

Political Philosophy in the East and West

In Search of Truth

Jaan S. Islam

Vernon Series in Politics



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The author would like to dedicate this book to his wife, Betül Tuba, who wed the author during the writing of this book.

Endorsements

“With an impressive combination of grand ambitions and punctilious insights, Jaan S. Islam identifies, confronts, and overcomes the reasons for our 21st-century crisis of certainty. Locating the causes at the very core of the Western tradition, and particularly its approach to the Good and the True (which is, of course, the nexus of action and thought, politics and philosophy), Islam radically critiques the intellectual inheritance of the Enlightenment as well as its ancient antecedents to expose its inherent contradictions...Yet Islam does not leave us abandoned, floating above the ocean’s abyss surrounded by the wreckage of a broken tradition. In an analytical turn that takes full advantage of emerging decolonial perspectives, Islam guides us to a distant, subaltern shore: the Chinese and Islamic political and philosophical traditions, with their distinct approaches that circumvent the contradictions at the base of our crisis of certainty: approaches that Islam categorizes as ‘knowledge-based cognition’”

E. T. Dailey, University of Amsterdam Press, Amsterdam.

“Throughout history, only a handful of writers dare bring out the truth. Rarely such writers are recognized in their lifetime as being truth-tellers, and are almost never celebrated in a society controlled by an establishment that has invested in keeping the truth away from the general public that it controls. In this revolutionary work, Jaan Islam challenges the core definition of truth in western philosophy – something that has not been done for many centuries. As he compares Western with Eastern political philosophy, he gives us a criterion for discerning the Truth from falsehood. The book is a breathtaking read. At the same time, arguments and logic used are airtight, devoid of any logical loopholes. It is no exaggeration to say that this is the first book in modern times that reads like poetry while offering logic of an engineering design. One can only wish this line of work catches on and we have a paradigm shift in the way our scholars communicate with the general mass.”

Prof. M. Enamul Hossain, Statoil Research Chair, Memorial University, St. John’s, Canada.

“The Information Age is synonymous with an overflow of “information”. Information is necessary for traveling the path of knowledge, leading to the truth. Yet, here a horrific contradiction leaps out to grab one and all by

the throat: of all the characteristics that can be said to define the Information Age, neither freedom nor peace is one of them. It is reasonable to conclude that ‘information’ or ‘knowledge’ in the modern era has not been in line with peace, creating contradictions in all aspects of cognition. Nothing is more contradictory than Dogmatic cognition and its modernized form that has been accepted as ‘enlightenment’ without scrutiny. In this book, Jaan Islam calls out the incoherence of the western philosophical tradition and demonstrates that a new approach must be taken in order to unearth the true nature of philosophy. With such empowerment, western and eastern philosophies are contrasted at the core of fundamental premises, thus showing the existence of entirely different paradigms. The author identifies the Roman Catholic Church’s cognition patterns as the driver of modern cognitive tools. He shows how western philosophy is based on illogical assertions and premises that remained unchallenged from the enlightenment era to the Information Age. Islam identifies the ‘elephant in the room’, i.e., ongoing prejudice and colonial hubris that has prevented modern scholars from seeing the hollowness of Orientalist philosophy that has only morphed into a more toxic form manifested through the two extremes of false cognition, viz. neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism.”

Kutluk Özgüven, Professor of Management Information Systems (Former Dean of the Faculty of Communication), Faculty of Communication, Zirve University, Gaziantep, Turkey.

"The most important application of the law of the excluded middle is the determination of the truth, i.e., something cannot be true and false at the same time. Yet, today we have arrived at a time when truth is being called subjective, as if it is a function of perception of an individual. This is a very significant departure from millennia of philosophical tradition. Every civilization recounted in history other than post-Roman Catholic church's Eurocentric era had a clear vision of what constitutes the truth. Plato understood it as synonymous with real that doesn't change with time (the physical world being fleeting or a function of time is not 'real'). Aristotle understood it as what really 'is'. Obviously, the modern notion of truth as being subjective amounts to eliminating the essence of the criterion of the truth. Today, western philosophy is synonymous with 'enlightenment' and knowledge of the truth, while any other philosophy is considered to be religious mumbo jumbo. Yet, the same society has accepted Islamic thinkers, such as Averröes, Ibn Khaldun, and others as the father of respective fields and not a single modern philosopher disputed their philosophical stance. In modern era, Edward Said was the first one to call out this contradiction and attributed such attitude toward the East as Orientalism – an euphemism for Eurocentric racism. Jaan Islam goes

further and shows us how western philosophers in essence plagiarized eastern thought (most notably Islamic thought), twisted it and packaged it as 'enlightenment' after adding layers of logical fallacies. As the author points out, notwithstanding the longstanding general acceptance of the distinction that Thomas Aquinas is the father of doctrinal philosophy and Averröes the father of secular philosophy, regardless of the claim to be operating on an entirely secular basis utterly disconnected from 'religious bias' of any kind, all aspects of scientific (social science as well as hard science) developments in modern Europe have been based on doctrinal philosophy. This is indeed a profound discovery with revolutionary implications. Because philosophy is the root of all cognition, the finding of this book can have an extraordinary impact for many generations to come."

Saad Dabbous, Ph.D, Geologist and Imam.

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Foreword

If we learned anything in the 21st century, it is the very newly-founded slogan that ‘anything goes’, when it comes to morality. The idea of ‘post-modernism’ in its academic and popular forms have—as this book outlines—at once rightfully removed major ideological biases, but also leaves us with moral relativism. Islam first demonstrates that humans have been categorizing and universalizing their subjective opinions as having the status of divine commandments, whether explicitly or implicitly. This entails a review of the Judeo-Christian philosophical tradition since its inception and through its development, through early Christianity, the ‘Enlightenment’, the Post-Enlightenment, the Modern and Post-Modern ages. The result of this project is confounded in the so-called ‘enlightenment’ era, also known as subjective universalism: an attempt by every philosopher to universalize their thoughts, resulting in a skepticism and formalization of the idea that morality does not really exist. In the modern age, this book shows that postmodernism is an ideology whereby these ideas are formally called what they are: the embodiment of the most-possibly myopic subjectivism. However, what this book highlights is that there is nothing new about people accepting moral relativism. Whether by implication (by belonging to a pretend-universalistic ideology) or by acknowledgement (of moral relativism), subjectivism wins once again.

The true gem of this book is not its genuine post-truth; its unique insights on the history of western philosophy. One would be greatly mistaken to think so; and in fact, the very identification of thinking that this would be ‘it’ is the problem. That is, a breaking from this broken western philosophical tradition. Much like Edward Said’s *Orientalism*, this book constitutes a ‘wake-up’ call to the western world, this time in what seems to be in an ultimate moral right-left gridlock. However, as opposed to merely identifying that the east ‘exists’ beyond the western paradigm, it makes a much bolder claim: eastern thought has the potential of solving the problems of the west. Even the most of the anti-colonial liberal thinkers have fell right into the trap—which was unacknowledged until now—of viewing the west as a moral standard for the eastern world. Even amongst the most communitarian, morally relativistic of thinkers, has there not been a realization of the potential of the so-called east. The genuine contribution that this book, that the author intends to make is—in my opinion—that the objective, ultimately True, and Good solution to the problems realized in the new westernized, globalized world, can indeed be realized, but that this realization can only take place with the contributions of

eastern philosophy. This view opposes the current study of Islamic philosophy, for instance, which is acknowledged as only having value in relation to its influence to the west; of only being valuable due to its mere existence.

This book can easily be interpreted as being on the cutting edge of post-modern thought, a restatement of the faultiness of religious or semi-religious thinking. Yet, the fact that the term “Absolute” “Objective” or “The” “Truth” is written in this book hundreds of times alludes to the suggestion that the purpose of this book is not to critique what others have in a new way. Rather, this book adds post-modernism itself to its critique list, and offers the potential for the existence of what we quench in our modern world: real truth. No, the author does not outline certain ‘truths’ and beliefs drivable from ‘common sense’, as the skeptic may assume. What this book does offer cannot be described until the reader openly listens to and accepts the suggestions of the author. This book deserves to be read with an open heart because it gives the *only* crack at what may be known as Truth.

G.V. Chillingarian

Professor, University of Southern California

Acknowledgements

To get right to the point; there are many scholars and colleagues whose help and both direct and indirect influence have helped shape this extraordinary book. Whether by emulation, understanding of research practices, raw data, or philosophical opinions, all of the individuals mentioned below have been a great help and influence in my political philosophy. The Prophet Muhammad said, “Is not the cure to ignorance, to question?” Indeed. Many of the contributions to this book has been a result of questioning and deconstructing—a recurring and repetitive theme of the book.

There are two professors who I must mention, Professor Marcella Firmini and Florian Bail, have been an enormous help in two major ways. Firstly, there is the dialectical discussion; many of the theories developed in my book have been a direct result of conversation with these two great individuals. Secondly, I appreciate both of my mentors’ enthusiasm and encouragement of my intellectual endeavours. In reply, I wish both of these brilliant scholars prosperity in all of their endeavours and goals. To Professor Rafiqul Islam, my father with whom I am intellectually near, and to my dear colleague Gary M. Zatzman, I am most certainly indebted to. Many Q&A sessions, discussions on logic and methodology, and the bulk of my influence in the field of political philosophy has been a result of their intellectual mastery. Both have helped a great deal in terms of developing both the methodological schematic of the book, which consisted of hours of conversation and debate. Both have contributed greatly to both the deconstructive and constructive theory.

Considering the formulation of the constructive theory—a caselaw for truth-based legal derivation—I have influences from many. Firstly, there is my colleague and friend, Professor Saad Dabbous, a great Islamic jurist. Professor Dabbous has contributed to the creation of the caselaw of Islamic philosophy discussed in Chapter Six. This includes discussions on Ibn Khaldūn’s and Ibn Rushd’s political and philosophical theory. Secondly, Ali Hassan Mughal has provided valuable information on philosophical consequentialism and idealism. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the intellectual contributions of another great figure, Mohammed El-Falah, my friend and intellectual colleague who helped develop the concept of the ‘degenerative’ dialectic.

I do not mean to imply that all of the individuals mentioned necessarily agree with the conceptions developed in the book. However, I can confidently state that their teaching, and my discussions and debates with them have strengthened the arguments on this book. They have all certainly, through

their scholarly ability, gave me the ability to each make my argument markedly stronger.

Preface



Above is a painting by Carl Haag, a 19th-century orientalist painter from Bavaria, Germany—the painting based on his travels of the middle east. Haag’s painting illustrates what I see to be a very important point, the question of the millennium, or even of humankind. This painting depicts the situation of every individual in this world, every person who dares attempt to take up the task of sorting out, and taking a position on, the seemingly unsolvable and innumerable of problems we are facing. The effects of a globalized world, global governance, the crisis of modern religion, of competing universalities, and other major problems make up the schematic that every thinking agent—you—must face.

I picture all of you who even bothered to read up to here as the man in this painting; your belongings are gone—a means to guidance—, a map or guide, the crisis of the time left in our lives, etc. It leaves us to sit there, just to ponder for a moment; how can I get out of this crisis? Which way—if at all—should I go? This book does not offer a consoling response of any kind, but rather, a reality upon which to find a way out. This way is only way of eventually finding the truth, and finding it means two things; a) that you have discovered the source of the truth, and b) you follow it as strictly and as best as you possibly can.

This book consists of two parts, the first being a review—an analysis of the reality of our situation, of the previous lines of thought (i.e. western philoso-

phy), and how they utterly fail to give us a solution. The solutions to this reality depicted in the first part are, at least partly, answered in the second part. The solution provided is the only way out—the only way to find a *true* solution to a problem is by discovering a source, or criteria, for truth, and sticking by it. In practical political terms, we set out to answer the question Aristotle and the entire west has failed to do; what is the best way to divide and/or make sure power is exercised in a *good* manner, and how can we know if that solution is right?

Western philosophy has wished to change the whole of a given government structure in order to hope that it may prevent usurpation of power and unaccountability. Instead of finding the best person to manage the power, they assumed its impossibility, and never on.—I revisit these assumptions and prove a) their logical inconsistencies, and b) a way to find a solution. The implications of this book are enormous. Simply put, it shows that there is no way to know if anything is true based on our current model of political thinking—this is the reality, a first stage to finding a way out. Secondly, that the only way out, the only way to the truth, is by following what that truth is.

Jaan Islam

15 September, 2017

Halifax, NS, Canada

Chapter 1

Introduction and Summary

Indeed, horrible things may be true, and familiar and praised things may prove to be lies.

Truth is truth unto itself, not because people say it is'

—Muslim Philosopher Ibn al-Nafīs (Serageldin 2007, 23).

Background

As a response to the moral degeneration of the world today, Melanie Phillips wrote; “*the world is upside down*” (Phillips 2013, 8). She points out the west’s surprising comfortability that the modern, liberal world has towards major moral obstacles towards justice and even the same principles liberalism claims to espouse. At the time of reading this, I could not agree more; and now, I have a chance write on it myself. In this brief volume, I intend to cover the exact same topic, with more of a focus on political philosophy amongst others, as it addresses key moral concerns. It is no mystery that the world is coming to a convergence, a climax that all political thinkers have been pointing to. As a result, every issue that ever became political at any point in history—be it religion, the physical environment, economics, health and medicine, education, etc.—is now a major subject of debate following political effects of a globalized world.

It is well-recognized by scholars regardless of field of study that there is a globalized, political agenda that started in the 20th century causing a surge in international trade, communications technologies, and the preliminary developments of what some even call a global *moral* status quo, demonstrated through frameworks of global just war, human rights institutions and protections, the responsibly to protect, and global governance and international law in general (see for example: Pogge in Brock and Brighthouse 2005; Held 2013a 2013b ch. 6; Thakur, etc). Since such institutions have not existed before—on a global level—this has led to the aforementioned scholars mistaken belief of there being an emergence of a global, moral status quo. Despite the accuracy statement that the book is dedicated to discussing, it is a fact that both academics, bureaucrats, and political activists are attempting to find a way to create a shared horizon of aspirations, to create a general, consensus-based

policy with freedom and democracy, good governance, peace, and all of the other things we picture in our every-day typical utopias. Of course, this is not easy, and nobody has indicated towards its immediate practical possibility, but there is no doubt need to have some kind of a global agenda in our fractured world.

The issue inalienable human rights of all individuals has come to the forefront of modern discourse over the last few decades following the existence of genocidal acts, conflict, and crimes against humanity. Very recently, the creation and horrifying testimonies of the acts of the Islamic State (a.k.a. Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) (Islam 2016, ch. 8), and the notorious legacies of the Second World War, the Rwandan Genocide, Ethnic Cleansing in former Yugoslavia, have all begged scholars of our generation to find a way out of war, destruction, and poverty, and towards the far-fetched visions of world peace, security, and order. Actions of the United States foreign policy—bombing campaigns, drone strikes, unauthorized collection of intelligence, invasion, and destruction in the name of humanitarian intervention (Bennis 2003, Bennis et al. 2003, Bell 2015)—have asked us to reconsider our views surrounding the balance between consequentialism and deontological ethics.

The modern age has been characterized as being both a time of “*technological disaster*” (as per Nobel Laureate Chemist, Robert Curl) and of “*scientific miracles*” (as the most predominant theme of modern education). Numerous debates break out every day, resulting in the formation of various schools of thoughts, often settling for “agreeing to disagree”. At the end, little more than band-aid solutions are offered in order to “delay the symptoms” of any ill-effects of the current technology developments. This modus operandi is not conducive to knowledge and cannot be utilized to lead the current civilization out of the misery that it faces, as is evident in all sectors of life. In this regard, the information age offers us a unique opportunity in the form of 1) transparency (arising from monitoring space and time); 2) infinite productivity (due to the inclusion of *intangibles*, *zero-waste*, and transparency); and 3) custom-designed solutions (due to transparency and infinite productivity). However, none of these traits has any meaning if we don’t have a theory with correct hypothesis. This chapter addresses the most important theories advanced in the modern age and deconstructs them in order to set the stage for a comprehensive theory that can explain natural phenomena without resorting to dogma. These theories are widely deemed to be ‘revolutionary’ in the sense of having caused a ‘paradigm shift’ in their respective fields. Our contention, on the other hand, is that all these theories are rooted in fundamentally flawed theories and ‘laws’ from the time of Atomism.

But despite these great concerns, globalization has led to an even more profound effect, one that serves as a major variable in global governance; that is,

the challenge of our local, communal, national values, deeply rooted religious and cultural beliefs and practices, and so on (Appiah 2006)—this is no “news-flash”-worthy observation. In order to answer the question that lies at the depth of all of the global issues we are facing—literally, all issues that we practice in our local and national polities (economics, national defence, foreign policy, etc.), there is a question our conscious is begging us to answer: what is right or good, and what is wrong or bad? This, dear reader, is what this book tries to give the background for an answer. Of course, there can never really be a true answer—at least none demonstrable enough to convince everybody (considering that even the factuality of mathematical truths are debated)—but what I will do is point out the major philosophical and cognitive ills of western philosophy over the centuries to prove that the answer to this question must lie elsewhere. In addition to the cultural concerns surrounding globalization, governments and citizens must deal with new forms of hype and fear surrounding their daily lives; the result of fear-mongering, disinformation, and misrepresentation in the mass media (Islam et al. 2013, ch. 5). Of course, for those readers approaching the book in an antagonistic manner, provided that you read the book in its entirety, you will notice that there remains an open challenge: if you indeed believe that the answer to objective truth can be found in the western political philosophical tradition, I wait for your refutation of the arguments I will put forth in this book.

Economist—philosophers Gary Zatzman and Rafiqul Islam summarize the effects of the information-age on knowledge as such, summarizing its main political and psychological effects:

“In what way, then, can it be asserted that the nature of this era in history has changed? The ‘information age’ has opened possibilities and prospects for people to rediscover to power of their own agency, their collective power to say “No!” and prevent imposition of what which goes against the interests of society as a whole, the long-term interests of everyone living today on this planet and that of future generations”
(Zatzman and Islam 2007, 115).

This would prove to be true in the years following the book; the Arab spring, political mobilization surrounding the ‘occupy’ and ‘99%’ movements, and so on. In the realm of the scholarly world, as we know, one could mark the beginning of this millennia—with its rapid sharing and transferring of knowledge and ideas—as being an age of ‘questioning’—questioning the very existence of what some consider fundamental truisms. For example, the very existence of human rights, international legal norms, the coexistence amongst people of different world-views and religions, and so on. These are nothing new philosophically speaking, but it is now that people are beginning

to ask themselves such questions. These questions, and answers alike to the theme of cosmopolitanism, historically come as a reaction to a material problem faced in the world, at most of the time. From Stoic philosophy being a reaction to the ‘crisis of the polis’ (Anheier and Toepler 2009, 586), to what many argue is our current situation; globalization and its following interaction, new limits (or ‘no limits’) of modern warfare, a questioning of the state system and national identity, and related phenomena bombarded at globalized people every day. Each time we in the west question ourselves, our existence and political place in the world, we create new philosophies and find new ways to ground ourselves so as to assume a new moral philosophy. Some of these can be considered ‘dialectical’ philosophies—philosophies, which develop from new conditions and the development of the intellect—and some can be considered ‘recurring’ philosophies, those which recur as an idea once faced with a similar crisis. Whether it is due to strictly empirical or material occurrences, or even perhaps a function of Georg Friedrich Hegel’s (1770-1831) model of idealistic dialectic,¹ there is no doubting that philosophy has developed over time. In Chapter 2, I argue that the dialectic that many tout as being ‘development’ and ‘progress’ is actually a down-spiralling dialectic; a degeneration.

Political philosophy has created new schools across time and space, and that each of those philosophies bases their theories upon fundamental premises which are different in nature—which ground themselves in different occurrences or perceived occurrences. For example, it is no mystery that Stoic philosophy grounds its existence in the fundamental philosophical assumption of universal orderliness, which in turn requires a sustainer of this orderliness, the Greek God, Zeus. On the other hand, taking a very different approach, utilitarian philosophy certainly does not ground itself in the assumption of an orderly universe, the existence of god, or the like. However, it still grounds itself in a fundamental assumption of perceived occurrence. Utilitarian philosophy is grounded in the assumption of the universal existence of

¹ For general information on the idealistic dialectical philosophy of Georg W. Hegel, see the following works: Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *The philosophy of right* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2015); Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Arnold Vincent Miller, *Phenomenology of spirit* (Motilal Banarsidass Publications, 1998). Well-written second-hand sources include: David Rose, *Hegel's' Philosophy of Right': A Reader's Guide* (London: A&C Black, 2007); Paul Franco, *Hegel's philosophy of freedom* (Yale University Press, 2002); Martin Heidegger, Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly, *Hegel's phenomenology of spirit* (Indiana University Press, 1994).

human 'happiness'² and 'pain', that these two things are respectively 'good' and 'bad', and that the potential of these two forces should direct our actions.

Because forces like globalization, especially the intellectual forces of the information age³ everybody is questioning that they want to believe in, what assumptions they believe in, and hence, what philosophies they adhere to. This book will do just that; question the philosophies' logic based on the logic of the assumptions. Hence, the first part of this book (Chapters 3-5) will consist of a high level of skepticism and questioning. One might hear two common recurring phrases or themes in such discussions:

-“Said who?”

-“Why?”

Such phrases, of course, are classically understood as dialectical tools used to develop and further understand a body of knowledge (Islam et al. 2012). Although it may seem repetitive, the fact of the matter is that this is because arguments advanced in favour of philosophies often resemble each other. Even if the substance of the philosophies are different—say, natural rights theory and utilitarianism—, the grounds used to justify the existence of the philosophy as a 'right' philosophy are often very similar. It may indeed seem reductionist, but again note that reductionism is key to understanding the bare basics of the theories: the only way to categorically deny a theory is by questioning its basic and fundamental premises.

Another recurring and important topic for the philosophical framework of this book is the concept of Eurocentrism and failed universality. History teaches us that these two concepts often overlap. Countless numbers of philosophies and religious individuals have attempted to convince the world that

²The concept of 'pleasure' or 'happiness' as a dictator of moral policy takes different forms depending on the various types of utilitarianism. Whereas some (i.e. Mill) consider intellectual pleasures higher than physical ones, others (i.e. Bentham) do not. Chapter 5 discusses and offers a critique of the various types of utilitarian philosophy.

³Islam et al (2012, ch. 2) discusses the significance of the information age on cognition. Despite its benefits of delivering high quality information, it is also a potential source of mass disinformation. Furthermore, the major influx of facts and opinions across the world created a knowledge vacuum that led to the existence of questioning local and cultural truisms. For this reason, the information age is of significance to our discussion.

their philosophy is the ultimate, objective, and absolutely true philosophy.⁴ In the western philosophical tradition, much of this has been a failure of the west in thinking of itself as a standard. As is often surpassingly ignored by mainstream philosophy (Hobson 2012), this very large, gaping hole in any philosophical tradition should otherwise be obvious to the individual. As philosopher Gary M. Zatzman puts it, the entire assault against objective ethics “*at this time is Eurocentrism pure and simple...Eurocentrism provides the gauze in which all the basically racist dismissal of all things Eastern is wrapped.*” As Alasdair McIntyre has shed light on, the very fact that western philosophy originated in the west puts doubts upon the authentic universality of western philosophies. The very idea that one part of the world—whether people, money, geography, etc. separate it—can claim universality towards the other side of the world, regardless of the intention of the person making the claim, casts doubt upon the legitimacy of such a philosophy. It is only in the information age that we can now analyze how other peoples and civilizations may think of the moral principles that Europe once developed without regard for others. Discussed mainly in Chapter 4, I argue that even self-proclaimed non-Eurocentric philosophers are unable to defend their claims of universality. This entails a comparison to different civilizations and their respective modes of thinking.

The concept of Eurocentrism itself, however, does not accurately describe the logical fallacy that Eurocentrism poses. Eurocentrism is the result of a *cognitive* ill, which any individual—European or otherwise—may fall into. In my discussions on logic and cognition (Islam et al 2012), my colleagues and I highlight the fact that cognition malfunctions when one fails to examine the holistic reality of a phenomenon, and that this occurs for one of two reasons. Either, (a) the observer has an insufficient amount of information and context to understand what (s)he is observing, and (b) the person desires to view the information presented to him/her through a scope of their choice, rather than on the basis of objectivity. The problem in point (b) occurs once the observer decides a priori to view phenomenon through a particular of observance. As a relevant example, Edward Said’s famous criticism of Europe’s study of the so-

⁴ People have tried to create objective philosophies: Or at least that the theory they propose to discover more knowledge is true. Every theory must have some sort of proposition attached to it. In order for a philosophy to contain ethical material, it must make an injunction as to what is right or wrong. Some philosophies purpose the existence of pure reason or some form used to dictate morals and laws (for example: Aquinas [1975/1259-65], Kant [1965/1787]). Other believe their ethical models can be used as a pathway to discover future truth. See for example: John Stewart Mill, *On Liberty* (Kitchener: Batoche Books, 2001 [1859]); John Stewart Mill, *On Utilitarianism* (Kitchener: Batoche Books, 2001 [1863]).

called 'orient' comes to mind. Said (2007 [1978]) points out that because the observers—the scholars—enter the realm of empirical study viewing their data from a lens of preconceived notions of the orient, that their subsequent findings are unsurprisingly not solid empirical facts, but rather, what the scholar desired to see in the first place. In other words, because of the ideas in the head of the observer, the observed phenomenon fit into these ideas s/he had already imagined, and therefore, the result does not differ from those preconceived notions.

Amongst Said's favourite quotes is that of Karl Marx, wherein he states, "*They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented*" (Ibid, 335). When somebody desires to view something through a certain lens, and at the same time when this person has a lack of knowledge (or desire to have knowledge about) non-European cultures, both cognitive malfunctions (a) and (b) occur, and the cognition process is flawed. It is through using this understanding of logic and empiricism that Eurocentric claims will be examined. It is important to view Eurocentrism as a cognitive ill.

From the backdrop of philosophy, it should be noted that I do not support a single philosophical tradition or ideology. Rather, I use one single, fundamental principle in my analysis: logic, which is based upon correct cognition. No, not some sort of 'pure reason' or even a notion of purified common sense as developed by enlightenment and post-enlightenment thinkers. We are thinking about the basic, perhaps Aristotelian, notion of logic. For instance, the most basic statement might be; "Something cannot be A and not A at the same time." In Aristotle's (2013, 69) words, it is not possible "*for the same thing to be present and not present at the same time.*" This basic principle will be used to judge the *internal* logical consistency of a given argument. If we once again take utilitarianism as an example, pointing out the fact that it Utilitarian philosophy cannot be universal due to the empirically provable high level of subjectivity amongst individuals would be an example at showing that something cannot be subjective, and universal at the same time. In other words, something cannot be 'A' (universal), and 'not A' (non-universal, subjective and differing), at the same time.

Regarding the application of logic, another logical form of analysis used is that similar to the principle of cause-and-effect leading Aristotle to believe that if all actions needed another action to exist, that the universe and its actions must exist because of the idea of an 'unmoved mover' (Aristotle 1930, book VIII sect. 1-2). I do not intend to claim the existence of an unmoved-mover, but to adopt the ideological version of this logic. That is, to claim that in order for a philosophy or claim of truth to be true, it must derive from a previous source of truth (Islam et al. 2013, ch. 3). For example, if someone were to claim something as simple as, "My name is A", if the statement is true,

it must derive from a source of absolute truth. In this basic case, it might be a birth certificate. Adopting this logic means that I can question the grounds of philosophies, and categorically deny their validity based on the fact that they cannot claim a source for what they claim to be true. Technically speaking, I do indeed believe that all sources of truth must be from a source of absolute (unchanging, constant) truth. In my historical examination of political philosophy, I will show how political thought, with time, became less and less able to claim a foothold in the notion of absolute truth. So, whereas the first part of the book may resemble the skepticism, pessimism, and perhaps even the moral relativist tendencies of R.M. Hare and others, the book ends on a more-or-less positive, constructivist tone urging optimists and seekers of knowledge to focus their scholarly evaluation towards a new body of perspective knowledge.

On the note of logic and examination, one should understand the need for differentiating between two distinct types of arguments I make against theories examined in the following chapters. Firstly, there is a categorical rejection of philosophies and ideologies based on a discussed, pre-determined criterion for eligibility to claim 'absolute truth'. That is, if a philosophy fails to produce any form of evidence suggesting that their argument is objective, absolute, and/or at least true, this philosophy is categorically disqualified as a contender for truth and objectivity. Secondly, another type of examination—what I call the “lower plain” of evaluation, as opposed to the categorical objection being the “higher plain” of evaluation—is the argument(s) made against the content of the theory, i.e. a pointing out of the logical fallacies and philosophical/cognitive wrongs of the arguments. One can compare this to a professor grading a test score; some tests may be categorically rejected due to pre-determined criteria for test eligibility (i.e. course registration, not being caught cheating); this is rejection based on the “higher plain” of deduction. When the professor, in fact, examines the test’s questions and grades them, this is deduction or evaluation being done on the “lower plain” of evaluation. Figure 1.1 highlights this evaluation scheme. Note that in the scheme, I have also added—but have chosen to categorically deny—certain philosophies that claim such subjectivity exists that it is literally impossible to even consider whether or not philosophies can be evaluated. For example, Hindu followers of *Vallabhacharya's* theosophy believe that the entire universe essentially comprises of the God Krishna in multiplicity and different forms (Bryant 2007, 479). Similarly, some Buddhists believe that the entire universe is basically our perception of Buddha. It is impossible to argue or polemicize with individuals using such logic, and hence, I will not evaluate them.

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