work itself. Second, note that Descartes is only appears in the subject headings of the historiographical works; nothing about the headings of Heidegger, Irigaray, or Dussel's works would remotely give an indication that they contain significant commentary on Descartes.[93, 94] Third, only the historiographical works consistently have the word "philosophy" in their subject headings. Heidegger's work is a work of philosophy by its placement, i.e. in the B call number range, but lacks any headings stating as such. Irigaray's work has "philosophy" in its heading, but secondarily. This might seem a minor point, but the heading indicates priority. According to the LC Subject Headings Manual:

> Assign the free-floating subdivision -Philosophy under fields of knowledge for works on the basic theory or principles of those disciplines, for example, Science - Philosophy. Do not assign headings of this type to works on special subtopics within the discipline of philosophy. Use instead headings of the type [topic] (Philosophy) for these topics, for example, Meaning (Philosophy).[95]

LCSH makes this distinction: if a topic attaches "philosophy" via a hyphen, it indicates the work is about the theory or principles of that discipline; if it uses "philosophy" in parentheses, the work is on a special subtopic of the field of philosophy. This begs the question, though, why Irigaray's work nevertheless is classified as HQ and not B: one of its headings (Femininity (Philosophy)) explicitly

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[93] I find Irigaray's classification and headings to be especially egregious. Irigaray opens *Speculum* with a sustained examination and critique of Freud and closes with a lengthy analysis of Plato's allegory of the cave. Neither figure is mentioned in the subject headings.

[94] This neglect of non-historiographical works occurs within the discipline of philosophy itself. Heidegger, Irigaray, and Dussel are not cited at all in the SEP article or Cambridge volume bibliographies, and only Heidegger receives a mention in the Oxford Bibliography entry (not even his own work either; an article by Wayne Martin tracing the influence of Descartes on the phenomenological tradition).

[95] Library of Congress, "Philosophy," in *Subject Headings Manual*, vol. H 1929, 2013, 1. My emphasis.

indicates the work is in philosophy. Why would "Women – Feminism" take precedence over philosophy? Dussel's work, meanwhile, has "philosophy" in its headings, but as "Philosophy and religion," an odd choice considering the LCSH states that "Philosophy and religion" is for "Works on the reciprocal relationship and influence between philosophy and religion,"[96] which is not especially the focus of Dussel's work.

Now, it might be argued that these classifications and headings are neither surprising nor unreasonable. After all, Descartes is not mentioned in the title of Heidegger, Irigaray, or Dussel's works, whereas the works grouped with Descartes explicitly mention him. Indeed, Heidegger's work is especially unsurprising: why would a work on Nietzsche be grouped with Descartes? Further, it could be argued that whereas the works of Heidegger, Irigaray, and Dussel do contain commentary on Descartes, Descartes is not the primary subject.

Regarding the issue of titles, many approaches to classification do lean heavily on classifying a work according to words in the title, but generally allow for some flexibility if the title is not reflective of the content of the work. That said, a cataloger may not feel going beyond the title is necessary if subject headings can be derived from the title.[97] Regarding the issue of primary subject: this is a normative claim. What it suggests is that there is a dichotomy between doing work *on* a figure (Descartes) and doing work *with* a figure, and only the former belongs with the figure in question. This dichotomy is a scission, reflected in the classification and reinforced by headings. Only the work *on* a figure is proximate to the work, or even has the figure mentioned in subject headings. Only that kind of work counts as philosophical knowledge. Looking at classification and subject headings, one would think

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[96] Library of Congress, Policy and Standards Division, "Library of Congress Subject Headings" (Library of Congress, 2019), http://www.loc.gov/aba/publications/FreeLCSH/freelcsh.html#Individual.

[97] Moreover, cataloging is generally inundated with materials, necessitating little more than scanning a book's title, descriptions from the publisher on the jacket or back cover, and (perhaps) glossing the table of contents or introduction. Working at such a pace means catalogers generally do not have the capacity to catalog in a more nuanced way.

Heidegger, Irigaray, and Dussel have nothing at all to say about Descartes and are irrelevant to anyone working with his thought. This could not be further from the truth.

For a researcher focusing on Descartes's thought, then, we find two very different experiences depending on one's approach. For the historiographical researcher interested in understanding Descartes's "main ideas," his historical context and reception, etc., research is relatively straightforward: the materials one needs are physically proximate, and subject headings readily connect to other works in much the same vein. For a researcher interested in other modes of understanding Descartes, e.g. as part of the history of Beyng (Heidegger), a figure of phallogocentricm (Irigaray), or a standard-bearer of Western intellectual imperialism (Dussel), Descartes remains elusive. Such a researcher would need to know in advance that analyses of Descartes could be found in these works since nothing gleaned from LCC or LCSH indicates anything to that effect. Such information could, of course, be found or inferred via other sources such as tables of contents or bibliographies (although, it is worth noting, none of the bibliographies from the major sources cited mentioned any of these thinkers or their engagements with Descartes). However, the point here is the contrast: the latter type of researchers have an onus placed upon them by the silence of the catalog that the former researchers do not.

Let us turn to another example: critical philosophy of race. Although race has long been an issue within philosophy, the 20th century witnesses rise to the discipline of "critical philosophy of race," especially in the Americas. Where does one find such works?

I would note, first, that no LC subject heading exists for the topic. There are a plethora of headings on race and various related topics, but no heading for critical philosophy of race specifically. A few examples of how texts speaking to such issues have been indexed:

- DuBois, *Souls of Black Folk*: E185.6 .D797 2007
  - African Americans
- Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*: GN645 .F313 2008

- o Black race -- Social conditions;
- o Black race -- Psychology
- Taylor, *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Race*: HT1524 .R686 2017
  - o Race -- Philosophy;
  - o Racism -- Philosophy
- West, *Race Matters*: E185.615 .W43 1994
  - o United States -- Race relations;
- Yancy, *Black Bodies, White Gazes: The Continuing Significance of Race in America*: E185 .Y32 2016
  - o African Americans;
  - o Racism -- United States;
  - o United States -- Race relations

Note the significant swath of call numbers here: E (history), GN (Anthropology), and HT (Communities. Classes. Races). All of these texts could be called crucial for a student of critical philosophy of race; yet how would any student find these works by looking at the library catalog? The books are neither physically grouped together nor united by any common subject headings.[98] Indeed, looking at LCC more broadly, we would find that a philosopher working on issues of race and racism might also need to look in the following areas:

- CB195-281 (philosophy of race and civilization)
- E184-185 (U.S. philosophy of race)
- GN199 (philosophy of race)
- HT1501-1595 (philosophy of race)

Depending on their particular interest—e.g. Critical Whiteness Studies or De/post-colonial Studies— a researcher might also need to consult the following additional areas:

- F1201-3799 (Philosophies of Central & South America, de/postcolonialism, Latinx philosophy)
- HM461-473 (philosophy of culture, critical theory)
- HX (Marxism, socialism, communism, anarchism)
- JA, JC (political science & theory)
- JF799-1177 (philosophy of rights)
- JV1-5397 (De/postcolonialism)
- PS (Various American figures, including Thoreau, Emerson, Anzaldúa)

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[98] There is some overlap, of course, but nothing to suggest they might all speak to the same research interest.

Note: none of these are within B; none of these are "philosophy." More extreme yet than the Irigaray example, no heading even indicates that race is a subtopic within philosophy, i.e. none of these bear the heading "Race (philosophy)" (which is unsurprising—that heading does not exist). As far as LCC goes, philosophy of race is not philosophy per se but something more like "Race -philosophy."[99] I do not think this is surprising. Consider: of the B call number range, the major subclasses are divided as follows:

- B – Philosophy (General)
  - "General works" (B69-99) followed by historical divisions (B108-5802)
- BC – Logic
- BD – Speculative Philosophy
  - Breaks down into General, Metaphysics, Epistemology, Methodology, Ontology, and Cosmology
- BF – Psychology
- BH – Aesthetics
- BJ – Ethics
- BL – Religions, Mythology, Rationalism
- BM – Judaism
- BP – Islam, Bahaism, Theosophy, etc.
- BQ – Buddhism
- BR – Christianity
- BS – The Bible
- BT – Doctrinal Theology
- BV – Practical Theology
- BX – Christian Denominations[100]

Imagine oneself as a cataloger tasked with situating philosophy of race in these headings: where would one place such works? There is no clear answer—and that is the point. Depending on the work,

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[99] This is a meaningful distinction in LCSH. "[Topic] -philosophy" indicates the work is about the theoretical basis of that field. This is compared to "[topic] (philosophy)" where [topic] is a specific subtopic of the discipline of philosophy.
[100] I will not go into detail about all of these headings, but there are a number of biases here that are clear even as a glance. Probably the most notable is the centrality of Christianity, which has five subject headings (BR, BS, BT, BV, and BX) compared to Judaism, Buddhism with one apiece, Islam, Bahaism, and the "etc." lumped together, and one heading (BL) for "the rest." I would also briefly note the Eurocentric conception of the divisions here, i.e. the assumption of a divide between philosophy and religion resulting in Buddhism removed from any of the stricter philosophy categories.

a case might be made for BJ – Ethics, but if a philosophy of race work was included here at all, it would probably fall into the B – General section. Residing in the Bs it is oddly-situated though; B108-5802 are organized along (Eurocentric) historical periods: Ancient, Medieval, Renaissance, Modern.[101] These categories refer not strictly to abstract divisions of time, but to epochs, reinforced by geopolit-ical divides.[102] Given this context, it is hardly surprising that critical philosophy of race would find little reason to be classified as philosophy as far as LCC is concerned.[103] Hence, even a text like Paul Taylor's *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Race*, which not only contains the phrase "Philosophy of race" in its title and which bears two headings explicitly associating philosophy and race (Race -- Philosophy; Racism -- Philosophy), ends up in HT. Such a work is not "Philosophy" because within this schema it can have no relation to "Philosophy."

One final example: deconstruction. Any student of deconstruction would seek, above all, the works in which the idea is addressed, discussed, and articulated. A likely starting point would include a selection of Derrida's texts, such as:

- *Of Grammatology*: P105 .D5313 1998
  - Language and languages -- Philosophy;
  - Writing
- *Speech and Phenomena*: B3279 .H94 D382
  - Husserl, Edmund, 1859-1938;
  - Phenomenology;
  - Signs and symbols;
  - Meaning (Philosophy);
  - Difference (Philosophy)
- *Writing and Difference*: B2430 .D482 E5 1978

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[101] This division is also misleading due to its disconnect from the discourse of philosophy in most academic settings. "Modern" as far as LCC goes is anything from the 17th century onward, which is in stark contrast to any "Modern Phi-losophy" course one would take elsewhere, which would cover roughly from the 16th or 17th century until the 18th cen-tury. Thus, for LCC, "modern" philosophy covers everything from Kant and German Idealism to Continental philoso-phy, Existentialism, Pragmatism, and Critical Theory.

[102] "By region or country" predominates throughout the Bs as a subdivision. Some noteworthy divisions include Ancient into the "Orient" and "Occident" while in Medieval the heading subdivides into "Arabian and Moorish philosophers. Islamic philosophers," "Jewish philosophers," "Oriental philosophers," and "European philosophers;" there is also a heading for "influence of Arabic philosophy' (influence on what tradition exactly is left unspecified, but one can guess).

[103] LC subject headings are little better: there is no "Race" as a narrower term (NT) of Philosophy. For headings, the closest one could find are "African American Philosophy" and select "Philosophy, [nationality]" subheadings.

- o Philosophy[104]

With these texts in mind, consider some secondary literature:

- Bennington, *Derrida*: B2430 .D484 B459 2008
    - o Derrida, Jacques;
    - o Deconstruction
- Caputo, *Deconstruction in a Nutshell: A Conversation with Jacques Derrida:* B809.6 .D46 1996
    - o Derrida, Jacques -- Interviews;
    - o Philosophers -- France -- Interviews;
    - o Deconstruction;
    - o Philosophy & Religion;
    - o Philosophy
- Culler, *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism*: PN98 .D43 C8
    - o Deconstruction
- Naas, *Taking on the Tradition: Jacques Derrida and the Legacies of Deconstruction*: B2430 .D484 N33 2003
    - o Derrida, Jacques
- Sallis (ed.), *Deconstruction and Philosophy: The Texts of Jacques Derrida*: B809 .D43 1987
    - o Derrida, Jacques -- Congresses;
    - o Deconstruction -- Congresses

As with critical philosophy of race, we find a wide range of call numbers: B809, B2430, and PN98; not quite as dispersed, but hardly proximate either. Note also: only the secondary literature has "deconstruction" in its subject headings (inexplicably Naas's work does not, however, despite having the word in the title). Were one to approach the concept from the library catalog, one might think the concept had sprung *ex nihilo*, or at any rate had a highly mysterious source. I do not want to point fingers here—new traditions are nigh impossible to spot when they arise—but simply to note the delay in recognition: "Deconstruction" was not added to LCSH until 1986. This delay affects the appearance of deconstruction within the catalog; foundational texts are not recognized as foundational

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[104] I do not mean to suggest these would thereby give the reader a definitive definition of "deconstruction," especially since part of the point of deconstruction is that any such definition is impossible. Further, these texts do not address any possible future modifications to the idea of deconstruction later in Derrida's writings. Nonetheless, I would maintain these texts remain important and foundational texts in the history of the development and reception of the idea of deconstruction.

and are quite distant from each other both in classification (B2439, B3279, P105) and headings (Philosophy; Husserl, Phenomenology, Signs and Symbols, Meaning, Difference; Language and Languages, Writing).[105]

What do these examples show us? In short, that when it comes to philosophy, historiographical approaches are significantly more intelligible within LCC via classification and subject headings than other approaches. With Descartes and historiographical readings, the *Principles* itself is found in B1863 and its commentaries surround it: B1854, B1875. With non-historiographical readings, we found ourselves either far afield of Descartes (Heidegger) or outside the Bs entirely (Irigaray, Dussel). The other examples show these shortcomings in more detail. Critical philosophy of race shows us the Eurocentrism of LCC; its classes and subclasses are not especially apt for non-Western philosophies or for philosophies that fall outside traditional Western topics. Deconstruction shows us, further, that as a new tradition arises, it often goes unnoticed until there is critical mass of related literature. This critical mass is the condition of intelligibility within LCC: only then do we have a historical "tradition" that can then be situated within the historical subclasses of the Bs.

But of what significance are these classifications? Items and traditions may be more difficult to find, more scattered across the library, but they are still in the collection after all.

The issue here is one of discoverability and of coherence. The above examples display biases towards historiographical philosophical projects (especially from a Eurocentric standpoint). Further, if LCC and LCSH are not outright hostile to new philosophical traditions (or simply non-Western ones), they cannot be said to be especially welcoming to them either. That, e.g., critical philosophy of race finds so many of its texts scattered both by classification and headings means philosophers working

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[105] A similar situation occurs with traditions such as existentialism, which finds many of its texts in PQ, and queer theory. Melissa Adler has written on the latter topic, and notes that Eve Sedgwick's seminal *Epistemology of the Closet* is categorized as PS374, "American Literature – Prose – Prose Fiction."

in those areas must struggle to find texts relevant to their research in a way that historiographical philosophers do not.[106]

This might not be an issue were it not for the massive amount of texts available to the contemporary philosopher. José Ortega y Gasset wrote, "The culture which has liberated man from the primitive forest now thrusts him anew into the midst of a forest of books no less inextricable and stifling."[107] For Gasset, writing in 1934, the book industry was already too large and too unwieldy. Admittedly such views are often concerning since the conclusion generally drawn from this is that there should be a purge: an elimination of certain voices, subjects, or interests.[108] If Gasset's observation about a "forest of books" was true in 1934, it is truer still now. Thanks to search engines, databases, and other source aggregators, the problem is not one of scarcity, but of overabundance. A search for articles or books that is not carefully filtered may return thousands or even millions of hits, many of which will be irrelevant, but in any case would take a lifetime (or several) for a researcher to comb through entirely. Any search must be filtered to produce manageable results.

Here we see a norming effect of LCC and LCSH. If research relies on filtering metadata structured by LCC and LCSH, then any research out-of-step with the thinking of those systems will struggle to find relevant materials. Further, if one's research interests are not adequately represented in the metadata for a given item, then a search will not return certain works at all. If, for example, I was looking for commentary on Descartes and knew nothing about who had written such works, the library would both nudge me towards finding historiographical works and, in the same move, suggest

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[106] Or, at least, do not have to as frequently.

[107] José Ortega y Gasset, "The Mission of the Librarian," trans. James Lewis and Ray Carpenter, *The Antioch Review* 21, no. 2 (1961): 151, https://doi.org/10.2307/4610323.

[108] Perhaps not coincidentally, these are generally the most recent voices and interests, which themselves are often founded in attempts to diversify the field.

that these are what count as philosophical commentary because they (and they alone) are classed and headed as such.

If we are to understand why LCC and LCSH are structured in this way, we must understand on what basis something is classed as philosophy and how its subject headings are assigned. In contemporary LIS language, this is called subject analysis. Though not a new process, subject analysis has informed not only how catalogers approach classification, but the structure of classification systems themselves. It is critical, then, to understand both how classification systems work and how they are theorized. What is the "thinking" of those systems? How are the classification and headings of a work determined?

Section 2 - Making the Cut(s)

In this section, I situate library classification as a kind of hermeneutic, that is, an interpretive orientation. Library classification lays out a series of rules, guidelines, principles, and categories—a framework—which prescribe a method for how items are to be read and subsequently categorized. This hermeneutic is integral to any library catalog insofar as it attempts to gather items "on the same topic." Such catalogs require that a cataloger examine each item to determine "what it is about," a property called (appropriately enough), "aboutness." In technical terms, any item entered into a catalog undergoes subject analysis.[109] Done perfectly, subject analysis would allow any library user to find every item on a topic: no more and no less. This is, of course, an impossibility. I say this not as an indictment of

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[109] In the following analyses—and throughout this work—I closely associate cataloging and classification. Strictly speaking, however, they can be differentiated. Cataloging refers to the process by which an item is added to a library catalog. Typically, this involves recording various standard properties of the item, such as title, author, publisher, etc. Frequently this includes some version of the item's subject, and this is where classification enters. Classification is the process by which a cataloger identifies and attributes a subject or subjects to an item. Thus, when I consider "cataloging" or a "cataloger," these are examined in the context of classification specifically.

catalogers or cataloging techniques, or as a lament of the finitude of the human—one recalls the maps of Carroll or Borges, with their scales of 1 mile: 1 mile—but to broach the topic of adaptations and concessions classification systems make. These adaptations, as I will argue, comparatively limit the accessibility of the library catalog.

This limitation takes two forms, both of which have to do with what is unsaid in classification. One form is omission, a matter in which catalogers could add further headings than they do, but simply do not (or cannot) due to restrictions from the system within which they operate.[110] So, for example, that the headings for Aristotle's *Politics* say nothing about the views on women he expounds therein, is an issue of omission; the topic is present and intelligible within the system, but has been judged to not be substantial (read: lengthy) enough to warrant a heading identifying it. The other form of limitation is the cataloger's paradigm. A system of classification sets up rules for its catalogers to classify books according to categories of information. Looking at Library of Congress Classification and Subject Headings for philosophy, these take two broad directions: topical and chronological/regional. Yet we can imagine quite different categories of information: how differently would the philosophy range appear be if it were organized by the questions asked in the work? Or its view of history? Or treatment of the Other? Further still, the philosophy call number range and associated headings posit conditions of inclusion and exclusion for Philosophy: they establish rules for whether an item can be called Philosophy. Put another way, how does subject analysis determine what is or is not philosophy, and why does it then organize philosophy in the way it does?

The system under consideration is that of the Library of Congress. Comprised of LCC and LCSH; both elements are of interest here. The former situates an item relative to the rest of that call number range, establishing and reinforcing a pattern of knowledge organization, while the latter's terms affect

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[110] See, for example, the LCSH twenty-percent rule, which specifies a heading may only be applied if it comprises 20% of the resource.

the discoverability of the item, determining whether an individual who would find the item useful for their research will, in fact, find it. The issue of how LC subject analysis and metadata application practices affect access for diverse philosophical projects is my focus here, but I believe metadata practices affect other areas as well. For example, classification informs selection: library approval plans may include or exclude given call number ranges, i.e. books on specific topics, and spending budgets often vary depending on area; thus, how an item is classified can have a direct effect on its inclusion or exclusion within the library itself.[111]

How are we to determine the methods of LC subject analysis? We may, certainly, examine contemporary texts and textbooks in LIS on this very topic, and in so doing we would find a variety of approaches. However, it is important to note that whatever their approach to subject analysis, insofar as they work within LCC/LCSH they all adopt and work within that system. Even with its historical evolutions, adaptations, and revisions, it remains structurally continuous with its intellectual basis. These origins find their roots, both historically and theoretically, in the work of Charles Cutter.

Working in the second half of the 19th century, Cutter published one of the first modern classification systems, his Expansive Classification, in 1880. This followed on the heels of a report he assembled in 1876 for the U.S. Bureau of Education on libraries in the U.S., which contained his *Rules for a Printed Dictionary Catalogue*. Cutter's *Rules* put forth his ideas about the principles and construction of a library catalog, helping establish ideas and standards that persist through today.

Cutter's Expansive Classification was one of many systems put forth by librarians around the time, but it gained a reputation for being the most scholarly and thorough of the available options and went through four editions. Partly for this scholarly bent (and partly because Melvil Dewey refused to

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[111] These, and related issues, will be considered in detail in Chapter 7.

let his system be adapted), Cutter's work formed the basis of Library of Congress Classification.[112]

This basis was not only in form, e.g. in its approach to creating call numbers, but in paradigm; early

versions of LCC and LCSH effectively adopted Cutter's approaches to classification by default.[113]

Today, training and teaching on LCC/LCSH draw from other sources, but Cutter's influence endures.

This is both because of working within LCC/LCSH and because much subject analysis is still informed

by Cutter's principles and ideas.

Accordingly, given that historically and theoretically so much of contemporary subject analysis is

indebted to Cutter, an analysis of his work and ideas regarding subject analysis will help situate much

of the work and thought regarding classification that follows. What exactly does Cutter say about

subject analysis and on what grounds?

Subsection A - Charles Cutter

Cutter's *Rules for a Printed Dictionary Catalogue* identifies eight "objects," i.e. objectives, of a catalog.

These are:

> 1. To enable a person to find a book of which either
>   (A) the author,
>   (B) the title,
>   (C) the subject is known
> 2. To show what the library has
>   (D) by a given author,
>   (E) on a given subject,
>   (F) in a given kind of literature
> 3. To assist in the choice of a book
>   (G) as to its edition,
>   (H) as to its character (literary or topical).[114]

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[112] Cutter's influence on LCC and LCSH was not explicitly acknowledged by LC for many years; as Alva Stone writes, "The influence of Cutter on the LCSH was not acknowledged by the Library of Congress until 1972, when that acknowledgment was made unofficially by the Chief of the LC Subject Cataloging Division" (3). Today, however, his influence is widely recognized and Cutter's work is referenced in LC training materials.

[113] E.g., as we will see, David Haykin imports definitions from Cutter wholesale.

[114] Charles A Cutter, *Rules for a Dictionary Catalogue*, 3rd edition (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1891), 8.

Using more recent LIS terminology, these objects can be sorted into types. On the one hand, a catalog has a *finding function*.[115] A catalog lists what items a library has in its collection so a user can determine if the library has the specific item they are seeking. Generally, this makes possible 1.A and 1.B of Cutter's desiderata, assuming the user knows these data in advance.[116] On the other hand, a catalog has *gathering* and *advisory* functions. Here, a user is not looking for a specific item but a type of item. It is presumed that by gathering items according to certain principles, users can find the kinds of items suitable to their needs. In Cutter's schema, this is the role of 2.D-F and 3.G-H.

For Cutter, these objects ground three principles that determine how a cataloger should enter an item into a catalog:

> Other things being equal, choose that entry (1) That will probably be first looked under by the class of people who use the library; (2) That is consistent with other entries, so that one principle can cover all; (3) That will mass entries least in places where it is difficult to so arrange them that they can be readily found, as under names of nations and cities.[117]

On this basis Cutter enumerates 261 rules meant to make a library's collection accessible for finding, gathering, or both. These rules range from the specific to the general and vary in tone from prescriptive to cautionary. One principle resides at the core of this plethora of rules: a library's contents are for use. Use is aided by a systematic and consistent catalog, and a systematic catalog is only possible

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[115] This is also sometimes referred to as a "discovery function;" I use both terms throughout this work.
[116] 1.C is more dubious to be as to its feasibility for reasons that will become clearer later. In short, however, it is because Cutter presupposes a certain singular public for whom a subject will either always be relevant or irrelevant.
[117] Cutter, *Rules for a Dictionary Catalogue*, 8.

if the library's contents have been (at least somewhat) consistently classified, allowing the catalog browser to differentiate between what is and is not relevant to their interests.

When it comes to consistent classification, certain metadata are more immediately apparent than others. Titles and authors are usually straightforward enough,[118] but to fulfil objects 1.C, 2.E, and 3.H works must be classified by subject. How does a cataloger determine the subject of a work? Cutter authorizes catalogers to determine this themselves: "Enter books under the word which best expresses their subject, whether it occurs in the title or not."[119] By licensing catalogers to pick a word or words which "best expresses their subject," Cutter grants catalogers permission to interpret the work in multiple ways. First, most obviously, catalogers determine the subject of the work.[120] Second, catalogers determine the "best" words that express the subject of the work. Keeping in mind Cutter's principles, the "best" word will be contingent upon the cataloger's conception of "the class of people who use the library." The cataloger must have some conception (however vague) of this "class of people" for whom certain words would be the "best" ones, i.e. enable them to find relevant works. Third, when assigning subjects, "Some of the subjects may be omitted if their treatment is so slight that it is not worth while [sic] to take any notice of them."[121] Cutter leaves it unclear whether "slightness" here has to do with length or with significance.[122] In any case, the cataloger has the power to decide whether a treatment of a subject is substantial enough to justify classifying the work on that basis. The bottom line, as Cutter reiterates, is that in assigning subjects to a work, "The points to be considered are: (1)

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[118] Although not always, as in the case of pseudonymous or anonymous authors, authors who have multiple name changes (due to marriage/divorce, transitioning, or otherwise), etc.

[119] Cutter, *Rules for a Dictionary Catalogue*, 50, §104.

[120] Even if a cataloger borrows the subject from the publisher (via back cover, jacket, website, etc.) or the author themselves, this too is an interpretive move, which simply presumes the appropriateness of those parties' assertions. *Mein Kampf*'s subject as conveyed by the author or original publisher would likely have a very different tone than how we would now characterize it.

[121] Cutter, *Rules for a Dictionary Catalogue*, 55, §109.

[122] After all, some works say extremely insightful and important things about a subject in just a few pages while others say next to nothing in dozens (or hundreds).

Would this book be of any use to one who is looking up the subject? (2) Is the entry or reference necessary as a subject-word entry or reference (that is, to one who is looking for this book)?"[123]

Cutter does not see these sites of interpretation vis-à-vis a work's subject as subjecting books to individual caprice. "Subject," as Cutter defines it, is "The matter on which the author is seeking to give or the reader to obtain information."[124] Put another way, the subject of a work is either the matter about which an author intends to convey information, or the subject is that matter about which a reader seeks information. "Information" thus acts as the foundation upon which a subject is identified (although Cutter says little about what "information" means).

Considering how Cutter thinks about classification introduces a key point in Cutter's thought. Both "subject" and "class of people" have a univocity to them, a point emphasized by Hope Olson.[125] Throughout his *Rules*, Cutter sets up his system in a way that suggests that everyone, or at least every-one who uses the library, is interested in a work for the same reason. This presumption is not only apparent in his wording (the singular "*the* class of people," e.g.), but in his rules: subjects are assigned based on *the* class of people who use the library. Cutter envisions a *singular* public, as expressed in his first principle: "That entry that will probably be first looked under by *the* class of people who use the library."[126]

Ironically, Cutter's wording undermines his presumption even as he attempts to found it. If the public were as singular as Cutter's language suggests, then there would be no need to write "That entry that will *probably* be first looked at."[127] If the public were uniform in their library catalog usage, there would be no issue; each user would know with certainty which entry to look at because of its universal

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[123] Cutter, *Rules for a Dictionary Catalogue*, 55, §109.
[124] Cutter, 11.
[125] Hope A Olson, *The Power to Name: Locating the Limits of Subject Representation in Libraries* (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic, 2002). See especially Chapter 2.
[126] Cutter, *Rules for a Dictionary Catalogue*, 8. My emphasis.
[127] Cutter, 8. My emphasis.

basis.[128] The issue, then, is not that Cutter fails to consider the possibility of other views or interests. Rather, he suppresses them. It is a matter of majority rules: a work is cataloged according to prevailing standards. Other interests and perspectives must resort to other means; the catalog is the domain of the "probablies."[129]

Now, we may seem to have a possible mode of address to this issue via Cutter's objects and reasons. Cutter notes at several points that libraries can have different objects (he contrasts reading libraries with libraries for study) and can vary widely to what degree they serve these or other interests. The "class of people who use the library" would concomitantly vary; and since Cutter acknowledges that most libraries serve a mix of users, diversity would seem to get some recognition.

However, while Cutter acknowledges that people reading for leisure and people reading for research have different ends, his wording suggests he still sees these broad types as homogenous. This is apparent in statements such as "Nobody wants to know what books there are in the library in folio, or what quartos, or what books bound in russia or calf, or what published by John Smith."[130] or "A man who is looking up the history of the Christian church does not care in the least whether the books on it were called by their authors church histories or ecclesiastical histories; and the cataloguer also should not care if he can avoid it."[131]

Cutter's examples do not work. A reader looking for something to read on their daily commute will care quite a lot about whether a book is folio; a historian interested in the particulars of the John

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[128] One might argue that here Cutter is simply allowing for the possibility of readers who do not know how to use a library catalog, e.g. they search for terms too specific or too general to find what they need. This is quite possible, but the point still stands. If this is the class of individuals Cutter has in mind when he says "probably," then his view is even narrower yet; he has no place for the possibility of legitimate diverse approaches.

[129] This sentiment carries forward: Eugene Frosio and C. Sumner Spalding, both involved in cataloging at LC in the 1970s, expressed the sentiment that LC "follows usage," i.e. goes with what the majority in the field say. Olson and Schlegl (2001) consider this point in more depth, arguing that this position "exacerbates the tyranny of the majority" (76).

[130] Cutter, *Rules for a Dictionary Catalogue*, 9. Quartos, which started to be phased out around the mid-Nineteenth century, are books that had eight pages printed on one sheet of paper which was then folded.

[131] Cutter, 50, §104.

Smith Publishing Company will care what books were published by that firm.[132] And although Cutter says that someone "Looking up the history of the Christian church does not care in the least whether the books on it were called by their authors church histories or ecclesiastical histories," this is not necessarily so. A historian might wish to analyze patterns of the use of the terms "church histories" vs. "ecclesiastical histories" relative to religious trends. Further, the term "church" is broader than the term "ecclesiastical" since the former can refer to non-Christian churches.[133] What Cutter does with these examples is key: interests in works that fall outside the *probable* domain of interests are dismissed. "Nobody wants to know;" "A man […] does not care;" even if these are hyperbolic, it does not change Cutter's dismissive position towards these other interests.

An alternative remedy to the suppression of diversity would seem to arise from Cutter enabling catalogers to determine the subject of a work. If catalogers can determine a work's subject, then they can potentially assign different subjects to address different interests. I think this is a crucial site of intervention, and ultimately one of the key points if cataloging is to make collection access more equitable. However, it is not an approach that rescues Cutter's thought. When we examine Cutter's priorities more closely, we find that a major reason he even allows catalogers to try and determine the subject of a book has less to do with considering the range of people who might be interested in reading it and more because there are a "very considerable number of books whose titles make no mention or only an obscure or a defective mention of their subjects."[134] Cutter envisions these sites of interpretation only as a way to address works with either "obscure" or "defective" mention of their subjects, not as a way to address diverse interests in the same work.

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[132] Perhaps for this very reason, both size and publisher are typically documented in modern cataloging.

[133] E.g. Church of Satan, Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster, non-denominational churches.

[134] Cutter, *Rules for a Dictionary Catalogue*, 50, §102.

Cutter's emphasis on order and consistency comes at a price. Specifically, it means that his approach to subject analysis concerns itself only with a singular, homogenous, presumed majority view. When Cutter acknowledges there could be other interests, he consistently dismisses them, generally by omitting or downplaying them and using rhetoric like "No one is interested." The few places in Cutter's scheme where different perspectives and interests might enter into consideration ultimately prove inadequate for remedying the situation of the marginalized because, in the end, Cutter emphasizes a singular, central subject as the basis for classification, a basis that precludes the possibility of other bases. Put another way, Cutter's emphasis is on the "probablies;" it is that "class of users" that remains at the forefront of Cutter's considerations and rules writ large including, crucially, assigning subjects.

Subsection B - Universally Uniform: The Domination of LC

Cutter's system is still used (albeit rarely), but its legacy endures in a more prominent way. Cutter's system became the basis for Library of Congress Classification and the accompanying Library of Congress Subject Headings when LC employees Charles Martel and James Hanson adapted Cutter's system for LC use. These systems have, in turn, informed many modern LIS practices internationally, and helped establish standards and institutions such as MARC and FRBR.[135] But just how prevalent are LCC and LCSH? And how did the LC framework become so integral to modern libraries?

The beginning of LC's domination can be traced back to the mid-19th century, a period of massive change in the library world. From 1876-1933, Melvil Dewey, Charles Cutter, Ernest Richardson, and

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[135] MARC started as a project in the Library of Congress in 1965, which converted Library catalog cards into a machine-readable format (hence its name: MAchine Readable Cataloging). In 1999 it became MARC21, an international standard for bibliographic data, integrated into various catalogs and metadata systems. FRBR is a conceptual model for metadata proposed by an IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) committee. Multiple members of the committee were either LC staff or came from university libraries that used LCC/LCSH.

(bleeding into the 20th century) Henry Bliss and S.R. Ranganathan all put forth their own classification systems.[136] These figures were all responding to changes in the world of libraries and books, changes that meant libraries were seeing more larger collections and more use. The Library of Congress's responses to these same pressures positioned it as an increasingly central institution in the library world.

The demand for books skyrocketed U.S. academic world during the second half of the 19th century thanks to a new kind of educational milieu.[137] Prior to 1876, a university's library was a marginalized institution. The position of librarian carried little prestige and was a dull, thankless task. Many libraries had draconian usage restrictions and limited hours, and some still adhered to the monastic tradition of chaining books to the shelves. This situation was hardly surprising: a university education simply did not require using the library.

Writing on this period, John R. Thelin notes, "Students faced a mix of classroom recitations and oral disputations in which they were subject to immediate critical evaluations by both masters and fellow undergraduates."[138] At Harvard, students were educated mostly through instruction by tutors, mimicking the educational model at Cambridge University. Harvard's library, founded in 1638 and the oldest library in the United States, "Played no part in this [educational] program," according to Arthur Hamlin.[139] This is a bit overstated; the library did see some use via students, tutors, and faculty using the library to further their education. But Hamlin's hyperbole can be forgiven when one realizes just what was required to use the Harvard library. Kenneth Brough reports that "Undergraduates had to procure 'an order under the Hands of the President, one Professor & One Tutor to the Librarian to

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[136] The names I cite are some of the more prominent and influential figures from this period, but plenty of others put forth their own systems; the above authors cite a number of authors to whom they respond.

[137] Given the scope of this project I am only focusing on the higher education context here, but other factors like rising literacy rates and education reforms around this time also led to an increase in readers across the U.S.

[138] John R Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2019), 18.

[139] Arthur Hamlin, *The University Library in the United States: Its Origins and Development* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), 6, https://doi.org/10.9783/9781512802078.

deliver what Books they shall judge proper for the Perusal of such a Student.'"[140] Nevertheless, bibliophiles persisted: as Yale historian Richard Warch writes: "A few students obviously used the library to complement their studies and a few more to expand their intellectual horizons. Others borrowed books for extracurricular reasons. On the whole, however, the library was not an integral part of the college course of study," an assessment that could be fairly applied to other academic libraries of that epoch.[141]

1876 changed the direction of U.S. higher education. Johns Hopkins University was founded, based on a research and seminar model of education advocated by Wilhelm von Humboldt and implemented in places like Heidelberg University, after which Johns Hopkins was modeled. Other new universities began to follow this model as well, including Clark University, the University of Chicago, and Stanford University.[142] Further, the 1860s onward saw the rise of the Ph.D. in U.S. higher education. Yale University began to offer the Ph.D. in 1860, the first U.S. university to do so; previously one needed to go to Europe to receive such a degree. Research was essential for such a degree and research could not be done without a library supplementing that work. As Atkins observes: "The spirit of the new institution was to search for scientific truth through sophisticated research techniques. Monographs and articles in scholarly journals become the mediums through which the findings of research were communicated in the United States and abroad."[143] That said, it would be misleading to suggest that this marks the dawn of a period of prolific research or an explosion of Ph.D.s. Neither is true. Nonetheless, there was a noticeable shift in thinking about the role, methods, and organization of the university and the purpose of the library within that context.

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[140] Kenneth J Brough, *Scholar's Workshop; Evolving Conceptions of Library Service* (Boston: Gregg Press, 1972), 4.

[141] Richard Warch, *School of the Prophets: Yale College, 1701-1740.* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 243.

[142] Stephen E Atkins, *The Academic Library in the American University* (Chicago; London: American Library Association, 1991), 14.

[143] Atkins, 14.

Over the course of the 1860s and 70s, these changes shifted what was required of those at a university. From undergraduates to faculty, research suddenly became far more prominent. It was at this moment universities remembered they had institutions suited to address these needs: enter the modern university library. Finding themselves suddenly in the spotlight, university libraries needed to radically revise their organization and operation. No longer could libraries get away with extremely limited hours, restrictive usage rules, and small collections.[144] A figure fully embracing this shift, Melvil Dewey instituted a number of sweeping and significant changes at Columbia University's library in 1883. Hamlin covers these in detail:

> The hours were extended from the pitiful ten hours weekly of the late seventies to eighty-four. A modern card catalog was begun. Lectures were given on the use of the library […] Dewey's reference librarians were to "counsel and direct readers."[145]

If these changes hardly seem radical, it is only because we take the changes advocated and instituted by Dewey for granted. Before he assumed control of Columbia's library, it was—like many other libraries at the time—primarily one concerned with preservation. A library was above all a place to safely collect and store books, and access was carefully controlled lest users damage the collection. As Brough notes, "Inspecting committees [charged with overseeing library collections] emphasized not the use of books but, rather, their conservation."[146] Hours were often highly restricted, especially before the widespread use of electric lights. Without sufficient daylight, library users would use candles, which more than a few university boards and librarians were leery of given both a long history of catastrophic library fires (the Library of Alexandria) and significant losses due to fire precisely in U.S.

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[144] In 1764, over a century after its founding, Harvard College owned fewer than 5,000 volumes (Harris, 173). Johns Hopkins itself went from a collection size of roughly 5,000 volumes at its founding in 1876 to over 194,000 volumes in 1900 (Rosenberg, 10).

[145] Hamlin, *The University Library in the United States*, 51.

[146] Brough, *Scholar's Workshop; Evolving Conceptions of Library Service*, 17.

academic libraries (Harvard lost thousands of books to fire in 1764, and William and Mary had its collection destroyed in 1859).[147] Brough sums up the paradigm of this new era: "The university library is essentially a laboratory, a workshop for the scholar."[148]

Individual libraries varied in their preparedness for this change. Especially concerning for many was that since books were rarely removed from the library, there was no need for a detailed system of where a given book should be stored. Still, some libraries had their own systems of organization, although these were sometimes more symbolic than practical, e.g. organizing books by donor. Attempting to remedy the inadequacy of these older systems, librarians began to create new systems of organization. Ushering in this new era was Melvil Dewey's Dewey Decimal Classification, the first version of which was published in 1876 in his book *A Classification and Subject Index for Cataloguing and Arranging the Books and Pamphlets of a Library* while Dewey worked at Amherst College, and Charles Cutter's Cutter Expansive Classification, drawing from his 1876 *Rules for a Printed Dictionary Catalogue*, and published in its first edition in 1880.[149]

Dewey and Cutter's systems turned out to just be the beginning. Over the course of the next few decades, myriad librarians tried their hand at creating classification systems, to varying degrees of success. With the proliferation of these systems and the expansion of the role of the library came new questions: should librarians have standards across the profession? Or should each library be left to its own devices and needs? For a few decades at least the answer tended towards to each their own. This

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[147] Frederick Andrew Lerner, *The Story of Libraries: From the Invention of Writing to the Computer Age* (New York: Continuum, 1998), 126; James W. P Campbell, *The Library: A World History*, 2013, 29.

[148] Brough, *Scholar's Workshop; Evolving Conceptions of Library Service*, 31.

[149] This was not the expansive system that is still in use (mostly in public and international libraries); that did not come about until the second edition, *Decimal Classification and Relativ Index for arranging, cataloging, and indexing public and private libraries and for pamflets, clippings, notes, scrap books, index rerums, etc.*, published in 1885. Cutter's system was also revised, and when his ideas became the basis for LCC, Martel and Hanson drew from Cutter's later work, *Expansive Classification*, published in 1882.

was the initial position of the first major professional librarian group, the American Library Association, officially founded in 1876.[150] Justin Winsor, librarian at Harvard College and first president of the ALA, was reluctant to position the ALA as a bearer of standards, preferring to let individual libraries manage their own systems.[151] This position held for a few decades, but prominent librarians such as Herbert Putnam increasingly pressured the ALA to adopt and enforce national standards. When Dewey became president of the ALA in 1893 he changed its longstanding position and pushed for national standards. His views found support in the library community, especially among public library directors like Putnam, but the question arose who would oversee these standards.

A prominent candidate for the standard-bearer was the library of the nation: The Library of Congress. The Library had existed relatively quietly since 1800 but saw a substantial expansion under the guidance of Ainsworth Rand Spofford, Librarian from 1864-1897. Among Spofford's numerous achievements was the 1870 establishment of the Library of Congress as the institution overseeing U.S. copyright. This was a substantial addition to the Library's duties, but it also greatly expanded collections since two copies of each copyrighted book were to be sent to the Library.[152] When the Library moved to its new building in 1897, it had acquired over 800,000 items from copyright acquisitions alone.[153] Despite its centrality, its collection size, and its status as a national institution, the Library was not well-positioned to occupy the role the ALA desired. For starters, Spofford was not involved with the ALA in almost any capacity. Though he did attend the 1876 foundational meeting, Spofford rarely

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[150] There had been a meeting in 1853 that had intended to found a permanent organization, but that did not come to fruition. Not until the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia was the ALA officially founded (American Library Association, "History," Text, About ALA, June 9, 2008, http://www.ala.org/aboutala/history).

[151] Rosenberg, *The Nation's Great Library*, 12.

[152] John Y Cole, *America's Greatest Library: An Illustrated History of the Library of Congress* (Washington, DC: The Library of Congress, in association with D. Giles Limited, 2017), 44.

[153] Cole, 44.

attended any subsequent annual meetings (only two additional ones between 1876 and his semi-retirement in 1896) and contributed little to the ALA.[154] Further, despite Spofford own's preoccupation with classification (he created his own somewhat idiosyncratic system), he did not believe the Library should set a national standard when it came to cataloging or classification.[155] It was not until Herbert Putnam was appointed as head librarian in 1899 that the direction of the Library—and of U.S. libraries broadly—changed. Putnam envisioned the Library of Congress becoming a true Library of the Nation, but this was no easy task. To do so, the Library would need to expand greatly. But first it needed to deal with in-house issues.

When the Library moved to its new home in the Jefferson Building in 1897, they brought with them a huge backlog of items. Eight hundred tons of materials, specifically.[156]

A picture of copyright deposit materials in the new Jefferson building basement, circa 1898.[157]

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[154] Rosenberg, *The Nation's Great Library*, 15.

[155] Francis Miksa, "The Development of Classification at the Library of Congress," *Occasional Papers* 164 (August 1984): 15.

[156] Melissa Adler, *Cruising the Library: Perversities in the Organization of Knowledge.* (Bronx: Fordham University Press, 2017), 15.

[157] Library of Congress, "Copyright Deposits in the Basement before Classifying," 1898, https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2007681329/. Credit to Melissa Adler for finding this remarkable photograph.

Spofford's successor, John Russell Young, had seen the move—rather optimistically—as provid-ing an opportunity to revise the existing classification, writing, "Now, when the work of organization is in a plastic condition, before what is done hardens and consolidates and becomes difficult of undo-ing, no step should be taken without considering not alone what is most convenient to-day, but what will be most useful a hundred years from to-day."[158] Young did not live to oversee such a project; he died unexpectedly in 1899, but Putnam almost immediately picked up the reins. Putnam revived an ongoing project overseen by Library employees Charles Martel and James Christian Meinich Hanson to revise existing LC classification schemes into what would become the Library of Congress Classi-fication system.[159] Their work would replace Spofford's system, itself a modification of the system Thomas Jefferson had used when Library of Congress purchased his library in 1815. They completed the major classes of LCC in 1904, although thanks to World War I, meager pay for Library employees, staff changes, World War II, and shifting priorities, schedules for every class were not completed until much later. It was not until 1948 that most schedules were released, apart from the K class (law), not completed until 2004. Library of Congress Subject Headings followed the creation of LCC, which started development in 1909 but was completed much more quickly: its first edition came out in sev-eral volumes from 1910-1914.

Putnam's time as Librarian was spent doing more than spurring the creation of the new LCC. In 1900, Putnam appointed Charles Harris Hastings as the director of the new Card Section, part of the Cataloging division. As director, Hastings developed the Card Section into a department not only providing catalog cards for the Library, but for any library using LC systems. Professional, detailed,

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[158] John Russell Young, "Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress" (Government Printing Office, 1897), 20, https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000072049.

[159] Hanson and Martel had begun initial research in late 1897, but this was halted when Young died and Putnam assumed the role of Librarian. See Miksa, "The Development of Classification at the Library of Congress," 21.

and consistent, the cards were a hit in the library world. Not even a year after offering the service, 170 libraries were subscribed; a year later, that number was 281.[160] Thanks to its convenience, LC cards saw widespread adoption across the U.S., and although some libraries—especially smaller ones—had used alternate systems and subject headings lists like the *ALA List* or the *Sears List of Subject Headings*, as Stone writes, "It was no longer economically feasible to continually revise subject headings appearing on LC catalog cards."[161] According to a 1971 study from Matthis and Taylor, much of the reason for this widespread adoption was economical: "The primary reason for adopting LC is economy—economy resulting from keying into the world's most extensive library operation [...] if one examines library literature on cataloging costs, little doubt remains that substantial savings are associated with the adoption of the Library of Congress Classification system."[162] If a library did not use LC cards, they had to hire their own catalogers, bibliographers, etc. to record such data for their items. There was thus a strong incentive for libraries to simply outsource that work to another institution—i.e. the Library of Congress.

Faced with massive demand and a greater number of books than ever before, libraries in the U.S. found themselves in need of massive structural changes. Through the rise of professional organizations like the ALA and the adoption of national standards, libraries became better-equipped to handle the influx. In academic libraries, the default framework increasingly became LCC/LCSH, thanks especially to the convenience of the card catalog service. Miksa reports: "By the end of the [1930s], 131 other libraries had begun to use the system in whole or in part. And after still another decade that total had risen to 209 [...] by the early 1980s, the total has apparently topped 1400 including close to 200

[160] Rosenberg, *The Nation's Great Library*, 51.
[161] Alva T. Stone, "The LCSH Century: A Brief History of the Library of Congress Subject Headings, and Introduction to the Centennial Essays," *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 29, no. 1–2 (June 1, 2000): 4, https://doi.org/10.1300/J104v29n01_01.
[162] Raimund E Matthis and Desmond Taylor, *Adopting the Library of Congress Classification System: A Manual of Methods and Techniques for Application or Conversion* (New York: Bowker, 1971), 5.

libraries in other countries."[163] It is still the most widely-used classification system in U.S. academic libraries.[164, 165]

Given LCC's dominance and continuing influence over the library world, it is well worth considering wherein its theoretical inheritance from Cutter lies. As we saw, Cutter's approach heavily favors monolithic classification. While he acknowledges that various peoples might have wider interests in a given item, he ultimately posits that an item should be classified in such a way that *the* class of people who use the library will be able to find it. Other interests are thereby sidelined, recognized and dismissed in the same moment. Do the LC systems inherit these issues?

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[163] Miksa, "The Development of Classification at the Library of Congress," 63.

[164] Brady Lund et al., "Evaluating Knowledge Organization in Developed and Developing Countries: A Comparative Analysis of Dewey Decimal and Library of Congress Classification Scheme Preference and Use in the United States and Nigeria," *Technical Services Quarterly* 36, no. 3 (July 3, 2019): 249, https://doi.org/10.1080/07317131.2019.1621563.

[165] My focus on LC classification and subject headings might lead one to think this is simply a U.S. issue (although LC's influence extends far beyond the U.S.). Other systems like Bliss bibliographic Classification, Colon Classification, and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)'s *Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records* (FRBR) might therefore be seen as not inheriting the kinds of issues one finds in LCC/LCSH. However, if we briefly examine the principles of such systems, we find marked commonalities. With IFLA, for example, bibliographic records should allow an individual to:

- Find materials that correspond to the user's stated search criteria (e.g., in the context of a search for all documents on a given subject, or a search for a recording issued under a particular title);
- [Use] the data retrieved to identify an entity (e.g., to confirm that the document described in a record corresponds to the document sought by the user, or to distinguish between two texts or recordings that have the same title)
- [Use] the data to select an entity that is appropriate to the user's needs (e.g., to select a text in a language the user understands, or to choose a version of a computer program that is compatible with the hardware and operating system available to the user);
- [Use] the data in order to acquire or obtain access to the entity described (e.g., to place a purchase order for a publication, to submit a request for the loan of a copy of a book in a library's collection, or to access online an electronic document stored on a remote computer) (Byrum et al., "Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records," 1997, 8).

If these principles seem highly familiar at this point, this is because much of library classification draws its thinking from the same or similar roots. The IFLA itself draws from Cutter's principles (Tillett, "What Is FRBR?: A Conceptual Model for the Bibliographic Universe," 2003, 5). Meanwhile, Ranganathan (creator of Colon Classification) studied Bliss (creator of Bliss Bibliographic Classification) who in turn studied Richardson (creator of the none-too-successful Richardson Classification) who in turn studied Cutter. Dewey and Cutter, Cutter and Dewey: even with systems beyond the U.S., the theoretical roots of the major classification systems around the world come back mostly to these two.

Section 3 - Making Decisions

Cutter's approach informed LCC and LCSH, collectively a system that, as we have seen, has come to dominate the library world, especially U.S. academic libraries. Thus, if Cutter's approach to subject analysis is inherent in LCC/LCSH, and those systems predominate U.S. academic libraries, then subject analysis will index philosophy according to terms suitable for the research needs of the "majority" of philosophers. I would note this is not simply an issue of term bias in the form of racism, sexism, homophobia, etc.; while these are also significant issues, bias here operates at a deeper level. Insofar as subject analysis informed by Cutter's approach shapes the classification of philosophy, remedies along the lines of more inclusive language cannot be sufficient. This is to say that while many modern textbooks and frameworks regarding subject analysis often emphasize that catalogers can and do bring biases to their work and advocate critical consideration of those biases when they catalog, that is not enough. If LCC and LCSH inherit and reify an exclusionary mode of subject analysis, insofar as one still works within the system, classification remains impeded by its approach to subject analysis itself.

These are, of course, large issues and large claims. They turn on a key point: do LCC/LCSH still operate on an approach to subject analysis that draws theoretically from Cutter? As I will argue in this section, yes. And, worse, over time LCC/LCSH have increasingly adopted a focus on "objective" qualities for the basis of classification, thereby obscuring the connection between reader interests and applied classifications. This claim regarding LCC/LCSH is not a historical one per se, although there is a very strong historical connection between Cutter and LC systems. It is, rather, a philosophical claim. That is, whether or not Cutter is an explicit source for contemporary LIS subject analysis thought, is his approach, i.e. majority rules, still operative? To answer this question, we must examine how exactly LC materials approach the topic of subject analysis, how they set up frameworks for catalogers to understand that an "item" has a "subject" and how, methodologically, catalogers identify that subject. To do this, I will look at three groups of texts.

First, I examine the earliest LC materials regarding philosophy, two texts from 1910. I should note that unlike Dewey, Cutter, and many others, Martel and Hanson produced no theoretical work to ground LCC or LCSH in ideas about books, works, subject analysis, objects, etc. Their work was, rather, practical: early materials are more along the lines of manuals or reference works. These include *Subject Headings Used in the Dictionary Catalogues*, the first LCSH publication, which contains practically no theoretical basis for either the application of headings or accounting for their generation, and the first LCC Philosophy schedule, *Library of Congress Classification: Class B, Part I: B-BJ, Philosophy*, which only offers some brief prefatory remarks from the creator of the schedule, Edwin Wiley. What comments one can find from other materials published around the time are mostly logistical or report on the status of the schedules. Nevertheless, we can observe trends and lines of thought, giving us some sense of how these speak to the subject analysis a cataloger would undertake.

The second "group" is 1951's *Subject Headings: A Practical Guide*, assembling by then-head of cataloging at LC, David Haykin. Although LC had released plenty of official materials by then, there was no official training material or guide on how to apply LC subject headings. Or, rather, there was no widely-available training material; for decades the Library held all its materials in-house, a hodgepodge of papers, memos, and documents mostly gathered in binders. Haykin assembled the guide to simultaneously remedy the silence on the topic and address the rise of cooperative cataloging, intended to address LC's massive backlog and workload, but which required wider dissemination of LC materials. Like previous publications, its focus is more practical than theoretical, but it does offer some reflections on classification theory.

The third group looks at contemporary theory regarding subject analysis within LCC/LCSH. Today, training in classification and cataloging is (in some ways) far less centralized. There are now a

plethora of schools, textbooks, and publications on classification and catalogers have many more resources to consider methods of cataloging than they once did. That said, LCC/SH is still so ubiquitous that LC inevitably remains a touchstone of classification theory. Aside from its omnipresence in LIS textbooks, LC makes its training materials available online through its Catalogers Learning Workshop (CLW) for trainees of its own programs and for cooperative programs. These supplement the primary materials used for LCC and LCSH cataloging, including the most recent LCC schedules and the *Subject Headings Manual*. By looking at the inception, the evolution, and the continuation of LCC and LCSH, we can identify both the principles according to which these systems operate and whether they still demonstrate the same approach to subject headings as Cutter did over a century prior.

I should, briefly, say a word about my methodology and assumptions here. I take it that no system, no ideology, no paradigm is applied in a thick, all-encompassing, all-consuming paste. However formal and exhaustive the LC system is, it is only ever implemented by humans, who interpret and adapt those rules to their particular context, even when they are not necessarily intending to. This is all the more so with contemporary materials, which, while official, are generally supplemented by various other textbooks and readings. Nonetheless, that catalogers work within the LC systems is itself a constraint; it requires the use of controlled vocabularies and even when new headings or divisions are added, they are done so only if they fit the prevailing divisional logic of that area.

Subsection A - A Wiley Approach

Seminal as they are, the first versions of LCC and LCSH had predecessors: James Hanson and Charles Martel drew from the ideas of previous classifiers. This was not wholesale adoption, however. Hanson especially tended towards pragmatic considerations in his approach; rather than try and subsume each and every subject under an overarching classification structure, Hanson pushed for more

carefully tailored sections. As Miksa puts it, Hanson believed "The best collocation pattern for any particular field was that which could be rationalized as best serving the interests of the specialists within it and the other readers who might use it."[166] This approach meant that rather than construct some grand system dividing up and relating fields of human knowledge, LCC and LCSH were developed with input from relevant scholars who helped construct divisions based on their subject knowledge.[167] LC hired multiple specialists, who could "Translate the language of his science or art into the language of the classification and catalogue."[168]

The first edition of LCSH, published in 1910 as *Subject Headings Used in the Dictionary Catalogues*, drew heavily from the ALA's 1901 *List of Subject Headings for Use in Dictionary Catalogs* and took two broad approaches to dividing up philosophy.[169] One approach construed philosophy as a field of inquiry with particular topics of interest, and thus the initial list of subject headings in philosophy included topics like Axioms, Being, Causation, Certainty, Consciousness, Good and Evil, Logic, Metaphysics, Reality, Soul, and so on. The other approach construed philosophy as the history of traditions and schools, and so divided the field into topics like Atomism, Gnosticism, Hedonism, Idealism, Materialist, Platonists, Positivism, Pragmatism, Skepticism, etc. In addition to these specific schools of thought, philosophy divisions included specific national and epochal headings, including "Philosophy, Ancient,"[170] "Philosophy, English, French, German etc.," and "Philosophy, Medieval." In line with

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[166] Miksa, "The Development of Classification at the Library of Congress," 27.

[167] Dividing fields of knowledge into a hierarchy was relatively popular with earlier classification schedule creators. Their principles for division often drew from Bacon's division of human knowledge into three areas, splitting collections into three broad areas: history (memory), poesy (imagination), and philosophy (reason).

[168] Herbert Putnam, "Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress" (Government Printing Office, 1902), 12, https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000072049.

[169] LCSH's list copies many headings from ALA's. Of the 62 headings in the first edition of the LCSH, 25 were identical to ALA headings and 5 were extremely similar (e.g. ALA "Scholastic Philosophy" vs. LCSH "Scholasticism").

[170] This heading's subcategories are wholly rooted in Ancient Greek traditions; they are: Atomism, Neoplatonism, Peripatetics, Platonists, Pythagoras and Pythagorean school, Skeptics, Sophists, and Stoics.

Hanson's pragmatic approach, new headings were introduced as needed, i.e. based on "literary warrant." Practically, this meant new headings were created only when a cataloger determined that there was a sufficient critical mass of literature on a topic such that it warranted a heading of its own.

LCC released its schedule for B-BJ (Philosophy & Psychology) that same year, 1910. It was assembled by Edwin Wiley, under the supervision of the project's director Charles Martel. Edwin Wiley received his B.S. from the University of Tennessee in 1891 and later an M.A. in "Literary Course" in 1898. He had also worked at the University of Tennessee library from 1892-1899 before moving to the Vanderbilt University library in 1899. He worked as an Assistant Librarian there until 1906, when he left and joined the LC Catalogue Division.[171] Though not a philosopher, Wiley was certainly a humanist and had a strong background in history, English, and literature.

Wiley begins the philosophy LCC schedule with a brief prefatory note. "In its preparation various systems of classification have been consulted and freely used, notably Cutter, Dewey […] Hartwig, Schleiermacher, the Bibliography of Benjamin Rand, the Psychological index, and the index to the *Zeitschrift für psychologie und physiologie der sinnesorgane*."[172] The nature of this "consultation" is something Wiley neglects to spell out, but he does go on to elaborate some of his thoughts in creating the schedule. Notably, Wiley comments on the elusiveness of philosophy, writing "In this class a desired degree of consistency or uniformity of treatment *was not attainable*."[173] This is because when Wiley examined works of philosophy he found that using subjects alone as the basis for classification was nigh impossible: "Owing to lack of issues of such works in separate form, the only existing or available editions in many cases forming part of collections, collected works, or combinations of two or more special

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[171] Herbert Putnam, "Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress" (Government Printing Office, 1910), 240, https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000072049.

[172] Edwin Wiley, Charles Martel, and Library of Congress, *Classification. Class B, Part I, B-BJ: Philosophy* (Washington: Govt. print. off., 1910), 3, https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001759908.

[173] Wiley, Martel, and Library of Congress, 3. My emphasis.

works."[174] Again, Wiley leaves the details vague, but we can simply substitute an example that illustrates the point. For example, looking at *The Complete Works of Aristotle* from this classificatory standpoint, we find volume one contains works on everything from animals to colors to interpretation to soul. Assuming we put the book in the philosophy range, which subject would we put the book under? We have already determined the book is philosophy, but of its myriad topics, which is the "primary subject"?

The issue of primary subject leads Wiley to try a different tack. "It was thought best, therefore, to keep together the resources of the library on a given writer."[175] This approach was not meant to replace the subject-oriented classificatory approach, but rather to complement it: the schedule "[Provides] for the representation of special works under the subject or subjects concerned by filing reference entries in the shelf list under Logic, Metaphysics, Psychology, Ethics, and more specific subjects, as the case might be."[176] Wiley thus creates a schedule allowing for two broad divisions, quite similar to those operative in LCSH. One, there are works to be classed by author. Two, there are "special works" with specific subjects that are classed and thus filed separately than works by author. Wiley claims "This appeared to be the only method by which great irregularity of treatment could be avoided."[177, 178]

Wiley fails to mention there is another dimension to his classification schedule. For although he states the schedule will group "the resources of the library on a given writer," he neglects to mention how. Were this a dictionary catalog, the authors would simply be classed alphabetically; Wiley, however, opts for a highly historical and regional schema. After the broad categories of B1-68, B69-785

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[174] Wiley, Martel, and Library of Congress, 3.
[175] Wiley, Martel, and Library of Congress, 7.
[176] Wiley, Martel, and Library of Congress, 3.
[177] Wiley, Martel, and Library of Congress, 3.
[178] Yet irregularity dominates the schedule, in large part because the two broad divisions are not mutually exclusive. Does Husserl's *Logical Investigations* belong under works by author or by the topic "logic"? (The answer is topic: its call number is BC73 .H813 [Logic – General Works – Deductive logic – 1801- – German]). Husserl's collected works, however, sit in B3279 .H9-H94. Similar phenomena can be found for other philosophers who wrote on topics that happen to have a specific call number in LCC.

cover "History and systems" with subdivisions such as "Greece," "Greco-Roman philosophy," "Medieval philosophy," and "Renaissance philosophy."[179] Wiley continues this historical approach in the next major range (B790-4651), which covers "Modern philosophy," philosophy from the 18th century onward. B791-843 cover general or comprehensive works along with "Special topics," many of which correspond to LC subject headings (e.g. "Humanism," "Idealism," "Utilitarianism"). B851-4651 then cover "Modern philosophy" divided by nation and period. German philosophy, for example, covers B2521-3395 and is subdivided by period: 17th Century, 18th Century, and Later 18th and early 19th century; in some cases particular philosophers have call numbers assigned to them (e.g. Kant occupies B2750-2799, Fichte occupies B2800-2849, Schelling occupies B2850-2899).

Wiley certainly uses a combination of subjects and authors in his construction of the philosophy schedule, but these are clearly not the only operative factors. Consistently, Wiley deems region and time period key elements in classing works of philosophy. Further, the hierarchy of classification here is intriguing. Within the B class, the largest sections of the schedule, B69-785 and B790-4651, are classed first by historical period. The next level of subcategories is then explicitly regional—Greek, French, German, etc.—or implicitly regional (e.g. Medieval, which focuses on European traditions (especially evident with the subcategory "Influence of Oriental philosophy").[180] Within each region, we again find periods (assuming there is sufficient material in that category to warrant further subdivision). The overall structure could be summed up thus: Historical period – Region – Historical period.

Consideration of this schedule allows us to see two intellectual foundations. The first, broadly, is historiographical. That is, knowledge is organized along historical periods. The second is a regional

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[179] Wiley, Martel, and Library of Congress, *Classification. Class B, Part I, B-BJ*, 7–8.

[180] Quite aside from the Eurocentric terms Wiley employs, there are suspicious classes and relations in this category. For example, Mexico, Central American, Cuba, and South America are all classed as a subcategory of "Spanish America," despite Mexico's independence from Spain in 1810 (a full century prior to Wiley's work) or Cuba's independence in 1898.

and especially Eurocentric perspective. Now, given LC's history this is perhaps unsurprising. LC received most of its acquisitions during this period via copyright, which only covered publications in the U.S.[181] Wiley's analysis, restricted to the highly national holdings of the Library, would therefore understandably demonstrate such a bias. Hence, under Modern Philosophy, we find only North American, "Spanish American," and European countries and regions; there are no classifications for any region in Africa, the Middle East, Asia, or Oceania.

Given the nature of these publications, a substantive comparison between their ideas and Cutter's is not possible. Unlike Cutter, who proffers principles and objects for his system, these documents are more concerned with the practical implementation of rules than their justification. This is itself interesting, however. With the introduction of these documents, the theoretical basis for classification and cataloging takes a step towards presumption. These documents do not see the need to justify the why of classification and in so doing shift the focus towards the how: classification moves towards a matter of technical expertise and training.

Subsection B - **Practical and Consistent: Haykin's *Guide***

David Haykin's 1951 *Subject Headings: A Practical Guide* was the first substantial training manual and statement of principles on LCSH; previous materials were primarily like that of the 1910 *Dictionary*, i.e. lists of approved subject headings with little to no explanation as to their origin or application. *Subject Headings* was intended to address this silence. The work is aptly named: it is first and foremost a *practical* guide to subject headings—not a theoretical, reflective, critical, or intellectual one. Nevertheless, the

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[181] It was not until the 1960s and 70s that the Library began to significantly expands its international acquisitions.

work broaches the topic of subject analysis which informs the application of headings. Necessarily, Haykin offers some considerations as to the principles guiding such a practice.

For Haykin, the guide provides two things: "First, […] the rationale and basic rules of practice in the choice and use of subject headings, and, secondly, a necessary basis of common understanding of subject headings for libraries participating in cooperative cataloging."[182] In either case, Haykin's concern is that anyone engaged in subject cataloging must share a common understanding of both how the system works and how to apply subject headings. Haykin emphasizes the importance of a subject heading catalog because "The primary purpose of the subject catalog is to show which books on a specific subject the library possesses."[183] This is to say that Haykin downplays the role of LCC in facilitating access to books on a specific topic, despite LCC being designed in such a way that it physically gathered books on the same or similar topics (ostensibly, anyway). For Haykin, LCC is primarily a means of facilitating physical organization, claiming it has more to do with ensuring the proper arrangement of books on the shelves.[184]

With LCC downgraded to mere logistics, Haykin can broach the Real Issue of subject classification: selection of the appropriate subject headings. Haykin emphasizes consistency here and throughout the guide, but consistency that is appropriate for the catalog audience. Haykin uses examples common throughout discussions of subject heading wording, e.g. "On a book about a specific type

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[182] David Judson Haykin and Library of Congress, *Subject Headings: A Practical Guide.* (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1951), v. A bit of context: though the Library had seen massive expansion in its services under Putnam, this was still not enough to process the flood of materials the Library received in a timely manner. Interested in addressing the issue, the ALA recommended the creation of cooperative cataloging efforts, where libraries could contribute to LC cataloging remotely. After a bit of a rocky start—LC catalogers initially insisted on proofreading every submitted entry, effectively saving little to no time—cooperative cataloging began to take off. As a result, however, training materials on how to use LC systems needed to be available to catalogers outside the LC itself, hence Haykin's *Guide*.
[183] Haykin and Library of Congress, 1.
[184] Haykin and Library of Congress, 1.

of animal, should one use the popular or scientific term?," referring to this as the issue of imperfect synonyms.[185] Like Cutter, Haykin advises a reader-centric focus:

> All other considerations, such as convenience and the desire to arrange entries in some logical order, are secondary to the basic rule that the heading, in wording and structure, should be that which the reader will seek in the catalog, if we know or can presume what the reader will look under.[186]

Familiar motifs begin to appear at this point. Haykin's phrasing, "The heading, in wording and structure, should be that which the reader will seek in the catalog" [187] is markedly similar to Cutter's "class of users," a conception which as we saw posited a relatively homogenous imagined group of library users. Haykin's wording presumes homogeneity too: headings are those which "the reader will seek." Unlike Cutter, Haykin does not even include wording that would suggest other readers with different motives, approaches, and interests might peruse the catalog. Haykin says neither the heading a reader *may* seek, nor the heading that *some* readers will seek; he states quite boldly that which the reader *will* seek, the only contingency being the ability of the cataloger to identify that heading. Cutter's phrasing, "That will probably be first looked under by the class of people who use the library," includes the qualification "probably" (even if Cutter spends later sections backpedaling via stronger language, e.g. "Nobody wants to know…") and thus—even if Cutter ultimately shunts these others to the side— at least acknowledges diverse interests. However, with Haykin, this language disappears. We are left only with absolute language: "The reader will seek."

Like Cutter, Haykin cannot quite manage to excise diversity entirely. Also like Cutter, Haykin combats such diversity by trying to downplay or outright dismiss its possibility. Haykin takes a slightly

[185] Haykin and Library of Congress, 5.
[186] Haykin and Library of Congress, 7.
[187] Haykin and Library of Congress, 7.

different tack, however. Whereas Cutter dismissed the possibility of other classifications by using language like "No one is interested in…," Haykin only acknowledges differences along certain lines: region, class/education, and historical, especially. Thus, "Usage in an American [sic] library must inevitably mean current American [sic] usage."[188] Even if it is not necessarily Haykin's intent, his wording here and throughout the work suggests that these groups have a standard usage of the term. His phrasing implies either that every "American" uses the same terms in the same ways or, excusing some hyperbole, that "American usage" cannot have a sufficiently wide range of possibilities in language usage to render the chosen term inappropriate or irrelevant. As far as Haykin is concerned, the only significant divergences occur between select groups, e.g. laypersons and scientists. Ultimately, Haykin pushes for catalogers to decide in favor of one particular term and one particular viewpoint. He makes his priorities clear: "Where there is diversity among the writers, the choice must fall on the term most often used."[189]

This consideration is not extensive, but it roughly comprises the extent of Haykin's thoughts on subject analysis, which is to say almost nil. For Haykin, classification is simply a matter of matching the item on hand with the appropriate (pregiven) subject headings. With the readership in mind, the cataloger must select that heading "the reader will seek" to the best of their ability. The only problems Haykin addresses at any length are when headings are lacking for the item in hand, which for him has to do with deficiencies in the catalog, e.g. a new term has not been added to the approved heading list, or the aforementioned difference between layperson usage and specialist usage.[190]

Looking at the *Guide* from a more theoretical approach, Haykin offers no substantive consideration of what exactly a subject consists in; indeed, Haykin defers entirely to Cutter in this regard. The

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[188] Haykin and Library of Congress, 8. Haykin's use of "America" when he means the U.S. is especially bizarre here because only three pages prior he uses an example about how "America" is a broader term than "United States."
[189] Haykin and Library of Congress, 8.
[190] This too hearkens back to Cutter, who distinguished between libraries for reading and libraries for study.

glossary of the guide defines subject thus: "'The theme or themes of the book, whether stated in the title or not.' (Cutter, p. 14)."[191] Oddly, Haykin omits the fuller definition of subject that Cutter gives, i.e. the matter about which an author intends to convey information, or the reader seeks information.

In and of itself, this focus on the "practical" is telling. With Wiley's schedule and the first Subject Headings Guide cataloging was presented as a matter of technical know-how; here we see something very similar. Haykin's emphases, the major issues and topics he wants to address, predominantly orbit the issue of selecting appropriate headings. What does not receive emphasis is determining the subject of a book. These may sound like the same project, but as Haykin sets up the task of the cataloger, they are not. For Haykin, the subject of any given book is relatively obvious; the tricky part is determining which of the thousands of headings best conveys that subject to the catalog user. What Haykin does not see is twofold: one, that the cataloger engages in interpretation in assessing the text, i.e. determining the subjects of the work, and, two, that by placing the emphasis on matching up preexisting terms from LCSH, any cataloger working within that system is limited by those terms. That is, catalogers will read books to find which of the pregiven terms seem to be most appropriate for the work.

To sum up, Haykin's *Guide* was meant to address the problem of LC cataloging beyond LC's walls, especially via cooperative cataloging programs. Read as a kind of diagnosis of where Haykin sees issues in cataloging arising, subject analysis is not a significant area. The topic receives notably little treatment; more than in Wiley's work, certainly, but less than in Cutter's (which itself proffered little on the topic). This dearth is itself suggestive. Roughly fifty years since the advent of the new LC systems, LC's own head of cataloging still sees subject analysis as sufficiently straightforward that it requires almost no training.

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[191] Haykin and Library of Congress, *Subject Headings*, 103.

Subsection C - LC Around the World: The Cataloger's Learning Workshop

The number of materials from the Library of Congress regarding LCC and LCSH has grown significantly since Haykin's day. Today, official LC materials used to train catalogers in LCC and LCSH are online via the Library's Cataloger's Learning Workshop (CLW).[192] There have been some notable changes. For starters, materials have been intellectually bolstered, especially by FRBR (Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records), a "Conceptual Model for the Bibliographic Universe" developed by the IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations). Further, subject analysis—which received short shrift for decades in LCC/LCSH—got its own dedicated modules. Yet how much have these changes impacted the overall LC approach? As we dive into the pool of technical details and terms, we find a system that is undoubtedly more robust, more detailed, and overall more sophisticated in its approach to subject analysis. However, certain LC rules continue to inhibit broader access, i.e. ultimately still favor the kind of majority rules approach operative since Cutter.

LC training now couches cataloging work in even more formal and technical terms than in Haykin's day. The techne has become technique. This manifests in the articulation of a formal relation between the elements involved in classification: subject analysis gives access to aboutness which provides the basis for subject headings.

In module 1.3 of the CLW's LCSH training, "What is Subject Analysis?" Young and Joudrey define subject analysis as "The process of examining a resource and figuring out what that resource

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[192] According to Janis Young, co-author of the online LCC training materials, these materials are meant to introduce library staff who do not have training in LIS classification and cataloging theory to some of the relevant issues and considerations: "We know that some library staff who are using the training have not been to library school and don't necessarily know the importance of subject analysis, or its theoretical underpinnings. We simply wanted to introduce the trainees to those ideas and concepts" (Young, Janis, "LCC Questions," February 20, 2020).

is, and what it is about."[193] They approach subject analysis by considering what would happen without

it, which would mean items could only be found by other means, such as by title. This, of course, is

not necessarily a wise approach: *Of Mice and Men* could just as easily be the title of a biology textbook

as it could a novel. On the other end of the spectrum, they consider a full-text system, which would

search every word and phrase contained in the book. They problem, they hold, is that any given book

often has terms within it that it is not necessarily about. I would agree, although I think there are some

concerns here; but we will return to this.[194] Young and Joudrey sum up the module as follows: "By

analyzing resources and identifying the most meaningful subject aspects in them […] and then naming

the most important topics, and recording those topics in our records, we allow our users to find rele-

vant resources quickly, consistently, and efficiently."[195]

With subject analysis defined and grounded in this way, Young and Joudrey move on to module

1.4, "How Do We Determine Aboutness?" There is a marked increase relative to Haykin in awareness

of the issues that lie therein in this training; in addition to devoting an entire module to the topic, the

"Aboutness" module is the longest module of the "Foundations" unit. This difficulty is underscored

when Young and Joudrey note that there is neither a definitive schema of how subject analysis should

be performed, nor is there complete agreement on the number of steps involved.[196] Nevertheless, they

hold there are two essential activities: first, "Examine the resource and figure out what it is about;"

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[193] Janis L. Young and Daniel N. Joudrey, "What Is Subject Analysis?" (Library of Congress, Policy and Standards Division, 2016), 6. Cutter's influence endures: one of the stated reasons for doing subject analysis is "To save the users' time and to meet Cutter's objects of the catalog" (Young and Joudrey, 7).

[194] The issue, in short, is that this position presumes that the reader's goal in reading a book always matches up with the authors. As the rest of this work will endeavor to show—and as Chapter 1 already intimated—that is not necessarily the case; especially in certain philosophical approaches, it is rather a matter of reading against the grain.

[195] Young and Joudrey, "What Is Subject Analysis?," 13.

[196] Janis L. Young and Daniel N. Joudrey, "How Do We Determine Aboutness?" (Library of Congress, Policy and Standards Division, 2016), 2, https://www.loc.gov/catworkshop/lcsh/PDF%20scripts/1-4-Aboutness.pdf.

this is also referred to as conceptual analysis.[197] Second, "Translate that aboutness into one or more subject languages," such as LCSH.[198]

Young and Joudrey then identify key components to performing concept analysis. The first, specificity, has to do with identifying the "essence of the topic" in such a way that allows for headings to be assigned that are neither too broad nor too specific. The LC *Subject Headings Manual* elaborates: "Specificity is not a property of a given subject heading; instead, it is a relative concept that reflects the relationship between a subject heading and the work to which it is applied. For example, a seemingly broad heading like Psychology is specific when it is assigned to an introductory textbook on psychology."[199]

The second component: objectivity. For Young and Joudrey, bias creeps in to the cataloger's work both because of the varied experiences and viewpoints of the cataloger, and because the controlled vocabulary of a given system (like LCSH) is often a product of its time and may contain outdated or problematic terms. What is interesting here is where Young and Joudrey take matters next, writing "Catalogers hold tremendous power. A cataloger can make any resource in the collection 'disappear' with simply a little typo here, the wrong subject heading there, maybe transposing digits in a classification number."[200] I say this is interesting because such examples presume some sort of malicious intent; it is because of some bias against a given group or body of literature that a cataloger deliberately inhibits access to that item by distorting metadata. The earlier acknowledgement of biases embedded in controlled vocabularies is absent here, and there is no consideration of either the implications of

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[197] Young and Joudrey, 2.
[198] Young and Joudrey, 2.
[199] Library of Congress, *Subject Headings Manual* (Library of Congress, 2008), 2.
[200] Young and Joudrey, "How Do We Determine Aboutness?," 3.

bias at a systemic level or the possibility that even if a cataloger does their job perfectly they may still be enacting bias in the application of metadata.

The third: exhaustivity. Exhaustivity is a "continuum," where on one end we find summarization, "Where the cataloger identifies only the dominant, overall objects of a resource," and on the other we have depth indexing, which "Looks at extracting all of the main concepts of a resource, but also many subtopics and sub-themes."[201] Traditionally, summarization is the preferred approach to subject analysis for library cataloging, in large part because they simply have too many items to process to engage in more detailed analyses.[202] Additional headings must adhere to the "20% rule," which states that headings may be assigned to a work if and only if a topic comprises at least 20% of the work.[203]

These considerations, which form the core of the LCSH method of subject analysis are rounded out via the consideration of two additional authors: Patrick Wilson and Derek Langridge. Wilson was a professor and dean of UC Berkeley's School of Library and Information Studies who got his A.B. and Ph.D. in philosophy and wrote extensively on issues of bibliographic control. Drawing from Wilson's 1968 book *Two Kinds of Power: An Essay on Bibliographical Control*, Young and Joudrey present his four methods of subject analysis, none of which Wilson believed was necessarily any better than the other. Akin to LCSH's authorial-intent approach, Wilson identified the "purposive method," which considers the item creator's aim or purpose as foundational to aboutness. He also develops what he calls a "figure-ground method," which performs subject analysis by observing what "stands out" in considering an item. The third method, the "objective method" is little more than a word count: it takes whatever word or term most frequently occurs in a work to be the main subject. Finally, Wilson

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[201] Young and Joudrey, 4.

[202] Young and Joudrey, 4, 5.

[203] Library of Congress, *Subject Headings Manual*, 1. There is one exception, i.e. when there are named entities that are integral to the work (Library of Congress, 6.).

articulates the "cohesion method," which examines the overall intellectual cohesion of a work, asking what ideas or themes tie the work together.

Young and Joudrey then present Derek Langridge's work. Unlike Wilson, Langridge focuses on the identification of certain properties of a work. These properties, Langridge holds, can be correctly identified insofar as conceptual analysis keeps its categories clear and consistent. Taking three questions as the core—what is it about, what is it, and what is it for—Langridge holds that the aboutness of a work is confused only when these questions are not kept sufficiently discrete. When they are kept discrete, they allow the cataloger to determine the form of knowledge (its genre, in a sense), discipline, topic, nature of the thought, and nature of the text. These last two components are especially important for Langridge. For him, the nature of the thought is reducible to specific circumstances: the culture in which the work was produced, its intended audience, its intellectual level, and (of course) the creator's point of view; the nature of the text, meanwhile, amounts to its medium or type of writing, i.e. what kind of publication it was.

All in all, three approaches to subject analysis are presented. First, we have the LCSH approach, which leans heavily on authorial intent for subject analysis. Second, Wilson's approaches, which vary rather widely in their method. Third, Langridge, whose approach is perhaps the most concrete, relying on the identification of several discrete properties as the basis of subject analysis.[204] Of the three, two focus primarily on authorial intent.[205] The only one that does not, Wilson, is the only one whose methods are explicitly critiqued. I want to consider the effects of this presentation. Recalling earlier modules, the emphasis here is consistently on objectivity. This is a specific kind of objectivity, one

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[204] I should note LC does not necessarily endorse either Wilson's or Langridge's approaches; they are presented here as a kind of intellectual exercise for catalogers who may not have had theoretical LIS training (Young, Janis, "LCC Questions," February 20, 2020).

[205] Wilson does present *a* method that relies on authorial intent, but this is only one of the four. Further, Wilson does not hold that this is necessarily the best method of subject analysis.

that posits that subjects are objective properties of an objective object, and that bias primarily occurs at the level of the ill-willed or ill-informed cataloger who misapplies headings.

This view is markedly different from the focus of earlier approaches to subject analysis like Cutter, Wiley, and Haykin, all of whom consider subject analysis as fundamentally based, not on the item per se, but on the library patron and their interests.[206] For them, an item could have a range of possible classifications and, therefore, headings. Thus, only with the patron in mind can one select words that enable them to access relevant materials. Here, that consideration is absent. No longer do we find anything like "best words" for "the class of people" using the library.

I believe this is so for two reasons. First, because LC training leans so heavily into authorial intent as the basis for its classification. Titles, tables of contents, headings, etc. – all these are consulted to give a sense "For learning what the author's intent is."[207] As it is put in the SHM, "Consider the intent of the author or publisher and, if possible, assign headings for this orientation without being judgmental. Follow stated intentions of the author or publisher in such matters as readership, audience level, treatment as fact or fiction, etc."[208] Readers are relevant only to the degree that the author intends to address a specific audience: subject headings are derived from author or publisher intent. Second, with a century of LCC and LCSH in place, the readership question is, de facto, already answered. One need not ask for whom these headings enable access or whether they facilitate access for diverse interests because headings patterns and motifs are already in place. Further, since headings are supposed to identify objective properties of a given item, then to the degree this is successful, the catalog should make the collection equally accessible to all, ergo the reader question is irrelevant.

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[206] This is a position common to many earlier thinkers of cataloging, including figures like Dewey and Richardson. Each acknowledged that if a catalog's purpose is to present a library's collection to a patron in such a way that they can find materials relevant to their interests, then the specifics of that presentation will vary according to who those patrons are.

[207] Young and Joudrey, "How Do We Determine Aboutness?," 7.

[208] Library of Congress, *Subject Headings Manual*, 7.

This viewpoint develops in an expected way out of the ontology implicit in thinkers like Cutter. From the beginnings of modern classification theory to more recent thinkers, we can easily find a trend in how subjects are posited.[209] For Cutter, for example, the acknowledgement that a library can have different objects stems from a difference in the intents of the readers. Thus, John Okada's *No-No Boy* could be the object of interest for a scholar in Asian-American Studies, or a novel for leisure reading of a casual stacks browser. Despite the different interests, it is presumed that the subject of the work remains the same; in either case, it is a novel about a young man struggling with his decision to say "No" to questions 27 and 28 of the War Relocation Authority's loyalty test. The book, it is assumed, retains its qualities either way.

What anchors these qualities to the book is quite simplistic. Recall Cutter: "Subject [is] the matter on which the author is seeking to give or the reader to obtain information."[210] Either the subject of the book is that information which the author wishes to convey, or it is the information that the reader seeks to obtain.

The problem is this: there are interests in items that cannot be reduced to the simple presence or absence of a subject. When it comes to certain philosophical approaches, what an item *is* cannot be reduced to what it *is about*, defined in the narrow sense of what its author intends the item to be about.

Part of what the thinking of various underrepresented and marginalized communities in philosophy teaches is that Others lurk in texts. So, for example, Kant's "Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime" is not "about" race in the sense that the word "race" does not appear in

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[209] This is not necessarily always the case; as indicated, authors like Wilson and various others have demonstrated awareness of the contingency of subject analysis relative to audience. Nevertheless, the more view regarding objectivity of qualities of an item's subjects is pervasive.

[210] Cutter, *Rules for a Dictionary Catalogue*, 11.

its title or table of contents. In fact, its LC subject headings (collated from a few different editions) are:

- Aesthetics
- Aesthetics -- Early works to 1800
- Philosophy
- Sublime

Similarly, in the Cambridge volume of the Works of Immanuel Kant containing this piece, only the following headings appear:

- Kant, Immanuel, -- 1724-1804;
- Human beings;
- History -- Philosophy;
- Education -- Philosophy;

Now, we could say that this omission is a simple matter to fix: simply add a relevant header on race ("Race – Philosophy," perhaps?) and voilà, problem solved. This, however, is insufficient. First, because the header itself gives no indication of *how* race appears within the work. There is a matter of specificity, certainly, but this heading also leaves it unclear if the work is a treatise on the nature of race, an argument for political action regarding race, an instance of philosophical racism, etc. Second, this approach relies on the logic of presence: it relies on what presents itself (and presents itself quite loudly) to a casual reader, i.e. the cataloger. Yet with thinkers like Irigaray (on women) or Spivak (on the subaltern), the issue is not one of presence, but of absence: texts speak *for*. Defying dyadic metaphysical thinking, Irigaray shows that woman is neither present nor absent from Freud's thinking, for

example.[211] Comparably, Spivak shows that in the thinking of select authors (Foucault and Deleuze, on her account), the subaltern's condition of presence is their absence.[212]

This is to say that beyond the mere use of words and phrases that indicate bias, discrimination, etc., the system of classification itself posits books as objects with objective qualities. In applying a classification and subject headings, the book is not simply *represented* within the system (however well or poorly), but is *posited* qua "Work" by the system. Only as "Work" can the object be construed as having these or those qualities, but in so doing the logic of presence and absence is instantiated. Thus, either the book is about this. Or it is not.

What this approach to subject analysis wholly fails to do is to accommodate research projects that examine items not for their topics per se, but for being instances of broader trends. Whatever an item may be "about" (however aboutness is defined or approached), it is also always a product of a particular historical and political epoch. Projects taking up interests from areas like philosophy of race, decolonialism, or feminism often examine texts *not* because of their explicit topics or what the author intended to focus on, but because of conspicuous silences, passing comments, and momentary occupations. Often, these demonstrate patterns in how these issues or topics are marginalized across time or within a tradition. Part of the issue, then, is that in looking at *an* item, subject analysis looks only at *that* item; it does not consider the item in a broader context.

Or does it? When we actually consider the kinds of categories and headings in LCC and LCSH, we find that broader contexts are pervasive: traditions, regions, periods…in a sense, every classification can be considered indicative of a broader context: each heading posits that the book is not alone,

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[211] Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman*. See especially the first section, which takes Freud (and Lacan) to task on the "mystery" that is woman—a phenomenon that is a "mystery" only because women themselves are absent from the discussion.

[212] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Can the Subaltern Speak?: Reflections on the History of an Idea*, ed. Rosalind C Morris (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

that there are others "like it." The question then becomes why it is relatively easy to find other books "like it" in certain veins, especially historical ones, and not others, like those in philosophy of race or philosophies of underrepresentation broadly.

What I want to emphasize having considered these materials is as follows.

If LCC and LCSH are widespread (they are) and if they introduce a paradigm to subject analysis that prevails throughout LIS (they do), and if those systems not only inherit significant systematic biases from progenitors like Cutter, but also reinforce and obscure deep-seated issues by reducing what a book is to its author's intention via subject analysis, then addressing issues of diversity requires a deeper analysis of issues of access stemming from the structure of LCC and LCSH themselves.

This is not an indictment of librarians or of catalogers; cataloging is a tough, demanding, under-funded, and often thankless job that is nevertheless fundamental to library operations. At the same time, if libraries broadly have a commitment to making their collections more accessible, more equitable, and more inclusive of diverse perspectives, then a serious consideration of the effects of some of its most fundamental systems is crucial.

Although Library of Congress systems have grown and evolved tremendously since their inception over a century ago, two core tenets have remained the same. First, although individual schedules have been and continue to be revised, no revision has taken place in the Philosophy call numbers that has restructured its historiographical divisions. Second, however much the thinking surrounding classification has changed, there remains the same emphasis on a presumed monolithic readership.

Section 4 - Conclusion and Summary

For LCC and LCSH, to tell the story of philosophy is to tell the story of the history of ideas. "Philosophy" is simply an inventory of those ideas, sorted occasionally by type, but mostly by historical and regional origin. Ergo: Descartes, René, 1596-1650, whose works reside in B1828-1879. LCC tells us this means his works are classified as Philosophy – Modern (1450/1600-) – By region – France – By period – 17th century.

What is absent from Library of Congress systems from Wiley to now is one question: why? Why are the philosophy schedule and headings so strongly ordered in this historical and regional way? If we recall Cutter, classification is done on behalf of "the class of people who use the library," so what philosophical interests are served by this approach to philosophy? What philosophers take understanding philosophy in its historical and regional settings as integral to understanding philosophy?

The answer is not especially difficult, in large part because it is a common enough approach. Such philosophers take historiography as integral to philosophical understanding. For such philosophers, "history" is a necessary component to understanding philosophy (to a greater or lesser degree) and, roughly sketched, to have a better understanding of a philosopher's historical milieu makes possible a better understanding of the philosophy itself. We have already seen examples of this idea and approach in the previous chapter.

This may sound, then, simply like the work of a historian, and indeed there are marked similarities. However, generally such philosophers demarcate their work as distinct from that of the historian in one way or another. Donald Verene, for example, writes, "The full study of a given philosopher requires an understanding of what is known of the philosopher's life, times, and ideas, and the place of

these ideas in the historical development of philosophy."[213] He then continues: "Beyond the historical comprehension of the history of philosophy is its comprehension as philosophy."[214] Verene holds that the history of philosophy and philosophy can be distinguished, but that the former is requisite for the latter. This is because "The philosopher is concerned with the truth of what a given figure in the history of philosophy has said once the philological and historical meanings of what he [sic] said have been established."[215] The philosophical work, then, has to do with the evaluation of the truth of the views expressed. The history aspect concerns itself with determining these views, which then makes possible their philosophical evaluation.

Verene's views have their own peculiarities, but they are not dissimilar from that of other philosophers working in a similar vein. History—the times, places, and ideas—is the foundation upon which philosophical understanding is built, and the prerequisite for philosophical analysis. After all, how could one evaluate the truth or validity of a given argument if one cannot determine what that argument is? And how could one determine what the argument is without an understanding of what the author meant? And how could one understand what the author meant unless one understands the historical circumstances in which they thought and wrote? It is out of these questions that an overarching guiding question spawns: how can one most thoroughly and accurately represent history?

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[213] Donald Phillip Verene, *The History of Philosophy: A Reader's Guide* (Evanston, Ill: Northwestern University Press, 2008), 7.
[214] Verene, 7.
[215] Verene, 7.

Chapter III - Understanding Understanding Philosophy

Section 1 - Introduction

LCC/SH are founded on principles of utility: Hanson and Martel held that the overarching schema of any given subject schedule should serve the needs of its users. This necessitates some conception of those "needs," i.e. a conception of what Philosophy is and, therefore, how it should be organized. Thus far, what we know about the library's conception of philosophy is only the end result: it is organized based primarily on when and where works were written. Somehow, then, this information is supposed to be useful to the likely user of the B range—i.e. a philosopher. But this does not tell us why such a mode of organization is useful; why would it be important, valuable, or in any way desirable for a philosopher to know such information? How does such organization aid philosophical understanding? How does this kind of organization make philosophical discourses accessible?

We could at this point delve into the historical roots of the library's conception of philosophy specifically. As mentioned in Chapter Two, however, there is a dearth of material on this topic. Although we know Wiley assembled the first schedule, it is unclear what works or scholars he consulted in the process of doing so. Even if we were to unearth some obscure tally of those sources, however, there remains the element of individual interpretation: whatever sources Wiley may have consulted, we do not necessarily know that he interpreted them and how those led to his conception of philosophy.

A more fruitful approach here asks how we may render the logic of the B range intelligible, i.e. how we may identify its priorities and explain how those priorities then make historical/geographical origin useful. This is neither to imply that there is only one mode of philosophical understanding that finds such information useful, nor that such information is useless for other modes. It is, rather, a question of priority: for whom is such information paramount?

Since our questions focus on philosophical understanding, it is apt to turn to a tradition that closely associates itself with understanding: hermeneutics. In particular, we are interested in identifying a view that closely associates historical information regarding origin and understanding a text. In this regard, one author appears prominently: Friedrich Schleiermacher.[216] An early figure in modern Western hermeneutics, Schleiermacher grounds understanding in "historical interpretation," both the basis for understanding in general and the foundation for "better" understanding, ultimately leading towards what he calls "correct" [*richtig*] understanding. By examining his hermeneutics, we uncover what "correct understanding" means and why it is contingent upon historical knowledge. With such a conception in mind, we can then see why a repository of philosophy organized by region and epoch would be desirable for a scholarly reader.

Though Schleiermacher claimed what he outlined as a "general hermeneutics" applied to understanding across all areas, it is worth considering in more details how historical factors inform *philosophical* understanding specifically. There are various ways to understand this relation but given the LC framework within which we broach this issue, there are two especially relevant approaches. One approach situates given texts, authors, or schools as historical phenomena relative to others of their ilk, emphasizing tradition and inheritance. Here, the text may be situated within a very broad tradition such as "Western Philosophy," or it may be delimited in some way, e.g. "Medieval Philosophy." Recall that this concern informed subject analysis: a work is attributed with specific classifications that group it with others of its kind. Approaching a given text or author from a kind of top-down perspective, the text is understood as a manifestation of that tradition, epoch, school, etc. Neokantianism, for example, could be understood (most obviously) as a revival of a kind of Kantian philosophy, but also

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[216] Forster writes that "The suggestion found in some of the secondary literature that Schleiermacher thinks that historical context is *irrelevant* to interpretation is absurd," (Forster, 2017), with which I concur. Historical context, as we will see, is an integral part of hermeneutics for Schleiermacher.

as a response to German Idealism or spurring reactive movements such as early Analytic or Continental philosophy; one might also examine figures like Rickert or Zeller qua Neokantians. As one might guess, this approach stresses continuity. To articulate this broad approach in more detail, I turn to Frederick Copleston's monumental *History of Philosophy*, a quintessential example of this kind of philosophy.

The other (complementary) approach to historical context has a much narrower focus. Here, the account attempts to detail—as much as it can—the specificities of a text as the work of a *particular* philosopher. The text may be situated in terms of its historical context—and generally is—but this is done so only to illuminate the meaning of some particular in the text (a term, a reference, an allusion, etc.). I revisit an earlier example, Anthony Kenny's work *Descartes: A Study of his Philosophy*, to articulate how this approach examines texts. I do not take it these approaches are mutually exclusive; quite the contrary. With both, what we see is an emphasis on capturing the meaning of the text "as it is," i.e. understood as a historical manifestation of a particular individual's expression. With both, this historical reconstruction of the original context is methodologically necessary to disclose its original meaning.

Examining these two approaches in the context of a Schleiermacherean hermeneutics helps us see the reciprocal relationship between them. The broad view still relies upon specificity: particular accounts develop what is unique about a given philosophy, defining its contours. Without such accounts, the haecceity of a given philosophy disappears beneath the gloss of broader movements (schools, epochs, etc.). Conversely, a particular philosophy inevitably has a relation to the historical context within which it appears (even if that relation is one of negation). A given term, idea, or argument relies upon a broader context to be meaningful; when Spinoza discusses God, he does so relative to traditions and individuals that have thought "God" in many different ways.

The final part of this chapter revisits subject analysis as it pertains to these modes of understanding. In so doing, we will be able to see more clearly how the mode of access enabled by LCC/LCSH is informed by specifically this type of philosophical understanding.

Section 2 - What Do You Mean? Schleiermacher and Correct Understanding

What kind of philosophical understanding does library indexing facilitate? At present, we know there is a strong connection between regional and historical classification and the works of a given philosopher, but details remain unclear. How, for example, does that information aid a philosopher in understanding? And what are they trying to understand? What is it the philosopher is doing such that this information is relevant and helpful for their pursuit?

In short, what is the history of philosophy for the philosopher? Is it a repository of past truths (or errors)? Is it a track record of the permutations of philosophical debates and questions? How does the philosopher relate to "the history of philosophy"? I do not mean to insinuate there is *one* relationship the philosopher may have to the history of philosophy; neither term is fixed in this relationship (and that is part of what is at stake). Still, there is at least one form of that relationship operative in LCC/LCSH, and it is that relationship that remains to be articulated.

This relationship hinges upon how the history of philosophy is read. It is, in short, a question of hermeneutics. The philosopher approaches the history of philosophy with some intent to "understand" the history of philosophy, and it is that purpose that informs their approach. What, then, does it mean to understand the history of philosophy? Or, more specifically, what does it mean to understand a historical text?

This is a question addressed at length in Schleiermacher's hermeneutics. For Schleiermacher, historical texts are records of human expressions: each text is a unique product of the individual that produced it, and to have understood the text correctly is to have understood what that individual intended to convey. This is a historical meaning: the text is understood as a text produced at and speaking to a specific time and place. Its meaning is historically bound. For Schleiermacher, this means "Misunderstanding occurs as a matter of course, and so understanding must be willed and sought at every point."[217] Because every text is written at a historically and culturally unique moment, only by understanding the context leading to its generation are we able to understand what the author means. For Schleiermacher, this means the reader understands the work as a "whole," i.e. as attempting to express a particular meaning on behalf of the author. (In)famously, Schleiermacher holds that this means the object of reading is "To understand the utterance at first just as well and then better than its author."[218] This pursuit leads him to make technical distinctions regarding various qualities of a text and to lay the methodological foundation for such correct understandings.

As we examine Schleiermacher's hermeneutics, two things must be kept in mind. First, I make no claim that what I present here can be understood as an authoritative or comprehensive image of Schleiermacher's hermeneutics. Despite being one of the first major figures in modern hermeneutics, Schleiermacher did not write a major treatise on the topic. His writings on hermeneutics are primarily found in two collected volumes of notes, fragments, drafts, and the like, both of which I consider here: *Friedrich Schleiermacher: Hermeneutik* (translated as *Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts)* and *Friedrich Schleiermacher: Hermeneutik und Kritik (translated as Hermeneutics and Criticism).* Accordingly, to assemble something like a holistic image would require crafting a kind of intellectual assemblage.

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[217] Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics and Criticism and Other Writings*, trans. Andrew Bowie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 21–22.
[218] Schleiermacher, 23.

However, I am not articulating the specifics of Schleiermacher's method for its own sake. Rather, the point is to articulate how Schleiermacher's approach founds and renders intelligible an approach to reading that generates questions, answers, and resources that found an organizational schema of "research." Second, I make no claim that every philosopher, historian of ideas, or individual pursuing research in that vein is a Schleiermacherean, either in word in spirit; such a view presupposes a widespread influence and inheritance of Schleiermacher's ideas that is historically untenable.[219] Rather, I take his approach, his questions, and his method as emblematic of a kind of approach to reading philosophy, one that renders the indexing we find in LCC/LCSH both meaningful and helpful.

For Schleiermacher, "Hermeneutics […] is generally the art of understanding particularly the written discourse another person correctly."[220] Understanding breaks down into two key areas: "grammatical" and "psychological."[221] Schleiermacher associates the grammatical with "Understanding the utterance as derived from language" and the psychological with understanding the utterance "As a fact in the thinker."[222] Explication in both areas is integral to correct understanding and neither aspect is separable from the other. Nevertheless, the two sides are distinguishable, and as such Schleiermacher holds they can be analyzed separately (insofar as one remembers their essential complementarity).[223]

Schleiermacher breaks grammatical explication into "canons," which examine conditions of making a linguistically meaningful utterance. His analyses parse connections: between one word and another, one utterance and another, and, most broadly, the utterance as an instantiation of the language

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[219] Schleiermacher's influence is significant, of course (see Michael Forster, "Schleiermacher's Historiography of Philosophy," in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2017 and Werner G. Jeanrond, "The Impact of Schleiermacher's Hermeneutics on Contemporary Interpretation Theory," in *The Interpretation of Belief: Coleridge, Schleiermacher and Romanticism*, ed. David Jasper), but it would be an overstatement to suggest *all* contemporary research that is similar to his can be traced to his work or ideas.

[220] Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics and Criticism*.

[221] Schleiermacher, 9, §6.

[222] Schleiermacher, 8, §5.

[223] "Whenever we are actually engaged in the interpretation of a particular text, we must always hold the two sides of interpretation together. But in setting forth the theory of hermeneutics we must separate them and discuss the two separately" (Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts*, 116).

in which it is expressed. By analyzing a text this way, Schleiermacher believes the reader is able to identify the "structure of thoughts" present in the work.[224] This structure enables the reader to distinguish between what Schleiermacher calls "main" and "secondary" thoughts, as well as "[Thoughts] which are not really part of the whole at all but are merely means of presentation."[225] Grammatical explication thus articulates something like the logical structure of the work.[226]

With psychological explication, the work is understood according to its "theme," that is, "The principle which moves the writer, and the basic characteristics of the composition as his individual nature which reveals itself in that movement."[227] Identification of the theme enables the reader to understand the work by contextualizing its generation and development. Individual utterances, larger sections, or even whole divisions of a work can be understood better if one is able to identify the author's intellectual impetus: "The more precisely I know the material of the thoughts of the other, the more easily will I overcome the difference between his and my own manner of thought, and vice versa."[228] Or, as he more (in)famously puts it, "The *divinatory* method is the one in which one, so to speak, transforms oneself into the other person and tries to understand the individual element directly."[229]

Psychological explication especially makes apparent the grounds upon which Schleiermacher bases his hermeneutics: the author. For Schleiermacher, a text is to be understood as the product of a human

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[224] Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics and Criticism*, 62.

[225] Schleiermacher, 62.

[226] Hamilton (2003) stresses purely the grammar of grammatical explication, but I believe Schleiermacher's analysis inquire more deeply into the logical structure of language itself.

[227] Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics and Criticism*, 90, §1. Schleiermacher also associates theme with the "inner unity" of a work (Schleiermacher, 98).

[228] Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics and Criticism*, 104–5.

[229] Schleiermacher, 92, §6. The divinatory method is, like psychological explication itself, only one half of the picture. Complementary to the divinatory method is the comparative method. Like the grammatical/psychological division, Schleiermacher holds that both are essential: "Both may not be separated from each other" (Schleiermacher, 93). Forster points out that although "divinatory" has religious overtones, it has less to do with the Latin (*divinius*, prophecy) and more to do with the French (*deviner*, to guess or to conjecture) (Forster, 2017).

will, a manifestation of an intent to communicate something. Accordingly, authorial intent is situated as the basis for correct understanding: to understand the text correctly, the reader must identify "The basic characteristics of the composition as [the author's] individual nature which reveals itself in that movement."[230] To understand a text correctly is to understand the text as the product of the author: a historically unique individual expressing a historically unique utterance.[231] A reader has correctly understood the text if their understanding corresponds to the meaning of the text as the author intended to convey it.[232] By positioning the author as fundamental, they become a research anchor; questions regarding how to understand the text turn to historical evidence of what the author meant in order to resolve questions and ambiguities. Further, questions of correct interpretation gain a basis for assessment: whether a reading is correct depends on the reader's ability to defend their reading as consistent (if not outright identical) with the author's intent.

Because the author writes in a particular historical context, the author speaks in and from historical language. The author writes having absorbed (in whatever ways, to whatever degrees) what other users of their language have expressed and how: phrasing, idioms, word preferences, and so on. As Michael Forster puts it, "Any given piece of text needs to be interpreted in light of the whole text to which it belongs, and both need to be interpreted in light of the broader language in which they are written, their larger historical context, a broader pre-existing genre, the author's whole corpus, and the author's overall psychology."[233] Every author writes in a language with a history broader in scope than their

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[230] Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics and Criticism*, 90, §1.
[231] This is not to say that every idea is historically unique, original, etc.; rather, the point is that any given author will write about even the exact same topic in slightly different ways, and this difference stems from their own unique experiences and histories as individuals.
[232] Further, this conveyance is to be understood historically, i.e. not just what the author intends to convey, but to whom the author intended to convey this meaning.
[233] Forster, "Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher."

life alone, and that history informs discourses and traditions of written communication within which the author writes.

What is included under "historical context"? Broken into components, correct understanding identifies what the author meant to say, to whom, and why. Grammatical and psychological explication, then, must take up the historical and biographical as a condition for the possible reconstruction of those circumstances. In what do the historical and biographical consist? Schleiermacher does not give exact definitions, but he gives several examples:

- "The area of the author […] is the area of his time, of his education, and of his occupations— also of his dialect."[234]

- "By specific vocabulary I understand dialect, period and language area of a particular genre, the last beginning with the different between poetry and prose."[235]

- "The vocabulary and the history of the era of an author relate as the whole from which his writings must [*müssen*] be understood as the part, and the whole must, in turn, be understood from the part."[236]

- "The richness of meaning depends on when and where a work arose."[237]

Schleiermacher identifies these and similar factors because they give the contemporary reader the information required to reconstruct "the language area which is common to the author and his *original* audience."[238]

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[234] Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics and Criticism*, 30–31, §§1, 3.
[235] Schleiermacher, 25. §21.2.
[236] Schleiermacher, 24. §20.
[237] Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics*, 70.
[238] Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics and Criticism*, 30–31, §§1, 3. My emphasis.

To correctly understand the utterance of an author, then, one would need to know the author's historical circumstances: the text's intended audience, the author's relations to peers and influences, the text as a work of a historical genre, and more. One can observe the kinds of research questions such an approach generates, e.g. "How does the author's intended audience shape how to understand the text?," "What would the author have expected their reader to know and with what degree of familiarity?," "How is the author's style similar to or different from that of their contemporaries and how does this affect the meaning of the text?," "What authors or books did the author read and how did this influence the text's meaning?" and so on. This holds in the realm of more specialized cases as well, such as in the writer's use of imagery, metaphor, or figurative language. Again, to be able to understand such references requires one have knowledge of the period and tradition in which the author wrote; it accordingly gives rise to further research questions: "How is imagery of [nature, God, etc.] used in writing of this period?," "What is the history of using a particular metaphor?," "What is the relationship between this genre of writing and its use of a particular rhetorical style?," etc. This is not to say having such information necessarily means the reader has understood the work better; however, if the reader lacks such information their understanding will be accordingly inaccurate.

Note, then, the resonance of this approach with the categories operative in LCC/LCSH. If correct understanding is predicated upon understanding the specific purpose of the text as an expression of the author, produced at a unique historical moment, one needs to know certain kinds of data: who produced it and when, of course, but also who else produced texts around the same time and how they compared. "What did the author intend to say and to whom?" is a question whose answer is facilitated by thorough historical and regional indexing. Such grouping identifies and delimits possible contemporary interlocutors, and in so doing undergirds correct understanding.

As an ideal, correct understanding would mean the reader has a 1:1 correspondence between their conception of what the author meant and what, in fact, the author meant. Schleiermacher puts it bluntly in one fragment: "Maximum of knowledge is imitation."[239] Yet Schleiermacher admits this degree of exact understanding is not possible, either on a grammatical or psychological level: "For the grammatical side to be completed on its own there would have to be complete knowledge of the language, in the [psychological] case a complete knowledge of the person."[240] To have this degree of knowledge would, in short, require being omniscient—the researcher would need to know *every* detail about *every* aspect of the text qua author utterance. They would need to know, for example, not only what the author read, but how thoroughly; it might also include what they did *not* read or, quite nebulously, what they retained from what they read. Neither the gaps of history nor the vagaries of human activity allow for this. Still, it remains an animating ideal—a regulative ideal, one could say.

If one considers what a Schleiermacherian approach to philosophy would entail, its task is simple (even if its execution is difficult). The task is to possess correct understandings of philosophical texts, where correctness means developing an understanding consistent with—if not outright corresponding to—the author's intended meaning. As we have seen, this is methodologically demanding and innumerable research questions can spawn out of the pursuit of "correctness." The most exacting research in this spirit would demand a significant degree of precision, while the most revolutionary research would present evidence that alters what we think the author meant and therefore our understanding of the text.

What is operative here is a return to origins as a precondition for understanding. Yet "origins" here may mean one of two kinds of projects. On the one hand, we may trace a particular idea, argument, term, etc. back to a particular author. On the other, we may trace that particular idea back to its

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[239] Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics*, 61.
[240] Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics and Criticism*, 11, §9.

historical predecessors, the thinkers who laid the groundwork, as it were, for the arrival of that idea. This approach is universal in scope; any given text by any given author can be read in this manner. Yet even with the factors Schleiermacher enumerates, there is room for variation in research. Certainly a given author conversed with and related to their contemporaries, but they may also have taken up relationships to prior texts, authors, and traditions. One approach to understanding the author's intent, then, is to trace historical inheritance, potentially extending back to ancient times. To understand the author correctly, one must understand the lineage of philosophical ideas, methods, and questions that the author inherits. Another approach, still centered on the author, understands the author in their time: as speaking to and from a set of philosophical discourses with unique terms, ideas, and debates. These two are not mutually exclusive, of course. Recalling Schleiermacher's emphasis on the unity of the hermeneutical approach—grammatical and psychological, divinatory and comparative—we may note that in many ways these endeavors complement and, in some ways, even rely upon each other. Still, they carry out their tasks in different ways, with different foci and can, accordingly, be considered separately.

The following sections present examples of each of these approaches in philosophy. As an example of understanding particular texts in broader contexts, I look at Frederick Copleston's *History of Philosophy* series. As an example of more a focused, specialized reading, I reexamine Anthony Kenny's *Descartes: A Study of His Philosophy*.

Section 3 - Compiling Copleston's History of Philosophy

Situating a given text in a broader context is difficult. For finite creatures, it is impossible to complete. For grammatical explication, for example, Schleiermacher noted we would need "Complete

knowledge of the language."[241] This point may be expanded if we consider what constitutes a "language." One can, for example, consider the constitution of a tradition a kind of "language." That is, there is in some senses a "language" of philosophy: terms like metaphysics, epistemology, logic, and so on have histories and an interconnectedness across languages and traditions. This is to say that, approached from a certain angle, it is insufficient for correct understanding to merely understand the linguistic context in which a given work was produced (e.g. Ancient Greek with Plato or Latin with Aquinas). Rather, one must also understand linguistic inheritance: philosophers write "God," "Idea," "Will," and so on within an inherited historical philosophical lexicon. Accordingly, if one is to understand what an author intends to say, one needs a survey of what such terms have meant across time: how particular authors have added to, complicated, and put their own twist on the term before it arrives before the author in question.

This mode of inquiry is aided by a historically-indexed repository, a place where one may identify exactly when and where an idea originated. Indexed properly, an idea can be historically triangulated and subsequently traced backwards, identifying those figures who set the stage for the arrival of *this* author and *this* idea. Herein we see the intersection of library indexing and a historiographically-rooted hermeneutics: such classifications enable the reader to account for a kind of historical genesis. In repository form, however, the amalgam of such works does not itself account for any genesis: we are given a sequence, not a narrative. For such a sequence to be meaningful, there must be works that proffer narratives of historical generation which explain who came up with what ideas, their influences and influencees, and provide the theoretical architectonic for a history.

Frederick Copleston's *A History of Philosophy* is a prominent example of this kind of work. Examining an extensive roster of Western philosophers and philosophies, Copleston situates each relative

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[241] Schleiermacher, 11, §9.

to "The History of Western Philosophy:" each is framed predominantly in terms of its significance for a Western philosophical tradition. Originally comprised of nine volumes written from 1946-1975, by 2003 it was expanded to eleven.[242] Each volume examines an epoch, beginning with Ancient Greek and Roman Philosophy and ending with Logical Positivism and Existentialism.[243] Part of the reason for the series' structure and length is Copleston's approach to the history of philosophy, about which he writes "No philosophy can really be understood fully unless it is seen in its historical setting,"[244] a sentiment well in line with Schleiermacher's hermeneutics.

Aside from its substantial scope, covering roughly 2,500 years of European philosophy, the series is notable for its reputation: Encyclopedia Britannica refers to it as "A concise, clearly written, and objective overview that became a standard introductory philosophy text for thousands of university students."[245] Writing shortly after Copleston's death in 1994, Gerard Hughes refers to Copleston's *History* as:

> A model of interpretative skill […] he does not write from any particular point of view, preferring instead to expound the views of the various philosophers in their own terms, and in relation to the controversies in which they were engaged, rather than to offer criticisms or assessments of them as seen through modern eyes, or against the background of the philosophical disputes of our own day.[246]

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[242] Copleston had originally envisioned the series to be significantly shorter, a mere three volumes (Hughes, 279).

[243] The last two volumes (10 and 11, on Russian Philosophy and Logical Positivism and Existentialism, respectively) were published posthumously. Originally the series ended with Maine de Biran to Sartre.

[244] Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy: Greece and Rome From the Pre-Socratics to Plotinus*, vol. 1 (1946; repr., New York: Image Books, 1993), 4–5.

[245] Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Frederick Charles Copleston," in *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., 2020), https://www.britannica.com/biography/Frederick-Charles-Copleston.

[246] Hughes, Gerard J, "Frederick Charles Copleston: 1907-1994," 280.

This is to say that Copleston's work is not an outlier in its representation of the history of philosophy; it is, if anything, a standard.[247] Accordingly, Copleston's series is a revealing example of what it means to understand a text with a broad view in mind; one can hardly offer a broader view than The History of Western Philosophy.

In the introduction to the first volume of the series, Copleston presents the history of philosophy as a kind of intellectual hall of fame, and to understand the history of philosophy is to understand what he calls "thought-creations." Figures like Plato, Aristotle, and St. Augustine proffer such creations, which "abide as outstanding achievements of the human spirit."[248] "Abide" is crucial; Copleston invokes the notion of *philosophia perennis*: from the first philosophers through the present, there is a relatively continuous tradition of inquiry. What history saves, what persists through to the present, are those inquiries which offer some insight into the nature of reality. History is the record of such inquiries, but that history is not merely the past: "If there is a *philosophia perennis*, it is only to be expected that some of its principles should be operative in the minds even of philosophers of modern times."[249] The history of philosophy, then, is framed as a continuous tradition up through the present day; "principles" (whatever this may mean) that informed ancient philosophers remain relevant today.

Accordingly, the history of philosophy is a resource for the modern philosopher. Sometimes that history provides answers to questions the philosopher may have ("Truths"); in other cases, the philosopher finds open questions (or questions with inadequate answers) which may be picked up and worked upon. The history of philosophy passes the torch to the modern philosopher, but for the philosopher to know where to go next, they must understand what it is they have been passed. Much

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[247] Which is not to say it is *the* standard.
[248] Copleston, *A History of Philosophy: Greece and Rome From the Pre-Socratics to Plotinus*, 1:2.
[249] Copleston, 1:2.

as a scientist must examine what has already been discovered and proved before beginning their re-
search, the philosopher must understand what prior philosophers have already said if they are to con-
tribute to the tradition. This is no easy task. Copleston notes "No philosophy can really be understood
fully unless it is seen in its historical setting and in light of its connection with other systems"[250] and
"If we really want to appreciate the work of St. Thomas Aquinas or St. Bonaventure or Duns Scotus,
we should know something of Plato and Aristotle and St. Augustine."[251] For the philosopher wishing
to express some philosophical truth worthy of being admitted into the halls of Western Philosophy,
they must understand what has already been expressed; a would-be philosopher who merely reiterates
what Plato, Descartes, or Kant has already said is simply naïve.

History, then, is integral to philosophical understanding. An idea's truth (or falsity) remains inac-
cessible if one does not understand what is being expressed and understanding what is being expressed
depends on historical knowledge. This point is so methodologically obvious for Copleston he explic-
itly says he feels no need to justify it. Regarding "How to study the history of philosophy," he writes:

> The first point to be stressed is the need for seeing any philosophical system in its
> historical setting and connection. This point has already been mentioned and <u>does not</u>
> <u>require further elaboration</u>; it should be obvious that we can only grasp adequately the
> state of mind of a given philosopher and the *raison d'etre* of his philosophy it we have
> first apprehended its historical *point de depart.*[252]

With historical understanding comes "a firmer and deeper hold on the principles of true philoso-
phy."[253] This, in turn, enables the continuation and development of "true philosophy." Because

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[250] Copleston, 1:4–5.
[251] Copleston, 1:2.
[252] Copleston, 1:8. My underline.
[253] Copleston, 1:10.

Copleston emphasizes philosophical lineage in this way (*philosophia perennis*), only if what a philosopher has to offer is both true *and new to that tradition* is it of significance. Admittedly truths may be forgotten or downplayed and thus a proffered philosophical idea need not be completely original, but the significance of a philosophical contribution nevertheless derives from its relation to the historical tradition: the "thought-creation" must be "outstanding."

Whose "creations" are "outstanding"? And how does one identify what is "outstanding" in a philosopher's work? Let us consider a few examples.

Part i - Copleston and Thales

Copleston begins with Thales, although he precedes his analysis with a consideration of the historical origin of philosophy, which he attributes (unsurprisingly) to the Ancient Greeks, who he describes as "The uncontested original thinkers and scientists of Europe. They first sought knowledge for its own sake, and pursued knowledge in a scientific, free and unprejudiced spirit."[254]

First and foremost, Thales is situated historically. Copleston opens with a story about Thales predicting a solar eclipse and notes his reported death to estimate that Thales was likely active in the early 6th century B.C., going on to recount a few apocryphal anecdotes, such as Thales falling into a well while gazing at the stars.[255] The first statement about Thales' philosophy Copleston makes is that Aristotle reports that Thales "declared the primary stuff of all things to be water."[256] Immediately, Copleston notes, "But the most important point is that Thales declared the primary stuff of all things

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[254] Copleston, 1:16. Copleston makes a point to emphasize the Greeks as the first scientists and as the first people to have a philosophy as opposed to mere myth or religion. He also, repeatedly, emphasizes the distinctiveness of Greek thought over and against thought in India, Egypt, Babylon, or "Oriental influences" (Copleston, 1:14–16).
[255] Copleston, *A History of Philosophy: Greece and Rome From the Pre-Socratics to Plotinus*, 1:22.
[256] Copleston, 1:22.

to be water…indeed, that he raised the question of the One at all."[257] This point is crucial for Copleston; in the course of three pages, he reiterates the point two more times:

- "The importance of this early thinker lies in the fact that he raises the question, what is the ultimate nature of the world, and not in the answer that he actually gave to that question or in his reasons, be they what they may, for giving that answer."[258]

- "The only certain and the only really important point about Thales' doctrine is that he conceived 'things' as varying forms of one primary and ultimate element. That he assigns *water* as this element is his distinguishing historical characteristic, so to speak, but he earns his place as the First Greek philosopher from the fact that he first conceives the notion of Unity in Difference."[259]

By frequency and emphasis ("most important point," "importance of this early thinker," "only really important point") Copleston stresses two aspects of Thales's thought. One, Thales raised a question about the nature of the universe and, two, he answered that with "water." Yet why is this information what is necessary—or at least desirable—for the philosopher to know?

When we focus more on Copleston's mode of presentation, a more substantial answer begins to appear. Explicitly, Copleston associates Thales's importance with a question: "What is the ultimate nature of the world?" In and of itself, this does not tell us why such a question is important; in the abstract, it seems as if we could just as plausibly assume that Thales's importance lies in his view that water is the "primary stuff" of the universe. This, however, is explicitly rejected; water may be Thales's

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[257] Copleston, 1:22.
[258] Copleston, 1:23.
[259] Copleston, 1:23.

"distinguishing historical characteristic" (which, here, is framed as little more than a mnemonic device), but it is not why Thales "earns his place as the First Greek philosopher."[260] But why? How does Copleston distinguish which idea is truly philosophical and which is merely trivial?

Admittedly to many modern readers this matter may seem inane in its obviousness. "Water" as the "primary stuff" of the universe sounds vaguely like New Age or mystical thought—an idea that is neither scientific nor philosophical. The other thought, though, that there is or could be some essence to the universe—what could be more essentially philosophical than that? Yet this valuation, even if we accept it as correct, presumes this distinction at the outset; it assumes we already have a basis upon which to distinguish the "properly philosophical" from…well, whatever the assertion about "water" is supposed to be.

How, then, does Copleston distinguish between what is of philosophical value in Thales and what is not? Why does Thales "earn his place" because "he first conceives the notion of Unity in Difference"?[261] Put another way, why is *that* idea sufficient grounds for including Thales in this history? Copleston does not answer these questions explicitly, but we may proffer answers of our own if we revisit our introductory consideration of his project.

What makes Thales noteworthy, what makes his philosophy worth presenting and examining as part of the History of Western Philosophy, is that with him we find a groundbreaking "Thought-creation." Thales is important because he introduces a way of thinking about the world that later philosophers would develop. That is, Copleston marks Thales as historically significant *because of* subsequent developments in the history of Western Philosophy. Copleston presents no reasons or justi-

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[260] Copleston, 1:23.
[261] Copleston, 1:23.

fications for why one idea is important and the other is not *except* for the fact that the former is inherited and the latter is (more or less) discarded. We lack any justification of the philosophical significance of these ideas that is not derived from a modern, pregiven conception of "philosophy." In lieu of such justification, Copleston does little more than appeal to the reader's sensibilities, perhaps assuming they approach the *History* with some familiarity with philosophy and already know the former as an Important Question while the latter is likely a quirky bit of antiquated thought. In short, what distinguishes the philosophically trivial from the significant is which notion founds a tradition in Western philosophy.

This approach is questionable. If importance derives only from inheritance, then it is unclear how such traditions are founded. Thales' contemporaries lacked historically given definitions that would allow them to decide what was "philosophy" and worth preserving as such. We could not even say his *successors* determined such a thing, for to be a successor presupposes a basis of inheritance. That is, we would have to already identify some specific line of inheritance from Thales to his successors, i.e. a basis for continuity. Evaluating Thales from our historical position, the distinction is easy; at the time, it would not have been so clear-cut.

But Copleston's characterization is not especially controversial, so why would it matter that he emphasizes the question about the nature of the universe over the answer to that question being "water"? What is significant here is the role the history of Western Philosophy plays in Copleston's analysis. That history is the foundation for Thales' importance; to "earn a place" in that history means one has produced a "thought-creation" that will be historically significant. Tense is important here; a thought-creation, no matter how original or brilliant, is not historically significant in and of itself. A thought-creation only *becomes* important if it is taken up into the philosophical tradition. On that basis its originator is (retroactively) established as a figure in The History of Western Philosophy.

This is connected to Copleston's avowal of *philosophia perennis*. What philosophy is, who is included and who is not, is a matter that is already settled for Copleston. Its core, its major themes and questions, are already given and clearly identifiable as philosophy. This point has further implications. Earlier, Copleston framed the study of the history of philosophy as a process of familiarizing the modern philosopher with the "principles of true philosophy," but he does not elaborate on how this happens. Yet Copleston's presentation of Thales is suggestive. Positively, Copleston emphasizes that Thales identifies a core question of philosophy, one which subsequent philosophers will take up and expand upon. The reader thus becomes familiar with this question as a guiding one in the history of philosophy. Negatively, Copleston notes that Thales identifies the "primary stuff" of all things as water, a notion that likely strikes the modern reader as strange and highly improbable (if not flat-out wrong). This is to say that Copleston teaches the history of Western Philosophy as a tradition: what the modern philosopher should know is what is *true* philosophy (which is not to say it is philosophy that is true) and what is true philosophy is that which has been taken up and passed down over millennia.

Now, two objections about this examination of Copleston's work might be raised here. First, Thales is a difficult example for nearly any reader because so little of his thought survives to the modern day. Accordingly, it seems unfair to expect Copleston to develop an especially robust presentation of Thales because materials that would make such a presentation possible are mostly missing. Second, as per Gerard Hughes' account, Copleston "Thought that the first volume, on ancient philosophy, had rapidly become out of date, and was in fact 'deplorable,' though he never found time to do the radical re-write he saw to be required."[262] Given Copleston's own distaste for the volume, then, it is perhaps misrepresentative of Copleston's approach to teaching the history of philosophy.

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[262] Hughes, Gerard J, "Frederick Charles Copleston: 1907-1994," 280.

To the first objection, I would note that material from Thales is, indeed, scarce. However, it is an overstatement to posit that precisely because of this lack little or nothing can be said about Thales (aside from the points Copleston himself makes). That statement remains true only if one adheres to the approach typified by Schleiermacher and which Copleston channels. Alternate modes of reading philosophically will be developed in later chapters, but for now let it suffice to note the readings of other authors who are able to offer rather more developed readings of Thales despite working with the same dearth of material.[263] Still, it might be objected that these comparisons are not fair because Copleston is offering only a summary work, not a more focused treatment like the cited authors. This is a fair objection but does still beg the question of why Copleston opts to summarize Thales in the way he does.

This leads into the second objection, i.e. that Copleston himself apparently expressed ambivalence about this volume. Although the details about exactly why Copleston felt ambivalence are scarce, one may note that later in his career Copleston seemed to adopt rather a different position that that of the *philosophia perennis*. In volume seven of the *History* series, for example, he writes: "There is no very good reason to suppose that we shall ever reach a universal and lasting agreement even about the scope of philosophy."[264] In a lecture in 1973, he clarified his views on *philosophia perennis*: "I was not claiming that the same philosophy recurs. I was referring to […] basic tendencies or attitudes which express themselves in different historical shapes, in different philosophies that is to say."[265]

Even if it is unclear whether Copleston would still stand by his presentation of Thales, there is sufficient material from later in his life to suspect Copleston would not want material from his first

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[263] See, for example, Heyd, 2014 or Pinto, 2016.

[264] Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy: Modern Philosophy, From the Post-Kantian Idealists to Marx, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche*, vol. 7 (1963; repr., New York: Image Books, Doubleday, 1994), 441.

[265] Frederick Copleston, "The History of Philosophy: Relativism and Recurrence," *The Heythrop Journal* 14, no. 2 (1973): 132, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2265.1973.tb00702.x.

volume to be representative of his approach to the history of philosophy writ large. With that in mind, let us consider another of his analyses. As a second example, I have selected Copleston's presentation of Nietzsche, from volume 7 of the series. Nietzsche is an appropriate figure for several reasons. First, Nietzsche will be part of the focus of Chapter 6 and Copleston's reading will help provide a contrast for what is to come. Second, Copleston dedicated a good bit of his scholarly efforts towards reading Nietzsche: several of his first articles and his first book (1942's *Friedrich Nietzsche: Philosopher of Culture*) were on Nietzsche. Third, the aforementioned quote about the unlikelihood of a universal agreement about the scope of philosophy, referred to positively in Copleston's 1973 article, comes from the volume in which he reads Nietzsche. Thus, if Copleston had a shift in how he thought about the history of philosophy, volume 7 would be the first place that would manifest.

Part ii - Copleston and Nietzsche

Copleston's presentation of Nietzsche occupies two full chapters of Volume 7, *Modern Philosophy: From the Post-Kantean Idealists to Marx, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche*. The chapters are the final two of the volume before he offers a kind of summary and some reflections. Copleston begins by noting that he closes the volume with Nietzsche because his "Influence was not fully felt until the present [20th] century."[266] This comment foreshadows how Copleston will read Nietzsche: to understand Nietzsche's philosophy means understanding how Nietzsche's ideas fit into the History of Western Philosophy, both as inheritor and predecessor. This is why Copleston emphasizes what one might call Nietzsche's "major ideas," where "major" means having a traceable connection to prior philosophers

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[266] Copleston, *A History of Philosophy: Modern Philosophy, From the Post-Kantian Idealists to Marx, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche*, 7:390.

and, more importantly, subsequent philosophers. To put it more in Copleston's own language, under-
standing Nietzsche means understanding his "thought-creations" which, as articulated previously, re-
lies upon a conception a History of Western Philosophy to be able to identify those creations.

This approach necessitates situating Nietzsche historically and leads Copleston to open with a
brief biography. Unsurprisingly, this biography is more robust than Thales'. Precisely for that reason
though, two characteristics of Copleston's presentation become apparent. First, Copleston emphasizes
those moments in Nietzsche's life where he encountered religion, philosophy, and philology, often
citing the names of teachers, schoolmates, and friends (including, of course, noting when and where
Nietzsche met Wagner). Second, Copleston outlines Nietzsche's various works, noting their year of
publication and what he takes to be the main idea or distinguishing characteristic of each work.

The question here is simple enough: how does this biography facilitate understanding Nietzsche's
thought? How does Copleston's conception understanding a philosophy inform why and how he
presents this biography to the reader?

We have no answer to these questions from the text itself. Copleston does not draw explicit con-
nections between Nietzsche's life and Nietzsche's thought. This absence is perhaps unsurprising, since
earlier in the series Copleston notes that a philosopher does not attempt to explain a philosophical
system as a result of the psychology of its progenitor. On Schopenhauer, for example, he writes, "A
purely psychological approach might lead one to suppose that the system of Arthur Schopenhauer
was the creation of an embittered, soured and disappointed man […] as though his philosophy were
simply the manifestation of certain psychological states."[267] This is, however, *not* the approach of the
historian of philosophy, who distinguishes themselves from the psychologist by attending to "The

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[267] Copleston, *A History of Philosophy: Greece and Rome From the Pre-Socratics to Plotinus*, 1:9.

truth or falsity of his ideas taken in themselves."[268] However, if philosophy is not to be explained as the result of purely psychological motives, why include a biography?

In a familiar move, Copleston takes it that these "ideas in themselves" are not immediately accessible to the reader. The reader may be able to make sense of the "the words and phrases as they stand,"[269] but for fuller, more robust understanding one needs more context. Specifically, beyond the apparent meaning of the text, there is understanding "the shade of meaning that the author intended to convey,"[270] a phrase that would not be out of place in Schleiermacher's writings. This is not an easy task, and it is here that Copleston distinguishes between the work of the scholar and the more casual reader. What the scholar is able to do is twofold: one, identify such shades of meaning in the text and, two, articulate how those shades affect the meaning of the text. Copleston offers some suggestions as to what the scholar needs to know to be able to read the text in this way: "A specialist knowledge of the philosophy of Plato, for instance, requires besides a thorough knowledge of Greek language and history, a knowledge of Greek mathematics, Greek religion, Greek science, etc."[271]

But how does an understanding of Greek language and history, science, etc. help with understanding Plato? What kind of reading does that information make possible? Why is it important or desirable to identify these shades of meaning?

Again, Copleston gives us little that is explicit. Considering Copleston's language, however, we can easily insert a Schleiermacheran intervention. Copleston situates any given shade of meaning as something the author has inserted. He offers no examples, but examples are common enough: allusions,

[268] Copleston, 1:9.
[269] Copleston, 1:9.
[270] Copleston, 1:9.
[271] Copleston, 1:9.

turns of phrase, popular references, and so on can be found in many texts. These insertions communicate additional nuance, another meaning, or in some way add meaning to the text that is not intelligible without additional context. Invoking Schleiermacher's conception of grammatical and psychological explication, we may say that the author draws from a particular historical and cultural context to write the text. Accordingly, we need this historical context if we are to be able to identify these references, determine what the author meant by them and how they function in the text, and subsequently identify what the author intended to say. Note, too, the resonance of Copleston's conception of the scholar with the indexing in the library: "Greek language and history, a knowledge of Greek mathematics, Greek religion, Greek science, etc."[272] The scholar, the specialist, understands the author in the context of their time and region because it is that region which gives the language and culture to the author such that they are then able to articulate their ideas, both on a more explicit level and with the shades and subtleties to which Copleston gestures.

The task of the scholar given here is something like a decoding. What is presented to the reader has an initial appearance, intelligible to whatever degree, but retains deeper meanings. These meanings, however, elude the reader who remains on the surface. To be able to "decode" such texts, to identify its symbols as symbols to be translated and to actually "translate" them, one needs to know the cipher: a historical and cultural context and language, in this case.

Historical biography is thus the precondition for recognizing such symbols as symbols. Copleston's biography of Nietzsche—or whomever else—accordingly effects two results. One, the more immediate, is the presentation of a context that is supposed to enable the reader to make sense of Nietzsche's ideas: this passage is actually taking shots at Wagner; that section has Schopenhauer in mind (if not in word). Such context allows the reader to identify elements of the text that would not

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[272] Copleston, 1:9.

be apparent otherwise. Hence Copleston writes comments and asides like "His admiration for the Greek genius was awakened during his schooldays, his favourite classical authors being Plato and Aeschylus,"[273] "If in the first period he decries Socrates, the rationalist, in the second he tends to exalt him,"[274] and "Just as Schopenhauer had based a philosophy on the concept of the will to life, so would Nietzsche base a philosophy on the idea of the will to power."[275] Such points identify what Copleston takes to be important philosophical connections, but connections that are not necessarily apparent if one does not know the context. Second, by positioning biography in this way, Copleston signals its status as integral to the task of the historian of philosophy. Explicitly voiced in the introduction to the first volume and enacted here, Copleston situates historical breadth and depth in the specific period and region of the author as necessary if one is to fully understand what the author meant.

Understanding what the philosopher in question meant—Nietzsche, in this case—is but one part of understanding philosophy. As with Thales, Copleston emphasizes reaction and inheritance. Unlike Thales, though, Copleston is able to situate Nietzsche along three historical axes: past, present, and future. We have already seen how Copleston situates Nietzsche's predecessors as relevant to understanding his philosophy; how does he present Nietzsche's contemporaries and successors?

Starting with reactions from Nietzsche's contemporaries, Copleston notes that in *The Birth of Tragedy* Nietzsche espouses the view that German culture can be "Saved only if it were permeated with the spirit of Wagner. Not unnaturally, the work met with an enthusiastic reception from Wagner, but the

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[273] Copleston, *A History of Philosophy: Modern Philosophy, From the Post-Kantian Idealists to Marx, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche*, 7:390.
[274] Copleston, 7:392.
[275] Copleston, 7:394.

philologists reacted somewhat differently."[276] Similarly, commenting on *The Dawn of Day* and *Joyful Wisdom*, Copleston notes that "Neither book was successful."[277]

As for successors, Copleston indicates inheritance in two ways. First, Copleston proffers evaluations of particular works. For example, after discussing *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, he notes "Calmer expositions of Nietzsche's ideas are to be found in *Beyond Good and Evil* (*Jenseits von Gut und Böse*, 1886) and *A Genealogy of Morals* (*Zur Genealogie der Moral*, 1887)."[278] On the works from Nietzsche's last productive year (*The Twilight of the Idols*, *The Antichrist*, and *Ecce Homo*), Copleston comments, "The works of this year [1888] show evident signs of extreme tension and mental instability, and *Ecce Homo* in particular, with its exalted spirit of self-assertion, gives a marked impression of psychical disturbance."[279] These comments may seem to be mere subjective evaluations—and they are—but we may also situate them as historiographical tools. With these remarks, Copleston differentiates between what of Nietzsche's thought is important, successful, influential, etc. and what is not.[280] Because it is those ideas that endure, it is those that are important: those ideas are the ones that make possible identifying shades of meaning in subsequent texts.

Second, Copleston traces specific lines of inheritance from Nietzsche to subsequent philosophers. In the last section of his chapters on Nietzsche, Copleston makes such observations as "Generally speaking, his influence has taken the form of stimulating thought in this or that direction. And this

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[276] Copleston, 7:391.
[277] Copleston, 7:393. *The Dawn of Day* [*Morgenröte*] is more recently translated as *Daybreak* (Cambridge UP) or *Dawn* (Stanford UP). *The Joyful Science* [*Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*] is now more commonly translated as *The Gay Science*.
[278] Copleston, 7:393.
[279] Copleston, 7:394.
[280] Somewhat curiously Copleston occasionally adopts an anachronistic approach to framing Nietzsche's thought. For example, he states "It was in this third period that Nietzsche explicitly stated his relativist and pragmatist view of truth" (Copleston, 7:395). The statement is odd if for no other reason than—if one can assume Copleston is referring to the U.S. Pragmatist traditions—the reader who is, indeed, a newcomer to philosophy would not know the Pragmatist tradition, which Copleston covers in the next volume, Volume 8. Another example is his comparison to Bergson (401), not covered until Volume 9.

stimulative influence has been widespread."[281] Repeatedly, Copleston associates the various ideas he has presented in prior sections as significant for subsequent figures:

> His importance for some people has lain primarily in his development of a naturalistic criticism of morality, while others would emphasize rather his work in the phenomenology of values […] To some he has been primarily the man who diagnosed the decadence and imminent collapse of western civilization, while other have seen in him and his philosophy of the very nihilism for which he professed to supply a remedy.[282]

Other comments in a similar vein (and around the same section) include:

- "In the field of religion he has appeared to some as a radical atheist […] while other have seen in the very vehemence of his attack on Christianity evidence of his fundamental concern with the problem of God."[283]

- "Some have regarded him first and foremost from the literary point of view, as a man who developed the potentialities of the German language; others, such as Thomas Mann, have been influenced by his distinction between the Dionysian and Apollonian outlooks or attitudes; others again have emphasized his psychological analyses."[284]

These examples compound on comments in a similar vein scattered throughout Copleston's two chapters. But perhaps most significantly, Copleston closes out his presentation of Nietzsche by noting "Professional philosophers who read Nietzsche may be interested principally in his critique of morality or in his phenomenological analyses or in his psychological theories,"[285] a comment in the spirit of

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[281] Copleston, 7:417.
[282] Copleston, 7:417.
[283] Copleston, 7:417.
[284] Copleston, 7:417.
[285] Copleston, 7:420.

earlier asides like "Others again, of a less academically philosophical turn of mind, have stressed his idea of the transvaluation of values"[286] and comments stressing fame: "In a famous passage in the first part of *Zarathustra* […]."[287] This is to say Copleston's presentation not only dismisses some of Nietzsche's ideas, but also places emphasis on others by suggesting they are more properly (i.e. "professionally") philosophical.

This reveals another dimension to these kinds of comments, i.e. Copleston's work as a norming force. Copleston does not just report on Nietzsche's influence, but shapes it. In affirming particular ideas as important or significant, the work itself reinforces this point. It is, admittedly, a kind of circle: the idea is important because it is referenced, and it is referenced because it is important. Of course, one could frame this (generously) as Copleston removing himself from the equation. Qua historian of philosophy, Copleston is simply presenting these ideas because they are important, i.e. objectively influential; for him to articulate *why* they are important outside of their influence on the History of Western Philosophy would cross a line into interpretation and criticism. I do not think this defense holds up, however.

For starters, Copleston explicitly disavows mere presentation as the project of the historian of philosophy. For Copleston, part of what is essential for the historian of philosophy is to consider "The truth or falsity of [the philosopher's] ideas taken in themselves."[288] Further, Copleston's text is chock full of evaluative asides, often with little to no qualification. He writes, for example, "His philosophy lacks the impressiveness of systems such as those of Spinoza and Hegel, a fact of which Nietzsche was well aware. And if one wishes to find in it German 'profundity', one has to look beneath the

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[286] Copleston, 7:417.
[287] Copleston, 7:413.
[288] Copleston, *A History of Philosophy: Greece and Rome From the Pre-Socratics to Plotinus*, 1:9.

surface."[289] Copleston's evaluative bent is even more prominent as he considers Nietzsche's critiques of Christianity. After writing such passages as, "He does not indeed deny all value to Christian morality. He admits, for instance, that it has contributed to the refinement of man. At the same time he sees in it an expression of the resentment which is characteristic of the herd-instinct of slave-morality"[290] and "He accuses Christianity of depreciating the body, impulse, instinct, passion, the free and untrammeled exercise of the mind, aesthetic values, and so on,"[291] Copleston responds:

> Needless to say, Nietzsche gives a very one-sided account of the Christian doctrine of
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> man and of values. But it is essential for him to insist on this one-sided view. Otherwise
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> he would find it difficult to assert that he had anything new to offer, unless it were the
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> type of ideal for man which some of the Nazis liked to attribute to him.[292]

More explicitly yet, Copleston writes, "Considered as a purely theoretical attack, Nietzsche's condemnation of theism in general and of Christianity in particular is worth very little."[293]

This is to say that one cannot simply posit that there is an objective entity called The History of Western Philosophy about which Copleston offers a kind of report. Rather, Copleston himself participates in crafting that history: a project of emphasis and evaluation, of inclusion and exclusion. *These* ideas are significant—*those* are not; *these* works are worth reading, *those* are not. It is a matter both of which ideas make it into that history and how they are subsequently represented within that history (unique/trite, important/unimportant, deep/shallow, etc.).

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[289] Copleston, *A History of Philosophy: Modern Philosophy, From the Post-Kantian Idealists to Marx, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche*, 7:396.

[290] Copleston, 7:402.

[291] Copleston, 7:403.

[292] Copleston, 7:403.

[293] Copleston, 7:404.

Part iii - Copleston and Philosophy

Whether we consider Copleston's presentation of Nietzsche or that of Thales, we find a markedly similar approach. Despite more material, a longer treatment, and a volume supposedly rooted in a different historical attitude than the first volume, we see the same kinds of emphases with Nietzsche as we do with Thales, especially on understanding the "major ideas" of a thinker. There is an extremely heavy historiographical bent here: not only are "major ideas" established relative to a preexisting canon of Western philosophy, but the value of examining a given figure is itself derived from that tradition. "Major ideas" are major either because they speak to a long historical tradition of attempts to deal with a topic, or because they themselves found a tradition of attempting to deal with a topic. There is no philosophical grounding of importance beyond that. Hence Thales is significant because he first posits the philosophical tradition of attempting to see unity in difference; his significance does *not* arise from his view that water is the ultimate element because the latter is not a question that endures through the history of Western philosophy. [294]

Much the same approach is exhibited in Copleston's presentation of Nietzsche—or other figures considered in Copleston's series, for that matter. Statements like, "It is in *Human, All-too-Human* that Nietzsche begins to treat of morality in some detail. The work is indeed composed of aphorisms; it is not a systematic treatise. But if we compare the remarks relating to morality, a more or less coherent theory emerges,"[295] connect Nietzsche to the history of philosophy. Copleston underscores how Nietzsche's works can be understood according to traditional categories like "morality" and how, even if he does not write in the mode of a typical philosopher, his aphorisms can still be taken to construct "a more or less coherent theory," something comparable to a "systematic treatise," i.e. traditional

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[294] I would note the inheritance of philosophizing with elements is not as archaic as Copleston suggests. See, for example, the works of Gaston Bachelard (*Water and Dreams*) or Luce Irigaray (*Marine Lover of Friedrich Nietzsche*).

[295] Copleston, *A History of Philosophy: Modern Philosophy, From the Post-Kantian Idealists to Marx, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche*, 7:400.

philosophical modes of writing (and traditionally esteemed ones, at that). Again, Copleston's analysis aims to identify the core of a given thinker's philosophy; all else either serves to situate that core and the ideas closely associated with it or is so much idiosyncrasy and fluff that can be safely omitted, downplayed, or dismissed.

Copleston writes, "The history of philosophy exhibits man's search for Truth by the way of discursive reason."[296] Accordingly, the history of philosophy amounts to two things. Either a philosophy has disclosed some truth or truths, in which case it should be preserved as contributing to the sum of what humankind (read: Western traditions) discovered as True, or a philosophy has misrepresented the truth, in which case it remains instructive insofar as it serves as a caution to future searches for truth in the same vein. In either case too, insofar as one understands any given philosophy as both influenced by and influencing the history of philosophy, one has thereby broadened one's mind and gained a better understanding of the "intellectual struggle of mankind."[297]

I want to emphasize the degree to which Copleston underscores the capital "T" of Truth: "When philosophers […] arrive by the employment of true principles at valuable conclusions, these conclusions must be looked on as belonging to the perennial philosophy."[298]

For Copleston, to understand philosophy means to understand philosophy's ideas, both its True ideas and the ways philosophy has erred in its pursuit of those ideas. Yet to be able to consider whether an idea is true, one must possess the historical and biographical knowledge to be able to reconstruct the context in which that idea was expressed. Or, put another way, one must be able to understand what idea an author was attempting to express. Without historical context, the truth of the idea disappears under anachronistic or otherwise distortionary readings. Invoking Schleiermacher, we could say

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[296] Copleston, *A History of Philosophy: Greece and Rome From the Pre-Socratics to Plotinus*, 1:6.
[297] This perspective will be articulated further in the examination of d'Alembert's work.
[298] Copleston, *A History of Philosophy: Greece and Rome From the Pre-Socratics to Plotinus*, 1:7.

philosophical evaluation and critique is predicated on historical understanding; without such under-

standing, one's evaluations can only ever miss the mark.[299]

This point returns us to the importance of breadth, and the ideal upon which an index gathers

"Philosophy." Copleston's work, much like the "B" call number range, gathers sources and resources

for the purpose of as correct an understanding of the given philosophies as is possible. Philosophy is

clustered around major terms, i.e. terms that have carried with them a certain amount of historical

clout ("literary warrant," in LC's terms), or major figures.[300]

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[299] Of course, such an approach makes an inherently impossible demand. On the one hand, to understand a philosophy in its historical context is a condition for accurate evaluation, critique, and other modes of response. On the other, to situate a philosophy in that context is an infinite pursuit. This is so for two reasons. First, as Schleiermacher points out, if a work is to be situated as an instantiation of a historical language, one would need *total* knowledge of that language to be able to pin down the meaning of that work, whether in terms of individual utterances, the work as a whole, or anywhere in between. Similarly, one would need perfect psychological knowledge of the author, knowing their every influence, impulse, drive, need, fear, desire, and impetus for writing. Immediately—and Schleiermacher notes this too—we run into the problem of even in analyzing utterances by the author that inform us of the author's psychological state, those utterances too are objects of interpretation; how are we to understand their self-assessments? Irony is a perfect illustration of the issue: if someone insists they are serious, how are we to *know* that insistence is itself serious? Already, then, interpretation is predicated upon inherently uncertain grounds. Second, as Derrida indicates in his reading of Nietzsche, interpretation must relate parts (passages, books) to wholes (books, canons). In so doing, interpretation can neither dismiss certain writings as irrelevant nor justify its situation of other writings as central without some degree of arbitrariness. As he writes in *Spurs*, examining one of Nietzsche's apparently-unimportant diary entries ("I have forgotten my umbrella"), "We will never know *for sure* what Nietzsche wanted to say or to do when he noted these words, nor even that he actually *wanted* anything" (Derrida, 123). This is not, of course, to say that this mundane fragment is somehow crucial to understanding another of Nietzsche's ideas. It is, rather, indicating the ambiguity of the part to whole relationship when the author is situated as master over their oeuvre. That Nietzsche wrote this sentence, that he included it in a diary of musings, means by definition it takes up a place in his corpus, yet its content suggests it is unimportant and easily dismissed. Yet it is not nothing. We can only respond with conjecture: perhaps it is just an aside (but perhaps not); perhaps it was to be developed into something (but perhaps not). Or perhaps the fragment is a reminder to himself. Or perhaps an encoded message. Even if we were able "By dint of diligence and good fortune" to reconstruct its "internal and external context," "Such a factual possibility does not, however, alter the fact of that other possibility which is marked in the fragment's very structure" (125). Blunting Derrida's *éperon*, the point here is that there is always a fundamental structural incompleteness or, at least, tentativeness that can never be ultimately, finally settled. With both points, we can see that to found the possibility of legitimate critique on something like "correct understanding" a la Schleiermacher means no critique will ever or can ever be secured in the full sense of the word. At best, what we have are critiques comparable in their assertions analogous to interpretations: more or less coherent, more or less resonant with what can be found in the relevant texts.

[300] Proximate philosophical discussions are reified through their indexing: works by an author reside near those of the same approximate epoch and region. Theoretically, subject headings could supplement the physical constraints of being able to only locate a work in one place on the shelf by proffering broader, more inclusive terms that might situate the text otherwise. In so doing other dialogues are gathered and made (more) intelligible. However, this predominantly is not the case. I will expand upon this further in Chapter 3, but overwhelmingly librarians have found indexing occurs along conservative disciplinary lines, appealing to long-established divisions while neglecting more recent and more critical ones.

What we can see more clearly now is why indexing philosophy along geographical and historical divisions takes precedent. If to understand a philosophy correctly is contingent upon understanding the context of its generation in historical and biographical terms, then grouping a given work together with others from the same region and period establishes parameters of the dialogue. Even in those cases where topic is ostensibly primary, geographical and historical divisions follow closely behind.[301]

Copleston's approach discloses another dimension of this way of thinking: the centrality and importance of "influence:" a historical and geographical index allows the scholar to trace influence to or from other figures in that history, elaborating upon various responses, inheritances, etc. Drawing further from Copleston, we could claim that such collection makes possible future philosophies by educating developing philosophers in the traditions—right or wrong—of the past. They learn the issues and questions, what has been answered and what has not, how philosophers have erred and how they have reasoned rightly. That is, of course, presuming one has understood those philosophies and philosophers correctly, which is precisely what these works facilitate.

Section 4 - Studying a Study: Kenny and Descartes

Copleston's approach is explicitly one of the broadest scope; he situates any given philosopher or philosophy as a historical phenomenon, arising from and participating in a relatively continuous tradition, i.e. "Western Philosophy." Yet to be able to assemble such a history, Copleston relies on the work of other scholars, scholars who have made such works available through preservation and trans-

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[301] I should note most of the philosophy call number range is populated by "B – Philosophy (General)," which as I indicated previously is highly historical/geographical; of the LCC B-BJ Text, containing all the LCC divisions for that range, 135 pages are "B" while 4 pages are for Logic (BC), 5 pages are for "Speculative Philosophy" (BD), 3 pages are for Aesthetics (BH), and Ethics has 21 pages (although much of this is on etiquette) (Library of Congress, "B-BJ Text: Philosophy, Psychology," February 2020).

lation, or accessible through exegesis and interpretation. As Copleston notes, his work is not for specialists per se, but is "Utilising the work of specialists."[302] This, as we saw, referred to the mode of understanding of the scholar, which is able to identify and "decode" shades of meaning in a text not apparent to the average reader.

How do such scholars use the kinds of information Copleston mentions ("language and history," etc.) to understand a text? Or, since Copleston implies that the scholar's mode of reading differs only from the layperson's approach in terms of degree, not kind, how is the scholar able to understand the text *better* using this information?

To answer such questions, let us reconsider an earlier example: Anthony Kenny's *Descartes: A Study of His Philosophy*. Kenny's work is helpful here because he shares a kind of affinity with Copleston insofar as he is also concerned with The History of Western Philosophy. In addition to his specialized works like *Descartes*, he wrote the four-volume series *A New History of Western Philosophy*: *Ancient Philosophy* (2004), *Medieval Philosophy* (2005), *The Rise of Modern Philosophy* (2006), and *Philosophy in the Modern World* (2007).

Offering more extensive meta-reflections than Copleston, Kenny writes in the introduction to his series, "In this narrative I have attempted to be both a philosophical historian and a historical philosopher."[303] Kenny sees these as two complementary sides to doing philosophy, writing of the first side, "historical philosophy":

> In one, which we may call historical philosophy, the aim is to reach philosophical truth,
> or philosophical understanding, about the matter or issue under discussion in the text.

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[302] Copleston, *A History of Philosophy: Greece and Rome From the Pre-Socratics to Plotinus*, 1:10.
[303] Anthony Kenny, *A New History of Western Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), xvi.

Typically, historical philosophy looks for the reasons behind, or the justification for, the statements made in the text under study.[304]

Regarding its complementary side, which Kenny associates with "the history of ideas," he writes:

In the other endeavour, the history of ideas, the aim is not to reach the truth about the matter in hand, but to reach the understanding of a person or an age or a historical succession. Typically, the historian of ideas looks not for the reasons so much as the sources, or causes, or motives, for saying what is said in the target text.[305]

Kenny associates two desiderata with his project, closely associated with the sides he articulates. On the one, "We may study the great dead philosophers in order to seek illumination upon themes of our own philosophical inquiry."[306] On the other, "We may wish to understand the people and societies of the past, and read their philosophy to grasp the conceptual climate in which they thought and acted."[307] We may associate these desiderata with the historical philosopher and historian of ideas, respectively.[308] Kenny strives to juggle these complementary sides in his reading of historical texts and because he does so his work (and oeuvre) form an intellectual bridge between the specificity of a study like *Descartes* and the generality of "Histories of philosophy," whether we examine Copleston's, Kenny's, or another's.

Like Copleston's *History* series, Kenny's work is both relatively mainstream and commonly acclaimed. Writing on *Descartes* specifically, Justin Skirry characterizes the work as "A classic of Descartes scholarship" and "A classic overview."[309] Further, Kenny was the subject of a compilation of essays

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[304] Kenny, xv.
[305] Kenny, xv.
[306] Kenny, ix.
[307] Kenny, ix. Cf. Copleston's "broadening." Also like Copleston, Kenny is a bit vague on why this novelty is pedagogically or philosophically significant.
[308] These also hearken back to the history of philosophy/history of ideas distinction considered in Chapter 1.
[309] Skirry, "René Descartes."

in his honor: *Mind, Method and Morality: Essays in Honour of Anthony Kenny*, published by Oxford University Press in 2010, which features an entire section on Kenny's work on Descartes. The work's preface is written by John Cottingham, himself a translator and well-known Descartes scholar, who writes of Kenny that he is "One of the most distinguished and prolific philosophers of our time"[310] and of his work on Descartes:

> His *Descartes: A Study of His Philosophy* (1968) gave a methodological overview of Cartesian metaphysics coupled with powerful refutations. It broke fresh ground in its treatment of the Cartesian circle, in its meticulous anatomization of Descartes's conceptions of ideas, and in its critical application of Wittgenstein's ideas to Descartes's arguments.[311]

As with Copleston, this is neither to say Kenny's reading is The Standard or even that his reading is accurate, insightful, etc.; I am bracketing those questions here. Rather, the point is to indicate the relative centrality of Kenny's work; it can hardly be called an outlier in scholarly discourses surrounding Descartes. And, as indicated previously, its position qua Descartes scholarship is clearly indicated by its LC indexing:

- LCC: B1875 .K43 (Philosophy (General) — Modern (1450/1600-) – By region or country – France – By period — 17th century — Individual philosophers — Descartes, René, 1596-1650 — Criticism and interpretation

- LCSH: Descartes, René, 1596-1650

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[310] John Cottingham, "Preface," in *Mind, Method, and Morality: Essays in Honour of Anthony Kenny* (Oxford University Press, 2010), vii.
[311] Cottingham, x.

One final note before turning to Kenny's *Descartes*: Kenny proves more agile in his conception of philosophy than Copleston. He notes, for example:

> It is possible to be a good philosopher while being a poor exegete. At the beginning
> of his *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein offers a discussion of St Augustine's theory
> of language. What he writes is very dubious exegesis; but this does not weaken the
> force of his philosophical criticism of the 'Augustinian' theory of language. But Witt-
> genstein did not really think of himself as engaged in historical philosophy, any more
> than he thought of himself as engaged in the historiography of ideas.[312]

Kenny does not dismiss Wittgenstein's "dubious" reading, but neither he does not say much about the connection between that reading and the "force" of the subsequent philosophical criticism. At most, he enacts a kind of bracketing: *if* Wittgenstein's criticism of the Augustinian conception of language were an accurate representation of that conception, then his critique would be a forceful one. Or, in Kenny's language, Wittgenstein may be an interesting historical philosopher but is an unreliable historian of ideas. Approached in this way, a historical reading may still have some value even if its reading qua contribution to the historiography of ideas is "dubious."

Part of what I want to consider is what Kenny does not: if Wittgenstein's exegesis is so dubious, then whence the significance of reading Augustine? Immediately, we might note that Wittgenstein did not necessarily think of his reading as "dubious," but if this is the case, then on what basis did Wittgenstein think his reading was legitimate? Or perhaps Wittgenstein was unconcerned with "legitimacy" (at least as Kenny conceives it)—but then why invoke Augustine at all? That Wittgenstein developed his account as a reading of Augustine suggests there is some kind of claim of fidelity to the original text; were the idea merely an abstract philosophical conception of language, an attribution would not

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[312] Kenny, *A New History of Western Philosophy*, xv.

be necessary. Kenny, touching on the matter, claims Wittgenstein cites Augustine because "The invocation of the great Augustine as the author of the mistaken theory is merely to indicate that the error is one that is worth attacking."[313] Yet this seems to gloss the matter.

First, surely Wittgenstein of all people did not need to invoke a prior thinker to establish the importance of the issue. Aside from his own fame and reputation, the account to which Kenny refers is found in the *Philosophical Investigations*, written well after Wittgenstein's reputation had been firmly established years early via the *Tractatus* and his time at Cambridge.[314]

Second, Wittgenstein's invocation seems strange when placed in the context of his early work. In the *Tractatus*, he wrote:

> I do not wish to judge how far my efforts coincide with those of other philosophers. Indeed, what I have written here makes no claim to novelty in detail, and the reason why I give no sources is that it is a matter of indifference to me whether the thoughts that I have had have been anticipated by someone else.[315]

Whatever the relationship between Wittgenstein's early and later work, it is a notable shift that he goes from the blasé attitude in the preface of the *Tractatus* to the very first section of the *Philosophical Investigations* opening with a long quote from Augustine. Wittgenstein regards citing Augustine as important; Augustine is given the lengthy opening line and occasions the subsequent discussion of language.

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[313] Kenny, xv. Kenny does not go into any more detail about why Wittgenstein invokes Augustine, or why he thinks Wittgenstein's exegesis is dubious even in his book on Wittgenstein. He does, however, take care to write, "Augustine, *says Wittgenstein*, […]" (*Wittgenstein* 123. My emphasis.).

[314] Admittedly Wittgenstein's reference to Augustine does appear in his earlier work, *Philosophische Grammatik*, written 1931-34, as Kenny himself points out Kenny, *Descartes*, 14.

[315] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus logico-philosophicus: the German text of Ludwig Wittgenstein's logisch-philosophische Abhandlung*, trans. David Francis Pears and B.F. McGuinness (London: Routledge & Paul, 1963), 3.

Third, despite his insistence on the proximity of historical philosophy and the history of ideas, Kenny's position here suggests he actually sees the philosophical and historical as divorced. This point is reinforced in some of Kenny's other works. For example, in *What I Believe*, Kenny writes "In my first years as a professional philosopher, I attempted to make original discoveries […] After I had written a few books in this area, however, I realised that I was not able to complete with the best of my philosophical colleagues."[316] By distinguishing "original discoveries" from his historical works, Kenny suggests that leaning on historical philosophers is a kind of aid, a fallback for those who cannot "compete" with those who proffer original philosophical thought.[317] This, however, implies that for the philosopher *par excellance*, reading historical philosophical texts is unnecessary.

And yet, Kenny holds up Wittgenstein as a figure of philosophical genius, a genius who positions his reading of Augustine front and center. And despite Wittgenstein apparently committing the sin of a "dubious reading," Kenny holds that Wittgenstein's critique retains its force. This, however, means its force cannot be derived from its fidelity to the historical text. But whence its force if not its (legitimate) historical basis? And if the historical basis is (apparently) not essential to the philosophically forceful, what is the connection between the two?

I do not believe Kenny answers these questions, at least explicitly. Now, in fairness to Kenny, he does not elaborate on the possible of kinds of errors that would explain why he judges Wittgenstein's reading as "dubious." Kenny mentions the "sin of anachronism," but he neither states nor insinuates this is the *only* kind of error philosophers can or do make when reading historical texts.[318] Kenny could thus hold that the dubiousness of Wittgenstein's account does not derive from its historical fidelity; Wittgenstein's exegesis is dubious as a reading of St. Augustine, but not because it is anachronistic.

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[316] Anthony Kenny, *What I Believe* (London ; New York: Continuum, 2006), 14.
[317] Like, presumably, the Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus*.
[318] Kenny, *A New History of Western Philosophy*, xv.

This is, however, only a negative response: if we reject that Wittgenstein's response is anachronistic, we are no closer to determining why his exegesis is nonetheless dubious. Nor, for that matter, are we any closer to understanding how the philosophical can be forceful despite its apparent failure to ground itself historically.

Thus, despite Kenny's own insistence on the interrelatedness of "historical philosophy" and "the history of ideas," the nature of that connection is unclear. If "historical philosophy" can maintain its "force" (another increasingly unclear term) despite an apparent disconnect between the proffered exegesis and the subsequent analysis or critique, then why should philosophy read historical texts at all?

One way of responding to this would be to insist, a la early Analytic philosophers, that philosophy does not need its history. History is, at best, a possible source of clarification via previous ideas or arguments. However, it is neither necessary to philosophy nor necessarily advisable that the philosopher read historical philosophical texts; insofar as the philosopher can do "original philosophy" well, i.e. in a sound and/or valid and innovative manner, then such texts are superfluous. More dismissively, one could also infer that history is a source of philosophical burdens and errors, fraught with the confusions, paradoxes, and absurdities of prior thinkers.[319]

Yet Kenny explicitly insists on the connection between historical philosophy and the history of ideas, and himself instantiates that connection through his myriad works on historical philosophers. This seems an apropos time to consider Kenny's text itself, framed in the context of these questions. How does Kenny present what it means to understand historical philosophical texts? How does understanding the historical circumstances within which a philosophical idea appeared render the philosophical itself apparent?

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[319] Again, this is a view heavily associated with early Analytic philosophy. See Ayer's work, for example.

Part i - Cartesian Doubt

Beginning with the observation that Descartes advised readers of his *Principles of Philosophy* to read the work three times, Kenny situates his work as aiding those "Who find that the penciled queries do not entirely disappear upon third reading."[320] This snippet already suggests certain qualities about the work. For starters, Kenny lets Descartes take point: whether or not the reader follows the three reading guidelines Descartes puts forth, Kenny's appeal to Descartes suggests that he sees his work as meant for those who are willing to go with Descartes, to follow his thinking on his terms. Further, Kenny's appeal to making the "penciled queries" "disappear" is revealing. Whether Kenny intended to move from Descartes' penned queries to his own penciled ones or not, his wording suggests a resolution that is a dissolution. Penciled queries are subject to erasure, to removal, because the basis upon which they were underlined in the first place is no longer relevant or no longer legitimate. This is not to say Kenny writes an apology for Descartes (he doesn't), but it does suggest that Kenny sees himself as proffering a work in which textual questions are capable of being thoroughly resolved.

The question then becomes: what does Kenny offer the reader such that he believes in the possibility of such adequate addressal? Put another way, Kenny sees himself filling a gap between what Descartes intended to convey and the reality of Descartes's texts; what does he take to be missing from Descartes' texts such that his own can be seen as a supplement? And why is such a supplement necessary or, at least, desirable? These questions orient this section: more than focusing on exactly what Kenny argues and its plausibility as a reading of Descartes, I focus on the "how" of Kenny's work. How is does the work situate what it means to understand Descartes? What kinds of information

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[320] Kenny, *Descartes*, v–vi. The "penciled queries" are in reference to Kenny's earlier paraphrase of Descartes, which notes that on the second reading of the *Meditations* the reader should mark difficult sections with a pen. Kenny is perhaps more tentative in his markings than Descartes though –or simply has a preference for graphite—since he writes about "penciled queries" rather than Descartes's penned ones.

does Kenny see as necessary for understanding Descartes and why? And why would the reader not simply be able to understand Descartes from his texts alone?

With these questions in mind, consider the first chapter: Descartes's "Life and Works." Like Copleston, Kenny gives no reason as to why he would open his study of Descartes with such information, which given its premiere position would suggest premiere importance. Kenny has said that he has written the work for those who are perplexed despite reading Descartes multiple times; that such a chapter is included suggests Kenny sees such historical information as a component in addressing those persevering perplexities. It might be objected that this is not necessarily the case, as Kenny could simply be providing some general context that he may not see as important to understanding Descartes. Yet I do not think this is so; Kenny's chapter—and, I emphasize, *chapter*—is not only detailed, but takes pains to emphasize those moments in Descartes' life that inclined him towards philosophy. If Kenny took Descartes's "Life and Works" to be incidental, then the reader is left baffled not only as to why the chapter is included in this study, but especially as to why it is the very first thing the reader encounters. We may say, then, that Descartes's biography is situated as a component of understanding Descartes, even if exactly how it functions in that capacity is vague.

The first discussion of Descartes's philosophy Kenny introduces is on Cartesian doubt. Kenny frames the stakes of the issue by way of analogy: "Our minds are like a canvas botched by apprentice painters; our beliefs constitute a shaky edifice on rotten foundations. The canvas must be wiped clean if reason is to paint upon it; the house of belief must be pulled up and rebuilt from the foundations."[321] Framed by the dual metaphors of a canvas and a house, Kenny positions Cartesian doubt as a way to "wipe clean" a mind of unjustified and erroneous beliefs. Through doubt, the possibility of securing a certain foundation for belief becomes possible.

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[321] Kenny, 14.

Kenny then reiterates the steps of Cartesian doubt as found in the *Meditations on First Philosophy*, from the worry concerning the reliability of the senses through the possibility of our sensations being dreams or crafted by a deceptive deity. After doing so, Kenny takes a rhetorical step back and notes, "We must go back over the argument to see how far it should carry conviction."[322] Kenny's subsequent analyses focus on the plausibility and limits of each step in the process of doubting. His judgments vary, ranging from the sympathetic ("Few would quarrel with the starting point: it is true that we grow up uncritically accepting many beliefs which may be false"[323]) to the critical ("Such principles [the principles of natural light], which seem at least at dubious as much that Descartes rejects, are not called in question even on the hypothesis of the evil genius"[324]).

Kenny prods especially insistently on the limits of what Descartes doubts, suggesting he could have doubted further. For Kenny, that Descartes grants immunity to the principles of natural light calls into question the sincerity of Descartes's doubt, writing, "A question also arises concerning the degree of seriousness with which [Descartes] entertains his doubt."[325] Kenny does not explain *why* this question would be of philosophical importance vis-à-vis Descartes; supposing Descartes's doubt were insincere—what then? Would that invalidate his argument? Would that change how we should under-stand the text? Instead, its focus establishes the shape of its answer: a resolution requires establishing the Descartes's sincerity. To do so, Kenny quotes a letter from Descartes to Pierre Gassendi, "To Gassendi Descartes wrote 'My statement that the entire testimony of the senses must be considered to be uncertain, nay, even false, is quite serious and so necessary for the comprehension of my medi-tations that he who will not or cannot admit that, is unfit to urge any objection to them.'"[326]

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[322] Kenny, 18.
[323] Kenny, 18.
[324] Kenny, 20.
[325] Kenny, 21.
[326] Kenny, 21–22.

This moment in the text can be read as a kind of foreshadowing to the work Kenny does throughout the work, which becomes more apparent in chapter 3. For Kenny, his work is a kind of supplement or undergirding of the text in question: Descartes's text expresses its meaning imperfectly. In such cases the text's meaning is likely unclear to the reader and therefore cannot truly be understood. These cases raise the same question in various contexts: "What does Descartes mean by…?" Enter Kenny. To resolve such questions, Kenny appeals to two sources. First, of course, is the text in question; Kenny draws the reader's attention to specific words or terms that must be understood precisely and carefully. Second, and more importantly given our goals here, Kenny establishes the meaning of a given idea, argument, or passage by appealing to another of Descartes's statements that he takes to be expressing more clearly what Descartes intended to say.

When placed in the context of our larger inquiry, we may discern a few points about Kenny's approach. First, Kenny stated at the outset that his work speaks to those students whose "pencil marks" remain after several readings. In reading this chapter, we find a kind of delimitation: although Kenny can be said to be clarifying Descartes's argument, his approach presupposes that the only questions a student might have are on what Descartes means and whether he truly means what he says. Kenny's comments, generalized, have either to do with what Descartes means (in a specific part or in entire passages, arguments, etc.), or whether what Descartes is doing coincides with what he says he is doing. Thus, we see in Kenny's exegesis of Cartesian doubt not only an enumeration of the steps of that doubt but also objections in the form of apparent inconsistency or insincerity in that process. What Kenny takes as the primary focus of his study is determining as exactly as possible what Descartes intended to argue and to what degree that argument stands up to a certain range of questions, inquiries, and criticisms. By reading Descartes quite slowly and analytically, Kenny's study strives to represent Descartes as accurately as possible. The pursuit of accurate representation goes beyond mere exegesis, however. As we examine his next chapter, we will see more of how Kenny achieves this.

Part ii - Resolving the *Cogito*

I do not intend to go through the entirety of Kenny's *Descartes*, but as with the examination of Copleston's work, I want to cover enough of Kenny's work that a representative picture of his approach and ends is apparent. The first chapter mostly set the stage, albeit in a vague way, by situating Descartes historically via his "Life and Works." The second chapter reiterates the steps of Cartesian doubt as it prods the limits of what Descartes will doubt. The third chapter, however, takes a slightly different tone. It continues the approach seen in chapter 2, but here Kenny situates his reading of the *cogito* in more explicitly scholarly terms. Introducing the topic, Kenny notes, "I have called the *cogito* a proof. It has always been debated whether it was intended as an argument or as an appeal to intuition."[327] This point serves to introduce a chapter much more focused on scholarly debates and discussion than the prior two. Because of this focus, it allows us to see how Kenny sets up the parameters of the debate, he legitimates his reading of Descartes, and what he ultimately sees as the role of his study qua scholarly work.

Kenny starts by introducing one of the key passages under dispute, one of Descartes's replies from the *Second Objections*:

> When we become aware that we are thinking things, this is a primary notion which is not derived by means of any syllogism. When someone says 'I am thinking, therefore I am, or I exist', he does not deduce existence from thought by means of a syllogism, but recognizes it as something self-evident by a simple intuition of the mind.[328]

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[327] Kenny, 41.

[328] René Descartes, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes. Vol. 2*, trans. John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff, and Dugald Murdoch (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 101. Kenny quotes the older Haldane and Ross translation; I cite the more recent Cottingham and Stoothoff translation (ATVII, 140).

Kenny notes that although the *ergo* of the *cogito ergo sum* (alongside Descartes's own statements) suggests that the *cogito* is a "reasoning," this passage seems to suggest a different interpretation, i.e. that the *cogito* should be understood as an "intuition."[329] Kenny immediately notes, however, that "There is no agreement about the sense of 'intuition,'" referencing readings by Chevalier, Ayer, and Hintikka.[330] Responding to these authors, Kenny offers his interpretation and writes at the end of the section, "It seems possible, therefore, to settle the debate about whether the *cogito* is an intuition or an inference."[331]

What is important here is neither the steps of Kenny's argument nor whether it works as a solution to the ambiguity Kenny identifies. What is important here is how and why Kenny does so, and how this work posits an image of scholarly research. Explicitly, Kenny responds to Hintikka's none-too-generous reading of Descartes by noting, "It is surely preferable, if possible, to find some interpretation of the *cogito* that will make Descartes appear less thoroughly confused."[332] This statement situates Kenny's reading and, in a sense, his project writ large. For Kenny, Descartes's text contains arguments and philosophical insights that are imperfectly expressed. It contains ambiguities, clumsy wording, and apparent inconsistencies. Following what is sometimes referred to as the principle of hermeneutic generosity, Kenny methodologically presumes the coherence of Descartes's position from the outset, seeking to find ways to reconcile the more conflicting statements in his writings into a cohesive philosophical system (or, at least, cohesive positions).

Kenny's approach is to situate more ambiguous passages (like the above) relative to other writings that he takes to be expressing the same point more clearly. Thus, in response to the ambiguity of the term "intuition," he quotes passages from the *Principles*, *Discourse on Method*, and Descartes's dialogue,

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[329] Kenny, *Descartes*, 41.
[330] Kenny, 41.
[331] Kenny, 55.
[332] Kenny, 44.

The Search After Truth, which he argues show the *cogito*'s structure more clearly as an inference. To address the passages that appear to situate the *cogito* as an intuition, Kenny presents other writings that suggest the reader cannot necessarily understand the terms at work in their most immediate or obvious meaning. He writes, for example, "Whenever Descartes sets out to explain what he means by '*cogitare*,' he always gives the very a much wider sense than that of the English verb 'to think,'"[333] and:

> It seems odd, to begin with, that Descartes should call "I am thinking, therefore I exist" a conclusion, when in fact it is a minor premise plus a conclusion; or, in spite of the contrast with "the major," does he in fact mean by "conclusion" the *drawing of* a conclusion, that is, an inference? Perhaps what he means is this: the inference from "*cogito*" to "*sum*" is a valid inference only if "whatever is thinking, exists," is true.[334]

The language in such passages is revealing and is repeated throughout the book: "Whenever Descartes sets out…," "Perhaps what he means…" As we saw when Kenny referenced Descartes's letter to Gassendi, an apparent contradiction requires reading that contradiction in a different way to dissolve it; but to legitimize that clarificatory reading, Kenny appeals to what Descartes was trying to do or to express. Recall also that the topic was introduced in that way: Kenny introduces the debate about the *cogito* by focusing on "whether it was *intended*" as an argument; that is, both the debate and the terms of its resolution hinge upon correctly identifying Descartes's intent in writing *cogito ergo sum*. The pursuit here is thus not primarily about whether *cogito ergo sum* is an inference, but whether Descartes intended it to be such. By martialing an assortment of other texts that Kenny takes to be expressing what Descartes intended to say, Kenny is able to clarify the meaning of the passage, i.e. provide the grounds to understand it as Descartes intended it to be understood.

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[333] Kenny, 44.
[334] Kenny, 52.

What Kenny sets up through his exegesis is that the business of exposition is first and foremost to ascertain what the text means. If one can identify some flaw, inconsistency, ambiguity, or tension within the text, where one portion of an author's work apparently contradicts another part, this threatens the integrity of the author's message. When such issues arise, the reader is no longer able to say what the text means because there are either multiple meanings or the text lacks a cohesive meaning (which, as it is set up here, would mean the text is incoherent). Second, either one can write about that contradiction and identify it as such or respond to others who have previously done so, attempting to resolve such textual issues. To resolve such contradictions, one must find other texts by the author that present the same point in a clearer way.

Or, at least, this is one way one could present this process. I would suggest, however, that this sequence of events is already situated by a kind of philosophical pursuit. For what is not addressed here is why the ambiguity matters. I have suggested this is because such ambiguities undermine the reader's ability to state, "The text means X," but this is not something Kenny states outright. Nevertheless, it is suggested: to the extent such matters are addressed, the focus is internal: such ambiguities (and other textual "flaws") matter because they undermine the cohesiveness of the philosophical point being expressed. Accordingly, only by reconstructing the author's thought in such a way that it better expresses what the author meant than what they actually wrote are we able to assemble a more coherent image of what the author meant. One may note the consonance of this approach with Schleiermacher's adage that the end of reading is to "To understand the utterance at first just as well and then better than its author."[335] The work of the exegete is scholarly duct tape, patching an apparent hole in the original construction.

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[335] Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics and Criticism*, 23.

I would suggest an alternate sequence gives us a better understanding of this process. First, the exegete presumes that what is paramount in reading a text is to correctly identify the main point/argument of the given text, where "correct" means reiterating the author's intended point as faithfully as possible. Second, or perhaps concomitantly, the exegete presumes that a given text, passage, book, or canon can only be of philosophical value if it demonstrates consistency (systematicity) throughout. An alternate form of this paradigm would be to say that a philosophical work can be condensed into a "main idea," "central thesis," etc., and note that the ability to articulate a "main point" of a given text depends upon the reader being able to organize the text around that main point. If the text itself presents resistance to that kind of unification (e.g. via ambiguous or contradictory passages), then any reader invested in such a project must address that resistance through reconciliation, dismissal, etc. I suggest this sequence of events as an alternate understanding of the situation because, without it, we are unable to articulate why one reads such texts, much less why the issues Kenny and others of his ilk identify as issues are issues.

This point calls for some elaboration. A motif of this dissertation has been that no text is approached without some already-present paradigm (however narrowly or loosely articulated). The cataloger approaches the text qua cataloger, that is to say with a classification schema in mind and a goal—the identification of metadata including subjects. The question here is how the philosopher approaches the text qua philosopher. In Kenny's case, what it means to approach a text qua philosopher means being able to identify a given text/author's main point. If that point is in some way fractured by contradictory or dissonant passages, then the reader must find some way of reconciling those statements. For Kenny, such reconciliation occurs by appealing to the author's intended meaning, established by reference to other texts. Once such reconciliation occurs, one may then offer some responses, e.g. by posing questions about the limits of the presented ideas or critiquing the argument.

Yet, as I noted, Kenny does not bring such points into the text itself. What we have instead are the outcomes: the results of such a mode of reading. More broadly, one might note this is itself founded in a conception of philosophy that here remains undefined. We can, of course, appeal to Kenny's other (later) writings for more context, but for a reader of this work alone, no such matters arise.

Section 5 - Conclusion

At the outset of this chapter, we faced questions arising from LCC/LCSH classifications: what kind of philosopher organizes philosophy along the historical lines we see in those systems and why? We are now able to proffer some answers.

For Schleiermacher, misunderstanding occurs as a matter of course. Because every utterance is expressed by a historically unique individual, we are never able to immediately fully understand any other's utterance. Even if we feel as though we have understood what is being expressed, we only achieve "correct understanding" if we understand the meaning of the utterance *exactly* as the author intended it. To do so, we must understand the individual and their mode of expressing themselves: inflections and references, genre and form, etc. This is (perhaps) easier with our contemporaries, but for historical individuals we must recreate the milieu of the original author. Factors like historical or linguistic distance—and the social and cultural distance it implies—must be considered and accounted for as we strive to reach correct understanding.

Achieving correct understanding is no easy task and even more so as our distance (historical or otherwise) from the author of the utterance increases. However, we can close this distance by learning about the context in which the author expressed themselves. Two examples of this approach in philosophy are found in Copleston and Kenny's works. For Copleston, that "distance" cannot be closed

by simply jumping to the original period in which the author wrote. Rather, there must be a continuity: because Kant references Hume and Hume draws from Locke and Locke responds to Descartes (and so on), we are in a sense compelled to understand the entire history of Western Philosophy to understand a single figure.

Copleston is cognizant that his *History* does not and cannot achieve such a feat. One would need an encyclopedia (or perhaps a library?) to make a history present in its entirety. The question, then, is if a series like Copleston's is necessarily selective, how does one choose which figures to present? He does not couch it in such terms, but for Copleston it is a matter of maximizing utility. If the purpose of the work is to facilitate understanding philosophy, and doing so requires knowledge of prior philosophers, then the figures that best facilitate understanding philosophy are those who have exerted the most influence in its history. Because they have influenced the most subsequent philosophers, understanding these influencers lays the widest basis for understanding these future figures. "The History of Philosophy" is determined in an economical manner: since only so many influencers can be included, it aids understanding in the most cases if the philosophers that are included are those who themselves exerted the widest influence.

Copleston does not critically engage the idea of influence that he relies upon; indeed, he situates it as an objective process. Influential ideas from the history of philosophy are so because they have articulated some truth, some idea essential to philosophy. This was apparent in Copleston's presentation of Thales, for example. Absent from Copleston's considerations, however, was any reflection on the role of his own work in shaping or influencing that history. This is not to say Copleston's word or work alone determines what counts as The History of Western Philosophy. It is, however, to note that the work is both a response to that history *and a reiteration of it*. Insofar as Copleston's work is read, referenced, or acts as any kind of basis for determining what else a student of philosophy should

read, it acts as a kind of starting point. Who is included, on what terms, and what is posited as "philosophy" exert a norming influence upon the reader.

This is not to say a reader could not read another, different history. Or that they could do their own research. Or, for that matter, any number of other responses that complicate or supplement this history. That said, there is no central power, no scholar-on-high who designates what counts as philosophy or is worthy of inclusion in its History. Rather, it is through works like Copleston's that this history is iterated and reiterated. In its presentation and reception and its characterization as "scholarly," the work posits its approach as the (or at least *a*) right one for understanding philosophy. Moreover, as indicated, Copleston's work is not an outlier. It is a work of a *type*: there are any number of other histories one could consult that engage in extremely similar kinds of projects.[336]

This includes Kenny's work. Aside from his own *History of Western Philosophy* series, Kenny's *Descartes* channels a similarly Schleiermacherean approach. For Kenny, philosophical understanding means understanding what Descartes thought (a point that is not justified or grounded in the work itself). This is, however, a task that works with an imperfect source. Descartes, like all of us, was not a perfect writer: his writing contains ambiguities, inconsistencies, etc. Further, his mode of articulation varied depending on circumstance: its genre, its addressee, its context and circumstance: all these shifted how he expressed his ideas, leading to some of the aforementioned uncertainties regarding what *exactly* Descartes meant. Yet it remains possible to resolve such uncertainties insofar as we can unite them into a single, coherent idea, argument, or position. Relative to such a central notion, all other forms become manifestations expressed in more or less adequate ways. What we have is a hermeneutic is akin to a crude Platonism; writings are beings, mere shadows of the fullness that is Being:

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[336] To name a few: William H. Dray, *Philosophy of History*, Prentice-Hall Foundations of Philosophy Series (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1964); Peter Adamson, *Classical Philosophy*, A History of Philosophy without Any Gaps, 2014; C. Stephen Evans, *A History of Western Philosophy: From the Pre-Socratics to Postmodernism* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2018).

the philosophical idea perfectly expressed. As with Plato, the question is therefore how to arrive at the idea itself, given that we have only its (impure) manifestations. For Kenny (and others of a similar approach), it is through careful consideration of those manifestations that we can come to posit the idea. Each manifestation is a hint, a clue to what Descartes is actually thinking. As we assemble, analyze, and compare such manifestations, we gain insight into the idea itself; the idea as envisioned and meant by the author.

What we see with these models of philosophical understanding is hermeneutics qua a science of understanding what an author meant. However its practitioners may disagree methodologically or whatever contestations they have internal to that discourse, the drive remains the same.

The library's utility for this kind of project is easily identifiable. Through precise historical indexing, ideas are traceable to their geographical and historical point of origin, and this in turn enables two kinds of research. On the one, works like Copleston's or Kenny's, which strive to rearticulate philosophical ideas as they were. This requires returning to the primary texts themselves, but insofar as it aims at correct understanding, also requires situation relative to other scholars. In some cases this may be corrective; new texts have emerged or been translated, thereby changing how the original idea is to be understood. In others, it may be the kind of historical distance considered with Schleiermacher; the interpretations themselves have become sufficiently archaic to no longer effectively disclose the ideas they represent. On the other, we have what Kenny referred to as "historical philosophy," which presumes sufficient givenness to philosophical ideas such that they can be analyzed for their "philosophical truth."

This, though, gives us an odd picture of the history of philosophy. For what is here presumed is precisely the existence of "philosophy," such that these kinds of works can proffer analyses and explanations of their ideas and figures. As I alluded to with Kenny's consideration of Wittgenstein's

reading of Augustine, there is an unclear link between "philosophy" (or "original philosophy," as Kenny had it) and its history. How is it that there are "philosophers" at all, such that they can be subsequently read and understood in these ways? Despite Kenny's insistence on the proximity of the "history of ideas" and "historical philosophy," do we nonetheless end up with a gulf between historical analyses and philosophy proper? Is it possible to do "original philosophy" alongside understanding historical philosophical texts?

These questions broach larger ones, questions which concern the relationship between the philosophy and "history" beyond relying on the latter to clarify the history of the former. To do so, however, the relationship between the philosopher and the history of philosophy must be resituated. As we have seen it thus far, the philosopher either clarifies ideas from the history of philosophy or assesses their truth. But given the presence of a repository—an archive, a library, a range like "Philosophy"—what other possibilities are there for philosophical engagement?

Chapter IV - Philosophy Accrued

Section 1 - Introduction

There are more ways to understand a text than reconstructing its meaning as intended by the author. Pivoting on this point allows us to examine philosophical understanding at a different level, the focus of this chapter. Whatever disputes and disagreements interpreters and scholars may have internal to the discourse of authorial intent, they remain united in positing that intent as an anchor of their research. As we saw with Schleiermacher, an archetype of this research holds that a reading's correctness is based upon its consonance with the author's intent. Accordingly, scholars like Copleston and Kenny attempt to reconstruct the circumstances in which the original text was written, enabling the reader to better understand what the author meant by identifying interlocuters (historical and contemporary), influences, references, and so on.

This is not to say such a pursuit is equated with philosophy proper. Kenny held that historical reconstruction was prep work: perhaps not glamorous, but crucial for drawing inferences, making critiques, or otherwise responding to the source.[337] What is notable about such approaches is the separation of "philosophy" into relatively discrete tasks: on the one, understanding texts in the history of philosophy; on the other, "doing" philosophy. Recall Kenny's remarks: "In my first years as a professional philosopher, I attempted to make original discoveries […] After I had written a few books in this area, however, I realised that I was not able to complete with the best of my philosophical colleagues."[338] Now, we may finesse Kenny's position and others like it by reference to his distinction

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[337] Kenny is by no means alone in this viewpoint (which is part of the reason for this analysis). For other examples of this approach and distinction see, e.g., Dray's *Philosophy of History*, Verene's *The History of Philosophy: A Reader's Guide,* or Collingwood's *The Idea of History: With Lectures 1926-1928*.
[338] Kenny, *What I Believe*, 14.

between "historical philosophy" and "the history of ideas," which he holds are not discrete but complementary. However, the distinction itself—along with Kenny's own praxis—suggests that even if such tasks are intertwined, one endeavor is more essentially philosophical than the other.

Yet, as we shall see, other philosophers hold that historical interpretation and philosophy cannot be so easily methodologically disentangled from one another. This, I propose, is because situate what it means to "understand" philosophy and how one contributes to further "understanding" in importantly different ways. The relationship between knowledge and its inheritors is crucial; what matters is how the relationship between a history of information qua the repository—library, archive, encyclopedia—and the scholar is philosophically developed. We may think of this relationship in terms of absences. That is, in relation to the presence of a body of texts ("Philosophy"), how does one's conception of scholarship inform how one identifies what is "missing," and therefore to be researched? Three examples enable us to discuss such differences in a more robust way.

The first example draws from the work of the Encyclopedists, here represented by Jean le Rond d'Alembert. In his preface to the *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, d'Alembert articulates a conception of knowledge and research that sets up the recognition of its absences according to categories. To take a simple example: if one has a collection of books on continents and possesses volumes on Asia, Africa, North America, Australia, and Antarctica, it is the schema of "continents" that determines the absences as missing continents, i.e. Europe and South America. Or, with the history of philosophy, it is a question of missing schools, missing epochs, missing regions—itself following from the schemas of the collection: historical, geographic, epochal. Framed in terms of research, absence means the undiscovered, which either adds to or corrects what is already present.

The second example draws from Walter Benjamin's works on history, including "On the Concept of History," the Arcades project, and assorted fragments and short pieces such as "Literary History and the Study of Literature." For Benjamin, there are two intertwined aspects to what is received as "history" that call for a particular kind of response on the part of the scholar. To appear in history is predicated upon, first, a material basis: having access to the means of historical representation. One finds innumerable absences in the archives for this reason: whole swaths of historical and contemporary peoples who have no works with which to present themselves. This point alone does not, however, meaningfully distinguish Benjamin from d'Alembert; Benjamin contributes only a more acute political and social perspective on the absent. Benjamin's deeper significance lies in his consideration of representation. Even if one can identify representative works, this does not mean that person or people is thereby "represented." Benjamin strives to articulate an approach to history that evades a dichotomous ontology which would posit an entity either as represented or not; rather, through a kind of recognition, representation is understood as a kind of truncation. Even if we have accounts from underrepresented and marginalized peoples, these accounts must be understood to not represent the totality of those peoples. No representation—individual or collective—ever captures totality. Thus, rather than simply investigate what is "missing" or "incomplete," Benjamin calls for investigation into the conditions and effects of representation in history, whether that is from texts, archives, or libraries. Absence is the presence of violence—of "barbarism," in his terms.

The third and final example draws from Michel Foucault's works on history and power, especially his essays "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," "What is an Author?," and "What is Enlightenment?" For Foucault, the categories according to which we conceive of something are the results of structures of power. I take Foucault's emphasis on non-juridical power as axiomatic here; there is no central authority, no lord or overseer, of Philosophy or its organization. This has two implications. First, no

single point of intervention will liberate the system; it is iterated and reiterated through myriad structures and relations, including the library but extending well beyond too: in classrooms, political systems, educational institutions, etc. Second, this makes critical intervention possible in many different situations, and this is where the work of the scholar enters. Put in terms of this chapter's motif, for Foucault absence takes the form of contingency: the library has the form it does, including its classifications, because those serve certain power structures. What is absent is less what is "missing," and more the effects of power relations themselves, which ironically manifests in the inconspicuousness of the form of the library itself.

In setting up these examples, we come to understand both philosophy and what it means to do philosophical research in broader terms than just those of the historiographical approach as seen in the previous chapter. This, in turn, allows us to consider the categories of research that would be relevant to such approaches and, more substantively, how to think about such categories qua scholar, librarian, or philosopher in the first place.

Section 2 - The Dragon's Hoard: Philosophy Accrued

The notion of a collection of knowledge can be found in many forms, but it is in the late 15th century in Europe when the term "encyclopedia" arises. The word supposedly drew from the Greek "enkuklopaideia," meaning cycle or circle of learning. The Ancient Greeks never used such a term, however. The word was a corruption of the phrase "enkuklios paideia," meaning a common/general education.[339]

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[339] William N. West, *Theatres and Encyclopedias in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge Studies in Renaissance Literature and Culture 44 (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 15.

In its early forms, "encyclopedia" did not originally refer to the kind of reference work we now think of. Rather, (en)cyclopedias were general works attempting to philosophically connect and unify various bodies of knowledge. The encyclopedia as we now think of it finds its roots in Johann Heinrich Alsted's 1630 work, *Encyclopaedia septem tomis distincta*. Alsted's work was pivotal because, as Ann Blair writes, "Alsted acknowledged both the classificatory and the accumulative aspects of 'encyclopaedia', but the impact of his *Encyclopaedia* increasingly moved the term 'encyclopaedia' away from questions of classification and toward encyclopaedic accumulation."[340] Closely connected to this movement is what Blair calls "A new level of care devoted to recording, saving and managing information about familiar places and authors as well as new ones."[341] It is this tendency, a desire to record more thoroughly, carefully, and comprehensively, I take as quintessential to encyclopedias. Or, as William West points out, one could even say quintessential of *the* encyclopedia, since "Insofar […] as [encyclopedias] all tend towards one goal – literal reference, in the sense of *bearing* their users *back* to the substratum of a reality, to things themselves, conceived as univocal – there can be only one encyclopedia and no encyclopedia but *the* encyclopedia."[342]

What does an encyclopedia do? Who is it for? Writing on the "Space of the encyclopedia" in early modern Europe, West describes the relationship between the encyclopedia and its users:

> The encyclopedia is imagined as an empty place in which knowledge is discovered as it plays out a scene detached from its viewer. It is experienced not as a temporally distanced subjective re-enactment, as in memory, but as something spatially distanced and objective […] where it can be viewed but not disturbed.[343]

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[340] Ann Blair, "Revisiting Renaissance Encyclopaedism," in *Encyclopaedism from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, ed. Jason König and Greg Woolf (New York, United States: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 395, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/emory/detail.action?docID=1543567.

[341] Blair, 381–82.

[342] West, *Theatres and Encyclopedias in Early Modern Europe*, 14.

[343] West, 18.

What West emphasizes is that to present "knowledge," the encyclopedia posits a relationship between itself and its contents, a relationship in which the encyclopedia maintains a kind of distance from its contents to allow them to present themselves as objective, as facts. As he puts it:

> This opening between an object and its meaning is necessary to allow the encyclopedia to emerge as a volume of text in which the signs correspond to things in the world referentially without being confused with them, but this opening also swallows the encyclopedic text into a theatrical practice, no longer as mere metaphor, but as an active staging that shapes the world by holding itself in part aloof from it.[344]

This self-staging allows an encyclopedia to be positioned by its creators as a compendium—a "storehouse of knowledge," a phrase West uses to describe conceptions of the encyclopedia, but which has also been used to describe libraries.[345]

Library collection development stands out as a notable inheritor of the ideals of accumulation, completeness, and truth. Regarding how a collection should be developed, a common ideal is "complete coverage," whether that be of a broad area (like Philosophy) or a more specific one (Metaphysics, Medieval Philosophy, etc.). The Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) division of the ALA, for example, advises when creating a bibliography to "Strive for completeness within the stated limitations (period, geographical area, medium, language, library holdings, quality, intended audience, etc.)."[346] "Completeness," in turn, is theorized as each and every item on that topic, albeit often with the proviso that items must be of "scholarly quality," i.e. the material must meet specific criteria (e.g.

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[344] West, 23.
[345] West, 42.
[346] Bibliography Committee, Collection Development and Evaluation Section, Reference and User Services Division, "Guidelines for the Preparation of a Bibliography" (RUSA, 2010), §2.2, http://www.ala.org/rusa/resources/guidelines/guidelinespreparation.

from a university press, peer-reviewed).[347] In a similar vein, this desideratum is sometimes framed in terms of a "balanced" collection:

> Balanced coverage means selecting materials that represent *all viewpoints* on important and controversial issues. More recently, librarians have sought to select materials that depict diversity in *all areas*—race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, and political beliefs—and to build collections that reflect the multiplicity of contemporary society.[348]

The emphasis here on "all viewpoints" and "all areas" maintains a similar conception of knowledge, i.e. there exist numerous more or less discrete fields of knowledge, which the library should ideally represent as completely as possible.

Yet why would collecting knowledge in this way be helpful, useful, or desirable? And why the emphasis on complete coverage?

Before addressing these questions, a word, briefly, on scope: there are numerous scholarly debates about the historical circumstances surrounding "encyclopedias," not the least of which is the disconnect between what we would recognize as an encyclopedia and how the term has been used historically. Additionally, there are debates about the status of knowledge—its definition, its production, its legitimation, etc.—moving from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. For the purposes of this section,

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[347] The topic of collection completeness vis-à-vis acquisition has been undergoing something of a shift in the past decades, especially as libraries run out of space and money. This is sometimes framed in terms of "just in case" vs. "just in time" collection development. "Just in case" is more associated with completeness, i.e. a library should collect all titles that might be of use "just in case," whereas "just in time" collection development advocates only purchasing what is strictly necessary, necessary often defined as demonstrated user need (including but not limited to newer acquisition models like evidence based acquisition [EBA] and demand driven acquisition [DDA]). I do not intend to delve into this topic here not only because it is a massive discussion in LIS in its own right but also because I see "just in time" collection development as primarily a response to budgetary constraints, rather than an ideological shift. Put another way, it is not that the idea of a complete collection (the ultimate "just in case") has become undesirable, but that it is simply unfeasible. See Chapter 7 for a more extended consideration of this issue.

[348] Peggy Johnson, *Fundamentals of Collection Development & Management* (Chicago: American Library Association, 2018), 23–24. My emphasis.

I am not so much concerned with how Renaissance encyclopedias differ from their Middle Ages and Ancient precursors, but rather understanding the philosophical basis of the impetus to accumulate information. As Seth Rudy puts it, "While these and other authors frequently disagreed with one another, both implicitly and explicitly, about the proper pathway to complete knowledge, the best way to represent that knowledge, and even what completeness itself entailed, they are all connected by their involvement in the modeling and mediation of that concept."[349]

For the Encyclopedists associated with Diderot's 28 volumes of the *Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, the *Encyclopédie* represented a catalog of the sum of (primarily Western European) human knowledge. The catalog was meant to represent everything known, but that hardly meant the *Encyclopédie* was complete. Diderot, d'Alembert, and other authors of the *Encyclopédie* did not think the work necessarily represented the final word on any given topic. Diderot thought of the *Encyclopédie* as a living text, to be continually expanded, updated, and revised. This is to say the text situates itself as a kind of repository; a collection organized and intended for future learning and scholarship.

The purpose of the *Encyclopédie*, according to D'Alembert, is relatively straightforward:

> As an *Encyclopedia*, it is to set forth as well as possible the order and connection of the parts of human knowledge. As a *Reasoned Dictionary of the Sciences, Arts, and Trades*, it is to contain the general principles that form the basis of each science and each art, liberal or mechanical, and the most essential facts that make up the body and substance of each.[350]

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[349] Seth Rudy, *Literature and Encyclopedism in Enlightenment Britain: The Pursuit of Complete Knowledge* (Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York, N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 4.

[350] Jean le Rond d'Alembert, *Preliminary Discourse to the Encyclopedia of Diderot*, trans. Richard N Schwab (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 4.

This is only a preliminary sketch of the *Encyclopédie's* project; as statements of purpose, they lack a sense of motive or importance and leave its organizational schema undetermined. D'Alembert addresses the latter point first, writing something of a chronological account of the generation of knowledge both in individuals and in societies.

Drawing heavily from Locke—to whom d'Alembert refers multiple times—d'Alembert distinguishes between direct and reflective knowledge.[351] The former appeals to the immediacy of the senses and the latter to the unification and combination of either direct or other reflective knowledge.[352] Of direct knowledge, what confronts us most immediately and pressingly is "The necessity of protecting our own bodies from pain and destruction," which "causes us to examine which among the external objects can be useful or harmful to us."[353] Beyond this initial assessment, d'Alembert writes that as attempts to assess these objects grew more sophisticated and interacted with the assessments of others, there must have developed "A deeper study of some of the less evident properties."[354]

Another side of knowledge appears here: curiosity. For d'Alembert, curiosity supplements the desire for knowledge because although we may pursue knowledge for the purpose of gaining pleasure or abating pain, not all knowledge is (immediately) useful to that end. He writes, "If an abundance of pleasurable knowledge could console us for our lack of useful truth, we might say that the study of Nature lavishly serves our pleasures at least […] It is, so to speak, a kind of superfluity that compensates, although most imperfectly, for the things we lack."[355] This works out for humans though, in two ways. One, it enables what d'Alembert calls "purely enjoyable knowledge" [*connaissances simplement agréables*], knowledge enjoyable in and of itself and therefore worth pursuing in its own right insofar as it

[351] Cf. John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, esp 1.2.15.
[352] d'Alembert, *Preliminary Discourse to the Encyclopedia of Diderot*, 6.
[353] d'Alembert, 11.
[354] d'Alembert, 15.
[355] d'Alembert, 16.

grants pleasure (and for d'Alembert "In the hierarchy of our needs […] pleasure holds one of the highest places"[356]). Two, new knowledge may not be *immediately* useful, but it may yet be useful in some future context: "The mere fact that we have occasionally found concrete advantages in certain fragments of knowledge, when they were hitherto unsuspected, authorizes us to regard all investigations begun out of pure curiosity as being potentially useful to us."[357]

On these grounds we can begin to see the purpose of the *Encyclopédie*. As a compendium of useful information, it enables individuals and societies to address the fundamental needs of all humans, i.e., the abatement of pain and enjoyment of pleasure by providing information about how to achieve those ends in various circumstances. Further, as a source of new knowledge, it is itself a potential source of pleasure to its reader. Further still, in providing the reader with this knowledge, it makes possible future, useful conversions of knowledge into additional or more refined forms of increasing pleasure or abating pain.

It is worth pausing a moment to consider what this means for the scope of the *Encyclopédie* project. Since useful information can address universal human needs on a universal scale, it can and should be included. Since non-useful information can grant pleasure to the reader and may contain latent useful information, it should be included as well. The *Encyclopédie* thus has a truly universal scope; ostensibly nothing should be omitted.

Of course, this presumes knowledge obtained from external sources is equivalent—or at least highly analogous—to our own direct or reflective knowledge. D'Alembert thinks it is: "We try to satisfy these needs by two means: by our own discoveries and by the investigations of other men."[358] This social dimension has another benefit too: it allows humans to collectively address increasingly

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[356] d'Alembert, 16.
[357] d'Alembert, 16.
[358] d'Alembert, 14.

difficult questions. Using magnets as an example, D'Alembert notes that properties of magnets have been defined and collected over time, and "All these singular properties, dependent on the nature of the magnet, probably relate to some general property which is the origin of them all."[359] Although this "general property" is obscure, D'Alembert suggests that even if we cannot yet determine what this general property is, gathering these properties together can still be useful as paving the way for the future discovery of such a property. Hence: "The only resources that remain to us in an investigation so difficult, although so necessary and even pleasant, is *to collect as many facts as we can*, to arrange them in the most natural order, and to relate them to a certain number of principal facts of which the others are only the consequences."[360]

Given what d'Alembert has said thus far, revisiting West's statement is apropos: "Insofar […] as [encyclopedias] all tend towards one goal – literal reference, in the sense of *bearing* their users *back* to the substratum of a reality, to things themselves, conceived as univocal – there can be only one encyclopedia and no encyclopedia but *the* encyclopedia."[361] The domain of the encyclopedia is universal; a complete encyclopedia, for encyclopedists, is *the* encyclopedia: there can be no other. This includes a temporal dimension: "Being animated by curiosity and self-esteem, we try, in our natural eagerness, to embrace the past, the present, and the future all at the same time."[362] Every topic, every area, every person, place, and thing—for all time: this is the scope of the encyclopedia *par excellence*. As with so many projects of a similar ilk, i.e. projects that strive for completeness or totality, there are concessions that such an achievement is impossible. Despite its impossibility, this idea remains both foundational (it establishes the scope of the project) and animating (its realization guides what work can and should be done).

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[359] d'Alembert, 23.
[360] d'Alembert, 23. My emphasis.
[361] West, *Theatres and Encyclopedias in Early Modern Europe*, 14.
[362] d'Alembert, *Preliminary Discourse to the Encyclopedia of Diderot*, 34.

The conception of the "completion" of knowledge resonates nicely with Copleston, Kenny, and the library for two reasons. First, the Encyclopedists conceive of knowledge as tending towards completion via accumulation. Individual pieces of information may be subject to revision or correction, but insofar as that information is true, that information is complete: nothing more needs to be said. Research *adds to* an existing body of literature that is presumed accurate. A specific area, such as the history of philosophy, thus amounts to a catalog of (presumed) accurate representations of historical philosophers' ideas. If a philosophy has been roundly circumscribed, i.e. we know "what a philosophy means" or have achieved "correct understanding," then research can only add to that information. Any further modification of correct understanding is redundant at best or tampering with the truth at worst.

What we have with the Encyclopedists is what we might call a topographical kind of knowledge. Human knowledge consists of various areas, and improving our knowledge means either discovery of the new (filling gaps) or correction (finessing contours). This holds true as we examine insets of the map—areas like history, mathematics, or philosophy. To the extent an area is represented by works, themselves under a heading that situates the area relative to the broader picture, knowledge is mapped, and the image is slowly filled out. For the scholar, then, contributing to the map means knowing which areas still need to be expanded, which need to be refined, and which are effectively "complete."

This approach is one way of conceiving of the absences of the collection: the to-be-filled-out. What it does not do, however, is interrogate how the areas of the map came to be established. It may debate exactly where a border should be drawn (is Bacon "Modern"?), but the borders primarily serve to frame the course of subsequent inquiry. As we move towards critique, response, and thinking otherwise, it is precisely these areas that are put in question. Why do we draw the divisions we do, and how did those divisions arise?

Section 3 - History Against the Grain: Benjamin

> Only a discipline that abandons its museum characteristics can replace illusion with
> reality.
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> — Benjamin, "Literary History and the Study of Literature"[363]

For Benjamin, the fullness of the archive risks obfuscating its absences. We examine a catalog and find thousands of titles and categories, a massive amount of information that we might inherit with awe. As we come to know its material, we learn of its gaps. Following d'Alembert, these gaps represent gaps in the sum of human knowledge; they represent the to-be-researched, the to-be-known. Benjamin, though, underscores the ethical and political dimensions of these gaps in two interconnected ways. On the one, some gaps are the result of historical violence: genocide, censorship, oppression— these affect what materials and what voices are present within the archive. On the other, Benjamin situates representation itself as a kind of violence, and therefore ever calls for a kind of response and redemption. What is absent is the flipside, the overshadowed of the represented.

Representation has been and continues to be a dominant concern in collection development and management. In our contemporary context, this is often framed in terms of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives, but its questions, concerns, and methods are founded in techniques of collection development that predate the rise of DEI work. Put briefly, the issues revolve around how to create a "representative collection," either within a specific area or for the collection writ large. To

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[363] Walter Benjamin, "Literary History and the Study of Literature," in *Selected Writings: Volume 2, Part 2, 1931-1934*, ed. Howard Eiland, Michael W Jennings, and Gary Smith, trans. Rodney Livingston, 2006, 462.

think through this method—and what a Benjaminean intervention looks like—we must take a step back to consider representation as construed by LIS literature.

For a work to be added to a collection, it must first be recognized as worth adding. "Recognition" is here predicated upon two factors. One, the more prevalent, concerns notions of quality or appropriateness for a collection. Johnson, e.g., notes that evaluation of "item-intrinsic qualities" examines facets of the work including whether it is "well written," its "reputation, credentials, or authoritativeness," and the "quality of scholarship."[364] Two, and more relevantly for this consideration, is how an individual work (or group of works) can be taken to be representative of a topic. Insofar as we remain within existing lexicons of authority terms—LCC, LCSH, DDC, publisher genres and terms—to identify a particular work as being relevant to a collection relies upon a consonance between the work's metadata and the collection. A simple example: if I am looking to expand my library's collection on social justice, I depend upon metadata that can (explicitly or implicitly) identify such items, which in turn enables me to select the item for acquisition. Admittedly no library or librarian is *necessarily* restricted to the use of one form of metadata, but if the system in use is not LCC or a comparable system, it still relies upon resources that are categorized as relevant, e.g. award winners and recommendations.

Yet there are a few issues with this reliance upon recognition. Recall, for example, that Derrida's works on Deconstruction are frequently separated from the secondary literature on the topic. Recall also how Melissa Adler notes that early works on queer theory, such as Eve Sedgwick's *Epistemology of the Closet*, are not (and could not) be classified as queer theory since a cataloger "could have no idea that Sedgwick would come to be regarded as one of the founders of queer theory."[365] In the case of emerging fields and discourses, there is (understandably) a dearth of associated classifications and

[364] Johnson, *Fundamentals of Collection Development & Management*, 126.
[365] Adler, *Cruising the Library: Perversities in the Organization of Knowledge.*, ix.

authority terms. This is, as I have alluded to previously, due in large part to the notion of "literary warrant," which holds that a heading is created only if that heading is used by and would be helpful to users in that field. However, this presupposes the existence of a field to which it would be relevant.

Even if such fields are more established, this is not a sufficient condition for the creation of authority terms: there must be a critical mass of works on the topic. As Barité notes, though multiple sources hold a new term should be created if there are "enough works," what "enough" means is often (perhaps unsurprisingly) vague.[366] Even if a criterion is specified, however, one typically finds a rather arbitrary number, e.g. in 1958 Custer wrote regarding Dewey Decimal Classification that a subdivision could be created if there were "more than twenty titles."[367]

Such situations underscore the way in which the categories according to which we divide and understand a topic are historical, social, and contingent. The formal creation of categories within a controlled system like LCC is predicated upon recognition. Yet if collection development is dependent upon such categories, this means what is present in the collection (and how) are contingent upon historical influences shaping the terms of their inclusion. These factors are, for Benjamin, elements that should be considered by the one consulting the repository—the researcher.

The question here is about the cost of representation. That is, what transformation does the ephemeral (e.g. a loose collection of writings) undergo as it coalesces into a representation (an identifiable discipline or subject)? For Benjamin, recognition—the identification of a thing as *being* this or that—follows from a certain logic of representation. In Section N of the *Arcades* project, he writes, "The pathos of this work: there are no periods of decline," and, later, "Overcoming the concept of 'progress' and overcoming the concept of 'period of decline' are two sides of one and the same

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[366] Mario Barité, "Literary Warrant," *Knowledge Organization* 45, no. 6 (2018): 526.
[367] Benjamin A Custer, "Editor's Introduction," in *Decimal Classification and Relative Index*, by Melvil Dewey (Lake Placid Club, NY: Forest Press, 1958), 19.

thing."[368] For Benjamin, to speak of "decline" or "progress" always begs the question regarding whom one is talking about. Quoting Hermann Lotze, Benjamin writes:

> To the view that "there is progress enough if, . . . while the mass of mankind remains mired in an uncivilized condition, the civilization of a small minority is constantly struggling upward to greater and greater heights," Lotze responds with the question: "How, upon such assumptions, can we be entitled to speak of one history of mankind?" Lotze, Mikrokosmos, vol. 3, p. 25.[369]

Whether we are discussing "humankind" or a specific culture, the idea that there is, has been, or will be "progress" should give us pause. Upon closer inspection, the category to which we assign the predicate "progress" is a composite entity. Moreover, the simplification of that composite serves a particular narrative that makes it possible to emphasize a certain section, the ones for whom things are achieving "progress" in this case. For Benjamin, then, the researcher should beware such categories precisely because of their power to obscure.

Benjamin's tenor emphasizes the political, historical, and cultural, but I take it this view of representation applies to more than concepts associated with those areas. For example, to classify a work as "literature" suggests it most properly belongs with other works of "literature," thereby emphasizing its "literary" characteristics and highlighting them for potential readers. Practically, not only does this mean the work will most easily be found by those seeking the work qua literature but the classification itself exerts a norming effect insofar as (1) it most easily and likely most consistently found by researchers in that area, thereby creating or reinforcing an association and (2) the classification itself acts as a guide to the reader for how the work is to be understood (i.e. as a work of *literature* and not history,

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[368] Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin, Third Printing Edition (1999; repr., Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2002), 458. N1,6. Benjamin, 460. N2,5.
[369] Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, 480. N14a,2.

philosophy, etc.). In classifying a work as literature, one cannot avoid glossing, de-emphasizing, or outright suppressing those aspects of the work that resonate with other fields: a work cannot simultaneously hold an LCC classification of both B (philosophy) and PS (American literature). Further, this assumes that all possible classifications are already present. Yet history is rife with disciplinary schisms, offshoots, evolutions, rebrandings, and so on, which continually introduce new terminology.

When a representation arises also matters. Benjamin emphasizes that a given representation is not pure abstract categorization based on some conception of knowledge as universal a la Bacon. "…The idea of autonomy easily spills over into the historical domain. It then leads to the attempt to portray the history of scholarship as an independent, separate process set apart from overall political and intellectual developments."[370] Rather, as something is characterized, certain aspects or ideas are emphasized vis-à-vis other possibilities. Much as one may notice different aspects of the same work depending on what one has read recently, so too a categorization will be tied to predominant interests at the time the classification is applied. To be clear, this is not due to individual bias or the fault of an individual cataloger—although those factors can compound matters. Rather, it is an acknowledgement of the fact that such classificatory decisions are inevitably made in particular historical, cultural, and political milieus, and influence how that material is likely to be understood as relevant to contemporary scholarly discourses.

If representation necessarily predicates itself on simplification, then there is no representation without reduction. Each representation harbors the possibility of an analysis that breaks it apart, that casts light on the hitherto overshadowed. This conceptual disassembly does not "solve" the issue, however, because this too is a mode of representation: changing spotlights from one to another ever leaves an Other in shadow. Or, put more drastically: the very act of representation *creates* its Other.

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[370] Benjamin, "Literary History and the Study of Literature," 459.

But if this is unavoidable, the question cannot be "How can the violence of representation be overcome?" Instead, the question is: "How should we respond to the necessary violence of representation?" For Benjamin this is a question that probes at what it means to be a historian. If violence is unavoidable, how can we recognize and redeem that violence?

To begin, we must set aside any notion that we can ultimately, finally, or absolutely redeem history. In taking up history, we are endowed with a "*weak* messianic power."[371] That is, in breaking apart the representations of history, we redeem by giving the historically-marginalized their due, but we do not achieve Redemption. As Gordon Hull puts it, "Writing history, in short, can only promise, but not bring about, its own fulfillment."[372]

This process is quite different from the project of historiography, which Benjamin associates with the Rankean emphasis on representing the past "the way it really was" [*wie es eigentlich gewesen*]. For Benjamin, such history inevitably sides "with the victor."[373] There is a twofold sense to this phrase. The first sense is one we have already seen. If historiography concerns itself with *representing* history as it was, then it relies upon already-given representations to carry out its task. It relies upon the existence of groups, identities, and categories that may then be studied, researched, and scrutinized. As Stefan Gandler points out, "Drawing closer to history's winners invariably means siding with today's rulers, their heirs."[374] The existence of certain "groups" is historically dependent upon those who oversaw such groupings. Reflecting on the differences between her own Korean heritage and her frequent association with other Asians, Cathy Park Hong writes, "Most Americans know nothing about Asian

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[371] Walter Benjamin, "On the Concept of History," in *Selected Writings: Volume 4, 1938-1940*, ed. Howard Eiland and Michael W Jennings, trans. Edmund Jephcott, 2006, 390. §2.

[372] Gordon Hull, "'Reduced to a Zero-Point': Banjamin's Critique of Kantian Historical Experience," *The Philosophical Forum* 31, no. 2 (2000): 173, https://doi.org/10.1111/0031-806X.00034.

[373] Benjamin, "On the Concept of History," 391. §7.

[374] Stefan Gandler, "The Concept of History in Walter Benjamin's Critical Theory," Radical Philosophy Review, April 1, 2010, 27, https://doi.org/10.5840/radphilrev20101313.

Americans. They think *Chinese* is synecdoche for *Asians* the way *Kleenex* is for *tissues*."[375] Alex Tizon writes, similarly:

> It was the children and grandchildren, the ones growing up in America, who would find—or be coerced onto—common ground. Years of checking 'Asian' on countless forms, of being subjected to the same epithets and compliments, of living in the same neighborhoods […] all of these would compel young Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Filipinos to accept their belonging to the category known as Asians.[376]

If such representations are relied upon uncritically, they do not recognize the violence necessary to produce the object of their study, and thereby reiterate the violence.[377]

The second sense gestures towards the material conditions of historical representation. Who was published? Who was able to create works that still endure? Who had the ability and the tools to write, and who was able to protect such writings against oblivion? Admittedly there are vicissitudes of history that mean even "The Greats" have lost texts to time; power and privilege is no guarantee of preservation. But it certainly helps. And, as noted, one must have access to the media being collected: writing materials, literacy, sufficient space and time to write, and a means of securing the continued existence of the work beyond one's death (or even, in some cases, during one's life). This is not to say one cannot find counterexamples, i.e. works from those who did not ordinarily write or have their works survive—that is not the point. But such examples prove the rule: works from the oppressed, colonized, and marginalized are often notable precisely because it is amazing they survived given the history of their marginalization and censorship, as well as their lack of access to the modes of expression being preserved.

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[375] Cathy Park Hong, *Minor Feelings: An Asian American Reckoning* (New York: One World, 2020), 19.

[376] Alex Tizon, *Big Little Man: In Search of My Asian Self* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014), 57.

[377] This issue will be explored further with Said and Orientalism.

These senses combine in such a way as to illustrate the contingent conditions that made possible our own reception of history qua texts, recordings, and materials. As Benjamin puts it, "There is no document of culture which is not at the same time a document of barbarism."[378] I take it that "barbarism" returns to its etymological roots here: barbarism is barbar-ism, enacting and enforcing an inside/outside: a civilized (and therefore of value) and an uncivilized (and therefore to be forgotten). No document of history avoids the logic of representation or the necessity of material preservation; each item in the archive, the library, or the museum has behind it a history of selection, preservation, and discrimination: *this* is worth keeping (and *that* is not).

What does this mean for the library? To begin, Benjamin emphasizes the gaps of the archive *not* as the to-be-researched (a la d'Alembert), but necessarily inherent in what is present. Hence, for Benjamin, the impetus to "brush history against the grain."[379] Note that this approach clashes with that of subject analysis. As we saw in Chapter Three, contemporary subject analysis construes subjects as a property of a material as dictated by the author or publisher. For Benjamin, such headings obfuscate the conditions of their legibility. This is even more so with the historical indexing we have already seen: to underscore the primary attributes of a philosophical work as its historical and geographical point of origin is to downplay how and why that particular work came to be in the library at all.

Admittedly there is no easy alternative. The idea of an "against the grain" series of headings seems a manifest contradiction, a reification of a method suspicious of such reifications. If the whole point is to break down the conditions of representation, then any representation—including new subject headings—would simply enact the same kind of violence. Our conclusion might therefore incline us towards the elimination of headings of any kind: no representation, no violence.

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[378] Benjamin, "On the Concept of History," 392. §7.
[379] Benjamin, 392. §7.

However, such a conclusion is preemptive for three reasons. One, logical consistency. To believe that the elimination of subject headings solves all issues conflates subject headings with representation in general. Eliminating subject headings does not eliminate representations within the library: other representations remain: titles, for example. A title stands in lieu of the work itself; it represents however many pages in a few words. More substantively, we find summaries, genres, even author names standing in for the work itself. Insofar as we employ language to stand in for an object, representation is inevitable.[380]

Two, such representations do not act exclusively as tools for access and discovery. As Cutter and others indicate, they act as a basis for the organization of the library itself and therefore cannot be disposed of wholesale without turning the library into little more than a browsing bin at a bookstore. Such an "organization" may result in interesting and unexpected discoveries but can hardly be said to facilitate more structured research projects.

Three, and most importantly, such a response misses the point. Benjamin writes, "What matters for the dialectician is to have the wind of world history in his sails. Thinking means for him: setting the sails. What is important is *how* they are set. Words are his sails. The way they are set makes them into concepts."[381] To adhere to "wrong" or "right" in that sense is to take up an ahistorical under-standing of those terms which does not recognize the ongoing historical development of such terms. The issue, then, does not necessarily lie at the level of the classification itself. Rather, classification is problematic only insofar as it represents a kind of reification; as Benjamin puts it, "As soon as it

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[380] This does not even get into the more complex consideration of the ontological status of an "object." I take it that any given object is, fundamentally, unrepresentable in its totality because its totality is necessarily incomplete. A stone "is what it is," so to speak, but the very identification of object *as* a stone presupposes, on the one hand, an ontological con-catenation of individual particles and, on the other, a representation of *this* unique object *as* an instance of a broader type (i.e. *this* stone is *a* stone). Insofar as this constitution depends on a being for whom this object appears qua object, it also depends on the relationship of that object with that being, a relationship that (for temporal beings anyway) is subject to change, revision, discovery, and experimentation. To identify a stone as a stone is, in short, not the only mode of repre-senting that object.

[381] Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, 473. N9,6.

becomes the signature of historical process as a whole, the concept of progress bespeaks an uncritical hypostatization rather than a critical interrogation."[382] The presumption of either correct/incorrect obfuscates dissonance; it is precisely the gap, the difference between the representation and the represented that provides the traction for critical projects to gather their energies. The "*How* they are set" precisely relies upon such words to analyze the historical, political, and social forces that have shaped the words and concepts that are used.

For Benjamin, brushing history against the grain is an activity; not a property. The task falls to the reader/historian to undertake this activity in relation to given representations. This being so, alternate modes of classification could yet be useful. Useful, though, must be understood in a fundamentally different sense that the way d'Alembert's collection of information is "useful." A Benjaminean family of classifications would emphasize emergent discourses, new possibilities of arrangement, and highlight hitherto un- or under-explored opportunities. Such headings would support, to use Benjamin's terms, new constellations of the history of philosophy, making possible new kinds of philosophical conversations.

This idea finds some traction in LIS literature. Hope Olson, drawing from Homi Bhaba, argues that LCSH should seize upon its position precisely to make these new kinds of conversation possible:

> LCSH and all of its policies and practices constitute a Third Space. It is a dynamic space of passage between documents catalogued and library users. It is a space of ambivalence in which meaning is constructed. That is, LCSH shapes the meaning that is conveyed from a document to a user. In this sense LCSH and its application form a cultural practice of authority. […] Viewed in this manner, LCSH has the power to create meaning whether that power is used consciously or not. It cannot be neutral

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[382] Benjamin, 478. N13,1.

because there is no neutrality or universal meaning--no "primordial unity." Therefore,

it should be used with a consciousness of that power.[383]

Authors like Emily Drabinski, meanwhile, draw from Queer Theory to frame classification other-

wise, advocating a "Shift in approach [that] emphasizes the pedagogical possibilities of our access

structures, shifting attention away from 'fixing' the placement of materials in organizational systems

and modifying and elaborating subject language and toward an effort that engages users in a critical

reading of the catalog itself."[384] This is to say that, for Drabinsky, subject headings and terms cannot

be "corrected" once and for all through the adoption of the "right" terms, nor are they so fundamen-

tally problematic that they should be abandoned. Rather, Drabinsky emphasizes:

> In order to be accessible to users, materials must be fixed in place and described using
>
> controlled vocabulary. However, this fixing is always fundamentally fictive; classifica-
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> tion and subject heading decisions are always made in a context that is subject to
>
> change. Queer interventions will highlight and make visible the contingency of cata-
>
> loging decisions.[385]

Drabinsky frames the situation as an either/or, suggesting that "the political focus on correcting

classification structure and subject language solidifies the idea that the classification structure is in fact

objective and does in fact tell the truth, the core fictions—from a queer perspective—that allow the

hegemony of a universalized classification structure to persist."[386] That is, *either* we insist on updating

existing headings and terms as a corrective and in so doing continue to reinforce the paradigm within

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[383] Hope A Olson, "Difference, Culture and Change: The Untapped Potential of LCSH," *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 29, no. 1–2 (June 1, 2000): 66, https://doi.org/10.1300/J104v29n01_04.

[384] Emily Drabinski, "Queering the Catalog: Queer Theory and the Politics of Correction," *The Library Quarterly: Information, Community, Policy* 83, no. 2 (2013): 97, https://doi.org/10.1086/669547. This point will be considered in more detail in Chapter 7.

[385] Drabinski, 105.

[386] Drabinski, 104.

which "correct" headings are possible and desirable, *or* we adopt a different approach to understanding headings, thereby rejecting the idea that such classifications are or could be objective.

I would argue that given the ongoing practicality of such representations, it is worthwhile to consider the conditions and effects of the forms of existing representations. As we saw in Chapter Three, such representations aid the historiographically-minded philosopher because identifying an origin grounds a hermeneutic. Still, if is the case that representations necessarily always fall short, then why not fall short in more modes than one? Previous examples, e.g. Kant's work on race, have already brushed history against the grain, and in so doing founded new modes of inquiry and discourses. Why not index Kant's works—or other works in a similar vein—based on what such research has uncovered? To argue against updating such headings because they will necessarily fall short misses Benjamin's point. That there will never be the "right" headings or that they are not objective does not mean the existing ones should be left alone or that new ones should not be created. Here it is a question of critiquing the paradigm that posits that Right or Correct headings are possible at all. By understanding such designations not as qualities of the materials themselves, but as historical, cultural constellations that make different kinds of access possible, we come to a different conceptualization of headings that allows for their continued utility while recognizing their inevitable shortcomings.

One additional point that follows from Benjamin's work is worth noting. Benjamin's points regarding representation apply to "Philosophy" itself. Philosophy only ever identifies *some* philosophers, philosophies, and philosophical projects as "Philosophy" with a capital "P": philosophy *proper*, *real* philosophy. Because the fundamental term is itself historical and social, contested and contestable, no set of headings, classifications, or categories would ever be fully satisfactory.

Section 4 - History is for Cutting: Foucault and Genealogy

Like Benjamin, Foucault holds that the scholar should not take what is given by the archive for granted. Knowledge is fundamentally tied up in relations of power: who is the knower? Who or what is the object of knowledge? And how does the way we understand "knowledge" reflect this relationship?

These questions may tempt us to scour the archive for a source. For Foucault, this is the temptation to search for an origin (some person, group, movement, event, etc.): an *arche*. In identifying such an origin, the source is taken to explain the phenomenon. By discovering this origin and linking it to our present drive to learn, we may claim we have attained knowledge. We saw this with Schleiermacher: to know the author qua origin of the work means we then know why the work has the form that it does; knowing this, in turn, makes possible a claim to know the work better or more fully. The philosopher who follows such a path seeks the origins of ideas in philosophers and their works: Dasein in Heidegger, the *cogito* in Descartes, "free will" in Augustine. The more acutely one knows the origin, the more acutely one can know the idea.[387]

In "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," Foucault critiques such searches, invoking the idea of "genealogy," which "Opposes itself to the search for 'origins.'"[388] Rather than seeking a discrete moment—a spark, an epiphany, a "eureka moment"—genealogy emphasizes the heterogeneity at the root of the apparently-unified, the apparently-homogenous: "…the genealogist sets out to study the beginning—numberless beginnings, whose faint traces and hints of color are readily seen by a historical eye."[389]

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[387] It is too lengthy to delve into here, but this situation should be considered in the context in which "authors" can become "scholars" or "specialists" through the demonstration of such knowledge, by articles, books, or grandstanding ten-minute long "questions" at professional conferences. Why this relationship exists in the way it does, i.e. that to be a specialist means knowing and being able to demonstrate one's memorization of such facts, broaches broader questions about the social mechanisms by which knowledge and authority are tied together and recognized.

[388] Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in *The Foucault Reader*, 2010, 77.

[389] Foucault, 81.

For the genealogist, historical study is not about the discovery of an origin, but rather using its ostensible origin to expose its fractured, contingent, heterogenous character. As Foucault puts it, "The search for descent is not the erecting of foundations: on the contrary, it disturbs what was previously considered immobile; it fragments what was thought unified; it shows the heterogeneity of what was imagined consistent with itself."[390]

In taking up genealogy as a method, the researcher can consider not just the historical phenomenon as it straightforwardly presents itself, but expose the mechanisms of power (social, political) that helped reify the phenomenon into its present form. "Knowledge" and "information" are reframed, and in so doing their associated categories and classifications are exposed in their contingency.

Foucault's essays "What is Enlightenment?" and "What is an Author?," help us consider this issue further. Reading these in the context of the library sheds light on how historical research in philosophy could be understood otherwise, reframing its purposes, categories, and objects of knowledge.

Part i - "Modern" Philosophy

"What is Enlightenment?" takes up history in the form of "modernity." That is, what does it mean to be "modern"? Against modernity as historical designation (e.g. of an epoch), Foucault situates modernity in terms of what he calls "attitude."[391] Yet, as attitude, our response may tend toward the dichotomous: for or against, adoption or rejection. This response is an oversimplification, but an oversimplification in a specific manner. What it presumes, as Foucault points out, is an approach in which the posited ideas are understood as ontologically universal or necessary. To be "for" modernity (or not) means positing some universal essence of "modernity" which is subsequently adopted (or

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[390] Foucault, 82.
[391] Michel Foucault, "What Is Enlightenment?," in *The Foucault Reader*, 2010, 39.

not). Further, the judgment itself is held to be universal: either "modernity" is worthy of acceptance, for all persons for all time, or it is not. Pace such universalisms, Foucault proposes understanding modernity in terms of what he calls a "philosophical ethos" that entails "a critique of what we are saying, thinking, and doing, through a historical ontology of ourselves."[392] This, for Foucault, is a more robust and productive sense of modernity.

Crucial to the attitude of modernity is a different way of understanding historical ideas, fueled by a question: "In what is given to us as universal, necessary, obligatory, what place is occupied by whatever is singular, contingent, and the product of arbitrary constraints?"[393] Consider this question in contrast to prior discussions: with Copleston, for example, adhering to a *philosophia perennis*, "philosophy" had a de facto essence. This is not to say Copleston articulated a universal conception of philosophy, nor that he explicitly posits such an essence. It is, rather, to note the *character* of Copleston's approach: he takes the categories of philosophy (metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, etc.) as given, not as historical phenomena. For Copleston, the domain of philosophy has already been established, and it is precisely because of his acceptance of those historical delimitations that Copleston's project takes the form and foci it does. Yet those very preconditions go unconsidered: as we saw with his presentation of Thales, Copleston already takes it as obvious what is philosophical in a thinker's ideas.

Now, this is not to say *all* such terms are ahistorical: it is simply a question of *which* ideas are presented as historical and which are not. In contrast to the givenness of categories like metaphysics or epistemology, Copleston situates ideas or schools like Platonism or the Death of God as arising at a particular historical moment. With the library too, we find revisions and expansions to classification schedules that acknowledge that new traditions and ideas come into existence at certain historical

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[392] Foucault, 45.
[393] Foucault, 45.

moments. However, it is a question of at what level these additions and revisions operate. "What place is occupied by whatever is singular, contingent, and the product of arbitrary constraints?"[394]

What the critical attitude acknowledges and takes up is the contestability of the given terms and the possibility of their being otherwise. This does not mean that philosophical divisions from the past several millennia are "wrong," nor that a new conception is needed that wholesale discards any and all prior conceptions. It is, rather, to recognize the dynamic and contingent character of the idea of "philosophy" and its associated concepts, to recognize them as classifications informed by historical conceptions, debates, disagreements, and politics about what counts as "philosophy" and why. As Foucault notes, "This historico-critical attitude must also be an experimental one."[395] Of course, one may object that should one perform such a critique and subsequently posit an alternative, one has simply swapped one definition for another. This, however, assumes that the replacements are posited with the kind of ontological fixity (universalism, perhaps) as the initial terms. Importantly though, what changes are not simply the terms themselves, but our understanding of the ontological status of such categories. This is why Foucault writes, "The theoretical and practical experience that we have of our limits and of the possibility of moving beyond them is always limited and determined; thus we are always in the position of beginning again."[396] The shift operates at a more fundamental level, one which understands such categories from within a different paradigm.

Were we to posit another order to the library's range of "Philosophy," we would undoubtedly do so as historical individuals. We might, for example, remove Eurocentric classifications that situate

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[394] Foucault, 45.
[395] Foucault, 46.
[396] Foucault, 47.

European philosophy to its Others ("Relation to Oriental thought," for example). Or we could introduce new terms (at whatever level), ones that would make gathering "philosophy of race" feasible. Both, I think, would be improvements. This is, however, said with a caveat.

Returning to an example from Chapter Two, reconsider the art gallery. Rearrangement makes possible different kinds of experiences: even with the same objects, the viewer has a different experience if the art is arranged by region than if by color. Expanding further, possible arrangements can themselves change if different objects are admitted as "art." Are any of these "right"? Perhaps—but if they are they are so only relative to a particular imagined space. We can say an object is "right" or "wrong" internal to any of these schemas (a red object does not belong in the blue room), but between schemas our criteria for evaluation are contingent upon the kind of experience we seek to evoke.

What, then, is being evoked by the library range called "Philosophy"? Our question now has a new dimension because it is a question of evocation. What kinds of conversations, dialogues, debates, and discourses does "Philosophy" make possible? And what other kinds of conversation *could* it make possible by shifting what "Philosophy" includes? As I suggested above, there are some modifications that could make certain kinds of new discourses possible: but this is just the beginning. And, crucially, it is only ever the beginning.

Like the gallery, new possibilities of arrangement are ever possible: depending on what is admitted into the space, depending on grouping, there are myriad opportunities here. It is, therefore, a question of priority and of value, and with this question we hit upon the crux of this critique: what is the value of philosophy? This is not a question of there being *one* value. This is not the kind of value presupposed and operative in the Encyclopedic approach where philosophy is framed as a repository of truths, and it is as *that* repository that philosophy has value. With Foucault's attitude of modernity, the repository's value derives from both what its present form allows us to see and how that form simultaneously

shapes the possibility of seeing its structure otherwise. In other words, one still consults the archive, but the mode of consultation changes. This change in mode is important, for it is not simply a matter of a new approach applied to an old topic; it is, instead, a change in mode that alters how the reader understands the topic.

Part ii - Truth and Authorship

There are reasons that prevent such remixes of philosophy. Some, logistical and economical, have to do with the sheer amount of work that would be required to classify works not just once, but again and again, in multiple ways—to say nothing of retrospective revisions. This issue could perhaps be alleviated through some of the efforts towards incorporating "User Tags" into catalogs, i.e. enabling users to create and share their own classifications of items.[397] Second, though, is the desirability of such shifts. As we saw in Chapter Three, philosophy as presented by the library means a kind of research into what an author meant. Insofar as that pursuit exists as philosophical research *par excellence*, integral to "proper philosophy," or even exclusively what counts as philosophy, then it will retain a privileged position.

Foucault proffers a critique of this focus in his essay "What is an Author?"[398] For Foucault, the concept of an "author" has a function within a particular scholarly paradigm:

> Modern literary criticism, even when—as is now customary—it is not concerned with
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> questions of authentication, still defines the author the same way: the author provides
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> the basis for explaining not only the presences of certain events in a work, but also

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[397] This approach has been widely discussed in LIS literature. An LC working group published a report in 2008 which called for more collaborative, decentralized bibliographic control (Library of Congress, 2008. 4). For further discussion of the viability and desirability of user tags, see Rolla, 2011; Pirmann, 2012; Voorbij, 2012; Brinna and Han, 2020. See also websites like LibraryThing.com, which allow users to catalog their own books however they like and consult community tags.

[398] I here consult only Foucault's revised edition of this essay, published in 1979.

their transformations, distortions, and diverse modifications (through his biography,

the determination of his individual perspective, the analysis of his social position, and

the revelation of his basic design).[399]

This mindset produces a set of questions, a kind of methodology when it comes to understanding a text: "We now ask of each poetic or fictional text: From where does it come, who wrote it, when, under what circumstances, or beginning with what design? The meaning ascribed to it and the status or value accorded it depend on the manner in which we answer these questions."[400]

Admittedly Foucault is discussing literary criticism here, not philosophy. We might note therefore, in contradistinction to literary criticism, philosophy generally retains a commitment to understanding and assessing the truth of the propositions of a given text. Understanding the text is simply a prerequisite for interpretation and criticism, or a prerequisite for understanding what has already been discovered such that one can then contribute "original" philosophy. Nevertheless, Foucault's description captures the general approach of the historian of philosophy involved in the initial process of understanding.[401]

Christina Hendricks details Foucault's concerns with and response to the notion of the author, writing, "If the institutions, individuals, and relations of power that work to circulate one's texts and oneself as an author expect and insist that one be someone in particular, one may end up constrained

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[399] Michel Foucault, "What Is an Author?," in *The Foucault Reader*, 2010, 111.

[400] Foucault, 109.

[401] I might add that, in some respects, this endeavor is self-erasing. That is, if what matters in a given philosophical work is understanding propositions of the text, its arguments, and its truth (or errors), then any given text is reducible to those propositions and arguments. Indeed, such a reduction is in many ways desirable, insofar as they capture more directly and succinctly the views of the work, and neatly circumvent the historical divide between the reader and author, especially in cases of radically different historical milieus, as one finds with authors as diverse as Plato, Avicenna, Laozi, St. Aquinas, etc. Admittedly insofar as Schleiermacher's fabled "correct understanding" remains incomplete, such reductions are inevitably founded on uncertain grounds.

in what one can write and publish, and how one is read."[402] Hendricks emphasizes that being an "author" comes with a set of expectations, and is associated with, first, authority and, second, a kind of holism. That is, the author is the one who can become an authority on a given matter, and it is through texts that the author is situated as such.[403] Further, being an author can mean being more than an of discrete individual works. An author grounds a grouping: the author presides over an *oeuvre*. Foucault expressed reservations over this point, writing: "Some readers, reading the new books on the backs of the earlier ones, and from one distortion to another, arrive at an absolutely grotesque image of the book."[404]

Foucault's concerns with the author function broach the possibility of other functions by way of critique. On the radical side, Hendricks details some of Foucault's attempts to "erase" the author, such as his 1980 interview with *Le Monde*, in which Foucault's identity was not disclosed at the time.[405] She notes, however, that "if one attempts to step out of [the author emphasis milieu] into anonymity, this gesture alone may not do much to change the ways that the culture approaches and handles discourse, including its insistence that one's identity as an author be rooted out and solidified."[406]

Hendricks' point is affirmed by critiques of Foucault's attempts to displace the author function. Reactions to "What is an Author?" underscored what Christopher Watkin calls "the performative contradiction thesis," i.e. that despite his critique of the "Author," Foucault remains the author of that essay. He is consistently identified as such and, as Hans Sluga puts it, "However much he pleaded with

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[402] Christina Hendricks, "The Author['s] Remains: Foucault and the Demise of the 'Author-Function,'" *Philosophy Today* 46, no. 2 (2002): 158, https://doi.org/philtoday200246244.

[403] Hendricks, 155.

[404] Michel Foucault, "An Aesthetics of Experience," in *Foucault Live: Michel Foucault Collected Interviews, 1961-1984* (Semiotext(e), 1996), 453.

[405] Hendricks, "The Author['s] Remains," 154.

[406] Hendricks, 154.

it […], it would not let him forget that he was after all Michel Foucault, the author."[407] More importantly though, Foucault's position as author is the basis upon which one makes references to his ideas. This latter point is important because some critics emphasize that, without the idea of an author, readers have no ground upon which to identify what a text means; recalling Schleiermacher, the author provides not just the basis for the meaning of the text, but the basis for assessing the accuracy of readings.

E.D. Hirsch, for example, explicitly claims that the author's intent (i.e. the text's meaning) is the only apparent basis for judging the validity of an interpretation. For him, what is at issue is "The right of *any* humanistic discipline to claim genuine knowledge."[408] He notes, "The theoretical claim of a genuine discipline, scientific or humanistic, is the attainment of truth, and its practical claim is agreement that truth has been achieved."[409] When the author is "banished," to use his term, genuine knowledge, i.e. the attainment of truth, is no longer possible. Hirsch puts this directly: "Once the author had been ruthlessly banished as the determiner of his text's meaning, it very gradually appeared that no adequate principle existed for judging the validity of an interpretation;"[410] "To banish the original author as the determiner of meaning was to reject the only compelling normative principle that could lend validity to an interpretation."[411]

Returning to Foucault, I take it that part of the point of "What is an Author?" is to expose the contingency of how this entity called an "author" functions within a discourse about truth and the text. As Watkin puts it:

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[407] Hans Sluga, "Foucault, the Author, and the Discourse," *Inquiry* 28, no. 1–4 (January 1, 1985): 404, https://doi.org/10.1080/00201748508602058.
[408] E. D Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), viii.
[409] Hirsch, viii–ix.
[410] Hirsch, 3.
[411] Hirsch, 5.

It is therefore to miss the point of the death or disappearance of the author to point the finger at Barthes and Foucault when, after appealing to the anonymity of the author and asking (in the case of Foucault) "what does it matter who is speaking?" the two authors then walk down the road to cash their royalties checks.[412]

What is noteworthy about Foucault's critique is not that, following the "death of the author," there is a vacuum, which would result precisely in the kind of issues Hirsch and others express. It is, rather, that Foucault points out the contingency of *this* conception of the "author." Whatever, however, one reads, some conception of how the text maintains a coherence qua singular "text" must be operational; without it, there is no "text"—only a series of unconnected sentences. One could apply a similar logic to the construction of a corpus, a genre, or a school of thought. This point takes us back to the overall arc of this work: how does the construction of classifications shape an in/outside? It is that question that allows us to unseat the dominance of the narrow conception of an "author" within the narrative of the accumulation of truth, from Schleiermacher to Copleston to d'Alembert to Hirsch.

Once one asks what "truth" means—what form it has, how it is ascertained, its ontological status, and what ends it serves—and how it relates to the "author," the dependency of Hirsch's critique on its conception of the definition and function of the historiographical "author" is exposed. For Hirsch, the meaning of the text *is* what its author intended it to be; if there is no author, there is no intention and therefore the meaning of the text cannot exist, strictly speaking. I should note that, despite its age

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[412] Christopher Watkin, "Rewriting the Death of the Author: Rancièrian Reflections," *Philosophy and Literature* 39, no. 1 (September 30, 2015): 42, https://doi.org/10.1353/phl.2015.0015.

(1967), Hirsch and his ideas remain alive and well: he is cited favorably in the SEP's entry on herme-neutics, for example.[413] However, Hirsch's critique is ultimately an immanent one, and by failing to understand Foucault's critique, Hirsch's response misses the point.

First with Benjamin and now in a different light with Foucault, that the reader should devote their efforts to determining what the author intended to express is not necessarily the desideratum of read-ing. Indeed, part of that point is that there is no singular desideratum; there are, in a certain respect, infinite "authors." As a point of contrast, Foucault introduces certain authors as "founders of discur-sivity."[414] Foucault cites examples like Marx and Freud who, on his account, "Have produced some-thing else: the possibilities and the rules for the formation of other texts."[415]

I think it is worth asking how it is that a "founder of discursivity" becomes—or stays—such a figure. To *be* such a figure would seem to require a certain kind of writing, tempting us to situate such writers as geniuses whose brilliance, insight, or eloquence inspires others. I think, however, this places emphasis too much on the creator as a quasi-mythical or even divine figure. For an author to become such a "founder" requires the existence (present or future) of a community who relate to the author qua founder. Much as a celebrity cannot be famous without fans who recognize them as such, it does not matter how brilliant, insightful, or innovative a thinker's work is if no one engages their thought. In this regard we may recall Benjamin's emphasis on the historical contingency of presence in the archive—not everyone is lucky enough to have been preserved.

We should at this point also recall Foucault's articulation of modernity. What makes possible the author qua founder of discursivity is not a fundamental difference between two discrete kinds of

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[413] C. Mantzavinos, "Hermeneutics," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Spring 2020 (Meta-physics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2020), https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2020/entries/hermeneutics/. Hirsch's outlook also resonates with the so-called "Cambridge School" of interpretation, as expressed by figures like Quentin Skinner.
[414] Foucault, "What Is an Author?," 114.
[415] Foucault, 114.

writing. It is not the case that some texts simply *are* such foundational texts and others are not. It is, rather, due to two factors that such texts can become foundational in this way. One such factor is due to the historical moment (recall Benjamin's "constellations"): the right text read at the right time by the right people can propel an idea into the spotlight. Such examples can be smaller too: a professor whose lectures make a text especially compelling; a text might be more available (or affordable); a text might simply have a more appealing cover or title. The second factor here is how the texts are actually read. It is easy to note that Foucault's own examples of founders have swathes of secondary literature which do not, I think, read Marx or Freud as founders of discursivity. Instead, they read the texts in line with the Modern Literary Criticism position Foucault articulates earlier: "We now ask of each poetic or fictional text: From where does it come, who wrote it, when, under what circumstances, or beginning with what design? The meaning ascribed to it and the status or value accorded it depend on the manner in which we answer these questions."[416] If we could attribute foundational power to the text itself, then responses would necessarily follow in this manner; there could be no other mode of response. That there are such differences in response means no text, no author simply *is* a "founder of discursivity;" rather, only through certain kinds of inheritance, certain practices of reading, does an author become such a figure.

Foucault's critiques of traditional conceptions of history introduce possibilities in shifting how we think about history in two ways. On the one, we begin to see how the categories according to which history is divided and understood—Ancient, Medieval, Modern; Metaphysics, Epistemology, Ethics— could be thought of otherwise. Through the creative expansion or dissolution of these categories, it becomes possible to see different kinds of narratives and discourses in philosophy, breaking down not only its Western centrism, but also its apparent commitment to "progress" towards "truth" in such

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[416] Foucault, 109.

fields of knowledge. Moreover, the category of history is itself transformed. It is not a question of simply exchanging one set of categories for another, which would itself raise questions about the superiority of such an exchange (which in turn would likely fall back on traditional conceptions of truth, i.e. which set of questions better facilitates access to and research towards Truth). Rather, in recognizing and acknowledging the contingency of the categories of knowledge, we simultaneously broach the possibility of new discourses of knowledge while acknowledging such discourses speak to a particular historical context, one which may (or may not) continue a year, decade, or century down the line.

Section 5 - Conclusion

What does it mean to do research in philosophy? At the outset of this chapter, we had one tidy conception in hand. To do research in philosophy means either making "original" discoveries or understanding historical philosophies to facilitate the former pursuit.[417] In either case, research is situated relative to the history of philosophy as a repository of prior discoveries. Thus, there is a methodological demand placed upon the philosopher: to have an "original" discovery, one must know what has already been discovered, and therefore one must have at least some sense of the history of philosophy. Beyond this minimum requirement, as Copleston and Kenny alike advocate, knowing the history of philosophy can facilitate deeper philosophical questions and answers; the history of philosophy can inspire, finesse, and inform the contemporary philosopher seeking truth.

Particular notions of originality and truth occupy central roles in this conception of philosophical knowledge. Predominant is a paradigm which situates information as quasi-objects. A collection of

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[417] This pursuit, in turn, may take several forms. To offer a few suggestions: work in a field that shows author X "still has something to say" about topic Y; discovery of point X was actually already made, foreseen, or foreshadowed by author Y; recent position X has effectively been pre-refuted by author Y; etc.

knowledge is comparable to a collection of books, stamps, mugs, or ugly sweaters. With such a collection, breadth and depth are paramount. New additions are coveted: only with them—and not merely another copy of some object already in the collection—is the collection meaningfully expanded. This analogy can be extended: authenticity matters. An object in the collection that is not authentic is of concern. It is not necessarily worthless, but if it is to remain in the collection, it must be a fake in an interesting way (e.g. works spuriously attributed to Plato). "Philosophy" is the historiographer of philosophy's collection: a display of The History of (primarily Western) Ideas.

Because of its commitment to truth and ongoing discovery, however, such a collection is more than a mere trophy case. As we saw with D'Alembert, truths are more than artifacts. For the scholar, the sum of human knowledge informs and edifies; it teaches what is as-yet-unknown and suggests possibilities for how the unknown could be discovered. The repository makes possible future discoveries, whether that is in the form of additions or syntheses, i.e. uniting hitherto scattered facts under a single theory. In so doing, humankind comes to better understand the universe and our place in it.

Copleston's approach, grounded in the model of research one finds in d'Alembert, follows easily from the desiderata of that model. If the pursuit is of original and True ideas, then two objectives will inform any history presented in that context. One: influential ideas. Whether they are true or not, such ideas have shaped how philosophers have thought for years, centuries, or even millennia. Their ongoing presence means that (1) the contemporary philosopher will likely find themselves influenced by such ideas, whether they know it or not and (2) insofar as they still hold a place of prominence, they are either True (and therefore to be added to) or False (and therefore to be refuted). Two: original and true ideas. Insofar as the emphasis in learning philosophy is the production of true, original ideas that will become part of the history of philosophy, then redundancy is undesirable. Any new philosopher must, therefore, become familiar with those ideas that have already been discovered. Without such

familiarity, the philosopher runs the risk of simply reproducing old ideas, either "discovering" what has long since been known or repeating past errors leading to already-disproved ideas.

This approach to the history of philosophy relies upon two presuppositions. One, that philosophy can discover true ideas. Two, that philosophy should be (or, more strongly, *is*) about the history of those discoveries—or at least the attempts to make them. In this regard, philosophy is understood as a positive field of knowledge. Moreover, it is understood as one field of inquiry among others that similarly attempt to discover the True. Just as biology discovers facts about biology, chemistry about chemicals, and so on, philosophy's purpose *and worth* analogously derives from discovering philosophical facts.

Understood within this framework, we can articulate the purpose of the library for philosophy. Qua repository, it tallies and organizes discoveries in Philosophy. Such discoveries are ordered either by when/where they were discovered or (less commonly) by the area to which the discovery belongs (metaphysics, epistemology, logic, etc.). Both a documentary and a textbook, the library situates philosophy as that field which is concerned with the continual expansion or correction of the sum total of Philosophical Knowledge.

With Benjamin "Philosophy" begins to break down. Even if we do not change our fundamental conception of what philosophy is or should do, we can note that to assert "Philosophy" means discoveries in philosophy is drastically oversimplified. For whom are these ideas discoveries? Situated historically, the library's "Philosophy" is about a very small group. "Philosophy" tells the story of Western Philosophy's discoveries for Western philosophers, at best paralleled or supplemented by non-Western philosophies. Even "Western Philosophy" is in some ways too broad; one finds numerous texts from the Continental Philosophy tradition not in the B range but in the P range (Sartre's *Saint Genet* is found at PQ2613 .53 Z883 while Derrida's *Of Grammatology* is classified as P105 .D5313).

This is not to say they are unfindable (obviously they are) but that they are not recognized within the library as works *in* or *of* philosophy. To the extent that such a schema emphasizes the creation of knowledge, that knowledge is not recognized as a discovery within "Philosophy."

This situation seems an easy fix: reclassify the titles. Yet one might question the purpose or effect of such a reclassification. Why should philosophy absorb these titles? Are these works not relevant to other fields? Couldn't one make a case for keeping most (if not all) of these titles where they are?

To even ask these questions itself indicates we have shifted how we think of works of philosophy. Recall that predominant classification methods and schemas in LIS insist that classification identifies properties of *the work itself.* A work's classification is an objective quality of the work. If correction of a classification is required, on this model, then that can only be because a cataloger has misattributed properties to the work: the error is methodological. With Sartre or Derrida, therefore, if they are philosophy, then they should be moved. End of story.

Recognizing the multiplicity of possible belongings and groupings takes us more in a Benjaminian or Foucauldian direction. It recognizes the contingencies of classification, of meaning, and of knowledge. And, as discussed with Benjamin, it is something of a category mistake to presume that correction can or should only take place on the level of classifications. Recognition of the limitations of categories (Benjamin) and the contingencies of their creation (Foucault) means our options must be thought of in broader terms than straightforward "correction."

What we move towards are more flexible and mobile categories of knowledge. Concomitantly, we take up a more flexible and mobile conception of knowledge itself. This is not to say that "truth" is thereby abandoned.[418] Such a critique is misguided. A cupboard or gallery is not any more or less

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[418] Hirsch's concern, along with numerous critics of postmodernism and its ostensible relativism.

"true" arranged one way than it is another. Rather, by reframing the categories according to which we understand the objects of the collection, we can come to understand those objects in different ways, seeing their facets and stakes, questions and answers in radically different ways.

This point is, however, still abstract. What does it mean to understand these things in "radically different ways"? Why and how should we do so? With the proviso that none of the examples I intend to present are meant to be taken as final or perfect examples of this approach, the next two chapters consider such questions in more detail.

Chapter V - Philosophy in the Margins

Section 1 - Introduction

The previous chapter laid groundwork for possibilities: philosophical understanding can mean something else besides its conception in a historiographical model. Yet that idea still floats around nebulously as a possibility. We can insist that the researcher can understand "Philosophy" in the library differently, that they can confront the collection "otherwise," but to what end? And how?

In one respect, the question necessarily remains vague and open-ended. I cannot represent the entirety of the possible. That said, it is possible to present examples of understanding that offer alternatives to models a la d'Alembert. I have chosen two examples for this chapter, and another two in a different vein for the following chapter. Each, in its own way, offers a unique model of philosophical understanding.

This chapter's examples raise questions about the political and ethical dimensions of how one studies history. The first, Edward Said's *Orientalism*, is helpful as an example of attenuating us to the social, cultural, and political contexts of the categorizations we employ. The second, Christina Sharpe's *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being,* draws our attention to the complicated matter of studying "history," and the ways in which more typical modes of historical research can obfuscate personal, ethical understanding. Before delving into such examples, however, I want to spend a moment considering what responding to these issues would mean.

One form stems from critiques of a kind of knower positionality, present in the library world and LIS literature for decades already. As mentioned in the introduction, beginning in the late 1960s and 70s, authors like Steve Wolf, Joan Marshall, and Sanford Berman pointed out the presumed user of

the library is "White, Christian (often specifically Protestant), male, and straight (heterosexual.)."[419] For many of these authors, the positionality of the cataloger and (expected) library patron was indicated by patterns of language found in systems like LCC and LCSH. Overtly or implicitly, metadata identifies particular groups as abnormal, threatening, inferior, or otherwise problematic relative to the implied "normal" user.

Primarily, though not exclusively, these publications and innumerable others that have followed take up "correcting" these biases by eliminating or updating problematic headings. This has resulted in myriad efforts petitioning Library of Congress to update or eliminate certain terms. Library of Congress has not adopted these changes as quickly as some would like, and alternate projects and efforts have arisen to address this. The Cataloging Lab, for example, is a crowdsourced wiki launched in January 2018 that allows catalogers to propose updates to LC terms. Other libraries have adopted library discovery platforms such as Blacklight, which allow the owning library to present users with public-facing records that remove or alter offensive or problematic language.[420]

Such approaches are hardly surprising. Updating specific words or terms is (relatively) straightforward since those terms can be identified specifically.[421] They are also prominent sites of cultural contestation; the documentary *Change the Subject* examines a battle over the term "Illegal Aliens" that saw

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[419] Marshall, "LC Labeling: An Indictment," 46.

[420] This practice is becoming more widespread, albeit often with extensive discussions about logistics and its impacts on discovery and visibility. Libraries adopting this approach include Princeton, CU Boulder, University of Virginia, and others. At present this practice is more common in archives due to their flexibility with metadata (archives are not as tied to LCC/SH metadata practices as libraries), but libraries are increasingly adopting similar policies.

[421] I say *relatively* straightforward because these projects can and do come with their own complications. For example, movements to update the term "Illegal aliens," and related phrases relies on the word "aliens," a search of which can also include, e.g., aliens (extraterrestrial beings) in literature or human-alien encounters. "Aliens" may also be used in the title of a work (rather than as a subject heading), in which case altering the title hampers efforts to find the specific work. Adler gives an example of this when "Paraphilias" replaced "Sexual deviation" in LCSH in 2007. Using a method called "batch editing," every item that possessed the term was simultaneously updated in the system: "By virtue of automation, texts that were cataloged in the early part of the twentieth century retain formerly held attitudes that associated homosexuality and bisexuality with perversion, but now in anachronistic terms" (29).

former Tennessee Representative Diane Black introduce legislation to overturn Library of Congress's decision to update the term.[422]

While these issues should continue to be addressed, what the preceding chapters have revealed are the ways in which bias can come not just from who one is (according to a certain social/racial/gendered nexus), but how expectations about the *telos* of research, undergirded by associated methodologies, inform the creation of metadata categories. This is to say that rather than it being an issue of specific *words*, it is an issue of the approach that constitutes and relates those terms.

This point has been pursued by some authors in LIS. For example, Melissa Adler's *Cruising the Library* draws attention to the ways in which families of classifications themselves pass judgements upon where a particular topic belongs. Adler notes that works on homosexuality, for example, are grouped with works on paraphilias—abnormal (deviant) sexual behaviors—and belong within a broader category that has to do with psychological disorders.[423] Marielena Fina, meanwhile, recounts her surprise (and indignation) at finding works about Latinas accessing information through libraries grouped under the heading "LIBRARIES AND THE SOCIALLY HANDICAPPED."[424]

I mention these ongoing discourses because I want to stress the importance of these deeper analyses for addressing issues of access in philosophy. In so doing, it becomes possible to illustrate ways in which the presumed *telos* and methodology of philosophical research can undermine attempts to increase diversity and inclusivity. Addressing issues within the philosophy range (and, more broadly, in the field of philosophy writ large) requires more than identifying problematic classifications and renaming or eliminating them. Such a solution does not fundamentally reorient how we might think

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[422] *Change the Subject*, Documentary, 2019.
[423] Adler, *Cruising the Library: Perversities in the Organization of Knowledge.*, 24–25.
[424] Marielena Fina, "The Role of Subject Headings in Access to Information," *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 17, no. 1–2 (December 14, 1993): 269, https://doi.org/10.1300/J104v17n01_19.

about philosophy, nor does it necessarily offer a way forward for the recognition and inclusion of previously-exiled, previously-marginalized philosophies.[425]

To return to the foci of this chapter, both Said and Sharpe's works—each in their own way—raise questions about the relationship between the terms of research and how that research is conducted. Their works confound easier, more linear conceptions of knowledge as accumulation of information. And, as such, they raise questions about what happens when despite that challenge such works are nonetheless framed by and included in systems of categorization that uphold that perspective.

Section 2 - So it is Said

One method of diversifying "Philosophy" is relatively simple. Following some recent efforts in library collection management, one could adopt a checklist approach.[426] Against boxes reading "White, cis, Western, male, Christian…" ticked again and again, the box marked "Other" is now being expanded, explored, and highlighted. Black, Latinx, Asian, Native American; trans, queer; indigenous and non-Western; female and non-binary—and so on. Taking this tack requires more extensive

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[425] Sara Tyson offers an excellent and quite thorough consideration of what "inclusion" might mean for women philosophers in her work *Where are the Women?* (Tyson, 2018). Chapter 1 is especially relevant here, as it discusses four "models" of inclusion and how three of them inadvertently perpetuate the marginalization of women by failing to critique practices of exclusion. Tyson's work will be considered in more detail in Chapter 7.

[426] ALA's "Diverse Collections: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights" (2006), outlines some of these considerations by advocating, e.g. "Seeking content created by and representative of marginalized and underrepresented groups." On the one hand, such advice is appreciated in the context of marginalization and underrepresentation of certain populations within the library. On the other, the document's wording does not delve into the philosophical issues surrounding such representation (as were considered in Chapter 4). Admittedly such a document is more a statement of principle than an analysis or substantive account of "diversity," but one encounters similar lines of thought in other publications too. Examining a project at Penn State University, Ciszek and Young (2010) describe the library's attempts to use "diversity codes" to identify "diverse" materials with codes such as "African American," "Ageism," "Arab American," and "Jewish studies" (157). Although Penn State eventually discontinued using such codes, the initiative itself is suggestive; the idea behind such a project presupposes a notion of diversity that can be codified and assessed in such a manner. Perhaps most straightforwardly, Johnson (2018) writes "Librarians have sought to select materials that depict diversity in *all areas*—race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, and political beliefs" (24, my emphasis).

metadata than is traditionally collected; thus 2013's *Resource Description and Access*, a standard for cataloging published by LC, introduced a field for an author's gender for the first time.[427] Some librarians have expressed support of such an addition and have called for similar fields that would describe an author's race, religion, political affiliations, etc.[428] Others have balked at such suggestions, citing concerns with privacy, profiling, and discrimination.[429]

What such an approach relies upon is a logic of representation that equates diversity with Having All The Right Pieces. To expand an area like philosophy amounts to asking, "Do we have materials representing groups X, Y, and Z?" or, in a (perhaps) more nuanced way, "Is our collection under/overrepresented by groups X, Y, and Z?" This approach is, in some ways, an evolution of longstanding collection development principles, which previously manifested as the need to create a "balanced" collection.[430]

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[427] Prior to the publication of RDA, the LC standard for cataloging was Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules (AACR), first published in 1967 and published in a second edition in 1978. No standard published by LC prior to RDA included gender as a field. One might also refer here to the MARC 21 386 field, introduced in 2013 and expanded in 2017, which allows for the addition of information like nationality, gender group, and religious affiliation.

[428] Clarke and Schoonmaker survey a number of sources to analyze what metadata is commonly called-for to identify "diverse books," which can include age, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, occupation, race, religion, and more (183). They note that these areas can vary drastically in their coverage and definition, but ultimately write, "library catalogs and bibliographic metadata should be designed to support a balanced approach between socially just metadata practices that carefully consider issues of identity and metadata structures that enable access and retrieval" (190). Moreover, as Billey et al. acknowledge, "Gender, like race, organizes social life. It is a primary way that individuals emerge into the group identities that comprise the social world. Recording gender recognizes this contemporary—if troubled—reality" (419).

[429] *Ethical Questions in Name Authority Control*, edited by Sandberg, features multiple chapters discussing this issue. Fox and Swickard (2018), e.g., recount the stories of multiple zine authors concerned with having personal information publicly available (13-14) and emphasize the potential harm to the author such information makes possible (16). In the same volume, Kazmer (2018) discusses the ways in which authority control can undermine authors' efforts—especially women authors—at self-determination, e.g. through pseudonymous authorship (30-31). Billey, Drabinski, and Roberto (2014), meanwhile, invoke queer theory to challenge the idea that any record could ever adequately represent the complexities of gender, to say nothing of the way assigning a gender strips the author of their right to control disclose their identity "on an as-needed basis," effectively outing them to anyone consulting the record (417-418).

[430] This tenet of collection development started to become popular in the second half of the twentieth century (prior to this, many librarians saw themselves as filters, striving to keep false, misleading, and trashy publications off library shelves).

If the focus is on the collection of All the Pieces, we would do well to consider just how those pieces came to be in the form that they do.[431] Recalling Benjamin, for example, the pieces we have are those that survived; especially when it comes to the underrepresented, those Pieces emerged from histories of oppression, slavery, colonialism, exploitation, and genocide. More saliently for this section, we would also do well to recall how, as representations, those Pieces inevitably simplify.

Enter Edward Said's *Orientalism*. For Said, the category of The Orient serves to facilitate representation and set terms of understanding for a primarily Western audience. His critique troubles the aforementioned approach to diversification; the solution to a bias in perspectives in Oriental Studies is (at best) only partially addressed by increasing the diversity of the works present within the field. Thus, efforts such as those of Peter Colvin or R.C. Dogra, whose book-buying efforts in the 1970s aimed to increase the representation of books published in the Middle East and South Asia, respectively, were likely sincere efforts to increase representation of the region on the authors' parts.[432] Put generously, we find genuine efforts to represent areas within "Oriental Studies" as fully as possible; or, in more contemporary terms, we find sincere efforts to diversify the collection through broader representation and finding sources where peoples "represent themselves."

The problem, though, is that the overarching category of the "Orient" and its effects remain unquestioned. For Said, Orientalism as a domain of knowledge inherits problems from its historical and political roots. Giving an initial definition, he writes that Orientalism is "A way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's specific place in European Western experience."[433] The

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[431] Although this pursuit of "total coverage" or "adequate representation" is common, there are authors in LIS who contest this way of thinking. Emily Drabinski, for example, has drawn from authors like Butler and Sedgwick to argue the pursuit of establishing the "right" gender for an author is fundamentally misguided because it ignores the dynamic, socially and historically-contingent nature of such labels.

[432] Peter Colvin, "Report of a Book-Buying Tour of the Middle East and North Africa," *International Library Review* 8, no. 3 (June 1, 1976): 271, https://doi.org/10.1016/0020-7837(76)90035-2; R. C. Dogra, "A Book-Buying Tour to South Asia: Some Problems and Suggestions," *International Library Review* 6, no. 4 (October 1, 1974): 471, https://doi.org/10.1016/0020-7837(74)90014-4.

[433] Edward W Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 2003), 1.

directionality of this definition is key for Said; Orientalism is that study of the region known as "The Orient" as defined by European producers of knowledge. It is neither a region, much less a field of study, that is produced by the region itself.[434] Moreover, as Said will note later, there is no comparable and analogous field, i.e. neither the Middle East nor Asia more broadly has "Occidental Studies."[435]

What is the significance of this divide? Or is there a significance at all? We could—and some of Said's critics pursue this line—note that the division between Occident and Orient is not especially important. It is, like borders between states, countries, or continents, a relatively arbitrary divide with no significance except perhaps for overt bigots ("Us vs. Them").[436]

Said admits, "There is always a measure of the purely arbitrary in the way the distinctions between things are seen, and with these distinctions go values whose history, if one could unearth it completely, would probably show the same measure of arbitrariness."[437] However, arbitrary distinctions do not necessarily remain meaningless. A relatively arbitrary geographical division like Occident and Orient can become more than an acknowledgment of a geophysical divide. Said notes, "Many objects or places or times to be assigned roles and given meanings that acquire objective validity only *after* the assignments are made."[438] This is to say that even if one maintains that even if the original division of a domain into regions is drawn utterly arbitrarily, that division does not necessarily remain insignificant.

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[434] We might note the similarity here with that group called "Native Americans" in the United States. The designation conglomerates myriad peoples under a single banner, thereby implying they can be studied as a unit, that they possess sufficient homogeneity to establish the category. As Vine Deloria Jr. puts it, "People can tell just by looking at us what we want, what should be done to help us, how we feel, and what a 'real' Indian is" (Deloria, *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* 1). Deloria emphasizes that the 'knownness' of the American Indian by white America through the lens of myth stymies attempts at self-representation or self-understanding on the part of American Indians themselves.
[435] Said, *Orientalism*, 50.
[436] Bernard Lewis makes this point (1976). Lewis' critiques of Said will be considered in more detail later in this chapter.
[437] Said, *Orientalism*, 54.
[438] Said, 54.

Still, we could insist that even if they allow for bigoted or nefarious meanings, divisions like Occident and Orient are necessary for research to occur at all. Occident and Orient is simply one way to divvy up the scholarly workload; one cannot study everything. Even if we were to eliminate such a distinction, surely lines must be drawn elsewhere—between countries, states, cities, etc. No matter how studious the scholar, one cannot study it all. Delimitation makes scholarship not just manageable, but possible.

For Said, this perspective might be true in a practical sense, but it ignores, downplays, and ultimately obscures the historical and political circumstances of the division between Occident and Orient. Said is not suggesting that the alternative to Orient vs. Occident is returning to an undifferentiated whole. Rather, it is to draw attention to how and why that whole has been divided and what consequences have followed from that division.

More specifically, when research begins with the position that Occident vs. Orient is "objective," then research begins with a question of *how*. That is, given that "they" are different from "us," in what way(s) are "they" different? Qualities can then be assigned to each region and their denizens. What is notable about this approach is that the legitimacy of the divide is presumed; from the start, it is presumed that there is a fundamental difference between the two sides, otherwise the divide would be unfounded. The ubiquity of the categories results in what we might call an implicit legitimacy. This is not a legitimacy that is grounded in argumentation, backed with data, or otherwise supported through evidence (although this may happen after the fact—part of Said's point). Rather, its legitimacy is a de facto one.

For Said, this presumed legitimacy is founded on a deeper set of beliefs about the Occident and Orient, what he refers to as myth or dogma. Within this paradigm, Occident and Orient are metaphys-

ically distinct entities: Occident and Orient are understood as fundamentally, *essentially* different. Beauvoir articulates a similar point concerning "woman" in *The Second Sex*: "To the dispersed, contingent, and multiple existence of *women*, mythic thinking opposes the Eternal Feminine, unique and fixed; if the definition given is contradicted by the behavior of real flesh-and-blood women, it is women who are wrong: it is said not that Femininity is an entity but that women are not feminine."[439] That is, however diverse individual women may be across cultures and historical circumstances, one maintains the position that there exists "Woman" which make possible not just the identification (or even being) of individual women, but unites disparate instances precisely in spite of those differences. Bringing the matter back to Said, just as "Woman" exists both prior to and despite the plethora of empirical beings referred to as individual women, "Orient" exists in practice as an *a priori* entity, as that which unifies peoples from the Middle East to India to China, however empirically different they appear. Said writes, "This object [The Orient] is a 'fact' which, if it develops, changes, or otherwise transforms itself in the way that civilizations frequently do, nevertheless is fundamentally, even ontologically stable."[440] What is pervasive about "The Orient" (and what I take it Said means by "ontologically stable")[441] is its ability to sustain itself as a Real Place in the face of differences which threaten to tear it apart; The Orient is sustained insofar as the heterogenous is reduced to the Same.

For Said, this belief in the fundamental unity or existence of "The Orient" as maintained by Orientalism can be fleshed out into four dogmas:

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[439] Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier (New York: Vintage Books, 2011), 315.

[440] Said, *Orientalism*, 32.

[441] In his 2003 preface to the 25th anniversary edition of the book, Said distances himself from this language quite explicitly: "Neither the term Orient nor the concept of the West *has any ontological stability*" (Said, xvii), my emphasis. I think, though, that Said overstates his case here. To hold that neither the Orient nor the West has *any* ontological stability would mean the term has zero fixity—no object to which it adheres, even momentarily. In this respect I agree more with his earlier wording, which emphasizes the way in which a historically and socially contingent object is made to *appear as* a fixed and objective entity.

1. "The absolute and systematic difference between the West, which is rational, developed, humane, superior, and the Orient, which is aberrant, undeveloped, inferior."[442]

2. "Abstractions about the Orient, particularly those based on texts representing a 'Classical' Oriental civilization, are always preferable to direct evidence drawn from modern Oriental realities."[443]

3. "The Orient is eternal, uniform, and incapable of defining itself, therefore it is assumed that a highly generalized and systematic vocabulary for describing the Orient from a Western standpoint is inevitable and even scientifically 'objective.'"[444]

4. "The Orient is at bottom either something to be feared (the Yellow Peril, the Mongol hordes, the brown dominions) or to be controlled (by pacification, research and development, outright occupation whenever possible)."[445]

These dogmata carry political significance for Said, which is both where he underscores the significance of the perpetuation of the idea of "The Orient" and which becomes a site of contestation for numerous critics. I do not intend to delve into the long and complicated body of work that is Said's subsequent works and responses, or his critics and their responses, but examining some of their disputes will help illustrate some of the core issues and implications of Orientalism.

Subsection A - Orientations

Prior to the publication of *Orientalism* in 1978, Said was already voicing critiques in a review of several works on the topic in October 1976 in a piece entitled "Arabs, Islam and the Dogmas of the

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[442] Said, 300.
[443] Said, 300.
[444] Said, 301.
[445] Said, 301.

West." The article lacks many of the arguments, justifications, and more fleshed-out lines of thought of the later publication (and perhaps its critics can be forgiven for misunderstanding for that reason), but many key ideas are already present, including what Said calls "The principal dogmas of Orientalism," which includes "The absolute and systematic difference between the West (which is rational, developed, humane, superior) and the Orient (which is aberrant, underdeveloped, inferior)."[446]

Said's assertions immediately provoked irate responses, some of which were published as letters to the editor in the December 12, 1976 issue of *The New York Times Book Review*. Morroe Berger, a professor of sociology specializing in the Near East at Princeton, accuses Said of picking only authors who demonstrate his point and writes that Said omits "The detailed, careful scholarship of Goldziher and Snouck Hurgronje."[447] Bernard Lewis, meanwhile, emphasizes "The sustained and immense effort which [our civilization] has made to understand, appreciate and interpret other cultures."[448]

Lewis in particular continued to respond to (and critique) Said's work on Orientalism in ensuing years.[449] In 1979, Lewis expanded on his letter to the editor in an article in *American Scholar*, emphasizing that those who studied the Middle East "Were for the most part university teachers, independent of the great imperial, clerical, and commercial interests and sometimes indeed highly critical of them."[450] Lewis maintains a strict division between what he frames as the (innocent, pure) intellectual drive of some Europeans to understand Middle Eastern culture, history, language, etc. and the (biased, imperialistic) drive of other Europeans whose understanding was "polemical," seeking to either repel

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[446] Edward W. Said, "Arabs, Islam and the Dogmas of the West," *The New York Times*, October 31, 1976, sec. Archives, https://www.nytimes.com/1976/10/31/archives/arabs-islam-and-the-dogmas-of-the-west-arabs.html.
[447] Morroe Berger, "Letters to the Editor: Orientalism," *The New York Times Book View*, December 16, 1976.
[448] Lewis, "Letters to the Editor: Orientalism," 37.
[449] The exchanges between Said and Lewis are numerous, arguably reaching its peak in a debate at the Middle East Studies Association of North America (MESA) meeting in November 1986. I do not intend to present the entirety of the repartee between Said and Lewis (much less his other critics and commentators), but the snapshot I give here illuminates the stakes and issues for the purposes of this section and project.
[450] Bernard Lewis, "The State of Middle Eastern Studies," *American Scholar* 48, no. 3 (Summer 1979): 369.

Islamic influence or extend Christian dominion.[451] It should be underscored that Lewis sees these pursuits as fundamentally discrete, even if there may be historical examples of the former supporting the latter (for Lewis these are, of course, the exceptions and in any case not the "real scholars"). Lewis laments that few understand this division, however. Without a trace of irony, Lewis writes, "Non-European civilizations still have the greatest difficulty in understanding intellectual curiosity of this kind [the pure motive simply "to learn"]."[452] He continues shortly thereafter—in even stronger language—that this "Reveals a sad inability to understand an enterprise that has added new chapters to the history of mankind."[453]

Lewis' writings woefully misunderstand Orientalism (both the book and concept), but are also, ironically, themselves perfect examples of Orientalism. Consider, for example, the previous quotes. "Non-European civilizations" apparently have some difficulty and, later, an outright "inability" to understand this kind of intellectual endeavor (*all* of them? And why is the divide between Europe and *them*? And do *all* Europeans "understand" this pursuit?). This is, I hope it is apparent, an incredibly broad generalization that not only dismisses "non-European" intellectual pursuits as lacking, absent, or even impossible, but more importantly *conceives of this lack on geopolitical lines*. It is *as* a non-European that one has this "inability."

What Lewis misses is that Orientalism is *not* about whether anyone has ever made accurate claims about "The Orient." It is, rather, about how the existence of the concept of "The Orient" makes these kinds of broad generalizations possible, and how the continued existence of "Oriental scholars" (like

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[451] Lewis, 365.
[452] Lewis, 366.
[453] Lewis, 367.

Lewis) is indicative of a cultural setting in which this kind of representation is not immediately considered problematic, even in some of the most prominent forums of higher education.[454] This is a key imbalance between Occident and Orient, i.e. that these kinds of generalizations are broadly permissible. Generalizations about "The Orient" can be made *and believed by officials and academics* about this region in a way that would be questioned, critiqued, or outright scorned if a different region were under scrutiny. As Said puts it, "Clichés about how Muslims (or Mohammedans, as they are still sometimes called) behave are bandied about with a nonchalance no one would risk in talking about blacks or Jews."[455]

Said does not use the term permissibility here, but this is an important dimension of the consequences of Orientalism. What Said brings to the fore is how this divide makes it permissible to make the kind of assertions that Lewis—or any number of examples from *Orientalism* itself—does. These are broad generalizations about regions and peoples, generalizations that certainly *can* be challenged, but that they are taken seriously at all or could even reach the status of "knowledge" says something about the status of the category "Oriental" in the society within which it appears.

If we are going to invoke the concept of permissibility, however, we would do well to consider who or what is granting permission here. This permission is not necessarily universally granted; assertions like Berger's are meant to indicate precisely that these generalizations, stereotypes, etc. are unacceptable and, moreover, there are figures both historical and contemporary who endeavor to combat

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[454] Lewis was a professor at Princeton University and, later, Cornell University—institutions that can hardly be said to represent the fringes of academia.

[455] Said, *Orientalism*, 301. For Said, this the political significance of the existence of "Oriental Studies." Said argues that the existence of such a scholarly field legitimates a way of "dealing with" the Middle East. That is, within the context of Western Academia where scholars may claim areas of specialization, the fact that there exist experts on "The Orient" means U.S. political foreign policy is legitimized in dealing with a culturally, religiously, and politically diverse region under the politically expedient label of "Orient" (or, today, "Middle Eastern") policy.

such ways of thinking. How, then, is the permissibility of generalizations established and maintained? And how could it be counteracted?

This line of inquiry leads us back to the library. To be clear, I do not mean that the library is solely responsible, or even primarily responsible, for the existence (originally or in continuation) of the category of "The Orient." However, I take it that precisely because there is no single authority that can decree the existence or nonexistence of such a category, we must instead look to diffuse sources.[456]

In this context library classifications and headings appear as a means of perpetuating myth. The existence of classifications and headings related to Oriental Studies structure the field as a coherent system of inquiry with a definite object.[457] The structuring and relating of knowledge in this area into subfields enables the continued pursuit of knowledge of "The Orient." But this is not the sole effect.

Classifications shape expectations. Returning to the art gallery, we might ask how it is that a gallery makes clear to its viewers that what it contains is art. I would suggest that one factor here—however obvious it may be—is the name. It is an *art* gallery, an *art* museum, an *art* showing, etc. Knowing that, we enter the space with expectations of seeing art. Further, we are drawn there precisely because of that expectation. Invoking the term exerts an influence insofar as it (1) prepares us to experience objects in a certain way and (2) draws attention from those who seek that object. The existence of The Orient and Oriental Studies thus carry more weight than simple identification. Their presence in the

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[456] I am (again) drawing from Foucault's conception of non-juridical power here, esp. as found in his *History of Sexuality (Vol. 1)* (Foucault, 1990). Pace a juridical model of power which locates power in a head or monolith (e.g. a monarch), non-juridical power sees relations of power as immanent, multiplicitous, decentralized, and ubiquitous: "The omnipresence of power: not because it has the privilege of consolidating everything under its invincible unity, but because it is produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in revery relation from one point to another. Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere" (93).

[457] LCSH/LCC have eliminated many uses of the term "Oriental," generally substituting "Asian" instead (e.g. "Asian art" is used in lieu of "Oriental art," and "Cooking, Asian" in lieu of "Oriental cooking.". Many uses remain, however, including (as of this writing), "Oriental fiction," "Oriental drama," and "Oriental literature." Notably for this project, LCC still categorizes B 121 as Philosophy – Ancient – Orient and in BC (Logic), BC 25 as Logic – Ancient – Oriental (Buddhist, Hindu, etc.).

lexicon of authority terms says something not just about the material, but about the culture and society in which that system of knowledge is produced, preserved, and maintained.

But what is a librarian in Oriental Studies to do? Librarians working in these positions are not generally able to question the categories within which they work in any meaningful way. An Oriental Studies librarian who refuses to collect materials for that field is likely not a librarian for long.

Recalling Benjamin from Chapter 4, it is perhaps best to adopt a "both/and" approach. Often, we seek solutions that will "fix" the issue, where our understanding of "fix" means creating categories that represent their objects accurately. If that is our definition, then "fixing" the language of the catalog is fundamentally impossible. We could, certainly, dispose of The Orient and break it down into more attenuated, nuanced divisions, but those too run the risk of presenting us with "objectivity" or homogeneity. Moreover, this does not "fix" the issue of simplification that is apparently inherent to representation that we saw in Benjamin's thought.

Yet other possibilities remain open. For starters, a critical awareness of the limitations of the categories within which we work means we can approach collection development and management, metadata processing, and information literacy with a sensitivity for its presuppositions, rather than presuming its objectivity or universality. Further, despite its shortcomings, we can still work to improve the language of the catalog. This can entail removing or replacing problematic language, certainly, but if part of the problem with "Oriental Studies" is the way it reinforces a discourse that permits assertions about "them," then we can also work to break apart those categories. In this regard one could pursue the path of efforts in indigenous data sovereignty, which emphasizes that metadata and its categories should be created *with* the groups they are about.[458] Or, as Adler writes, "Local and

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[458] Morphy (2016) describes this issue in terms of the "Epistemological aspect of data sovereignty," going on to elaborate, "indicators are never neutral and 'objective'; they depend on culturally specific categorisations that determine what it is 'significant' to measure. And, if they are dictated 'from above', the power of definition rests there" (104).

community-based taxonomies written from various points of view can augment and/or replace or even invert the universal classifications."[459] These are not a perfect solutions by any means (who counts as "representing" those groups?), but given that there are no perfect solutions to be found, this one is at least better than a set of categories constructed entirely separately from those it concerns. With both replacement and better representation *and* a sensitivity for the fundamental inadequacies of representational categories, the library can offer a more inclusive, equitable catalog.

Towards the end of *Orientalism*, Said asks, "Can one divide human reality, as indeed human reality seems to be genuinely divided, into clearly different cultures, histories, traditions, societies, even races, and survive the consequences humanly?"[460] Said offers no clear answer and I suspect there isn't one. But if that is the case, the question becomes: how should we understand ourselves and others if such divisions are nonetheless integral to our ways of thinking about and interacting with the world?

On the one hand, as Benjamin's thought indicates, all representations are inadequate. On the other, as Foucault suggests, the author—a representation—remains. And this is apparent even in Oriental Studies—around the time of Said's critiques (and especially following them), many departments and professional groups opted to rename themselves, generally to "Middle Eastern Studies" or something similar.[461] Yet what Said's work offers is a (necessarily) imperfect way of proceeding. If all categories are in some respect inadequate, at the same time some of those categories are more overtly distortionary, problematic, or harmful.

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[459] Adler, *Cruising the Library: Perversities in the Organization of Knowledge.*, 158.

[460] Said, *Orientalism*, 45.

[461] Some departments preceded Said's critiques, e.g. Princeton's department of Oriental Studies split into the departments of Near Eastern and East Asian Studies in 1969 ("History of Department"). Other groups, such as ASOR, opted to go by their acronym rather than their full name (American School of Oriental Research) before changing to "American Society of Overseas Research," although this too is a misnomer since they focus on "the history and cultures of the Near East and wider Mediterranean world" ("About ASOR"). Not all institutions have made such a change, however (e.g. the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago).

More specific to philosophy, bringing critical awareness to the ways in which these categories condition our knowledge brings forth a different kind of understanding. Taking a step back from the particulars of his work, Said's approach questions how the conditions within which we pursue knowledge shape the object of our inquiry. Put another way, Said draws our attention to the interdependence of facts and the systems of knowledge within which those facts appear. To achieve this is no easy task, and this perhaps accounts for many of the misunderstandings in responses to *Orientalism*.

What is notable about this pursuit—and hence its selection as an example for this chapter—is that it neither wholesale rejects the categories and classifications of information one finds in higher education, nor does it "follow" them in a cumulative or positive manner. Whatever one wishes to call Said—philosopher, thinker, intellectual, scholar—his approach to understanding requires asking about the terms of understanding themselves to disclose their effects.

Section 3 - Pointed Questions: Sharpe and Wake Work

Another quite different work that complicates how we think of categories of philosophical knowledge is Christina Sharpe's 2016 book *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*. Writing specifically in the context of black life in the contemporary U.S., Sharpe urges a specific kind of thinking about history, what she calls "wake work." For Sharpe, the study of history almost inevitably places the past in the past, as an event that once happened and is now over with. Even in analyses that trace the ongoing effect of select events, Sharpe finds they altogether too quickly lead to the present in a way that ultimately negates or suppresses the past to move forward.

Throughout the work, Sharpe considers myriad issues regarding objects of knowledge and their classification. One example in Chapter 2 focuses on a photograph of a "girl child" (Sharpe's words) with the word "ship" on a piece of tape on her forehead. Imagining ourselves as researchers in this

context, I want to contrast the kind of research (and researcher) we are set up to be by the classifications of the library in relation to Sharpe's project. The former is not an account Sharpe herself develops, although I take it part of her concern in the work has to do with how norms of education prepare us to receive and learn about (pace learn from) objects of research.

To begin, let us take Sharpe's example out of context:

[Image removed for copyright purposes]

We are examining a photograph of a girl. She is looking at the camera and on her head there is a piece of tape with the word "Ship." The given description tells us the following:

> PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI - JANUARY 21: A child waits to be medivaced by U.S.
> Army soldiers from the 82nd Airborne to the USNS Comfort on January 21, 2010 in
> Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Planeloads of rescuers and relief supplies headed to Haiti as
> governments and aid agencies launched a massive relief operation after a powerful

earthquake that may have killed thousands. Many buildings were reduced to rubble by the 7.0-strong quake on January 12.

This description is itself already an example of metadata creation, i.e. it provides information about the object. This can be broken down into pieces, which might look something like this:

- Location: Port-au-Prince, Haiti
- Date: January 21, 2010
- Photographer: Joe Raedle

To these basic metadata one could add more robust information, i.e. the selection and application of relevant headings. Typically, cataloging of items does not take up individual photographs unless the library is fairly specialized, e.g. an archive (which is not as beholden to LC standards). However, imagining this photograph to be a "text" and the above description to be the publisher's description, what headings and classification might apply?

With the caveat that I am not a cataloger, the following LCSH headings stand out as solid candidates based on the available information:

- Haiti Earthquake, Haiti, 2010
- Haiti Earthquake, Haiti, 2010 -- Sources
- Earthquake relief -- Haiti
- Earthquakes -- Haiti
- Disaster victims – Haiti

I am sure catalogers more adept than myself could propose more headings, but I do not think these selections are aberrant. Such headings anticipate certain kinds of research and intellectual interests.[462] Specifically, these headings frame the photograph as part of a historical event (the 2010 Haiti earthquake) and part of either the history of a region (Haiti) or of disasters and their aftermath.[463] As a researcher, I am most likely to find this material if I am searching for information along one of those lines. Further, by finding the materials as part of those categories, I am guided to think of this photograph as part of those patterns.[464]

I think it is fair to say Sharpe understands this photo in a completely different manner. To understand both how and why, we must first understand the context in which she presents and considers the photograph, in the context of what she calls "wake work."

Sharpe introduces wake work in the context of the continuing influence of slavery and imperialism on Black bodies.[465] For Sharpe, slavery is often thought about in one of two ways. First, as a kind of historical epoch, with its own dates, events, names, etc. Within this paradigm, to understand "slavery"

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[462] It is interesting, I think, that none of these headings mention the actual subject of the photograph, i.e. a child—a girl. This is, I suspect, because LCSH generally does not focus on people unless they are either prominent creators in some respect (of works, of ideas, of inventions) or they can be identified as part of some social, cultural, religious, etc. group. The effect of such an approach is the disappearance of those who are not (or cannot be) identified concretely as being part of this or that group.

[463] It might be objected that my point here is distorted by the fact that I have selected my own headings; I could have selected different ones, ones perhaps more in accord with Sharpe's reading. This is certainly true, and perhaps a more veteran cataloger than myself would apply different metadata. However, two points are worth making here. First, recalling Chapter 2, the approach to cataloging advocated by LC emphasizes standard and consistent application of subject headings. This is to say that even if it is true that individuals could select alternate headings, the training and the system of LCSH inclines the cataloger to understand the item in a particular way, i.e. in line with the histories identified above. Second, even if we were to select different headings, we remain fundamentally constrained by the authority terms of LCSH. If, for example, I wished to apply headings more in line with Sharpe's line of thinking, I could not do so unless they appeared in some form in the LCSH list. And, consulting said list, I find a paucity of terms in that vein.

[464] Certainly I am not *restricted* to thinking of the material in this way—that is part of the point here—but its inclusion under these categories facilitates research by priming me (so to speak) to understand the material as part of this group, these kinds of projects and interests.

[465] Sharpe primarily considers Black bodies in the contemporary U.S. but frames this focus as part of a broader phenomenon ("Living in the wake on a global level means living the disastrous time and effects of continued marked migrations, Mediterranean and Caribbean disasters, trans-American and -African migration…" [15]). I adhere to her language here, to the extent I am able; by default, I assume she refers to the specific case (i.e. Black bodies in the U.S.) unless she specifically invokes a more global context.

means possessing knowledge about these data and their interconnections. Second, as an event to be overcome, to be moved on from, or, broadly, "Works that look for political, juridical, or even philosophical answers to this problem."[466] Against these options, Sharpe proposes a perspective that "Looks instead to current quotidian disasters in order to ask what, if anything, survives this insistent Black exclusion, this ontological negation, and how do literature, performance, and visual culture observe and mediate this un/survival."[467]

Sharpe's position is sometimes associated with the movement of Afro-pessimism, defined by Douglass, Terrefe, and Wilderson as:

> A lens of interpretation that accounts for civil society's dependence on antiblack violence—a regime of violence that positions black people as internal enemies of civil society, and cannot be analogized with the regimes of violence that disciplines the Marxist subaltern, the postcolonial subaltern, the colored but nonblack Western immigrant, the nonblack queer, or the nonblack woman.[468]

They write, further:

> The claim that humanity is made legible through the irreconcilable distinction between humans and blackness is one of the first principles of Afro-Pessimism, and it is supported by the argument that blackness is a paradigmatic position, rather than an ensemble of cultural, social, and sexual orientations. For Afro-pessimists, the black is positioned, a priori, as slave.[469]

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[466] Christina Sharpe, *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2016), 14.
[467] Sharpe, 14.
[468] Patrice Douglass, Selamawit D. Terrefe, and Frank B. Wilderson, "Afro-Pessimism," in *Oxford Bibliographies* (Oxford University Press, August 28, 2018). *In the Wake* is cited in this bibliography.
[469] Douglass, Terrefe, and Wilderson.

There are resonances between Sharpe's thought and the tenets outlined above; claims like "*In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* is a work that insists and performs that thinking needs care ('all thought is Black thought') and that thinking and care need to stay in the wake" read in conjunction with Sharpe's critiques of works that seek to "move on" or "go beyond" slavery can incline the reader to underscore the "stay" of "stay in the wake."[470] To my mind, however, Sharpe is doing something slightly different. I see *In the Wake* as a kind of meditation, one that does not necessarily suggest that Black bodies are, as the above authors have it, "Positioned, a priori, as slave." Rather, I take some of Sharpe's questions to be pedagogical invitations: "What happens when we proceed as if we *know* this, antiblackness, to be the ground on which we stand, the ground from which we attempt to speak, for instance, an 'I' or a 'we' who know, an 'I' or a 'we' who care?"[471] As Ewara writes, "Her [Sharpe's] goal is not to make yet more use of the Black bodies that she points to with these words, but to be drawn to and stay with them, to dwell a bit on them."[472]

This is to say that I do not think *In the Wake* is a work that necessarily *opposes* efforts to think, work, or move through the aftermath of slavery. I see it, rather, as a work with reservations about many attempts to do so, and a counter-attempt to think through a different mode of memorialization. As Sharpe puts it, "If museums and memorials materialize a kind of reparation (repair) and enact their own pedagogies as they position visitors to have a particular experience or set of experiences about an event that is seen to be past, how does one memorialize chattel slavery and its afterlives, which are unfolding still? *How do we memorialize an event that is still ongoing?*"[473]

These questions bring us back to wake work. What does it mean to "understand" the history of slavery and its effects? For Sharpe, we must first rethink our assumptions about understanding: "I

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[470] Sharpe, *In the Wake*, 5.
[471] Sharpe, 7.
[472] Eyo Ewara, "Book Review: In the Wake: On Blackness and Being," *PhiloSOPHIA* 8, no. 2 (November 26, 2018): 103.
[473] Sharpe, *In the Wake*, 20. My emphasis.

mean wake work to be a mode of inhabiting *and* rupturing this episteme with our known lived and un/imaginable lives."[474] Sharpe's emphasis opposes more traditional "objective" modes of understanding. Here, understanding is not removed or distant from its object; it is "a mode of inhabiting." It is not about gaining or obtaining some new information; it is about "rupturing this episteme." For Sharpe, wake work means approaching slavery in such a way where understanding fundamentally ruptures the everyday.

What does it mean to "do" wake work? Or, put another way, who does wake work? We might think that Sharpe herself "does" wake work, i.e. the book *In the Wake* is itself a manifestation of wake work. This might be true, but in any case there is more to it. Sharpe is clear that wake work is individually transformative, and as such wake work cannot be done on another's behalf. Rather, the teacher (or author, in this case) must guide the reader through the process, facilitating an engagement with history in such a way that they can take up the project of wake work.

Having said all this, let us turn to Sharpe's presentation of the earlier photograph. Sharpe describes her encounter with the photograph:

> It was not the first time I had cautiously entered this archive, but this time I was stopped by this photograph of a Haitian girl child, ten years old at the most (figure 2.5). A third of the image, the left-hand side, is blurry, but her face is clear; it's what is in focus. She is alive. Her eyes are open. She is lying on a black stretcher; her head is on a cold pack, there is an uncovered wound over and under her right eye and a piece of paper stuck to her bottom lip, and she is wearing what seems to be a hospital gown.

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[474] Sharpe, 18.

> She is looking at or past the camera; her look reaches out to me. Affixed to her fore-
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> head is a piece of transparent tape with the word *Ship* written on it. Who put it there?
>
> Does it matter?[475]

What is striking about Sharpe's description is how much it contrasts with the given caption, especially regarding the dominant figure, the girl. Compare: "A child waits to be medivaced by U.S. Army soldiers from the 82nd Airborne to the USNS Comfort on January 21, 2010 in Port-au-Prince, Haiti." What Sharpe emphasizes in her description is the girl herself: her look, her appearance, her life. This is not to say Sharpe ignores the circumstances of the photograph—far from it—but I take it both emphasis and order of topics matters.

Sharpe continues:

"What is the look in her eyes? What do I do with it?"[476]

These questions, set together on their own line in the book, invite the reader to consider what it means to understand the photograph. To elaborate, Sharpe subsequently proffers a series of questions regarding the photograph: "Where is she looking? Who and what is she looking for? Who can look back? Does she know that there is a piece of tape on her forehead? Does she know what that piece of tape says? Does she know that she is destined for a ship?"[477] and, shortly thereafter, "Is *Ship* a proper name? A destination? An imperative?"[478] Out of context, this series of questions could be understood as the pursuit of a typical research project. All these questions have factual answers; with a bit of luck, each could potentially be answered. Yet answering these questions in that manner misses the point. Instead, Sharpe writes, "I see her and I feel with and for her as she is disarranged by this process. I

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[475] Sharpe, 44.
[476] Sharpe, 44.
[477] Sharpe, 45.
[478] Sharpe, 46.

see this intrusion into her life and world at the very moment it is, perhaps not for the first time, falling apart. In her I recognize myself, by which I mean, I recognize the common conditions of Black being in the wake."[479]

To highlight the contrast here, Sharpe sees the girl first: a Black girl caught in and "disarranged by" the ongoing effects of slavery. The metadata and given description, to the extent one can even say they "see" the girl in the photograph, see the event of the Haiti earthquake first, while the particularity of the girl—her look, her circumstances, her life, etc.—are absent. Each frame is different, and each frame invites us to understand the photograph differently. This is precisely the point of wake work; by introducing the material at hand in a different manner, what we see—and thus how we understand—is transformed.

I want to briefly note that Sharpe's own analysis is far more complex than what I have presented thus far. Sharpe juxtaposes her consideration of this photograph with another photograph of a girl, also Haitian, from 1992. She also presents the photograph in the context of discussing the slave ship *Zong* and an associated court case from 1783, and a host of other examples besides. These allow Sharpe to flesh out the ways in which these phenomena intersect, deepening our engagement with them. For our purposes, however, I will leave these aside as the analysis of this photograph alone is sufficient to draw the contrast needed.

Doubtless an objection could be raised that part of the reason metadata takes the shape it does is because of a concern with objectivity. If, for example, we described the photograph of the girl from Haiti in terms perhaps closer to Sharpe's ("Refugee children – penetrating gazes"? "Black girls –

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[479] Sharpe, 45.

Haiti"?), we would be using extremely subjective language and catering to specialized or esoteric research. By identifying the photograph in the broadest, most objective terms (place and time), the photograph becomes discoverable by the widest possible group of researchers.

I will offer two responses to this concern here. First, the introduction of new veins of metadata is not necessarily antithetical to existing metadata. Part of the point here is that the *addition* (not replacement) of different kinds of metadata can support and make different kinds of projects possible. Second, I want to consider what kinds of claims are presupposed by the emphasis on objectivity. This hearkens back to the discussion in Chapter 2 regarding the "probablies" of the library; terms are selected in anticipation of what "library users" are most likely to search for. There, as here, I would hold that those expectations are encoded with norming expectations. This is part of why Sharpe's work is useful as an example; it is not simply that the metadata and description have little to do with Sharpe's project—those data fail to identify the material as in any way relevant to her research, despite being integral to the chapter. This point should already raise some questions about the "objectivity" or "neutrality" of the description if that ostensible objectivity only serves research of a particular kind. Moreover, and this is again part of Sharpe's point, we should attend to the way in which the metadata for this photograph (1) obscures the girl herself and (2) emphasizes the Haiti earthquake sans reference to all of the historical circumstances that made that earthquake so devastating and how responses to that earthquake both recall and continue patterns of Black slavery and colonialism.

Having presented this example, some consideration of impact and next steps is apropos. That is, is wake work better served by having its own associated metadata? Would using a heading like "Refugee children – penetrating gazes" facilitate further research in this area? Moreover, is the introduction of new headings sufficient if part of what is being questioned is the paradigm of research within which those headings appear?

This last question is one Sharpe herself takes into consideration. At various points in the text, Sharpe frames wake work as a way of responding to the archive. Like Benjamin's call to respond to the archive by considering the history of silences and absences, Sharpe frames the archive as a possible space for counter-narratives that recover the human. She notes, "In the archives Spillers, Philip, Hartman, and others most often encounter not individuals but columns in which subjects have been transformed into cargo marked in the ledger with the notation 'negro man, ditto, negro woman, ditto.'"[480] That refrain of "ditto, ditto" is the process by which subjects become objects for processes of colonialism; the subject becomes a tally mark.

As with Orientalism and Said, I do not think "correction" can solely take the form of updated, removed, or added headings. The presence of alternate sets of headings may perhaps strike us—if we are used to the typical axes of identification—as unusual, bizarre, subjective, esoteric, etc. Yet we should understand that this is so because part of what is being challenged is the predominant mode of understanding itself. Sharpe writes:

> What is the word for keeping and putting breath back in the body? What is the word
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> for how we must approach the archives of slavery (to "tell the story that cannot be
>
> told") and the histories and presents of violent extraction *in* slavery *and* incarceration;
>
> the calamities and catastrophes that sometimes answer to the names of occupation,
>
> colonialism, imperialism, tourism, militarism, or humanitarian aid and intervention?[481]

If part of what Sharpe is undertaking is a way of framing the history of slavery in such a way that it can be transformative in the way she describes (as rupturing, e.g.), then understanding that frame— wake work—is essential to navigating any related headings.

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[480] Sharpe, 52.
[481] Sharpe, 113.

This point has an implication for how one conceives of information literacy. After all, if under-standing wake work is essential, then there must necessarily be some education for would-be research-ers spelling out the theoretical basis for that set of headings. This is more work for both catalogers and library educators and, in a way, makes the catalog more impenetrable by adding a whole new paradigm to searches. That said, two responses are appropriate here. First, institutions of higher edu-cation the world over already invest in educating individuals how to use library catalogs; outreach, education, and instruction are integral components of nearly every community-facing librarian posi-tion. This point suggests existing patterns of classification are not necessarily any more intuitive than a pattern like that based on wake work. Second, part of what Sharpe's project throws into relief is the way in which a particular research paradigm can stymie and reinforce systemic racism. Learning preex-isting patterns of classification can affect developing researchers in terms of their conceptions of methodologies, relevance, parameters of the field, "important" questions, "major" figures, and so on. Simply modifying existing language is thus insufficient to address the ways in which these research paradigms are reinforced: paradigms themselves, and especially how they are learned and taught, must also be addressed.

Subsection A - Serendipity, Responsibility, Spontaneity

There is an additional aspect of Sharpe's work worth considering here that concerns the relation-ship of existing headings to future research. To do so, let us revisit an earlier quote for a moment: "It was not the first time I had cautiously entered this archive, but this time I was stopped by this photo-graph of a Haitian girl child, ten years old at the most."[482] An aspect of this quote I did not consider previously is the tense in which Sharpe discusses the photograph. Specifically, I want to note that

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[482] Sharpe, 44.

Sharpe frames herself in the passive voice in relation to the photograph. It is not that Sharpe sought the photograph per se, but that she was "stopped by" it. Later, Sharpe frames her encounter in an even more contingent way: "When I <u>stumbled upon</u> *that* image of *this* girl child with the word *Ship* taped to her forehead, it was the look in her eyes that first stopped me, and then, with its coming into focus, that word *Ship* threatened to obliterate every and anything else I could see."[483]

Much of this project has presented research as focused—driven, even. The researcher seeks, and in that seeking is aided or stymied (to various degrees) by the metadata that guides them to materials of possible interest. Yet what we see here is a rather different approach. Sharpe is not seeking *this* picture. Nor, as far as the text indicates, is she necessarily seeking the kind of photograph that my earlier proposed headings indicated, i.e. "Refugee children – penetrating gazes." On the contrary, this account suggests there was nothing specific that Sharpe was seeking at all; that she found this photograph and that it resulted in the analysis it did seems a result of pure serendipity.

This point could be seen as a critique of alternative metadata languages. If Sharpe's project was pure coincidence, the result of a random encounter, then why bother to change metadata? Sharpe's work was not the process of that kind of research, and if that is true for projects of a similar ilk, then those projects are not necessarily aided by these other kinds of metadata. Sharpe's account and the role of serendipity thus calls for some further consideration in related to indexing, discovery, and what it means to seek materials during research.

Somewhere between absolute, *adaequatio* categories and undefined, unnamed χάος is the realm in which our inquiry takes place. The process of research is one of navigation, using signs and waypoints

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[483] Sharpe, 44–45. Underlines my own.

to keep one's bearing and sense of direction. That said, it is also the nature of research that it investigates the uncharted.

Sharpe encountered a photo that she was not seeking per se, but neither was she *not* seeking that photo. By the very act of going to an archive and, presumably, going with some sense of what kinds of materials she might find, Sharpe increased the likelihood of having precisely this kind of experience. By way of analog: think for a moment of how you enjoy music. Perhaps there is a favorite chair; you might prefer headphones or a sound system; you might prefer to listen with others or live or you might prefer listening alone. None of these circumstances is, unto itself, sufficient for you to enjoy a piece of music. However, by creating a space in which you are *more likely* to appreciate the music, you increase the likelihood of eliciting that kind of experience.[484] The preparatory work is not sufficient for enjoyment, but by shaping the space of the encounter, the form of that encounter is anticipated. In other words, although Sharpe may not have been seeking that specific photo, she was seeking something like it, and the metadata (the name of the archive, its holdings and exhibits) facilitated discovery to that end.

At the same time, this point tells us something about Sharpe's approach to the archives. What did Sharpe "bring" to the archive to make this kind of encounter possible? How did she "prepare" herself to see the photograph she did in the way she does? I think, broadly, we could refer to this as both a kind of openness and a kind of criticality. Sharpe writes, "What happens when we look at and listen to these and other Black girls across time? What is made in our encounters with them? This looking makes ethical demands on the viewer; demands to imagine otherwise, to reckon with the fact that the

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[484] Not that all those factors can compensate for a piece of music you detest, of course. But the circumstances can help give the piece its best shot, so to speak. David Byrne talks about this in terms of how music's relationship to settings, i.e. how a room may (or may not) "flatter" a type of music—its melodies, rhythms, lyrics, etc.—depending on where it is played (Byrne, 2010).

archive, too, is invention."[485] It is precisely the intersection of Sharpe's own research and the archive—

its particular mode of appearance—that produces such results. Sharpe is *open* to seeing the look in the

girl's eyes in a way that is glossed by the press description.

I think what Sharpe articulates—and what wake work attempts to bring the reader to—is a framing, a characterizing. It is a way of preparing us to encounter *this* kind of object and not *that*; we might

go so far as to say it is a different object. It is setting the object up; it is setting *us* up. It is occasioning

the possibility of a rupture. That rupture is then actualized by the look, by the Haitian girl child whose

look stops Sharpe. This point has consonance with Benjamin's "constellations."[486] Benjamin characterizes such moments as a flash, the result of which assembles the apparently fragmentary and discrete.

Such constellations are historical and political: their emphasis is indicative of the purpose they serve

in the time and place in which they are realized.

This point has, I think, two implications worth considering further. The first shifts how we might

think of headings and metadata more broadly. From: articulating metadata in terms of how it "identifies" materials, where headings ostensibly describe the most salient features of a work for library users.

To: thinking of metadata as framing materials for possible encounters, where that encounter anticipates the generation of a certain kind of knowledge and understanding. This allows, as Adler puts it,

"Partial knowledges derived and viewed from multiple points [that] provide us with ranges of new

possibilities for embodiment and relating."[487] This may seem a minor shift, but it underscores that

here research is not looking for different materials as much as it is looking for materials differently.

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[485] Sharpe, *In the Wake*, 51.
[486] Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, 463. N3,1.
[487] Adler, *Cruising the Library: Perversities in the Organization of Knowledge.*, 163.

The second point gives us the ground upon which to push back against conceiving of metadata as "useless" in cases of serendipity. To designate such headings as "useless" presumes a model of research in which metadata *identifies*. On this understanding, either metadata successfully identifies material as relevant to a particular research pursuit, or it does not (either by applying the heading when it is not relevant or failing to applying the heading when it is). Here, however, no such dichotomy applies. Metadata are *suggestions*, assessments on the part of a predominant paradigm of research and knowledge about relevance and importance.

Sharpe's account of her being "stopped by" this photograph thus carries implications for both how we think about metadata as well as how we might think about alternative languages. As much as the library—and so many systems of knowledge—strives towards a kind of universality, it is doubtful classification will ever reach a point of totalization. This is not a lament. Instead, it is an acknowledgement that although metadata plays an important role in the formulation of research questions and answers, it would be a mistake to presume that expanding our conceptions of metadata would solve issues of discoverability and accessibility once and for all.

Section 4 - Conclusion

The ongoing work of correcting and updating problematic language in LC and other authority records is important, and it should continue. But we should not think that such a project will somehow "restore" neutrality or objectivity to LCC/SH. More than being about individual words or terms, the very system that delimits and defines the network of terms we use is indicative of the priorities and paradigm of the system. It is, as we saw in Chapter 2, a system rooted in "practical" interests, i.e. being of use to presumed users. It is indicative of a system that expects certain persons and perspectives to belong within the library while others are positioned as outsiders.

In philosophy, this means a "Philosopher" belongs in the B range. As far as metadata is concerned, a philosopher is primarily one who is thought of as pursuing the kinds of historiographical projects we saw in Chapter 3, rooted in the kind of conception of knowledge and truth articulated by d'Alembert in Chapter 4. To that end, LCC/LCSH remain practical and helpful.[488]

Imagine, now, how Said, Sharpe, or another researcher interested in a different kind of understanding might use library metadata. Put another way, what is it that Said or Sharpe would be looking for when examining a catalog? And, importantly, are there other headings that could have been applied to better facilitate their searches?

To address the first question, we must first set aside any notion that these authors simply needed just the right heading, and that if that magical term had existed in the catalog at the time of their research, they would have gotten all the right materials with a quick and easy search. What is significant about both cases is that their work is looking for hitherto unidentified patterns. They are looking to collect materials that *they* see as connected, and their work endeavors to make that connection and its significance apparent.

Is metadata therefore useless to these projects? Although we might initially think yes, with some finessing the answer becomes (a complicated) no. First, although it is true neither Said nor Sharpe would have had any luck searching "Orientalism" or "Wake Work" in the catalog, both still navigated the library and archives. A whole host of materials would be available with a simple search for "Oriental Studies" or "Slavery in the U.S.," for example.[489] What is worth noting is that it is precisely the tension between the expected and the found that makes these projects possible. Both project a kind

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[488] Both systems have their shortcomings, of course. But the general approach is one that resonates with the interests and needs of the researchers; shortcomings manifest more as misapplication than incongruous interests.

[489] Presuming access to a discovery tool, of course—which would have looked different during Said's research in the 70s and Sharpe's in the 2010s. In either case, though, their work is still guided by metadata that identifies materials as being potentially relevant.

of hope on to the catalog, a hope that this category will present to them the kinds of material they seek. When it does not, the question becomes *why* it does not. That question, in turn, fuels subsequent research: why is it that one finds these kinds of assertions and information about "The Orient"? Why, when I search for materials on slavery and its legacy, do I find so many materials framing it as a historical event in the past?

I do not know how either Said or Sharpe went about their projects, nor do I mean to suggest their projects were as easily founded as the above questions suggest. Often enough, the research process is messy, shifting and changing through myriad interrelated questions and searches that the researcher themselves may not be able to fully articulate. Research struggles to find the right questions as much as it struggles to find the right answers. The questions I pose are merely meant to show how thinking through (or against) the form of presented metadata can make these kinds of projects possible.

I should note, on a more personal level, that a similar approach has fueled this project. I was— and am—often baffled by what counts (or doesn't) as philosophy in the library. And it is precisely that tension that helped to craft the questions and direction of this research. For me, and I think for Said, Sharpe, and others, even when metadata does not return the results we hope for, it is not useless because it informs how others (institutions, our society, our culture) think about a topic and discipline.

This takes us to the second question, i.e., are there other headings that could have been applied to better facilitate their searches? The obvious answer here is yes: supposing there were some prescient cataloger who put all of what Said ended up citing under "Orientalism" right as he began his project, his search for relevant materials undoubtedly would have been faster. That is not to say it necessarily would have been better, however. Part of the research process is delimitation; I am sure Said and Sharpe both encountered additional examples, discourses, and ideas that could have been added to the work (and perhaps at one point were). Through the process of reading, writing, and thinking,

however, they came to think of the project as having *these* parameters, which could only be set with some sense of the "beyond," the out-of-scope.

Again, this might incline us to think, "Well, what is the point of metadata then?," to which I would reply that these examples are already-completed works. They are not future projects. If present metadata, patterns of information, and the inclinations of the library and archive led to these projects, what else might updating and rethinking those patterns produce? What would be the next *Orientalism* if *Orientalism* itself were the basis? Or the next *In the Wake*? These questions have no determinate answer (at least in my mind), but they indicate that by changing the grounds upon which possible projects are thought out and developed, we can make possible newer still forms of thinking, questioning, and philosophizing.

Where does this leave us? At the outset of this chapter, I proposed that Said and Sharpe would help us think through more concretely what it means to understand in different modes. For both—albeit in very different ways—understanding means something more than just facts, dates, and a system concerned with the recording of those for its own sake. And although both have their works classified as history (i.e. in the "E" range), I take it that this inclination towards investigating the grounds upon which a phenomenon appears in the way it does is fundamentally philosophical.

What happens, though, when a figure is claimed by The History of Philosophy (inasmuch as there is such a monolith) despite their own critiques and distancing of their thought from that notion? Barring certain editorial interference and tampering, what happens when figures who critique "Philosophy" become integral to that tradition? What remains of their critique? These questions propel us to the next chapter.

Chapter VI - Philosophy Between the Lines

The previous chapters raised questions about the priorities and values implicit in classification. Social, cultural, political, and educational contexts posit patterns of use, and in philosophy the pattern is one of a quasi-Encyclopedist project: the accumulation and preservation of the history of ideas.

Ironically, numerous authors in Western philosophy who have been indexed in this fashion have critiqued this very notion. In various ways, they argue that philosophy is not simply the amalgamation and study of "Philosophical Ideas," but something else, something more. Accordingly, what it means to study such a history and how one should orient oneself towards such study are grounded otherwise.

In this section, I consider two such critiques: one from Nietzsche, one from Heidegger. There are a variety of other authors that could be considered here. An earlier version of this chapter included Hegel; at times I have toyed with the idea of presenting Bataille. Ultimately, however, I found reading Nietzsche and Heidegger in this context to be the most fruitful and illustrative. This is because both thinkers are deeply concerned with the way "The History of Philosophy" has been culturally situated as a potential object of study. For Nietzsche, how such a history is preserved and taught is suffused with values that orient its learner towards presuming a certain kind of worth. For Heidegger, both the history itself and the institutions that have ensured its preservation bring with them certain kinds of presuppositions—especially about what it means to learn philosophy—that can obfuscate doing philosophy in a deeper sense. For both figures, what it means to study the history of philosophy means navigating the givenness of philosophy in such a way that a more potent, meaningful, and ultimately more significant form of philosophy emerges. Reading Nietzsche and Heidegger in this context moves us towards the culmination of this project, namely, a consideration of what it means to inherit the given values and language of philosophy.

Section 1 - *Unzeitgemäße* Philosophy

"What? We have to interpret a work exactly as the period that produced it? But we have more pleasure, more amazement, and also more to learn from it precisely if we do not interpret it that way!"

— Nietzsche, *Dawn*[490]

Nietzsche's "On the Use and Abuse of History for Life," questions the Encyclopedist conception of the value of knowledge from the outset. The Encyclopedist sees preservation writ large as valuable for the sake of both useful and pleasurable knowledge; the more comprehensive the collection, the more possible uses. Nietzsche, however, is suspicious of the foundational values of collection and preservation. For him, there is a risk to such an approach to collection because there is a tendency for it to become a kind of obsession where anything and everything must be collected, cataloged, and preserved as an end in itself.

It is worth noting the consonance of this concern with the collection ideal of "complete coverage." Way observes the conditions that led to such an ideal:

> In the past, it was difficult to know what other libraries owned, and it could be expen-sive and time-consuming to get items from other libraries. As a result, libraries needed to build comprehensive stand-alone collections that attempted to anticipate users' needs. Materials were acquired in case a user might someday need them. Volume

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[490] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Dawn*, trans. Brittain Smith, The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche 5 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 251.

counts were a marker of excellence because, theoretically, the larger the collection, the

greater the likelihood that the library would meet a user's information needs.[491]

More recent years, filled with budget cuts and increasing costs (especially related to journal subscriptions), have resulted in often-lamented cuts and concessions. However, the ideal of the comprehensive collection is not rejected as such, but recognized as "unrealistic and unsustainable."[492]

Nietzsche's critique gives us an entry point into considering more closely what upholding this ideal means for the collection and presentation of the history of philosophy. Broaching this topic requires some careful examination: Nietzsche's analysis focuses on how values inform what it means to read and learn from history; it does not focus on curation, collection development and management, or what we might call the provider side of the equation. However, as we will see, Nietzsche's analysis allows us to examine how the staging of an encounter between text and reader affects the mood and expectations of reading.

Before delving into the text, a brief word on translation. Nietzsche's *Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen* has been translated into English several times, and its title has varied with nearly every translation.[493] This variance also applies to the title of the essay under examination here, i.e. "*Vom Nutzen und Nachtheil der Historie für das Leben,*" with "*Nutzen und Nachtheil*" translated as "Utility and Liability," "Service and Disservice," "Use and Abuse," "Uses and Disadvantage(s)," and more. In this section, I refer to the title of the work as *Unfashionable Observations*, drawing from Gray's point that, "If fashion is taken to designate those things that achieve popular appeal and dominate public taste in any particular epoch,

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[491] Doug Way, "Transforming Monograph Collections with a Model of Collections as a Service," *Portal: Libraries and the Academy* 17, no. 2 (April 8, 2017): 284, https://doi.org/10.1353/pla.2017.0017.

[492] Way, 285.

[493] These include: *Thoughts Out of Season* (1909, Luovoci and Collins), *Untimely Considerations* (1974, Dannhauser), *Untimely Reflections* (1980, Hayman), *Untimely Meditations* (1974, Kaufmann; 1983, Hollingsdale), *Unfashionable Observations* (1995, Gray), *Unconventional Observations* (1995, Schaberg), *Unmodern Observations* (2011, Arrowsmith), and the idiosyncratic *Inopportune Speculations, Unfashionable Observations or Essays in Sham Smashing* (1908, Mencken).

then it is precisely an unfashionable crusade against these fashions that fueled Nietzsche's polemical fire."[494] And Ansell-Pearson's point: "What motivates the kind of intellectual praxis Nietzsche carries out in the four observations is the need to speak the truth no matter how unpleasant it might be."[495] I refer to the essay itself in terms of "Use and Abuse," not only because that phrase has become ubiquitous in Nietzsche scholarship (and beyond), but because the parallelism of the terms use/abuse nicely captures one of the philosophical points at the heart of the essay, as we will see.[496]

What is at stake in Nietzsche's "Use and Abuse" is what role history plays in the lives of those who study it. Does one understand history as a source of a kind of strength, a pool of "exemplars, teachers, and comforters" from which the individual, people, or culture can draw?[497] Or is it part of what Nietzsche calls being "cultivated" [*Gelehrte*], which he chides as creating an individual "Who is useful at the earliest possible age and places himself outside life in order to recognize it more clearly"?[498] Whether one takes the former or latter approach is precisely what divides the use and abuse (respectively) of history for Nietzsche.

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[494] Richard T. Gray, "Translator's Afterword," in *Unfashionable Observations*, The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche 2 (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), 398.

[495] Keith Ansell-Pearson, "'Holding on to the Sublime': On Nietzsche's Early 'Unfashionable' Project," in *The Oxford Handbook of Nietzsche*, ed. John Richardson and Ken Gemes (Oxford University Press, 2013), 228, https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199534647.013.0011.

[496] This shift necessitates some modified translations, as I primarily cite the 1995 Stanford edition, *Unfashionable Observations*, which translates Use/Abuse as Utility/Liability. Such edits are indicated by brackets. It is worth noting that Jensen critiques use/abuse as a translation because it, "Is common, trite, and used mostly likely because it rhymes. It wrongly conveys the impression that we are straightforwardly active and history is straightforwardly passive: we use history and we abuse history" (11). Jensen argues that "Uses and Disadvantage" is the most accurate for a variety of reasons, but especially because it does not employ the "antonymical parallelism" of many other translations (use/abuse, utility/liability, etc.) (13). Without delving into the complexities of translation, I would simply note that I am not ultimately convinced that disadvantage conveys the philosophical point of the essay any better than abuse. Indeed, although there may be linguistic reasons to favor disadvantage as a translation of *Nachteil*, abuse seems to me to better capture the way in which Nietzsche judges the abuses not merely as disadvantageous, but *wrong*.

[497] Friedrich Nietzsche, "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life," in *Unfashionable Observations*, trans. Richard T. Gray, The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche 2 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 96.

[498] Nietzsche, 160.

The latter situation begs some questions. Why—and how—would one take up a position "outside life"? What would living out such a position mean? Further still, wouldn't this itself count as a form of "life" (even if it is a reclusive one)?

Nietzsche answers these questions in a roundabout way: by way of memory. For him, memory does not refer to a part of the mind or a psychological capacity. Instead, it names the way in which humans relate to their past: it is the basis upon which we assemble narratives of meaning that connect past events and experiences to the present for the sake of empowering and guiding our lives. To that end, Nietzsche describes memory as operating between two poles. On the one: rumination [*Wiederkäuen*], which he describes as "A degree of sleeplessness […] of historical sensibility."[499] Rumination captures a sense of (nearly) infinite causes and conditions: the never-ending rabbit hole of historical research. To explain a given event, we can identify innumerable causes leading up to it, and one could spend a lifetime trying to determine every single contributing factor.

What prevents such a nearly infinite task is the other pole of memory, what Nietzsche calls "shaping power" [*plastische Kraft*].[500] For Nietzsche, shaping power deploys forgetfulness as a way of delimiting rumination. As with memory, Nietzsche has a specific sense in which he uses the term: forgetfulness is not passive, i.e. it does not refer to the way in which most of us tend to forget all but a relatively small portion of our lives. Instead, it means deploying forgetfulness in a more active way: a kind of recognition of finitude. One cannot account for every single cause leading to an event, and to

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[499] Nietzsche, 89.

[500] Two points seem to me relevant to make about the German here. First, on *Wiederkäuen*, the German contains *wieder*, i.e. "again," and thus has a stronger sense in which what is being considered is being rehashed, rethought, reexamined, etc. than "rumination." Second, on *plastische Kraft*, *Kraft* is distinguished from *Macht*, despite both often being translated into English as "Power." In particular, *Kraft* often has a more concrete, even physical connotation than *Macht*; Nietzsche's use here thus has more of a sense in which the "shaping power" is something deployed, something engaged in the process of manifesting change—rather than an abstract ability to make change (if one was so inclined). Further, as Humphrey points out, using power as a translation of *Kraft* is somewhat misleading since Nietzsche's *Wille zur Macht* is translated into English as Will to Power (Humphrey, 527).

pursue such a project is to become trapped in the past. Forgetting is a point of scission, where one says, "Good enough" and moves on.

For Nietzsche, there are three types of history that recognize the importance of the "Good enough": Monumental, Antiquarian, and Critical.[501] Exactly how each kind of history draws from the past is precisely where they differ. The monumental looks to history to identify "greatness" (whatever form that may take), and from this "Concludes that the greatness that once existed was at least *possible* at one time, and that it therefore will probably be possible once again."[502] The antiquarian "Looks back with loyalty and love on the origins through which he became what he is; by means of this piety he gives thanks, as it were, for his existence."[503] Finally, the critical finds "The strength to shatter and dissolve a past; he accomplishes this by bringing this past before a tribunal, painstakingly interrogating it, and finally condemning it."[504] Each recognizes a moment of "Good enough" that enables its practitioner to identify a project's end point.

Here we find the eponymous "use" of history. "History" is not an abstract sum of historical data: events, peoples, works, nations, etc. It is about the way in which the study of history enables a kind of narrative potency in the present. Given this definition, one may guess what "abuse" refers to: an understanding of history that divides history and life. It does so, on Nietzsche's account, by "Stuffing and overstuffing ourselves with alien times, customs, arts, philosophies, religions, and knowledge,"[505] and, in the end:

> We sense, of course, that one thing sounds different from another, that one thing has
>
> a different effect from another: increasingly we lose this sense of surprise, so that we

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[501] Nietzsche, "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life," 96.
[502] Nietzsche, 98.
[503] Nietzsche, 102.
[504] Nietzsche, 106.
[505] Nietzsche, 111.

are no longer overly amazed at anything and, ultimately, find satisfaction in every-

thing—this is what is called historical sensibility, historical cultivation.[506]

To abuse history does not mean to simply neglect it—if anything, just the opposite. Abusing history

means a kind of fetishization of history, a way of positing an abstract object that can be controlled

and "mastered." As Bambach writes, "To the extent that history promoted 'an ever more intense

feeling of life,' it could serve as a positive force; to the extent that it promoted armchair detachment

and connoisseurship, it needed to be exposed as 'impotent tartuffery.'"[507]

This account takes us back to our earlier questions, i.e. how and why one would take up a position

"outside life," as well as on what basis one could assert that this is not itself a form of life. It should

be noted that Nietzsche—as is so often the case with his thought—packs more ideas into his writings

than is apparent at first glance. For Nietzsche, "life" is fundamentally associated with growth, change,

adaptation, and experimentation. He writes in *Beyond Good and Evil*, for example, "Anything that lives

wants above all to *discharge* its strength—life itself is will to power,"[508] and in *The Gay Science*: "No, life

has not disappointed me. Rather, I find it truer, more desirable and mysterious every year – ever since

the great liberator overcame me: the thought that life could be an experiment for the knowledge-

seeker – not a duty, not a disaster, not a deception!"[509]

This issue is foregrounded at the very outset of "Use and Abuse." In the very first line of the essay,

Nietzsche opens with a quote from Goethe: "Moreover, I hate everything that only structs me without

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[506] Nietzsche, 135.

[507] Charles R. Bambach, "History and Ontology: A Reading of Nietzsche's Second 'Untimely Meditation,'" *Philosophy Today* 34, no. 3 (August 1, 1990): 267, https://doi.org/10.5840/philtoday199034315.

[508] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil / On the Genealogy of Morality*, trans. Adrian Del Caro, The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche 8 (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 2014), 16.

[509] Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, ed. Bernard Arthur Owen Williams, trans. Josefine Nauckhoff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 181.

increasing or immediately stimulating my own activity."[510] Employing this language, we could say an important distinction between the use and abuse of history is that the former stimulates while the latter merely instructs. Accordingly, to take a position outside life is not necessarily to advocate death, but is instead to situate life as static, fixed, or eternal. The abuse of history is so called, then, because it posits a value to the study of history that is utterly indifferent to the particular context in which it is studied.

But how does an individual come to abuse history? Under what circumstances would someone take up this position? To answer this question requires a slight pivot. Thus far, I have articulated the types of history predominantly in terms of how an individual might approach learning from history. This is aligned with Nietzsche's own account, which is mostly presented as the ethos of an individual. However, Nietzsche also writes that one can speak of "peoples" and "cultures" as representing these approaches.[511] This shift in emphasis allows us to broach broader questions concerning how types of history become institutionalized and what significance such institutionalization has.

Institutionalization appears in "Use and Abuse" itself, in the context of education and associated practices. At the outset of the essay, Nietzsche observes, "I have no idea what the significance of classical philology would be in our age, if not to have an unfashionable effect—that is, to work against the time and thereby have an effect upon it."[512] We encounter the idea again at the end of the essay, via a motif: "cultivation."[513] These bookends (essayends?) set the stakes of the essay: using history counteracts the reification of history in cultural and educational milieus.

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[510] Nietzsche, "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life," 85. It is interesting that Nietzsche decides to open with this quote, because the very structure of the writing here indicates what Nietzsche is describing. The quote from Goethe does not, for Nietzsche, receive any kind of historical analysis, but instead sparks the ensuing discussion. At the same time, the very act of opening with a quote indicates the way in which Nietzsche's thought is indebted to the thought of other writers. The essay itself is an act of using history.

[511] Nietzsche, 89.

[512] Nietzsche, 87.

[513] Nietzsche, 160.

Cast in this light, the concern with the abuse of history becomes clearer. It is, after all, unclear how the use of history could be transformed into abuse (or vice versa). However, in the context of reified pedagogical practices, we find a twofold educational ossification. First, the positing and reiteration of a particular form of life, that is, a set of practices and ideas that undergird what we do and how we live. In our context, this means upholding historiographically-oriented research in philosophy as primarily or exclusively the kind of history that enriches the life of an individual or culture. Second, this form is situated as the default: it is natural, innate, universal, etc.

These points lead us to consider the implications of Nietzsche's thought—and critiques—for classification. There is a relatively apparent point of entry here (i.e. is library classification a form of Monumental, Antiquarian, or Critical history?), but I do not think that approach produces the most insightful or impactful analysis of the relationships between the library, classification, and philosophy. Instead, I propose we should understand classification itself as a form of education, and shot through from the outset with valuations about history, its study, and its preservation. To be clear, when I say education here, I am not referring to the more active teaching we find in most classrooms, nor am I implying that classifications offer an explicit argument for a particular idea of history. It is, rather, a matter of acculturation and norming—a kind of pedagogical soft power.

Metadata, in its very form, is symbolic. It does more than present information about a work—it situates the material within a broader context of knowledge production, preservation, and presentation. In such a context, classifications appear as a way of already-knowing; in order for the text to be classified at all, it must be both knowable and known within existing patterns of knowledge. One might recall *Orientalism* at this point, noting the way in which the presentation of a divide—Occident/Orient—means subsequent research slides into articulating the "in what ways" of the divide, rather than questioning the divide itself. In an analogous manner, situating a philosopher according to

a Eurocentric historiographical nexus invites an array of questions about the place of texts, ideas, and philosophers within that nexus—but does not invite questions about the nexus itself in the same way.

Put another way, classifications are already readings and valuations of history. They present "philosophy" itself as already having been read and understood, as if philosophy had a quasi-eternal or objective essence. They are, as Foucault put it, given as universal, necessary, objective, etc. Accordingly, texts are forestructured as learnable or knowable as moments within that history. This is not to say that such texts are *determined* as knowable exclusively in this manner; the very fact that one can find the significance of reading Nietzsche in other terms testifies to this possibility. This is, rather, to indicate in what way the givenness of a text as part of a broader valuative framework nudges the reader towards understanding the text within that framework.

Yet this situation creates a kind of tension. Finding a work like "Use and Abuse" means tracing the logic of a pregiven narrative. Whether it is Nietzsche or a more obscure philosopher, finding a work is akin to reading a map: one must understand how the territory has been laid out and what markers to look for. "Use and Abuse" accordingly appears first and foremost as the work of a 19th Century German Philosopher. Thus, Nietzsche's call to evaluate the values operative in the study of history are subtly undermined by the context in which they appear. Nietzsche's invitations to philosophize are not necessarily taken as such, but instead registered as identifiable ideas—"thought-creations," as Copleston put it. The spur of the essay, for the reader to reflect upon why they read history, is analyzed from one step removed: what matters is giving an account of what Nietzsche articulates and what significance those ideas have in the context of Western philosophy.

This situation has broader implications for how we think of the production of knowledge. That is, not only is the individual impact of Nietzsche's thought disarmed, but its impotence is reiterated through traditions of scholarly research. What becomes important are projects like those of Chapter

3; to be a professional philosopher means to contribute to an imagined pregiven canon. At no point does the scholar of philosophy need to ask themselves why scholarship in philosophy takes the form it does. Copleston certainly did not; for all points and purposes, it was already apparent to him what constituted the domain of philosophy and what counted as valuable contributions to it. If anything, what was unapparent is why such a project would be important or valuable for either himself or for those who read his work. We have a given purpose, to be sure—to better facilitate learning the history of Western philosophy—but why that would be important is, as I indicated in Chapter 3, vague and underdetermined.

This preemptive blunting of the point of the text is precisely what Nietzsche is worried about. As he puts it:

> We will discover to our dismay just how uniformly the entire aim of education has been conceived, despite the great divergence of opinions and the vehemence of the controversies; we will discover just how unswervingly the previous product of education, the "cultivated human being" as he is conceived today, is accepted as the necessary and rational foundation of all further education.[514]

The reiteration of a type of education that sees the purpose of research as adding to a body of "knowledge" sidelines the question of why and for whom such research is carried out. It slots individuals into an assemblage of Knowledge Production; what matters is the product, not the producer.

As Nietzsche's trio of Monumental/Antiquarian/Critical indicates, the issue is not with information and knowledge itself. Instead, we must look to the institutions and practices that incline us to think of learning in this way. This leads us to question in what ways the library facilitates education

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[514] Nietzsche, 160.

qua cultivation. We find a certain irony here; in better facilitating the production of objective knowledge, the library simultaneously obscures these other types of learning.

Because education happens in myriad contexts, there is no single site of intervention or correction that would "fix" the issue. Still, in a library context, we can suggest a twofold response. First, a critical consideration of how history and its institutions present "learning." How do pedagogical practices not simply teach content, methods, etc., but simultaneously teach what it means to learn? Why do they do so? What do institutions of learning aim to do through realizing "education"? These are, of course, broad questions that extend well beyond both the library and philosophy. As Nietzsche indicates, however, these contexts situate the very project of using—or abusing—history.

Second, if we understand classifications as a practice of educating users how to think about philosophy, could we propose alternative or additional classifications that would allow for more diverse forms of philosophy to appear? Could classifications facilitate new kinds of connections and conversations?

To illustrate: consider how differently institutions of learning and research could gather and present history. A monumental approach might be concerned with The Greats: titans of history whose deeds and creations can inspire and impel similar actions in the present. This mode of learning has its place; in creative endeavors especially, the right kinds of examples and exemplars can provide a spark for new ideas, connections, inventions, and more.

In thinking through how the monumental would inform classification, I confess I found my taste at odds with the kinds of headings it might produce, e.g. "Living well – Major Insights," "Analyses of Mind – Brilliant Thinkers." These are so blatantly subjective that my sensibilities balk at even writing them here. Yet these kinds of judgments can (implicitly) be found everywhere. Compendiums and companions claim to represent the best in scholarship, and one could say that even to be recognized

as relevant to a scholarly discourse is already a judgment of value: it recognizes the worth of the work as contributing something significant. Framed in that way, I believe the monumental approach could produce more useful and more grounded headings, like the following:

- Existentialism – Seminal texts
- Marxism – Major interpretations
- Living well – Idealizations and Models
- Race – Philosophical Bases
- History of Beyng – Descartes

These headings are thoroughly at odds with many contemporary principles of classification, primarily because they do not simply list "objective" data. But, as I have been arguing throughout this work, both the selection of certain data as relevant or significant, alongside the construction of an inside/outside "Philosophy" are already suffused with values about learning, research, scholarship, and philosophy itself. This is partially the benefit of Nietzsche's framework; there is no "objective" in the sense of a way of presenting history that is without valuation. Each presentation of history situates certain qualities, figures, and ideas as more or less important, more or less relevant. To that end, the monumental does not "correct," but simply allows for additional modes of discovery and facilitates different kinds of interactions.

Undertaking a similar exercise with the critical, meanwhile, results in a somewhat odd set of descriptions, in part because historical preservation seems to require a kind of respect for the worthiness of preserving writings, artwork, and materials more broadly, to which the critical is (at least in its most extreme form) antithetical. And yet, reactive and sardonic though it might be, the critical still relies upon history to fuel its rejection. Although it is a none-too-flattering image, the critical is like a teenager who in some senses *needs* authority figures to be a rebel, a punk, anti-authoritarian, etc. because it is

only as antithetical to such authority that the rebel exists. More productively, we might think of the way in which acknowledging the faults, issues, ambiguities, failures, and range of errors one finds in the past can still be the impetus for action. Understood in a relatively linear way, one might try to improve upon the errors of the past, retaining its successes and excising its failures. Or, understanding critique in a very different way, recognizing failures and flaws strips away the almost-mythical status of certain historical figures, and in so doing the messy, involved, contingent struggle that led to the imperfect product is revealed. Thus, rather than a *magnum opus* whose brilliance shines so radiantly one thinks "I will never write anything so profound," one comes to understand the messy process of dead-ends, failed attempts, first drafts, and crossed-out lines that makes possible such works. In other words, the Work of Genius can still be appreciated, but in identifying its imperfections it again becomes human. Some examples of such headings:

- Philosophical racism – Examples
- Philosophical sexism – Examples
- Philosophical writings – Fragments, incomplete works
    - [This would likely work better as a subdivision, rather than a new heading]

Part of what I want to note about both the monumental and critical headings is that they reveal connections between texts in a way substantively different than that of historiographical indexing. A researcher looking for texts that reflect on what it means to live well might encounter Aristotle, Confucius, Dōgen, Nietzsche, Murdoch, Kittay, and Thích Nhat Hanh.[515] This is not to say such headings mean the concepts of each work are automatically connected simply because they bear a new heading,

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[515] One might object that the BJ LCC division (Ethics) or the LCSH headings on Ethics already cover this ground. However, two issues arise here. The first, discussed in Chapter 1, is that because B (general philosophy) and BJ are nonexclusive, it is unclear whether a work like Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* should go under the works of Aristotle or under Ethics (mostly it is cataloged as the former). The second is that the Eurocentric conceptual grounding of LCC/SH means "Ethics" primarily means Western traditions of philosophical analysis of issues in ethics, as evidenced by major subdivisions that include "Religious [read: Christian] Ethics," "Positivist Ethics," "Socialist Ethics," etc.

of course. It is, rather, to indicate how new encounters and connections are made possible through a new form of presentation.

These alternatives supplement and, I would argue, even complement the dominant antiquarian tendencies of library classifications. To be clear, this does not mean historical indexing in the sense of identifying materials by their year of publication should be jettisoned. It is, rather, to change the narrative. It is to de-center a mode of presentation that frames philosophy as All the Ideas from Anywhere, Anytime. At the same time, Nietzsche's separation of the types of history as applicable to individuals, peoples, and cultures indicates that situating history as something edifying and empowering falls to more than just libraries and classifications. It falls to practices of pedagogy and research—those iterated and reiterated ways of producing "knowledge" that situate the value of understanding history in particular terms.

Section 2 - Introducing Foundations: Heidegger on Teaching Metaphysics

> "Knowledge of the start can show whence and how each of the philosophers has developed. We could thereby calculate, at least approximately, the presuppositions, influences, and developmental conditions of the later and especially of the more recent philosophy.
> "Yet what would be the point of all that? To collect information *about* the great philosophers—that simply means to reflect on a former way of thinking instead of thinking for oneself out of, and on behalf of, the present time."[516]

The year is 1929. Two years ago, you published a work—*Being and Time*—that roundly critiqued Western metaphysics. Now, you find yourself teaching a course: "Fundamentals of Metaphysics." Ironic, to say the least. This moment, however, is an opportunity. It occasions a critical question: how does one mediate between teaching "Philosophy" as a subject framed and situated by academia and

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[516] Martin Heidegger, *The Event*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 35.

historical traditions, and "Philosophy" a (Topic? Approach? Orientation?) that one is attempting to critique and rethink?

This is no easy question, and I think one can understand many of Heidegger's reflections on education, history, and philosophy in this light. Indeed, others have written a variety of works on Heidegger's relationship with education vis-à-vis philosophy. Predominantly, such considerations have focused in part or in whole on the issue of the relationship between Heidegger's rectorate and involvement with Nazism and his views on philosophy and education, either by stressing the independence of the two (e.g. Kisiel (1993), Crowell (1997), Milchman and Rosenberg (1997), Thomson (2005), Aboutorabi (2015)) or the interdependence of the two (e.g. Ott (1990), Van Buren (1994)).

Readings of Heidegger on education generally articulate his critique as getting at the way in which academia transforms the discipline of philosophy into a kind of *techne*, and the "stuff" of philosophy into a kind of *Gestell*. In this vein, Thomson connects education with Western metaphysics, writing, "By giving shape to our historical understanding of 'what *is*', metaphysics determines the most basic presuppositions of what *anything* is, including 'education.'"[517] Unpacking the notion of *paideia*, Thomson continues: "We cannot understand education as the transmission of 'information', the filling of the *psyche* with knowledge as if inscribing a *tabula rasa* or, in more contemporary parlance, 'training-up' a neural net."[518] Karamercan elaborates upon many of Thomson's points, arguing for understanding education in terms of *poesis* pace *techne*: "*Poietic* thinking that gathers, which is the basis of genuine learning and teaching, one does not simply say what things *are*, but learns to see the things in the world anew in their presencing through stillness."[519] For Mika, this

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[517] Iain Thomson, "Heidegger on Ontological Education, or: How We Become What We Are," *Inquiry* 44, no. 3 (September 1, 2001): 248, https://doi.org/10.1080/002017401316922408.

[518] Thomson, 254.

[519] Onur Karamercan, "Revisiting the Place of Philosophy with Heidegger: Being-in-Academia," *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, August 29, 2021, 8, https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2021.1972414.

idea identifies a goal for educators: "The task of the teacher, it would seem, is to open a realm of possibilities for the student, to encourage them to think *within*—rather than from *without*—the obscurity that thinking exposes."[520]

That Heidegger was concerned with education, teaching, and learning and its (en)framing in academia is apparent. However, beyond the moments in Heidegger's work where we can highlight explicit reflections on education, we can also see it enacted. As Babich points out, "Heidegger's concern with education is a broader one than may be indicated by wordsearch-specific remarks on education alone. Hence the attention Heidegger pays to learning as to [sic] learning to think and to questioning [sic] runs throughout his work."[521] This is especially apparent in Heidegger's lectures, which often begin not by delving into the text or topic at hand, but by drawing attention to the framing of the course and its material in language drawn from the history of Western philosophy. Ever concerned with foundations and grounding, Heidegger's introductions think through the tension between how concepts are introduced—the language they use and traditions from and to which they speak—and the work of philosophy. Thus, an examination of such introductions gives us a sense of the complicated relationship between academic "philosophy" and philosophy as Heidegger understands it. Importantly, the two are not separate from each other, but understanding how they differ is vital to understanding what Heidegger is doing in his lectures.

Part of what makes Heidegger a helpful example for this project is that he understands the language of philosophy in a way that complicates historiographical indexing. Juxtaposed with someone like Copleston, Heidegger does not situate philosophy as the discovery of truths in the field of philos-

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[520] Carl Mika, "Some Thinking from, and Away from, Heidegger," *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 48, no. 8 (July 2, 2016): 829, https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2016.1165016.

[521] Babette Babich, "On Heidegger on Education and Questioning," in *Encyclopedia of Educational Philosophy and Theory*, ed. Michael A. Peters (Singapore: Springer Singapore, 2017), 2, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-287-532-7_151-3.

ophy, but as a tradition in which insights into the ways things are has (and continues to) spur think-ing.[522] Philosophical thinking gets at *something* of an originary experience or insight, but never reaches or represents the totality. As such, philosophical texts give us hints—a kind of train of thought or trail of breadcrumbs—that can lead us towards thinking, but to conflate what is revealed or discovered as in any way exhaustive of the phenomenon is to both misrepresent the thought and misunderstand what it means to think.

In this section I consider one example of how Heidegger introduces, frames, and questions the terms according to which philosophy is presented and learned, the aforementioned introduction to Heidegger's 1929/30 lecture course (GA29/30), *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude.* This is one of the more extended and substantive treatments Heidegger gives on the topic of how philosophy is framed by a philosophical and academic context, and hence its inclusion here, but it is by no means the only introduction of its kind. There are numerous other volumes that could be considered: GA17-GA63 cover Heidegger's lecture courses from 1919-1944 and total 47 volumes; most have introductions of a similar tone. Moreover, because Heidegger was perpetually concerned with how to enter into, introduce, begin, or otherwise start phenomenology/philosophy/thinking, a particularly exhaustive account would consider virtually all of Heidegger's writings.

This section does not attempt to give such an account. Nor does it attempt to compare how Heidegger goes about introducing different topic(s), whether there are differences based on setting or institution, or whether there are significant shifts between "periods" of Heidegger's thought (e.g. pre- and post- *Kehre*). These I leave to a more dedicated Heidegger scholar than I. It suffices for this project

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[522] On Beyng [*Seyn*], more specifically. Although I am inclined to think Heidegger's notion of thinking necessarily means thinking on/out of Beyng.

to show one way in which Heidegger thinks about the tension between what is called philosophy and what it means to do philosophy.

Subsection A - Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics

"No matter how avidly we scrape together what people before us have said, it is of no avail if we cannot summon the energy for simply seeing what is essential"[523]

One might think a course on the fundamental concepts of metaphysics would include Big Important Metaphysical Concepts: God, space, time, and so on. When it comes to Heidegger's 1929 Freiburg course, *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik: Welt, Endlichkeit, Einsamkeit,* one would be wrong.[524] Heidegger touches on concepts familiar to metaphysics in the lectures, but they can hardly be said to be the foci. Famously, the first lecture course focuses on boredom while the second considers animality. But there is another part to the volume that is often overlooked: sections 1-15 articulate an understanding of the relationship between philosophy and what it means to do or to learn "metaphysics."

Heidegger observes that the course is situated in an academic context in which "we are faced with a fixed discipline called 'metaphysics.'"[525] Yet almost immediately Heidegger calls this idea into question: "What if it were a *prejudice* that metaphysics is a fixed and secure discipline of philosophy, and an *illusion* that philosophy is a science that can be taught and learned?"[526]

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[523] Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, ed. Nicholas Walker, trans. William McNeill (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 142.
[524] With perhaps the exception of time, which is integral to the section on boredom.
[525] Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 1.
[526] Heidegger, 1.

Because this course on "metaphysics" appears in a context in which it is one topic among others, it invites easy comparison. There is a structural similarity: "Fundamentals of Metaphysics" seems analogous to "Fundamentals of Biology," and just as biology has its own topics and subtopics peculiar to it, so presumably metaphysics would as well. Heidegger insists, however, that philosophy is not a science [*Wissenschaft*]. There are two ways we can understand this statement. The first is as a kind of lament, because philosophy has not obtained the methodological foundation to secure access to "the truth" despite the efforts of figures like Descartes, Kant, Frege, and others to provide an "unshakeable" foundation. The second—Heidegger's approach—is to insist that philosophy is not a science *and cannot be*. Heidegger claims that to even attempt to ground philosophy in this way is "fundamentally an error and a misunderstanding of the innermost essence of philosophy."[527]

If philosophy is not a science, we might be tempted to suggest philosophy is more like a worldview. Accordingly, the spectrum of philosophies we see across cultures and periods is indicative only of societal or individual dispositions.[528] Heidegger rejects this too: philosophy is not the proclamation of a worldview [*Weltanschauungsverkündigung*]. He holds, further, that philosophy is incomparable to subjects like art or religion.[529] The last apparent basis for determining what philosophy is might seem to be a kind of historical analysis, but Heidegger rejects this as well, writing that to do so is to "Become acquainted with opinions *about* metaphysics, but not with metaphysics itself."[530] In some ways we should not be surprised by this systematic rejection since the lecture's first section is entitled "The incomparability [*Unvergleichbarkeit*] of philosophy."

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[527] Heidegger, 2.
[528] This view of philosophy resonates with some of U.S. Pragmatism (James, especially) and Neopragmatism, such as with Rorty's work.
[529] Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 1–3.
[530] Heidegger, 3.

We have, thus far, a series of rejections. Philosophy is unlike other disciplines: science, art, religion, and history. It is also, we are told, not simply a "worldview." *Why* this would be the case is still unclear. Heidegger begins to posit his own definition when he articulates philosophy as a kind of questioning that stems from being in the world.[531] He writes:

> Philosophy […] is not some arbitrary enterprise with which we pass our time as the fancy takes us, not some mere gathering of knowledge that we can easily obtain for ourselves at any time from books, but (we know this only obscurely) something to do with the whole, something extreme, where an ultimate pronouncement [*Aussprache*] and interlocution [*Zwiesprache*] occurs on the part of human beings.[532]

For Heidegger, what makes philosophy philosophy is when inquiry leads towards "the whole." Philosophy, then, cannot be an isolated "I wonder…" which posits the conditions of its fulfillment in advance: a shrug, a Google search, or a glance at Wikipedia. Nor, for that matter, is philosophy questioning within the context of a pregiven discipline, which methodologically posits in advance the means of its resolution. Nor is it idle daydreaming. Philosophy does not refer to the way our mind may wander while we wait somewhere, do the dishes, or watch paint dry. Nor is philosophy necessarily found in thinking that elicits a furrowed brow or mimics the pose of Rodin's *Thinker*. All of these could be philosophizing; none of these necessarily are.

What is philosophy, then? Thus far, we have only this rather vague characterization of philosophy as "something to do with the whole." Heidegger goes on to consider various topics—world, finitude,

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[531] Heidegger is sometimes critiqued for the way in which he appeals to "essence" [*Wesen*] in rethinking various phenomena. Typically, the concern is that Heidegger simply (and apparently arbitrarily) substitutes one conception for another with little to no evidence for why one conception would be better, truer, more accurate, etc. than the other. In brief, I am not sure that Heidegger understands "essence" in the way much of Western philosophy and metaphysics has, any more than he understands philosophy, thinking, or truth in the same way. Instead, I take it that when Heidegger appeals to "essence," he is inviting us as readers and thinkers to more deeply consider how something could be the way it is. It is not, then, a simple substitution, but (if anything) a kind of deconstruction [*Destruktion*] of "essence" itself.

[532] Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 4.

individuation—but ends with this: "Each of these questions inquires into the whole. It is not sufficient for us to know such questions what is decisive is whether we really *ask* such questions, whether we have the strength to sustain them right through our whole existence."[533]

If this sounds like a high bar that would mean most of us never really philosophize—that is correct. We might respond with indignity, either because who is Heidegger to insist on *this* conception of philosophy against all others, or because Heidegger has given no basis upon which to assert that anyone is not, in fact, doing philosophy.

Responding to these objections can only be done in tandem. I will still analyze these responses in turn, however. First, it is correct to say that Heidegger has no basis upon which to make the claim that others are or are not philosophizing. Heidegger himself writes, "Philosophizing fundamentally belongs to each human being as something proper to them, that certain human beings can or must have the strange fate of being *a spur for others*, so that philosophizing awakens in them."[534]

There are several aspects to this statement that could be considered further. Here, I want to focus on the relational aspect Heidegger articulates, i.e. "The strange fate of being a spur for others" [*für anderen eine Veranlassung dafür zu sein*]. *Veranlassung* can indeed mean spur, but it can also mean reason, cause, or (my preference) inducement; in this case, to awakening philosophizing in others. So one never knows for certain if, in fact, one is a philosopher because to be a philosopher would mean inducing others to philosophize, a logic which continues on *ad infinitum*. It is, fundamentally, interpersonal and ambiguous. Heidegger himself writes, "The teacher [of philosophy] is not exempt from ambiguity, but through the very fact that he presents himself as a teacher he brings a certain semblance

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[533] Heidegger, 6. My emphasis.
[534] Heidegger, 13. My emphasis.

with him."[535] There is thus a structural openness to philosophy. If to be a philosopher means to awaken philosophizing in others and if to philosophize means not just to privately ruminate by and for oneself but to spur others, then philosophy relies on an always-incompleteness (or ambiguity, in Heidegger's terms). To be called philosophy, it relies upon recognition by indeterminate others—an assessment which cannot be determined in advance by any machinations of the (ambiguous) philosopher.

But however appealing (or not) we find this image, Heidegger has given us scant reason why this would be philosophy proper and why other conceptions of philosophy would be deficient. What is wrong with thinking of metaphysics as that subfield of philosophy which deals with the conditions of existence?

The short answer is that this conception of philosophy fails to consider the conditions of its own existence, and therefore relies on pregiven, presupposed definitions that ultimately undermine its projects. A longer answer is that, as Heidegger indicates, to presume the existence of certain ideas as belonging to an area like "metaphysics" means one takes for granted what is purportedly being questioned. The objects of inquiry, the methods according to which one investigates those objects, and most importantly, the concept of being that makes possible the delimitation of those phenomena as beings—these are all assumed and, therefore, such inquiry does not inquire into the most fundamental ideas that structure existence.

Accordingly, Heidegger views philosophy (and metaphysics) as attempting to go deeper into the very basis of what is presented as "philosophy" and how that presentation could occur at all. If philosophy were any of the other conceptions we might grant it—a science, a proclamation of a worldview, a region of inquiry with its own peculiar object—then philosophy would merely be a field

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[535] Heidegger, 13. Heidegger is not particular interested in the ontic (generally speaking), but I would note this "semblance" is heavily encoded with societal norms. As a relatively short man who looks younger than he is (and who lacks the resources to dress especially well), I have had to assert more than once that I am, indeed, a teacher and not a student.

analogous to other realms of inquiry, rather than the ground upon which such inquiry is possible. Thus, Heidegger writes, "Metaphysics is not some discipline of knowledge in which we interrogate a restricted field of objects in a particular respect with the aid of some technique of thinking."[536] Even if we want to call philosophy that field which investigates topics like metaphysics or epistemology, then, we cannot do without philosophy in Heidegger's sense as that which makes academic philosophy possible in the first place.

Heidegger's conception, though, begs further questions about what that (academic, disciplinary) field of inquiry called "Philosophy" is—how it thinks about its objects of inquiry, what it posits in advance as potential information or knowledge—and its relationship with Heidegger's alternative conception of "Philosophy." He begins to address this by noting, "This general ambiguity becomes more acute, however, precisely whenever we venture to present something explicitly as philosophy."[537] This presentation *as* could be as simple as lending a text to a friend when they ask for a work of philosophy; or, it could carry a measure of authority, such as when a university or library asserts that certain texts are philosophy.[538] Heidegger describes such latter cases as a kind of intensification, where "A certain undesired authority speaks for [the teacher of philosophy]."[539]

For Heidegger, philosophy's ambiguity is obfuscated when it becomes "an affair of schooling and learning."[540] Rather than inquiry into the whole, a questioning *towards*, philosophy "has come to be something known […] something for everyone to learn and repeat."[541] This is most apparent when

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[536] Heidegger, 9.
[537] Heidegger, 14.
[538] I believe one could also read Heidegger's reference to Hölderlin in *The Question Concerning Technology* that "But where danger is, grows. The saving power also" in this light. That is, though a worldview that situates philosophy as *Gestell* may strive to represent philosophy exclusively in that capacity (e.g. through an emphasis on "objective measures of learning," the fetishization of quantitative evaluations, multiple choice questions) the ambiguity of philosophy cannot be contained in such a manner and, accordingly, always threatens to break through and disrupt the existing paradigm.
[539] Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 14.
[540] Heidegger, 37.
[541] Heidegger, 35.

philosophy is broken (read: fractured) into subdisciplines. Heidegger identifies these as ἐπιστήμη λογική, ἐπιστήμη φυσική, and ἐπιστήμη ἠθῐκή: logic, physics, and ethics.[542] The very division of philosophy into such specialties means one can become a specialist in a particular area—know its concepts, methods, proofs, ideas, and so on. Philosophy becomes a matter of know-how, of technical knowledge, rather than an inquiring orientation that is in many ways unconcerned with existing disciplinary boundaries.

Granting the plausibility of Heidegger's account, how and why does *this* disciplinary conception come to be the one that dominates?[543] What institutions, practices, persons, and texts contributed to sustaining this image of philosophy? Rather hegemonically, Heidegger attributes the division of philosophy into logic, physics, ethics and (later) metaphysics to "scholastic philosophy" [*Schulphilosophie*] in the first century B.C.[544] He takes this division as pivotal: "This changeover in the title is by no means something trivial. Something essential is decided by it—*the fate of philosophy in the West.*"[545]

I am dubious that philosophy has ever been so monolithic that a change in its concepts and names by a single tradition resulted in a shift throughout the Western world in how philosophy was thought about. But Heidegger's concern with language—how it both reflects a certain paradigm of understanding and reiterates that paradigm—is in some ways reflective of the concern of this chapter. That is, how does changing the name of a thing change how it is understood (and by whom)?

To this our answer must be that the name changes everything and nothing. On the one hand, simply changing what a thing is called does not change the thing itself. On the other, how something

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[542] Heidegger, 36.

[543] "Dominates" should not be equated with total determination. Heidegger is quite clear—both here and in other texts—that a more originary experience of *physis* has happened at various times in the history of philosophy.

[544] Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 37. "Academic philosophy" might be a better translation than "Scholastic philosophy" here, given (1) Heidegger traces the division to Plato's school (i.e. the Academy) and (2) scholastic is, in English at least, more often associated with medieval Scholasticism (although the translators do take care not to capitalize the term).

[545] Heidegger, 39.

is identified is suggestive, sometimes powerfully so: "What is decisive is that from the commencement this scholastic structuring *prefigures* the conception of philosophy and of philosophical questioning."[546] Thus, to identify a text as, e.g. the product of a 20th century German thinker is not to authoritatively determine the content of the text, but it is to reiterate and reinforce a particular "prefiguring."

Does this mean there could be philosophically valuable alternative sets of classifications? Wouldn't such sets simply reinscribe philosophy as what Heidegger calls "absolute knowledge"? Meet the new philosophy, same as the old philosophy. On the one hand, I think the answer is yes; "The question is which viewpoints *now* regulate the ordering of this rich material, which is no longer taken hold of at its core or in its vitality."[547] On the other, if philosophy always requires a kind of intervention that revivifies the questioning at its core, then alternate sets of terms are not necessarily any worse than existing ones. One could, for example, point to the way Heidegger uses Greek philosophical terms as a way of challenging the reification of philosophy into academic domains. One could also note that the very introduction of the unfamiliar is itself disruptive: it calls for a new way of orienting oneself, and thereby opens possibilities for revaluation and thinking—of philosophizing, in other words.

Section 3 - Conclusion

For Nietzsche and Heidegger, how we encounter philosophy matters. The way in which philosophy is introduced, taught, and learned informs what it means to read philosophical texts. To call a text "philosophy" is not simply to name it as relevant based on its topics or content, method, or proximity to existing discourses. It is, rather, to present an image of an approach—a paradigm, even.

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[546] Heidegger, 36–37. My emphasis.
[547] Heidegger, 35. My emphasis.

To neither under- nor overstate this relationship requires pausing for a moment to discuss influence vis-à-vis a predominant mode of analysis in philosophy, i.e. cause and effect. I am not here suggesting that classifying a text as philosophy is either a necessary or sufficient condition for reading philosophy in a historiographical manner. That language is here inappropriate to the topic. Instead, the more subtle language of influence, inclination, and norming is more suited to the situation. As Park writes, "By recounting philosophy's past (what philosophy was), the history of philosophy teachings what philosophy is (the concept of philosophy)."[548] A teacher of philosophy does not necessarily need to give a formal definition of what philosophy is for the student to glean a sense of what philosophy is. In their very presentation, both texts and mode(s) of analysis, the student is accultured to what we might call disciplinary habits: predominant and reiterated ways of thinking, discussing, reading, and writing. Yet, as any teacher well knows, each student will take up teachings in different ways, synthesizing it with their own experiences, ideas, and education. Nevertheless, such presentations matter. Even in the mode of rejection, critique, and rebellion, initial images become touchstones for reaction.

Examples of this phenomenon can, I think, be found throughout the history of philosophy. In some cases, philosophers take up the ideas of dominant voices. Whether they characterize themselves as an "-ean" or not, their chosen figure(s) become the point of departure. They add additional concepts; they critique missing ones. They apply ideas to some new scenario; they demonstrate a lack of validity or soundness. The point is not that there are not a whole host of modes of reaction, but that the source founds and shapes reactions.

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[548] Peter K. J Park, *Africa, Asia, and the History of Philosophy: Racism in the Formation of the Philosophical Canon, 1780-1830* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2014), 1.

What we are dealing with, then, is how the presentation of the history of philosophy itself shapes "The History of Philosophy." To emphasize this or that thinker is not simply to recognize the originality or profundity of their thought. However true (or not) that may be, the very *presentation* of the thinker as monumental (lesser or greater) in the history of philosophy is, in some respects, a self-fulfilling prophecy. Thus, without suggesting that Kant is not an important figure in the history of Western philosophy, his importance is not *simply* because of the originality of his ideas, but in part because of the way in which his presence in that canon is reiterated. Moreover, that reiteration takes place through sites of education, including teaching, course catalogs—and the library.

Chapter VII - Inclination, Acculturation, and Dissonance: The Library as a Site of Norming

At the outset of this project, I posited that the library norms philosophy. There are many ways in which this can be understood, some more noticeable than others. With the preceding considerations and examples behind us, I want to turn to a more explicit consideration of how language, practices, presumptions, and institutions coincide to reify particular understandings of philosophy.

As for the library, I aim to make its modes of norming more explicit. I do so in three ways. First: through collection development and management. Second, through discovery mediated by metadata and classification practices. Third, through the reiteration and normalization of historiographical methodology. Except perhaps for the first mode, the library is not necessarily the only institution responsible for affecting philosophy in the identified ways. However, in each case I consider how the library plays a part in shaping the discipline and practice of philosophy.

Section 1 - Collecting Philosophy

One of the first and most obvious ways in which philosophy is normed is through collection management. Libraries curate, and few (if any) libraries have the budget to purchase anything and everything. Selections must be made, and in so doing it falls to the judgment of libraries to determine what is worth purchasing.

The process of deciding what is worth purchasing is a complicated one, affected by both varying ideas of what a collection should be, as well as more practical factors like staff and budget. However well-funded the library, though, no librarian has time to read any and every book in their subject area—

any more than any faculty member does. They rely upon their judgment of what is relevant and important which is, first and foremost, informed by the research needs of the associated department. On paper, this is simple enough: a library that supports a Plato scholar simply purchases materials on Plato and Plato scholarship.

As we have seen, however, exactly how one identifies such material is not as straightforward as it seems. True, there exists both an LCC range (B350-398) and related headings (e.g. Platonism, Platonists), but the biases inherent in how such materials are identified means only a certain spectrum of philosophy is well-represented by such metadata. The work of a Gail Fine or Richard Kraut is easily located, occupying both the aforementioned range and bearing the heading "Plato." Hegel's reading in his lectures on history; Lacan's reading in his lecture on Transference; Foucault's reading in his lecture on the hermeneutics of the subject; none of these bear any indication within a typical library catalog that they have anything whatsoever to do with Plato.[549]

It is, of course, possible that a librarian seeking to develop a collection in this area procures materials through other means (e.g. publisher lists, relevant professional society release lists, bibliographies), but as I have written about elsewhere there is a systemic inclination away from such work because this requires a significant amount of additional time and labor.[550] Moreover, given the existence of relevant labels (in Plato's case and many others), there is a kind of ironic barrier to such work. Because the label exists, a librarian would need to know both that the label is biased and in what way(s) to even have the idea to search for additional materials. To a non-specialist, the label's existence suggests that

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[549] That is, nothing in the title, description, LCC call number, or LCSH terms identifies the work as relevant to anyone interested in readings of Plato.

[550] Lori M. Jahnke, Kyle Tanaka, and Christopher A. Palazzolo, "Ideology, Policy, and Practice: Structural Barriers to Collections Diversity in Research and College Libraries" 83, no. 2 (March 3, 2022), https://doi.org/10.5860/crl.83.2.166.

either one need only to purchase those materials, or, on a more nuanced view, that the materials identified by such a label are, if not perfect, at least good enough.[551]

Having a librarian able to devote substantial time and energy to managing philosophy in this (rather proactive) manner is something of an ideal scenario. Although one can find examples of librarians selecting individual materials, typically this kind of selection is (at best) only a fraction of overall collection management. A modern academic library may employ a variety of approaches to developing collections, including approval plans, demand-driven/evidence-based acquisition (DDA and EBA, respectively), standing orders, and more. Such approaches often save time and labor by automating or semi-automating purchasing, but in so doing they rely even more heavily on pregiven metadata. An approval plan, for example, might specify that the library should automatically purchase all books in a given LCC range or all books with a given LCSH term, but this only means collection development is even more entrenched in the biases of the LC system.[552]

This situation is compounded by a host of other factors that affect collection development and management. Budget, of course, is perhaps the most significant, but also relevant are collection policies, physical/space limitations, library and institutional priorities, and more. Especially noteworthy in this regard is an ongoing reframing of collection development; in 2016, the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) wrote:

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[551] This, further, would often need to be justified to supervisors, managers, directors, etc. as a worthy use of a librarian's time. Writing as a philosopher with these issues in mind, it is obvious to me at least that such an endeavor is valuable. However, recent LIS literature often see specialized collection development as outdated, and a way for the librarian to "hide" from the community they serve. Accordingly, there is an increasing emphasis on "outreach" and "community engagement," while collection duties are passed to dedicated teams of non-subject-specialists or mostly/entirely automated means of collection development.

[552] Some approval plans may rely on different kinds of metadata, such as that provided by publishers. In such cases, however, one swaps one set of biases for another. Instead of being dependent upon what LC considers philosophy, one is then dependent upon what any given publisher considers philosophy. A consideration of the full range of factors informing how publishers classify materials is beyond the scope of this work, but I would briefly note that here commercial—rather than intellectual or scholarly—interests reign.

There has been a remarkable shift to the incorporation and integration of more con-

tinuous, ongoing, flexible, and sustainable review of collections rather than ad-hoc

project-based models. "Rightsizing" the collection has become a norm. There is an

increasing need to establish more holistic and agile approaches (both qualitative and

quantitative) to manage budgetary constraints while ensuring that collections are "re-

sponsive" and committed to institutional research and curricular requirements and

needs.[553]

This rethinking is spurred by numerous factors in the library world, but one is especially relevant

here: the role of publishers. Subscriptions to journals, often bundled and not purchasable "a la carte,"

take up a significant percentage of the average library's budget.[554] A 2019 survey conducted by Ithaka

S+R of over 600 library directors in the U.S. found that "Directors are currently spending the majority

(about two-thirds) of their materials budget on online journals and databases."[555] And although some

libraries breathed a collective sigh of relief when rate increases were paused during the height of the

Covid-19 pandemic, the overall trend has been annual increases for continued access to journal pack-

ages—both outstripping inflation and resulting in a profit margin roughly four times higher than the

average profit margin of a FTSE 100 company.[556]

Often, journal subscriptions are like a streaming service subscription: you have access as long as

you pay. If you cancel, you keep nothing. This means libraries find themselves in a no-win situation:

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[553] ACRL Research Planning and Review Committee, "2016 Top Trends in Academic Libraries: A Review of the Trends and Issues Affecting Academic Libraries in Higher Education," *College & Research Libraries News* 77, no. 6 (2016): 275. There have been, as of this writing, two more recent reports in the same series. However, the central topics of each report vary depending on observed trends and writer/editor priorities, so the more recent publications lack discussions of collection management.

[554] These are often known as "Big Deal Packages."

[555] Jennifer Frederick and Christine Wolff-Eisenberg, "Ithaka S+R US Library Survey 2019" (Ithaka S+R, April 2, 2020), 68, https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.312977.

[556] Robert Cookson, "Elsevier Leads the Business the Internet Could Not Kill," *Financial Times* (London, United Kingdom: The Financial Times Limited, November 15, 2015), http://www.proquest.com/docview/1749048405/citation/4E097CCF90674437PQ/1.

they cannot simply cancel access since the academic community needs that access to do their work, but journal subscription packages eat up a majority—and increasing—percentage of the collections budget. Accordingly, either libraries progressively need more and more funding (both unsustainable in the long run and a rarely-granted request), or they must cut costs elsewhere. In this respect, methods of acquisition that automate or semi-automate purchasing—or offload the duties onto users, e.g. via DDA and EBA—are cost-cutting measures in response to an increasingly dire financial situation.

To summarize: journal packages eat up an increasingly large portion of a library budget, which in turn means libraries have fewer funds to allocate to more specialized work, such as dedicated collection development. This, in turn, means libraries increasingly rely on alternative means of collection development—approval plans, standing orders, DDA, EBA, etc.—which entrench existing biases further in library collections because they use biased metadata, often with little oversight.

As if the previous considerations were not enough, there are the issues with various fragmented fields I mentioned previously. A "Plato Scholarship" approval plan needs only to identify B350-398 as an area of interest, whereas collecting philosophy of race must compile a list comparable to the one I presented in Chapter 2:

- CB195-281 (philosophy of race and civilization)

- E184-185 (U.S. philosophy of race)

- GN199 (philosophy of race)

- HT1501-1595 (philosophy of race)

Each of these areas also includes a host of materials likely either irrelevant or only tangentially related to philosophy of race. A librarian managing such an area, therefore, needs to devote additional time and energy to carefully examining titles selected by an approval plan in these areas—eliminating much of the purpose and benefit of using cost-saving methods in the first place.

The collective effect of these factors is a systemic inclination away from developing collections that better represent a wide array of forms of reading and research in philosophy. What such collection barriers mean, practically, is philosophy becomes preemptively filtered. It is an issue of unknown unknowns; one does not know how the collection one encounters could have looked otherwise. In some ways, the very presence of books "On Plato" or "On Platonism" on the shelf can blind one to the fact that there are other discourses in very different veins.

I do not want to suggest that, in finding a swath of titles in a library catalog the philosopher draws the conclusion that Here Be Philosophy. More often than not, browsing the stacks or searching the catalog is but one component of a multifaceted, complex, and often highly individual process. It is a question of exposure, of the range of discourses set before us and with which we become familiar. Given the limitations of metadata and collection development, to browse the philosophy call number range is to face Eurocentric historiographical discourses—again and again: now with Plato, now with Descartes, now with Kant, now with Nietzsche…Accordingly, to respond to such literature means either, first positing a critique of the work consonant to that paradigm (thereby already positioning oneself as an "outsider"), or to contribute to it, thereby growing and repeating the given pattern of scholarship.

Section 2 - Discovering Philosophy

For academic philosophers, two media dominate as sites of publication: books and journals.[557] Any philosopher who wishes to put forth their own views—arguments, readings, analyses—does so with a sense for how their work fits with already-published work. For their work to be recognized by

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[557] There are, of course, numerous other media in which philosophers express their views. Examples include blogs, radio/TV/online interviews, community-based teaching, and more. That said, books and journals remain dominant—in large part because of their favored role in tenure and promotion.

existing communities as both relevant and significant, the philosopher must write in such a way that their work is minimally intelligible to appropriate audiences. Writing is anticipatory, in other words.

It matters, therefore, who the philosopher imagines to be their audience. This image may be more or less precise, but it is influenced by the range of discourses to which the philosopher is exposed. A Plato scholar, for example, might frame their work relative to Fine or Kraut; a Kant scholar, to Guyer or Allison; a Descartes scholar, to Kenny or Cottingham; and so on. Indeed, to even think of oneself as "A Plato/Kant/Descartes scholar" (or, for that matter, a "philosopher") is already to situate oneself relative to perceived scholarly discourses.

Exactly how one develops this sense of one's own work relative to others is complex, to be sure, and the more one becomes familiar with a "family" of scholarship, the more precise and nuanced one can be. But in the beginning the philosopher needs to find their bearings. Qua scholar, qua philosopher, where do they belong?[558] What is it that their work contributes to ongoing conversations?

These questions propel a kind of research which aims to concretize these "others." And voila! The library provides. But, as we have seen, it provides in specific ways. It says (without saying anything), "What figure do you work on? What period? Perhaps 19th century German philosophy? Or maybe the evolution of the idea of 'will' in Medieval Christian philosophy?" The philosopher is invited to both think about and characterize their work in these ways.

What if those are not the preferred terms? Or what if the given terms are not to be found in "Philosophy"? Take philosophy of race, for example. If one's primary interest is something like the lived experience of being a person of color in a predominantly white space, there are no easily available

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[558] I am, of course, speaking predominantly of the graduate student or faculty member in philosophy here. I suspect anyone who writes philosophy has *someone* in mind, even if that is just themselves (cf. Aurelius' *Meditations*). For one working within the modern discipline of philosophy, however, there is a different kind of impetus to locate oneself amongst one's peers and contemporaries.

terms in Philosophy to locate such discourses. With a bit of finagling one *might* be able to unearth materials that are relevant, but here the philosopher is working against the system. This is because in this context philosophy of race can only appear as a Tradition, traceable to a specific region and time when specific authors founded it—a subtle but important transformation that quietly posits the when and where as the overarching narrative.[559] But, if one does not want to undertake such a struggle, one could conclude (not entirely wrongly), "The library and its catalog are not designed to support the kind of work I do."

The more one is frustrated by this kind of experience, the more one is inclined to view the library catalog as unhelpful for research. Writing on LGBTQ+ materials, K.L. Clarke notes:

> Add in the difficulty of searching library catalogs, and the near-impossibility of browsing LGBTIQ books in a campus library (which are likely to be in several different call number areas due to the interdisciplinary nature of the field), it is easy to understand that some users might be frustrated and abandon using the library and its resources altogether.[560]

Despite the difference in topic, philosophers can easily find themselves in the same boat. To have one's efforts continually stymied by an ostensible resource for research means one learns to simply look elsewhere.

Thus far, I have considered mostly how LCC/SH affect searches, but neither is the dominant form of searching for the modern catalog user. By default, most searches begin simply with a keyword search, which collectively scan titles, subject headings, descriptions, and more. It is true that keyword

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[559] To say nothing of instantiating particular notions of ownership, authorship, etc.

[560] K.L. Clarke, "LGBTIQ Users and Collections in Academic Libraries," in *Serving LGBTIQ Library and Archives Users Essays on Outreach, Service, Collections and Access*, ed. Ellen Greenblatt (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Co., 2010), 83.

searches loosen the vice grip of LCC/SH and may identify materials that are not recognized as "philosophy" in those systems. However, there are two issues here.

First, this is entirely contingent upon the presence of just the right words in the record. This is precisely why a search for "philosophy of race" will find Taylor, Alcoff, and Anderson's *Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Race* or Zack's *Philosophy of Race: An Introduction* on a keyword search, but not Du Bois' *Souls of Black Folk* or Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*. Whether one searches for the phrase or just the keywords "philosophy" and "race," only if those words appear in the record will a keyword search identify such materials—particularly a problem with seminal texts, which almost inevitably exist prior to the term used to subsequently identify a discourse.

Second, a uniquely frustrating aspect of searching for keywords as a philosopher is that including the term "philosophy" in any search will inevitably return a whole host of materials that include phrases like "The philosophy of this work is…," "Our institution's philosophy is…," etc. Szostak, Gnoli, and López-Huertas elaborate on several issues with keyword searching: "Keyword searches, especially full-text keyword searches, will retrieve large numbers of documents, many of which are of no value to a particular user."[561] They also note that despite the additional functionality of Boolean searching, "it will not distinguish 'history of philosophy' from 'philosophy of history' or indeed any document that addresses both history and philosophy."[562] These concerns are, one might recall, still given as reasons for the existence of subject headings in subject analysis training. Search engines on their own cannot yet gauge the significance of the words they use, much less any subtle variations in

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[561] Rick Szostak, Claudio Gnoli, and María López-Huertas, *Interdisciplinary Knowledge Organization* (Switzerland: Springer, 2016), 67.

[562] Szostak, Gnoli, and López-Huertas, 67. And the philosopher who searches for history of philosophy of history is truly doomed.

how a given word might be used over time, in different fields, as a technical term, etc. Keyword searches are thus no solution to the issue of classifications and headings.

Given the accruing shortcomings of the library as a way of situating oneself as a professional philosopher, the philosopher might turn to other means to orient themselves.[563] But where else can one turn? A litany of alternatives presents itself, but I think broadly we may consider them under three headings: technological alternatives, social connections, and footnote chasing.

By technological alternatives, I mean that assortment of ever-changing platforms the academic might turn to in order to find relevant discourses. These are, in many regards, analogs of the library catalog: searchable platforms the philosopher can use to identify potential resources of interest. A study from Ithaka on the research practices of select humanistic disciplines found these included search engines (Google, Google Scholar, WorldCat), databases (Project Muse, EBSCO, JSTOR, ProQuest), commercial websites (Amazon, AbeBooks), professional sites (Academia.edu), and social media (Twitter, Facebook, listservs).[564]

It is not possible here to delve into the specific details of how each of these platforms identifies and presents philosophy. I would note, however, that many of these platforms rely on some type of publisher-provided metadata.[565] Such metadata reproduce many of the shortcomings of LCC/SH, but especially feed into the problem of historical inertia. Much as the library presents a certain historical

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[563] I do not mean to imply that the situation is an either/or with regard identifying discourses. Typically, a scholar will use an informal mélange of means to identifying relevant materials. My point here is, rather, if a scholar consistently finds the library of little to no use, they will lean more heavily on other means of identification.

[564] Danielle Cooper et al., "Supporting Research in Languages and Literature" (Ithaka S+R, September 9, 2020), 16, 20–21, https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.313810; Danielle Cooper et al., "Supporting the Changing Research Practices of Religious Studies Scholars" (Ithaka S+R, February 8, 2017), 21–22, https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.294119. The disciplines included here are Languages and Literature, Religious Studies, and History. To the best of my knowledge, there are no recent comparable studies on the research practices of philosophers specifically.

[565] Cases in which users are free to tag or otherwise frame their own posts as philosophy (as, e.g., with Twitter) are more complicated since nothing prevents any given user from tagging their own post as philosophy. This decentralization means the disruptive possibilities of such tags are more ample, and I believe it would be interesting in a future study to assess what kinds of posts are explicitly tagged as philosophy. Though, of course, many posts do not even have tags—and are philosophical nonetheless.

conception of what counts as philosophy, so too many of these platforms simply reiterate—rather than challenge—what counts as philosophy. This is arguably an even more rigid form of classification with publishers, whose primary concern in choosing whether to identify a work as philosophy or as some other genre is commercial viability. The issue undergirding such a decision is, simply, will the title sell better if it is categorized as philosophy? To be sure, such decisions are complicated, but fundamentally to make such a decision one needs to assess the relevance of a work to potential audiences. And, again, we find ourselves constrained by conservative, historical boundaries. The more one's work presents itself as "Philosophy," the more one is likely to be categorized as such; but to present as philosophy means adhering to the language of philosophy even if one is critiquing or attempting to expand that vocabulary. A philosopher looking for "alternatives" to the image of philosophy they find in the library may, therefore, find slight variations by consulting these other platforms, but the same presentation of philosophy continues to dominate.

Beyond technological alternatives, scholars often report finding relevant literature by contacting professional colleagues or conversing at professional gatherings (e.g. conferences, workshops).[566] These kinds of networks are what I mean by "social connections." However, data consistently show that women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and POC in academia are less well-connected and well-supported by both their institutions and by associated professional societies. Typically, literature in this area focuses on employment issues; Heffernan writes, for example, "The data suggests that a strong academic network can result in both male and female academics benefiting from employment opportunities, but it cannot be ignored that these opportunities heavily favour male participants."[567] Bourabain refers

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[566] Cooper et al., "Supporting Research in Languages and Literature," 20–21; Cooper et al., "Supporting the Changing Research Practices of Religious Studies Scholars," 21; Carl Lehnen and Glenda M. Insua, "Browsing, Networking, Contextualizing: Research Practices of Humanists and Implications for Library Instruction," *Portal: Libraries and the Academy* 21, no. 2 (2021): 276, https://doi.org/10.1353/pla.2021.0016.

[567] Troy Heffernan, "Academic Networks and Career Trajectory: 'There's No Career in Academia without Networks,'" *Higher Education Research & Development* 40, no. 5 (July 29, 2021): 990, https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2020.1799948.

to the phenomenon of systemically supporting cis men in academia as "cloning practices": "Ways in which women are excluded form academic tasks and opportunities that increase the chance of an academic career."[568] But just as relevant are pedagogical opportunities: scholars at all points of their career can benefit from the experience of more senior colleagues. Learning the research practices of one's field as well as the "unwritten curriculum" of both academia and one's discipline can be more easily facilitated with the right kind of mentor. If there are insufficient scholars to act in this capacity— or they are not easily found, overworked/exploited qua "diversity hire," etc.—junior scholars must simply figure things out on their own; not an impossibility, but certainly another difficulty.

More specific to philosophy, the most recent APA survey found 26% of its total membership identified as women. Coincidentally, 26% is also the percentage of the total membership who identified as non-white.[569] This dominance has consequences. To be white in philosophy is not to say much about what one does. To be a woman, LGBTQ+, POC, disabled, or otherwise Other in philosophy is not the same situation. To be in such a situation is already to be on the defense since one can usually expect offense. Kings writes, "Feminist philosophers are not only forced to navigate a landscape that is conceptually hostile to their methodology but also expected to operate within a discipline whose refusal to acknowledge its own blindness to issues of gender, race, and class has led to the privileging of a singular dominant account."[570] These factors, are, of course, to say nothing of pervasive issues

[568] Dounia Bourabain, "Everyday Sexism and Racism in the Ivory Tower: The Experiences of Early Career Researchers on the Intersection of Gender and Ethnicity in the Academic Workplace," *Gender, Work & Organization* 28, no. 1 (2021): 256, https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12549.

[569] American Philosophical Association, "Member Demographics - The American Philosophical Association" (American Philosophical Association, 2020), https://www.apaonline.org/page/demographics.

[570] A E Kings, "Philosophy's Diversity Problem: Understanding the Underrepresentation of Women and Minorities in Philosophy: Metaphilosophy," *Metaphilosophy* 50, no. 3 (April 1, 2019): 226.

facing women and the historically underrepresented/marginalized of academia, such as overt discrimination, microaggressions, harassment, and so on.[571]

Or, to the scholar of color who works on race: of course they do! To the scholar of color who does not: why not? And these are asked relative to a perceived "role" into which the philosopher is supposed to fill. The "diversity hire" is the one who teaches feminism, queer theory, philosophy of race; who is expected to compensate for the failures of their colleagues to critically assess their own biases and practices. "Becoming the race person means you are the one who is turned to when race turns up. The very fact of your existence can allow others not to turn up,"[572] as Ahmed puts it. A certain kind of patience or steadfastness is called for in this situation. Responding to an interviewer who expressed surprise at her desire to go into philosophy despite its predominant whiteness, Gines writes, "I am often annoyed by this reaction to my being a philosopher. I wonder, 'Why wouldn't I (or *shouldn't* I) because of (or in spite of) my embodied existence—that is, my embodiment as a Black woman—be interested in philosophical reasoning and fields of inquiry?' I think to myself, 'Who gave white men ownership of philosophical discourse?'"[573] Gines' reaction captures an important dimension of philosophy's white maleness: insofar as this perception is prevalent, it preemptively filters the bodies and perspectives found within the discipline. If a student (undergraduate or graduate) is told philosophy is the turf of old white men and they will almost certainly face racism, sexism, homophobia, and bias in general—why would they willingly join such a community?

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[571] I do not intend to delve into such issues here, both because they are discussed extensively in other publications, and because my focus here on the systemic support (or lack thereof) of diverse kinds of philosophical research. I do, however, think the combined effect of these factors is disparaging; the reaction (however unhealthy) to "throw oneself into one's work" as a way to escape issues does not even work here, since to philosophize in this space means to constantly be reminded that one is on the margins.

[572] Sara Ahmed, *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012), 5.

[573] Kathryn T Gines, "Being a Black Woman Philosopher: Reflections on Founding the Collegium of Black Women Philosophers," *Hypatia* 26, no. 2 (2011): 433.

These points are not, of course, meant to imply that the category of historically marginalized philosophers and the category of philosophers diversifying philosophy are coextensive; a philosopher of color can work in a conservative historiographical vein just as much as a white, cis-male philosopher can work in work in a non-historiographical vein. Still, many challenges to contemporary philosophy—its presuppositions, its methods, its foci—come precisely from the historically-marginalized. It is significant, then, if those who are working to diversify the discipline receive comparatively less professional and academic support than their whiter, maler peers. The result is an experience of obtaining an education in philosophy (especially at the graduate level) that is often more grueling, hostile, frustrating, and alienating for the historically-marginalized than for their more privileged peers, resulting in more dropouts, and ultimately hindering many attempts to diversify the discipline of philosophy.

Finally, there is the matter of so-called footnote chasing. Inertia, again. And again due to ossification. With the historiographical, as we have seen, the new scholar can justify their work primarily on one of two grounds. Either the work presents something new—an analysis of a neglected theme or work, commentary on a newly-discovered or translated volume—or it corrects the old. But the old sets the terms for the new: one still encounters those Kant scholars who insist his racism was incidental, marginal—not part of his "real" philosophy or in any way philosophically significant. A new perspective on the old topics? Fine: metaphysics, epistemology, logic, ethics, God, time—these are all up for grabs. A new topic? Sexism, racism, ableism; fear, desire, love—perhaps interesting, but not *really* philosophy. As we have seen already in so many forms, the presumption is as if what counts as philosophy were pregiven, eternal, or ahistorical, and to fall outside the established categories is to be doing…well, not philosophy. The philosophical canon, with its particular themes that have been debated for decades or even centuries, serves as a gatekeeper, demanding justification of these upstart topics in a way that is not demanded of the old crowd.

Having surveyed these factors, we can observe an overarching trend. As the philosopher attempts to find their "place" in the discipline of philosophy, they survey discourses to determine where their contributions are relevant and significant. As a library catalog user, they are nudged towards thinking of their work in a historiographical tenor, and while locating other kinds of discourses is always possible, this requires working against the system. If the philosopher turns to other means of situating themselves in scholarly discourses—technological alternatives, social connections, or footnote chasing—each of these presents possibilities, but for philosophers working in/on/from the margins, to do philosophy is to constantly fight an uphill battle. Importantly, this is not to say a philosopher working in a more conventional, traditional manner has their path to success laid out for them. It is, rather, a matter of comparative difficulty: the latter finds each of these resources more fluidly merge with their approach than the former.

I am not suggesting the blame for marginalizing diversity in philosophy solely—or even primarily—falls on the library's shoulders. I simply mean to note how the library participates in a network of academic frustrations and disincentives, cultural and disciplinary norms. And this is despite numerous initiatives at both the library and academic levels to support diversity, equity, and inclusion in recent years.[574] It is a harsh reality check, in other words, when students from historically underrepresented and marginalized groups find the interests they might have in philosophy of race, Feminist philosophy, decolonial philosophy, indigenous philosophies, or whatever else are not as well supported compared to those of their more academically-central and privileged peers.

Section 3 - Doing Philosophy

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[574] Although, as various authors have pointed out, diversity initiatives are sometimes more about the performance of diversity—allowing the institution to proclaim its commitment while ironically marginalizing such work and maintaining the status quo (Ahmed, 2012; Bourabain, 2021).

Consistently, throughout this work and especially in the preceding sections, I have held that a significant part of what impedes philosophy's diversification is a reified image of philosophy. Implicitly or explicitly historiographical and Eurocentric, what is especially worrisome about this approach is the way in which the study of philosophy is delimited from the outset. This was perhaps most prominent in Copleston's work, but it is, I think, operative in most philosophy carried out in this vein. Two questions seem to me worth pursuing in response to this situation. First, how do we learn what philosophy is? Second, why do we understand philosophy in one way and not another?

Learning what philosophy is is, first and foremost, undergirded by acculturation to a pedagogical epistemology. That is, in the course of our education, we do not just learn subjects—English, math, history—we learn what it means to learn immanent to those discourses. We learn what it means to "be a good student," how to inhabit and perform that role (or not), and how to demonstrate that and what we have learned.

In the U.S. at least, philosophy survives primarily in the context of a college education.[575] This is to say that before one ever learns "Philosophy," one has already learned what it might mean to learn philosophy. At the bare minimum, as Heidegger indicated in Chapter 6, this means an expectation by way of positioning; one takes a philosophy course alongside another in sociology, computer science, biology, etc. With each, philosophy is positioned by the university as inherently substitutable: a course in philosophy might instead be a course in English, Classics, Comparative Literature, or any other number of Humanities courses. Each varies only in content in an obvious and mundane way: we learn about English in an English course and about Philosophy in a Philosophy course.

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[575] I am not sure that the situation would change much if students learned philosophy earlier, e.g. in high school as in France or certain Christian high schools.

The authority of the university as a cultural institution stands behind such divisions, both between Philosophy and other disciplines, as well as internal to Philosophy. The discipline itself is parsed into subtopics of knowledge: logic, metaphysics, epistemology, bioethics; Ancient Philosophy, Modern Philosophy, Continental.[576] None of these demarcations require any explicit argument or definition on the part of the philosophy professor; the expectation is already there by virtue of a ubiquitous conception of education. In this way, philosophy's scope is "given to us as universal, necessary, obligatory," as Foucault put it.

We see this logic repeated in the library's presentation of philosophy. The course catalog and library catalog are twins, each presenting a dominating imaginary which proclaims: Behold: Real Philosophy™. Here is the kind of philosophy you can become *specialized* in, which you can come to know and claim as your area of expertise. Take your pick: specialize in Greek, French, English, and German authors, adding to the rows upon rows of works detailing every little aspect of their works and lives. There is no overt argument here for this image of philosophy being philosophy proper and, in many regards, there does not need to be. There is a whole complex of metrics and incentives that busies us with identifiable ends and goals for everything from our term papers to scholarly research and publication. One makes an entire career (maybe an entire life) out of being a scholar of this or that, producing scholarly "output" in one's niche of academic philosophy.

Precisely in this work, however, we can—and I think do—miss broader considerations of what philosophy could be. We miss this because we do not consider "philosophy" and its subcategories

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[576] There are, of course, other kinds of philosophy courses that do not fall into these patterns. At Emory, where I am writing this work, there is for example a "Love and Friendship" course. But I would note such courses are generally the exception and, I think, positioned as "topical courses," not typically recognized as domains of knowledge per se. That is, one would not claim "Love and Friendship" as a specialization; it would need to be couched in other terms, such as "The idea of love in Ancient Philosophy" or "Ethics of love and friendship." They need to invoke Philosophy Terms, in other words.

critically. Why do they take the form they do? On what ideas—of knowledge, learning, and pedagogy—are they based? Without asking and critically considering these questions, philosophy cannot meaningfully diversify. Why?

Within a historiographical paradigm, diversification is difficult because of the problem of "influence" discussed in Chapter 3. With teaching, for example, including more and different authors is to try and shoehorn in Others alongside "Major" figures who take up so much space.[577] In a Modern European Philosophy course, for example, one might teach Bacon, Malebranche, Descartes, Hobbes, Spinoza, Locke, Hume, Rousseau, Leibniz, etc. To add to this already-crowded roster by way of Conway, Cavendish, Elizabeth of Bohemia, etc. seems to allocate time to relatively less influential and impactful figures—regardless of what one thinks about the quality or insightfulness of their philosophy, or even if one acknowledges the political and cultural barriers impeding their impact on a wider audience. Even if one succeeds, the marginalized positions of such authors already frames them as "minor." As Deborah Rosenfelt writes, "The persistent attitude among many male and some female scholars that women as a class, if noticed at all, are not to be taken seriously means specifically that, though 'great' women writers are often acknowledged as such, 'minor' women writers are perceived as more minor than their male counterparts."[578] Within this paradigm, teaching the "minor minors" seems like an inefficient use of limited time. One might, perhaps, justify such a pursuit qua specialist (for a PhD dissertation, say), but even in that context the project itself is already situated as esoteric and obscure.

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[577] Philosophical canon manspreading, one might say.

[578] Deborah S. Rosenfelt, "The Politics of Bibliography: Women's Studies and the Literary Canon," in *Women in Print: Opportunities for Women's Studies Research in Language and Literature*, ed. Joan E. Hartman and Ellen Messer-Davidow (New York: Modern Language Association, 1982), 16.

Yet we could replace "influence" as a basis upon which to select the figures we study, research, and teach in philosophy. Even within a historiographical approach, we saw a few alternative pedagogical ideals earlier in this work. Skinner and Copleston allude to a kind of "broadening" which holds that by studying historical ideas that are significantly different from our own, we broaden our philosophical and intellectual horizons. I would note that the mechanisms of how this works as a pedagogical technique are often left undefined, i.e. it is unclear how learning what a philosopher from long ago thought about substance or time or God "broadens" the mind. It is also unclear to what ultimate pedagogical end(s) one might do so, i.e. why such "broadening" is important.[579] Diderot gives a more substantive account of such learning, which situates such research and learning as either practical (easing pain, giving pleasure) or enjoyable in itself. However, even if we accept these preceding positions, this does not account for why the categories and canon of philosophy would be so rigid. That is, if the point is to broaden the mind of students, why are we so restricted to *these* texts and *these* authors? Wouldn't, if anything, a more diverse set of readings in philosophy serve to broaden minds even further?

We could turn to Bernard Williams' reading of Descartes to answer the preceding questions. According to that approach, the reason for the selection of these specific texts/authors is simply because they express a philosophical idea especially well—they make a particularly compelling argument, proffer an insightful analysis, etc. Williams himself identifies Descartes as worth reading because there is "Something historically and importantly true about his outlook."[580] This gives us more of a reason for

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[579] Or, as Copleston frames it, it is a matter of learning about the inheritance of ideas from Western civilization. This is, I believe, an even worse framing than abstract "broadening," since it raises questions about the place of the non-Western student and why it would be important for the student to learn about their "heritage." Note I am not suggesting that the ideas, arguments, and texts *themselves* are unimportant, just that to learn them as *heritage* is pedagogically suspect.

[580] Williams, *Descartes*, xiv.

selecting Descartes specifically as an object of study, but it still leaves us with questions. What is it about Descartes and his ideas that makes his outlook not just true, but "*importantly* true"?

Recalling the analysis from the introduction, Williams asserts that what makes Descartes' doubt philosophically (as opposed to historically) important is that it raises questions about the relationships between doubt, truth, knowledge, and method. We might wonder, however, what it is that makes *these* topics proper to philosophy. In some ways this seems like an absurd idea: what could be more philosophical than something like truth? To be clear, I am not suggesting such topics are not philosophical. I am, rather, asking how they come to be characterized or classified as philosophy. For Williams' part, he offers little in the way of an answer. He writes only that he is guided "by the aim of articulating philosophical ideas."[581] This is to say, in other words, that for Williams the properness of the aforementioned topics to philosophy is self-evident.

In the absence of Williams' own answer, we can speculate about the implicit appeal here. For Williams, that no argumentation is necessary to justify his topic as philosophical means he undertakes his investigation qua philosophical in a tradition that has already sanctioned such topics as philosophy. Copleston made a similar move when he excised water from Thales' thought as so much chaff accompanying the "real" philosophy. Both rely upon conceptions given by a certain historical tradition, in other words. To be sure, this differs from Williams' appeal to "historical importance," which for him has more to do with the impact of Descartes' work on his peers and (more historically proximate) successors. It does, however, still couch the significance of his project and the scope of his analysis in historical terms.

The point here is not that topics like truth, doubt, or method are *exclusively* relevant or significant to European philosophy. The question is, rather, upon what conception of "philosophy" Williams

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[581] Williams, xiv.

grounds his project. And here we see again why I held that, despite his explicit separation from a "history of ideas," Williams nevertheless operates within its paradigm. By way of reference to "importance," Williams implicitly accepts the same narrative, i.e. "Philosophy" has a particular set of topics or questions, to which Descartes speaks insightfully or meaningfully. Williams does not question why or how topics like doubt and knowledge, philosophical method, and metaphysical topics (God, space, time, substance) count as "Philosophy," he simply reads Descartes because he sees Descartes as important or insightful in answering the questions of those topics.

Still, in some ways, Williams' approach is a promising means to diversifying philosophy. That is, to the extent an author speaks to Philosophical Problems, they are worthy of inclusion—regardless of influence (or lack thereof). Framing this in the context of women in the history of philosophy, Sara Tyson identifies this as the "Enfranchisement" strategy of inclusion, which "seeks to enfranchise women into European and Anglophone philosophical history. Arguments in this line advocate for understanding women philosophers as being just like men philosophers and important to philosophical history for the same reasons as recognized, canonical philosophers in that tradition."[582] Here, she writes, "Women […] wrote and write philosophy just like recognized canonical European and Anglophone philosophers."[583]

However, here we encounter the limitations of Williams' approach—at least without some tempering. Tyson notes that the "just like" preemptively constrains the newly-included: "If the grounds of women's legitimacy are that they have practiced philosophy just like men, then evidence that women have introduced topics and questions not typical of men philosophers undermines the case for enfranchisement."[584] Women philosophers would, therefore, only be philosophers to the extent they

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[582] Tyson, *Where Are the Women?*, xxix.
[583] Tyson, 3.
[584] Tyson, 8.

reiterated the philosophical practices of men, making any kind of unique contribution or challenge to the boundaries of "philosophy" impossible. Tyson's analysis is about women specifically, but I believe her views are applicable to many other situations in which the hitherto marginalized are newly "included."

Deborah Rosenfelt elaborates on the issue of inclusion by way of an analysis of literary canons, writing, "A body of prejudice held that domestic and sentimental concerns were the proper sphere of women writers, especially in the nineteenth century; on the other hand, a set of values, both social and aesthetic, tended, as the genteel tradition faded into the past, to patronize or dismiss precisely those concerns as beneath the dignity of a significant writer."[585] An analogy is appropriate here: just as a professor of English might dismiss letters or diaries as insufficiently "literary," so the philosopher might examine a work outside a traditional Western canon and consider it insufficiently "philosophical."[586]

But let us say through acceptance (being allowed to cross the threshold—what an honor!), new voices are integrated into philosophy. Which voices? What, in other words, are the terms of expansion? Rosenfelt, again:

> Memoirs, diaries, personal essays, letters—forms in which women writers have excelled—were increasingly considered subliterary genres, except for those works that had been acknowledged as literature for so long that their status was secure: Franklin's *Autobiography*, but not that of Linda Brent, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, or Mary Hunter Austin; Emerson's or Thoreau's essays, but not those of Margaret Fuller. In addition, fiction, poetry, or drama that engaged in an impassioned examination of specific social

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[585] Rosenfelt, "The Politics of Bibliography: Women's Studies and the Literary Canon," 18.
[586] As was the case, for example, with many texts and much thinking from Asian traditions up until relatively recently.

issues was deemed suspect; it was propaganda, not art—unless, of course, its internal

symbolic structure gave it a universality transcending the temporal concern.[587]

My preceding threshold comment is flippant, to be sure. But appropriate, I believe. An expansion

outward means an undisturbed center. Insofar as terms of recognition—of what counts as philosophy

and what does not—are based on divisions and interests presented as universal and ahistorical, they

will only recognize the new to the degree it resembles the old. Rosenfelt notes this is "an exclusive

rather than an inclusive strategy, a […] tokenism that would allow the most assimilable to rise but

would not question the established […] order."[588]

Robert Bernasconi's work on Western practices of philosophy offers critiques in a similar vein,

but focuses on philosophy from various cultures and traditions rather than the marginalization of

women. He underscores the way in which Greek philosophy sets the terms of the game: "The Greek

tradition of philosophy is still often used as the standard in terms of which disputes about what is and

what is not philosophy are judged."[589] In particular, he notes that during the 17th and 18th centuries,

European and especially German thinkers positioned themselves as the inheritors of the Greek tradi-

tion of philosophy.[590] This was not simply a matter of straightforward genealogy from Greece to Ger-

many, however. Bernasconi notes that at the same time there was "a secularization of philosophy that

led to a renegotiation of the distinction between myth and reason, so that what had previously been

regarded as philosophy was displaced into religion."[591] This reconsideration of myth vs. reason meant

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[587] Rosenfelt, "The Politics of Bibliography: Women's Studies and the Literary Canon," 21.
[588] Rosenfelt, 22.
[589] Robert Bernasconi, "Ethnicity, Culture and Philosophy," in *The Blackwell Companion to Philosophy*, ed. Nicholas Bunnin and E.P. Tsui-James, 2nd Edition (Blackwell Publishers, 2003), 568.
[590] Bernasconi, 569.
[591] Bernasconi, 569.

jettisoning numerous non-European philosophical sources deemed too influenced by "myth" or "rev-elation," including Egyptians, Chaldeans, Jews, Persians, Indians, Phoenicians, and more.[592] Peter K.J. Park argues that much of this rewriting of history was instigated by figures like Christoph Meiners and Wilhelm Tennemann, each of whom held that philosophy was exclusively Greek in origin.[593]

Importantly, this (re)defining contains latent valuations that operate prescriptively. Philosophy is reframed: it is supposed to be about "reason," and where reasoning means the presentation of an argument in a form minimally recognizable as an argument. However: who does that recognition? This is sometimes negotiated immanent to philosophy (as seen with figures like Montaigne or Nie-tzsche), but recognition is predicated on presuppositions about the ways in which philosophy is read, learned, and practiced. That is, for a text to "have an argument," and therefore potentially count as philosophy, one expects to be able to identify a string of statements leading to a conclusion. What one misses with such a definition is the way in which texts can offer analyses that trouble what it means to argue or can be brought to life through discussion.[594] A text like the *Dao de Jing*, for example, is precisely *not* meant to contain a familiar form of an "argument" leading to "truth."[595] This, in turn, means that textual traditions falling outside the expected rhetorical form of Western philosophy can be easily dismissed for failing to meet the most basic of criteria.

This objection concerning form carries over to topic as well. Who decides what topics belong to philosophy? At various times in history, economics, psychology and psychoanalysis, anthropology,

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[592] Bernasconi, 569.
[593] Park, *Africa, Asia, and the History of Philosophy*, 8.
[594] The idea of a text "having" or "not having" an argument hearkens back to the issue of authorial intent. On that view, to identify a text as having an argument is shorthand for stating that the text is the argument of the author. There are, however, a host of questions here, i.e. whether the point of writing philosophy is to "prove" something, whether the form of essay or monograph-based argumentation is the most effective means to demonstrate a point, etc.
[595] We can observe such an issue internal to Western philosophy as well. Authors who write aphoristically (Nietzsche, again), expect a certain kind of response to the text on the part of the reader that means the argument is not to be found via follow-the-dots reasoning. Accordingly, there are still those who view Nietzsche as "not a philosopher" because he "doesn't have an argument."

and many of the natural sciences have all borne the heading "philosophy." Moreover, at various points, deeply (Christian) theological questions have preoccupied figures considered to be centrally canonical (Augustine, Aquinas, Duns Scotus, Anselm, etc.), troubling the notion that philosophy is supposed to be separate from religion. It is, therefore, highly suspect when the topics and subtopics of philosophy are taken as fixed—as if this time we finally (somehow) got it right. And yet, philosophers from relatively new fields—Feminist philosophy, philosophy of race, decolonial philosophy, etc.—face questions about the relevance of their topic to philosophy as if the disciplinary bounds of philosophy were not highly historically mutable.

Thus Williams' approach, to simply include those authors who speak insightfully to Philosophical Problems, needs further finessing. Perhaps (perhaps) we can approach philosophy from the standpoint of looking for those who meaningfully speak to certain problems. But Tyson, Rosenfelt, and Bernasconi underscore that how we recognize relevant modes of "meaningfully speaking" and "certain problems" need to be challenged. Failing to do so, only those authors whose writing already resembles the existing canon of philosophy in form and word will be recognized. Moreover, as Tyson emphasizes, in so doing any "non-philosophical" elements to their work are preemptively quarantined as irrelevant, thereby defusing any possibility of challenging what exactly the "canon" or "philosophy' are. As she puts it, "Simply trying to bring historical women's writing to philosophical attention without changing the practices by which we deem something worthy of philosophical attention can aid in the exclusion of women from philosophy, even in the guise of certain forms of permissiveness."[596]

At this point we might wonder if it is even possible to make philosophy more diverse without reiterating marginalization. I believe so, but as Tyson and Rosenfelt indicate, and as I have repeatedly

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[596] Tyson, *Where Are the Women?*, xvi.

intimated, only if we challenge the pregiven categories of philosophy alongside a critical consideration of the discipline of philosophy itself.

Tyson herself does this by way of what she calls a "transformative model":

> The transformative model investigates norms of philosophical engagement and offers new norms that not only countenance work by women, but also highlight its importance. More precisely, this model shows how women's exclusion has shaped prevalent notions of what is considered philosophy and shows how European and Anglophone philosophy must be reshaped to redress this exclusion.[597]

What does this mean? In what way(s) is this model "transformative"? What does this ask of us as "philosophers"? As Tyler elaborates, it asks what "makes it possible for us to question the standards by which writing is judged as philosophical and to become readers capable of judging differently."[598] This is to say that part of what is transformed here is the very idea of "philosophy," and this transformation is necessary to reevaluate not only the place of women within it, but the grounds upon which they have been excluded. Reading Michèle Le Dœuff, Tyson asks, "Could it be that women produced philosophy that we cannot and do not recognize as such in the European and Anglophone tradition, because the qualifications for the title of 'philosopher' have been in the way of our being able to appreciate philosophical thinking?"[599] For Tyson, writing on specifically the history of women's exclusion from philosophy, this transformation is cashed out in terms of how it will allow us move beyond simply adding women philosophers to the canon, but how new modes of reading will allow "philosophy" to appear in texts that have been historically marginalized. Tyson herself does this with texts like the *Declaration of Sentiments* and Sojourner Truth's "Ain't I a Woman?" The implications of Tyson's

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[597] Tyson, 39–40.
[598] Tyson, 44.
[599] Tyson, 119–20.

argument, however, can be applied beyond just the case of women; in rethinking philosophy, even canonical philosophers and texts are not left undisturbed. Rethinking the terms of recognition can recast what we recognize as philosophical within canonical texts and figures, changing both what and how we teach, and what we pursue as researchers and writers.

At another point in her work, Tyson writes, "The goal [...] is an ongoing critical engagement with how our thinking has been made possible, particularly by exclusions, and how we can think differently."[600] Tyson is describing a particular mode of reading here, what she calls "speculative practices," but I believe her account could be productively deployed as an alternative model of what it means to do philosophy. What is particularly appealing about this conception is its relative openness: it does not couch itself in terms of a definite or final goal (obtaining "truth") or rigidly historically-defined terms (epistemology, metaphysics, etc.); nor does it presume the relevance or irrelevance of a particular body of texts.[601] It performs, one might say, a kind of epoché vis-à-vis the very idea of philosophy.

What philosophy can become, then, is something other. Tyson rightly opposes the transformation model to the more conservative supplementation model.[602] While acknowledging that philosophy does not become "all-inclusive" (by bearing the name philosophy it already cannot be), it becomes significantly more open. This does not mean existing practices and traditions of philosophy are jettisoned; they are, instead, reframed. They are consulted not because they were influential in a tightly-bounded Eurocentric history of ideas, nor because they offer a quintessential account of a problem in "Philos-

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[600] Tyson, 142.

[601] To be sure, this is not to imply such a definition is free from historical conceptual definitions—"thinking," especially, but also conceptions of causality inherent in considering "how our thinking has been made possible"—but I see these as necessary as using language (however imperfect, imprecise, or frustrating) to get at ideas and representations. The more salient question is whether one understands those as precise instruments to ascertain some "essence" or "truth," or whether one sees them as a kind of constellation (to borrow Benjamin's term)—aligning what is there in such a way that we see it differently.

[602] Tyson, *Where Are the Women?*, xxvii.

ophy," but because they can insightfully speak to, disrupt, challenge, and otherwise expose the conditions and directions of our thinking. To that end, philosophy opens to the possibility of more meaningfully engaging texts from the hitherto marginalized, and to the possibility of fundamentally reorienting both what we consider a "text" and what it would mean to "read" such texts.

Part of what I find appealing about this approach is that it does more than diversify philosophy by way of addition or supplementation. The addition changes the whole; it allows texts, authors, and ideas to connect with each other in new ways and, in so doing, expose aspects of thinking that we might not have seen otherwise. This reframing, too, is a way of challenging the institutionalization of philosophy in places like the library. It recognizes both that the labels used to present and organize philosophy carry methodological biases, and that any new labels would similarly manifest their own biases. What it concludes, however is not that such additions or updates are, therefore, useless. Instead, they become new foundations and new possibilities.

Section 4 - Conclusion

To do philosophy means to situate oneself qua scholar, qua student, and qua learner relative to "philosophy." It is, then, worth considering how our conception of philosophy is shaped by the circumstances of the encounter: by a catalog, subject terms, keywords, or disciplinary traditions.

I can already hear cries of objection: where did argumentation go? Careful, meticulous analysis? What about "rigor"? Let me reassure anyone who might fret: they are all still here. But here differently. There is no dichotomy between philosophy as it is often written, thought, and practiced now and what I am advocating. And it may well be the case that for the majority of philosophers writing and practicing today, philosophy as it exists already fills this role perfectly. Personally, I am not one of those, so I cannot say.

What I can say is that it is both absurd and exclusionary to pretend that philosophy flourishes only or in its best form under present conditions. I do not believe there is a particular path one must walk to arrive at questions of existence, knowledge, truth, or the good. These questions arise and are answered in all kinds of contexts and spurred by all kinds of encounters. Perhaps it is a specialized research paper; perhaps it is a Tweet. Perhaps it is in the very process of writing—or of rewriting. Recognizing that just because philosophers have found such sparks in a canon of texts, and that many have for many years, does not mean that canon should remain so fixed and so rigid that it cannot find the philosophical except through more of the same. Hence: the need for a critique of "philosophy" that unsettles so many of the discipline and practice's presuppositions alongside a consideration of the norms and institutions that acculture its practitioners.

Conclusion

While writing this work, I participated in an initiative to integrate Homosaurus into Emory's cataloging procedures at its Woodruff Library. Created in 1997 by IHLIA LGBT Heritage, a Dutch archive for LGBTQ+ materials, Homosaurus presents a more robust and descriptive set of authority terms—standard words and phrases—to that of LCSH on the topics of sex, gender, sexual orientation, and many related topics.[603] Accordingly, either updating existing terms or adding additional headings to existing items would (in theory at least) increase the visibility of certain items.

Of course, the irony of the project is that those involved find themselves trying to identify the unidentified. How can you find those works that could benefit from additional headings when the indexing itself is insufficient to identify those materials in the first place? Of course, there are oblique and imperfect ways of finding such materials: using existing headings (imperfect though they may be), outside sources (bibliographies, reading lists, award winners), and Library of Congress Classification, but the project is in many ways inherently frustrating.

As a philosopher, I immediately thought, "Oh, this could be quite helpful to folks working on topics like philosophy of sex and gender, queer theory, trans* studies, Feminist philosophy, etc." However, because it is not possible for Emory's limited workforce to systematically review its 5.6 million materials for recataloging, some narrowing of scope is necessary. So where could I point catalogers to look for relevant materials? And then the very impetus for this project hit me full on in the face.

To start, a significant amount of works are not in the Philosophy range at all:
- *Transcending Gender Ideology: A Philosophy of Sexual Difference* by Antonio Malo
    - HQ21 .M356 (Sexual behavior and attitudes. Sexuality)

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[603] "Homosaurus - About," 2019, https://homosaurus.org/about.

- *Thinking Woman: A Philosophical Approach to the Quandary of Gender* by Jennifer Dragseth
  - HQ1075 .D73 (Sex role)
- *Gender: Key Concepts in Philosophy*, Tina Chanter (ed.)
  - HQ1190 (Women. Feminism)

What one does find in the Philosophy range reaffirms my frustrations. *Iris Murdoch, Gender, and Philosophy* by Sabina Lovibond is found at B1647. Its only subject heading? "Murdoch, Iris." Its location, meanwhile, situates the work in the following hierarchy:

Philosophy, Modern (Modern (1450/1600-)

    By region or country

      England. Ireland. Scotland. Wales

        19th and 20th centuries

          Later 19th and 20th centuries

            Individual philosophers

So, an analysis of Murdoch's thought on sex and gender is primarily indexed as the work of a philosopher from the later 19th and 20th centuries from the England/Ireland/Scotland/Wales region. Surrounded by works on MacIntyre, Midgley, and Moore, it is related neither by classification nor by heading to any comparable work on philosophy of sex and gender.

Another example: *The Bloomsbury Research Handbook of Indian Philosophy and Gender.* The conjunctive "And" is not enough to hold the topics together here: the material's subject headings split the work into "Philosophy, Indic" on the one hand and "Gender identity--Religious aspects--Hinduism" and "Gender identity--Religious aspects--Islam" on the other. The classification, meanwhile, puts the work at B5131:

Modern (1450/1600-)

    By region or country

Asia

Southern Asia. Indian Ocean region

By country

India

There are two points I want to emphasize that arise out of this experience. First, this isolation is by design. The system of classification, organization, and presentation itself works to render these discourses discrete. Because the emphasis is, first and foremost, on the geographical and historical origin of the work, there is no focal point around which these works could gather to converse, exchange ideas, or facilitate understanding.

Second, I want to point out that the way in which philosophical topics have been isolated is so prevalent that *even a project expressly dedicated to increasing the visibility of works on the same topic* struggles to identify relevant materials. Homosaurus, though by no means perfect or a solution to all ills, struggles to enhance visibility of materials on philosophy of sex and gender because relevant materials are so scattered and disconnected that nothing unites them.

My examples here are not exhaustive, of course—but they are suggestive. And, importantly, contrast the way in which these titles share no headings and no classification with those titles they *do* share commonalities. As I mentioned earlier, the work on Murdoch sits near works on MacIntyre, Midgley, and Moore: fantastic if you happen to be interested in major philosophical figures from the England/Ireland/Scotland/Wales regions during the later 19th and 20th centuries. Not so much if you are interested in, well, philosophy of sex and gender.

As a scholar, you have two options. One, lean in. The result is works that are, first and foremost, about a given figure and, secondarily, about the topic found in the work of that thinker. Hence Iris Murdoch leading to sex and gender, not sex and gender leading to Iris Murdoch. This may not seem like an issue, and one could argue that this merely reflects the ways in which philosophy itself tends

to organize around philosophers. But even if is a stretch to say this indexing is the cause of such divides, it is at least a contributing factor in their reiteration. The system sanctions omission by its very organization: one who reads Lovibond's work on Murdoch is in another scholarly universe than someone reading *Sex, Love, and Gender: A Kantian Theory* by Helga Varden (B2799 .S47 V37 – works on "Sex differences" in Kant) or *Deleuze and Gender*, edited by Claire Colebrook and Jami Weinstein (HQ1075 .D454 – works on "Sex roles").

Indeed, and I want to emphasize this point, the only way philosophy of sex and gender or anything like it is recognizable as philosophy is if it is attached to a philosopher or school of philosophy of sufficient prominence that Library of Congress has decided to associate a call number range. The same holds true for philosophy of race, decolonial philosophy, and many other topics. This point also results in some strange fractures since until a range is established for that individual, their works are likely to be categorized by topic. For example, Judith Butler has her own call number range (B945 .B88), but as this was not created until 2009 many of her works are instead in HQ. This is not to say her works are irrelevant to that range (i.e. Feminist Theory), but to note the bizarreness of the situation. Qua abstract writer, Butler's works are about given topics, but upon reaching a certain state of prominence, she suddenly becomes a Philosopher and is assigned a range accordingly. It is worth noting too that Butler does not have a range in the HQs; somehow, at some moment, Butler went from being an author whose works were commonly classified as Feminist Theory to a Philosopher, despite there being no immanent conceptual connection between the two in LCC.

This point takes me to a broader one, which is that it is deeply unclear what exactly counts as philosophy for LCC/LCSH purposes. Of course, one could argue that in philosophy itself it is not always especially clear what counts as philosophy; that is part of an ongoing conversation within the discipline itself. However, there are degrees here. While it is true some forms of inquiry, creativity, and

scholarly endeavor are quite controversial to call "Philosophy," the boundaries of philosophy have decidedly moved. It is not ambiguous that philosophers are interested in and researching topics like gender and race and has not been for some time. However, LCC/SH still reflect an extremely conservative and Eurocentric conception of philosophy, with corresponding language. When the overarching categories are concepts like Logic, Ethics, Aesthetics, and Speculative Philosophy, the options for articulating how these new forms of philosophy are related to "Philosophy" are limited. Until ground is cleared to recognize more diverse types of philosophy and, concomitantly, more diverse modes of doing philosophy, works will continue to either be exiled to other ranges or subsumed under the rubric of a historiographical inventory.

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