

Heidegger on the Way
from Onto-Historical Ethnocentrism
to East-West Dialogue

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Some scholars may still wish to debate whether Heidegger was the greatest Western philosopher of the twentieth century. Most all will agree, however, that among those who make the short list for this distinction, Heidegger not only committed the most egregious political error but also, at least in the 1930s, was the most stubbornly ethnocentric thinker of the lot. Heidegger often asserted that Germany, as “the land of poets and thinkers,” had a central world-historical role to play in any possible recovery from the technological nihilism of the modern epoch.

And yet, it is also arguably the case that, among the greatest of twentieth-century Western philosophers, Heidegger demonstrated the most sincere and sustained interest in clearing the way for a radical dialogue with East Asian thought.¹ East Asian students and scholars were among the first to show interest in his work, and he reciprocated by conversing with them and reading translations of texts from the Daoist and Zen traditions in particular. “From a Conversation on Language: Between a Japanese and an Inquirer [*Aus einem Gespräch von der Sprache. Zwischen einem Japaner und einem Fragenden*]” (GA 12: 79-146/OWL 1-54,

tm) is not only a noteworthy indication of this interest, it is also widely acknowledged as one of his most important texts.

The ensuing question that I wish to pursue in this article is this: How are Heidegger's trenchant ethnocentrism and his profound interest in East-West dialogue related? While neither can be wholly confined to one or another period in his thought, I will show how, starting in the late 1930s, Heidegger begins to recover from the most ethnocentric period of his thought, and how he starts thinking of his reflections on the Western history of being as a preparation for what in 1953 he came to call "the inevitable dialogue with the East Asian world [*das unausweichliche Gespräch mit der ostasiatischen Welt*]" (GA 7: 41/QCT 158).

ONTO-HISTORICAL ETHNOCENTRISM: 1930S AND BEYOND

The recently published Black Notebooks further reveal *both* the depth of Heidegger's entanglement with National Socialism in 1933–34 – with his attempt to develop a "metaphysics of Dasein" into a "metapolitics 'of' the historical people [*Metapolitik 'des' geschichtlichen Volkes*]" (GA 94: 124/91, em; see also 115–16/85)² – and the intensity of his efforts to disentangle his own unrealized vision of a "spiritual National Socialism [*geistigen Nationalsozialismus*]" (GA 94: 136/99) from the ruling "vulgar National Socialism [*Vulgärnationalsozialismus*]" with its "brainless references . . . to Hitler's *Mein Kampf*" (GA 94: 142/104, tm). Heidegger soon comes to identify the latter with a "barbarian principle" (GA 94: 194/142, tm), and to call his own 1933 Rectoral Address a "little interlude of a great error" (GA 94: 198/145, tm; see also GA 95: 18, 408; GA 97: 98–99, 258). By the end of the war, Heidegger bemoans what he calls "a blinded leading-astray of our own people" (GA 77: 206/133). Throughout his notebooks, as elsewhere, Heidegger consistently criticizes in particular the biological racism of Nazi ideologues (see for example GA 94: 143/105, 157/115, 364/266, 478/347; GA 95: 22–23, 32; GA 96: 48; see also GA 36/37: 209–12/159–61; GA 65: 18–19/17; GA 45: 143/124; and GA 69: 70–71/61).³

Strangely and disturbingly, however, an infusion of anti-Semitic thoughts into his narrative of the decline of the (Western) history of

being into rootlessness (*Bodenlosigkeit*) and machination (*Machenschaft*) first occurs in the *Black Notebooks* in 1938 (GA 95: 97),⁴ several years after he had distanced himself from the actual Nazi movement, and continues into the mid-1940s (see esp. GA 95: 326, 339; GA 96: 46–47, 56–57, 133, 243, 261–62; GA 97: 20, 159).⁵ The recent discussions of the *Black Notebooks* have been rather restrictively focused on a dozen or so passages containing disparaging remarks about Jews and “*Judentum*.”⁶ This critical focus is understandable, of course, given longstanding debates regarding how to view the relation between Heidegger’s thought and his affiliation with Nazism, and given the absence heretofore of hardly any evidence that the anti-Semitism he occasionally displayed in personal and professional correspondence, not to mention in his actions as rector, played a role in Heidegger’s thought itself.⁷

Although this new evidence demonstrates a more entwined relation between Heidegger’s anti-Semitism and aspects of his thought than previously known, I think it would go too far to say that what Peter Trawny aptly calls a *seinsgeschichtlicher Antisemitismus* inextricably contaminates (*kontaminiert*) the core of all Heidegger’s thinking during these years, much less his thought before and after this time period.⁸ It seems to me more apt to say that in these passages from the *Black Notebooks* Heidegger experimented with linking his critique of the rootlessness, machination, and technological calculation that for him defines Western modernity to certain anti-Semitic stereotypes, tropes, and conspiracy theories that pervaded not just Nazi Germany but also much of the Western world at the time. To be sure, this was a reckless and culpable experiment, especially given what we know of the ghastly outcome of anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany. And it is difficult to fathom why Heidegger allowed these passages to be published, without comment, as part of his *Gesamtausgabe*. For the historical record, perhaps, but then why not also, for a more complete historical record, clarify whether and why he ceased to hold these views after a certain date? In any case, as lamentable and condemnable as the *seinsgeschichtlicher Antisemitismus* expressed in these passages is, it is far from being

the keystone of Heidegger's thought-path as a whole – and so not the Achilles' heel some polemicists would hope for.

However, a stronger case *can* be made against an ethnocentrism (or *Volk*-centrism) that pervades Heidegger's thinking more deeply, broadly, and for a longer period of time. What Trawny calls “the narrative of a German salvation of the Occident [*das Narrativ einer deutschen Rettung des Abendlandes*]”⁹ might well be dubbed a *seinsgeschichtlicher Ethnozentrismus*, that is to say, an onto-historical ethnocentrism.

In the summer semester of 1933, Heidegger opens his first lecture course as the first Nazi rector of Freiburg University with the claim: “The German people [*Volk*] is now passing through a moment of historical greatness” (GA 36/37: 3/3). He goes on to argue that because the “ethnicity [*Stammesart*] and language” of the ancient “Greek people [*Volk*]” have “the same provenance as ours,” there is a special philosophical and “spiritual-political mission of the German people [*Volk*]” (GA 36/37: 4-6/4-5).¹⁰ To be sure, Heidegger stepped down from his official position as the rector of Freiburg University after only a year in office (1933-34), and he became increasingly critical of Nazi politics from then on. Nevertheless, he continued to assert that there is a special world-historical role to be played by the Germans as “the people of poets and thinkers [*das Volk der Dichter und Denker*].” In a notebook entry from the early 1930s, Heidegger confidently proclaims: “The German alone can poetize and say being in an originally new manner [*Der Deutsche allein kann das Sein ursprünglich neu dichten und sagen*]” (GA 94: 27/21, tm). In an entry from the mid-1940s, Heidegger calls the Germans “the shepherds in the Occident [*das Hirtentum im Abendland*]” (GA 97: 51). And in a lecture course from 1943 he claims that “world-historical reflection can come only from the Germans, provided that they find and preserve ‘the German’” (GA 55: 123).

Even when the Germans lose the war, Heidegger continues to assert that it is they, and they alone, who can save the Occident and indeed the entire Europeanizing world. At the end of the third and last of the *Country Path Conversations* (*Feldweg-Gespräche*), completed on 8 May, 1945, Heidegger writes of this date: “On the day the world celebrated

its victory, without yet recognizing that already for centuries it has been defeated by its own rebellious uprising” (GA 77: 240/157). “The War decides nothing,” he adds in a note; the devastation it entailed is just a surface phenomenon of the nihilistic “desertification” (*Verwüstung*) that is eating away at the heart of the Occident, that is to say, of the “abandonment of being” (*Seynsverlassenheit*) that corresponds to our own “uprising and refusal of attention to the belongingness in beyng” (GA 77: 242, 244/159, 160). The real decision, Heidegger tells us, is “whether the *Germans* as the central heart of the Occident fail in the face of their historically destined assignment and *become* the victim of *foreign ideas*” (GA 77: 244/160). “Nationalism” is in fact one of the “foreign ideas” – based as it is on “what is naturally given,” and thus on the biological and racial – that Heidegger’s *Germans* must reject if they are to recover their true spiritual essence as the people of poets and thinkers that “waits” in attentive correspondence with being (GA 77: 232–36/151–54).

Being or “beyng” (*Seyn*), in contrast to all the beings (*Seienden*) we normally concern ourselves with, in contrast, that is to say, to all the “necessities” of life with which we are generally preoccupied, is “the unnecessary” (*das Unnötige*). Being (or beyng) is not one being among other beings, but rather the appropriating event (*Ereignis*) that first opens up a world and so bestows meaning on beings and their relations. This bestowal, however, requires us as responsive recipients: “The unnecessary requires us and our essence like the sound ... requires the instrument which gives it off” (GA 77: 237/155). *Sein* requires *Dasein* and, in particular it seems, *German Dasein*. We *Germans*, Heidegger’s character says near the end of the third conversation, “must learn to know the necessity of the unnecessary and, as learners, teach it to other peoples” (GA 77: 237/155). The onto-historical ethnocentrism that pervades much of Heidegger’s thinking, especially during this period, is in plain view here.

And yet, and yet ... the third conversation does not quite end there. Rather, it – and thus the entire collection of *Country Path Conversations* – ends by quoting “a short conversation between two thinkers” from a

“historiological account of Chinese philosophy,”¹¹ a conversation, moreover, that concerns precisely “the necessity of the unnecessary” (GA 77: 239/156). Evidently, the “kindred ones” who will share “the burden of the teaching that learns” may after all include non-Germans and, specifically, East Asians. This remarkable reference to a passage from the Daoist classic *Zhuangzi* at the end of *Country Path Conversations*, and at the end of the war, is not, I think, an isolated aberration on Heidegger’s otherwise ethnocentric path of thought. Rather, it bears witness to a significant countermovement *within* that path, a movement toward what he finally comes to call “the inevitable dialogue with the East Asian world” (GA 7: 41/QCT 158). It is this aspect of Heidegger’s thought-path – this movement beyond onto-historical ethnocentrism toward opening up a radically intertraditional dialogue with East Asia – that I wish to pursue.¹²

TOWARD THE INEVITABLE DIALOGUE WITH THE EASTERN WORLD

Heidegger’s interest in East Asia dates back to the 1920s, when a number of Japanese students and young scholars, including Tanabe Hajime and later Kuki Shūzō, studied with him in Freiburg and Marburg. At least by 1930 Heidegger was familiar with Martin Buber’s 1910 edition of the *Zhuangzi*, chapter 17 of which he once referenced in a conversation in order to elucidate our being-with others.¹³ In retrospect Heidegger expressed appreciation for the ability of the Japanese, as opposed to his fellow Europeans, to understand what he meant by “das Nichts” in his 1929 lecture “What is Metaphysics?”¹⁴

But in the mid-1930s, during Heidegger’s most ethnocentric period, he acknowledged no affinity for East Asian thought and he viewed “the Asiatic” (*das Asiatische*) in general as something that Europe needed to guard against. In a speech entitled “Europa und die deutsche Philosophie” that was given in Rome on April 8, 1936, Heidegger says that one of the conditions of the salvation of Europe is “the protection of the European peoples from the Asiatic [*die Bewahrung der europäischen Völker vor dem Asiatischen*].”¹⁵ In his Schelling lectures given the same year, Heidegger links the “Asiatic” with “the mythical” (*das Mythische*), and

claims that these were overcome by the Greek inception of philosophy (GA 42: 252/146; see also GA 39: 134/118).¹⁶ Still in 1941, in his *Black Notebooks*, Heidegger writes that *Abendland* (Occident), as opposed to *Europa* (Europe), is a “historical concept [*geschichtlicher Begriff*] which defines the essential history of the Germans and their provenance from out of the confrontation with the Oriental [*dem Morgenländischen*]” (GA 96: 274).¹⁷ References to East Asia are scarce in the notebooks, though on at least two occasions from the mid- to late 1930s he links China with a lack of genuine historicity as well as with technological machination and superficial “lived experience”: “*history ceases* and the Chinese realm of machination and lived-experience begins [*die Geschichte untergeht und das Chinesentum der Machenschaft und des Erlebens beginnt*]” (GA 94: 432/314 tm; see also 302/220).

However, starting in the late 1930s Heidegger’s respect for and interest in East Asia is rekindled. Let me recount a couple of episodes relating to Heidegger’s renewed interest in East Asian thought between 1937 and 1946. When Nishitani Keiji, the Zen thinker and Kyoto School philosopher, was studying in Freiburg between 1937 and 1939, he presented Heidegger with a copy of the first volume of D. T. Suzuki’s *Essays in Zen Buddhism*. It turned out Heidegger had already read and was eager to discuss this book. Nishitani recounted to Graham Parkes “how Heidegger had given him a ‘standing invitation’ to come to his house on Saturday afternoons to talk about Zen.”¹⁸ Nishitani also told Ban Kazunori that he had often been invited to the Heidegger residence, where he “explained quite a lot about the standpoint of Zen to Heidegger.” He even said that, after taking meticulous notes, “Heidegger would himself repeat these ideas in his lectures, only without mentioning Zen!”¹⁹

After meeting Heidegger in 1942, Paul Shih-yi Hsiao recalls having “now and then . . . handed him parts of [his] translation of the [*Daodejing*] into Italian,” and during the summer break of 1946, their plans to work on a collaborative translation of the *Daodejing* into German materialized when Hsiao “met [with Heidegger] regularly every Saturday in his cabin on top of Todtnauberg.”²⁰

Even though Heidegger's interest in East Asian thought was thus clearly on the rise since the end of the 1930s, a significant reference to it did not appear on the surface of his texts until 1945 when, in the final pages of *Country Path Conversations*, he quotes the *Zhuangzi*. But this conversation remained unpublished until 1995. Publicly, Heidegger broke the silence on his longstanding conversation with East Asians and East Asian thought with another text written in the form of a conversation. In the mid-1950s, occasioned by a visit from Tezuka Tomio, and on the basis of his conversations with numerous other Japanese scholars and philosophers over the years, Heidegger composed "From a Conversation on Language: Between a Japanese and an Inquirer" (GA 12: 79-146/OWL 1-54, tm). It is not difficult to surmise the need Heidegger felt to compose this particular text in the form of a dialogue; it is, after all, a dialogue concerned with the very possibility of dialogue between two radically different traditions, two radically different languages or "houses of being."

I would like to suggest a special connection between *Country Path Conversations* and "From a Conversation on Language." It is fitting that he chose to write these two texts in the form of conversations, since both texts evince the arc spanning the twin dialogical orientations of Heidegger's thinking.²¹ On the one hand, Heidegger clearly developed his thinking in dialogue with those whom he considered to be the great thinkers of the Western tradition, and especially with the Greeks. With the possible exception of Hegel, no other Western philosopher has so thoroughly engaged in a dialogue with his predecessors. On the other hand, as Rolf Elberfeld notes, "Heidegger is the first great European thinker . . . whose entire path of thought has been accompanied by dialogues with Asian philosophers."²² Indeed, on several occasions Heidegger himself suggested that his lifelong dialogue with the Western tradition is to be understood as a preparation for dialogue with East Asian thought. His hermeneutical engagements with the Western tradition were not meant to hermetically seal us up within it, but rather to open up the possibility of a more radical, originary, and perhaps ineptual dialogue with non-Western traditions, those of East Asia in

particular. To the organizers of the first conference held on this theme, in 1969 Heidegger wrote: “Again and again it has seemed urgent to me that a dialogue take place with the thinkers of what is to us the Eastern world.”²³ Yet, at the same time, this urgency is tempered by Heidegger’s insistence that “the dialogue with the Greek thinkers and their language ... remains for us the precondition of the inevitable dialogue with the East Asian world” (GA 7: 41/QCT 158). The step outward into dialogue with the East requires Westerners to first step back through a dialogue with the Greek origins of their own thinking. Heidegger never wavers from insisting on this precondition. Nevertheless, the step back through a dialogue with the Greeks increasingly comes to be seen as a step on the way to an inexorable East-West dialogue.

What I am calling the arc spanning the twin dialogical orientations of Heidegger’s thinking – the arc that extends back to the Greeks and then over to East Asia – is clearly at issue in “From a Conversation on Language between a Japanese and an Inquirer.” Let me suggest how it can also be found expressed in *Country Path Conversations*. All three of the conversations that make up this book reflect on the Western provenance of the problem of willful technological thinking. The first conversation aims to retrieve and rethink a one-word fragment from Heraclitus, but in the background can be discerned the unmistakable influence of the *Daodejing*.²⁴ The second conversation ends with the arrival of an enigmatic “guest,” who, on account of his ability to listen “with such courteous anticipation,” is said to be “the guest *par excellence*” (GA 77: 180/117). The guest is said to have brought a picture to the Tower Warden (GA 77: 169/109), a picture that “unsettles” the Teacher as something “wondrous” to be “solved,” but which the Tower Warden says is something “strange” that “hints back into itself” (GA 77: 163–64/105–6; 188/122). Is this perhaps a Japanese guest, who brought with him a picture that shows how “the ruling world-picture of the natural sciences and technology” (GA 77: 193/126) has spread from Europe across the globe? Or does the picture from Japan perhaps intimate rather a non-technological form of art? Or, as suggested by Heidegger’s later comments on Kurosawa’s 1950 film *Rashōmon* in

“From a Conversation on Language” (GA 12: 99/OWL 16), might it even be a picture from Japan that does both at once? In any case, surmising that the guest is from East Asia is enhanced by the fact that the third conversation ends with the Older Man retelling a story from the Daoist classic *Zhuangzi* to help illuminate the “necessity of the unnecessary” (GA 77: 239/156). In sum, we might venture to interpret the course of these three conversations as demonstrating a step back through the Western tradition that enables a step outward toward dialogue with East Asian traditions.

LESSONS AND LIMITS OF HÖLDERLIN’S HOMECOMING THROUGH THE FOREIGN

Hölderlin plays a crucial role in Heidegger’s Greco-Germanic *Seinsgeschichte*, and thus in the onto-historically ethnocentric current of this thought-path; he is the poet of poets who, in dialogue with the thinker, will purportedly show Germans, and hence Westerners, and hence the whole world, how to leap into another inception beyond the technological end of the Western history of metaphysics.²⁵ What role does he play in that other current of Heidegger’s thought-path that we have been pursuing, which ultimately leads outward toward an intertraditional dialogue with East Asia? To begin with, it was Hölderlin who taught Heidegger that “the free use of one’s own [*der freie Ge-brauch des Eigenen*]” becomes possible only by way of an encounter with the foreign. Heidegger returns time and again to Hölderlin’s letter to his friend Böhlendorff, dated 4 December 1801, in which he says that in order for the Germans to learn to freely use what is proper to them, namely “the clarity of presentation [*die Klarheit der Darstellung*],” they must learn what is natural not to them but to the Greeks, namely “the fire from heaven [*das Feuer vom Himmel*]” or “holy pathos” (GA 39: 290-94/261-67; GA 52: 188-91; GA 53: 168-70/134-70; GA 4: 86-100/110-22).

Yet it is questionable whether Heidegger’s reading of the poetic project sketched in Hölderlin’s letter provides a path toward a genuine intertraditional dialogue, and especially one that would exceed

the orbit of the Greco-Germanic European tradition. Let me be clear that I am concerned here with *Heidegger's reading* of Hölderlin. It has been pointed out that Heidegger largely ignores Hölderlin's references to Egypt and to India.²⁶ In the 1947 "Letter on 'Humanism,'" Heidegger himself confesses that "we have still scarcely begun to think the mysterious relations to the East that have come to word in Hölderlin's poetry" (GA 9: 338/257). In his readings of Hölderlin, Heidegger is concerned with going only as far East as Greece – and of going to Greece only for sake of enabling a true homecoming to Germany. Heidegger's first lecture course on Hölderlin in 1934/35 ends with a reflection on Hölderlin's 1801 letter to Böhlendorff, and the entire lecture course is concluded by citing again what is for Heidegger the key point: "Nothing is more difficult for us to learn than the free use of the national" (GA 39: 294/267). In his 1943 essay "Andenken," he again stresses: "the love for what is not like home, purely for the sake of becoming at home in what is one's own, is the essential law of destiny by which the poet is sent into the foundation of the history of the 'fatherland'" (GA 4: 87/111–12).

The journey to the foreign is thus undertaken for the sake of "becoming at home in what is one's own," for the sake of learning "the free use of one's own." In a footnote, Heidegger acknowledges the question of whether the "law of historicity [*das Gesetz der Geschichtlichkeit*]" poetized by Hölderlin – the law according to which "spirit is not at home at the beginning" and so needs to pass through "colony" in order to appropriate its own homeland – is clarified or obscured by reference to "the unconditional subjectivity of the German absolute metaphysics of [Hölderlin's friends] Schelling and Hegel, according to whose doctrine the very being-in-itself of spirit requires its return to itself, which in turn presupposes its being-outside-itself" (GA 4: 90n/173n2). While Heidegger presumably wants to argue that drawing this connection obscures rather than clarifies Hölderlin's thought, he evades or postpones making this argument and merely says that this "question is best left for further reflection" (GA 4: 90n/173n2); Heidegger also raises, but barely responds to, this question in GA 53: 158/126–27. We are reminded of a comment by Gadamer, who was otherwise much more sympathetic

to Hegel than was Heidegger: “Hegel’s dialectic [of a self-othering and self-recuperating spirit] is a monologue” rather than a dialogue, which requires a genuine openness to what the other has to say.²⁷

The question is whether the “law of historicity” that Heidegger gleans from his reading of Hölderlin is the only legitimate manner of intercultural dialogue. Is there not rather a whole spectrum of legitimate ways in which someone can relate to two or more cultures, languages, and traditions? Heidegger’s reading of Hölderlin provides us with one possibility, a possibility that is in some respects quite edifying and compelling, but in other respects rather questionable. Specifically, we need to critically ask whether Heidegger’s reading of Hölderlin provides a model for intercultural or intertraditional dialogue that is open to a creative *transformation* of one’s horizons, or whether it only ever sees the journey into the foreign as a way of distancing oneself from one’s native land so that, having supplemented one’s natural endowment by learning from the foreign, one can then proceed to the ultimate aim of returning home capable of a “free use of one’s own.” What seems problematic to me is, first of all, that what is “one’s own” supposedly remains a given: the parameters of what is native and what is foreign are seen as fixed; and secondly, that the foreign is treated as “colony.” Hölderlin writes: “Colony and bold forgetting are what the spirit loves [*Kolonie liebt, und tapfer Vergessen der Geist*]” (GA 4: 90/114, tm). But, I submit, the forgetting of the homeland is not yet bold enough as long as it loves the foreign land only as “colony.”

It would seem, at least, that the other land is not respected as the land of the Other insofar as it is treated as “colony.” Moreover, could not an initially foreign land become the site of a new homestead, the site of a new individual beginning or even the site of another historical inception for a community? At the other end of the spectrum from homecoming through the foreign, emigration/immigration – such that what was once a foreign land becomes not a colony, but a new home – should not be ruled out of the range of possible outcomes of an encounter with another land and its initially foreign tradition. Yet it seems

that emigration/immigration would be outlawed according to “the law of historicity” Heidegger’s gleans from his reading of Hölderlin.

Heidegger says that what Hölderlin teaches us (and by “us” is meant here specifically, though not only, the Germans of 1942) is first of all that “the relation to one’s own is never a mere self-assured affirmation of the so-called ‘natural’ or ‘organic’” (GA 53: 179/143). It is only by way of journeying to the foreign and, moreover, harboring the foreign as “guest,” that is, as “the presence of the unhomely in the homely,” that the homeland can be appropriated. “The guest makes the thinking of the homely into a steadfast remembrance of the journeying to the foreign (to ‘colony’). The appropriation of one’s own is only as the encounter and guest-like dialogue with the foreign” (GA 53: 177/142). This is surely a significant critique of actual Nazism, and a bold teaching for Heidegger to deliver in this lecture course of 1942. We still have much to learn from it today. But it is not clear that Hölderlin, much less Heidegger, has broken free of the orbit of an always self-returning dialectic of spirit, insofar as the foreign would be treated as colony, and as a means for homecoming, and furthermore insofar as Greece is taken as the inception of the tradition to which Germany belongs, so that the journey that brings this guest back home would be a recuperation of one’s own estranged origin more than an encounter with a radical other.²⁸ All the more significant, therefore, are the implications of interpreting the guest who arrives at the end of the second of the *Country Path Conversations* as an East Asian. The journey to, and the welcoming of a guest from, a land outside the orbit of the Western tradition introduces, to be sure, a more enigmatic set of questions; but it also inaugurates a more radical and potentially more radically transformative kind of intertraditional dialogue.

HESITANT OPENINGS TO RADICAL EAST-WEST DIALOGUE

Heidegger sometimes advances toward and sometimes steps back, or perhaps shrinks back, from “the inevitable dialogue with the East Asian World” – and sometimes in the same text. In the 1966 *Spiegel* interview, for example, moments after having said, “and who of us

can decide whether one day in Russia and in China ancient traditions of a 'thinking' will awaken which will help enable human being to have a free relationship to the technical world" (GA 16: 677/MHNS 61), Heidegger pulls back and proclaims that "any reversal of the modern technological world can only occur from out of the same location in which it arose, and . . . cannot happen by means of an adoption of Zen Buddhism or other Eastern experiences of the world" (GA 16: 679/MHNS 62). He then goes on to say that "When [the French] begin to think, they speak German," and affirms that the Germans have a special task in the transformation of thinking "in the sense of the dialogue with Hölderlin" (GA 16: 679/MHNS 63).

In the 1947 "Letter on 'Humanism,'" however, Heidegger says that when he spoke of the "homeland" at issue in Hölderlin's elegy "Homecoming," this is not a matter of patriotism or nationalism, in fact it is not so much about returning to Germany as it is about returning to the West. Furthermore,

even the West is not thought regionally as the Occident in contrast to the Orient, nor merely as Europe, but rather world-historically out of nearness to the source [*Nähe zum Ursprung*]. . . . "German" is not spoken to the world so that the world might be reformed through the German essence; rather, it is spoken to the Germans so that from a destinal belongingness to other peoples they might become world-historical along with them. (GA 9: 338/257)

In the space of the ellipses of this quote is where Heidegger says that "we have still scarcely begun to think the mysterious relations to the East that have come to word in Hölderlin's poetry." The question is, insofar as Eastern nations belong to the world but not to the West, how they might become world-historical along with the nations of the West. Presumably they have their own ways of dwelling "near to the source." Heidegger seems to recognize this in his 1959 lecture "Hölderlin's Earth

and Heaven,” where he says that the humble Occidental present of the great Greek inception

can no longer remain in its Occidental isolation. It is opening itself to the few other great inceptions which belong, with what is proper to them, in the selfsame of the inception of the in-finite relationship in which the earth is contained. (GA 4: 177/201)²⁹

In a foreword written for the Japanese translation of one of his essays in 1968, two years after his wavering in the *Spiegel* interview, Heidegger affirmed that a dialogue between a “transformed European thinking” and Eastern thinking “can assist in the endeavor to save the essence of the human from the threat of an extreme technical calculation and manipulation of human Dasein” (GA 16: 695). And so, the inevitable and even urgent dialogue with the East Asian world would, in the end, play a world-historical role in the turning from the *Ge-stell* to a more authentically human dwelling near the source.

EAST-WEST DIALOGUE WITHIN THE MONOLOGUE OF LANGUAGE

Yet this returns us to the most vexing question: How would such a radical East-West dialogue be hermeneutically possible? Insofar as, according to Heidegger, it is the kinship between the German and Greek languages, along with the entire legacy of the Greek inception of metaphysics, that allows the journey (back) into the (semi-)foreign world of the Ancient Greeks, on what grounds would a dialogue with an utterly non-Western tradition such as those of China and Japan take place?

It is precisely this question that is addressed in Heidegger’s “From a Conversation on Language between a Japanese and an Inquirer,” which is what makes this such a crucial text in Heidegger’s corpus. In that conversation Heidegger says that, if “language is the house of being,” then “we Europeans presumably dwell in an entirely different house than do East Asians,” such that “a dialogue from house to house remains nearly impossible” (GA 12: 85/OWL 5, tm). A few pages later he tentatively speaks of the possibility that “European-Occidental saying

and East Asian saying” could “enter into dialogue in such a manner that something sings which wells up from a single source” (GA 12: 89/8).

Let us approach this possibility of radical intertraditional dialogue by way of starting with Heidegger’s interpretation of a line from Hölderlin on conversation (*Gespräch*). In an essay on Hölderlin from 1936, Heidegger interprets Hölderlin’s line “Since we have been a conversation” to mean that “the being of humans is grounded in language” and that “this properly occurs only in *conversation*” (GA 4: 38/56). The conversation at issue here is not only that between humans, but first and foremost that between the poets and the gods: “it is precisely in the naming of the gods and in the world becoming word that authentic conversation, which we ourselves are, consists” (GA 4: 40/58). Heidegger stresses that this “always also signifies we are *one* conversation.” “The unity of a conversation consists in the fact,” he goes on to say, “that in the essential word there is always manifest that one and the same on which we agree, on the basis of which we are united and so are authentically ourselves” (GA 4: 39/57). What provides this unity underlying the plurality of voices in a conversation? To “be *one* conversation and to be historical . . . belong together, and they are the same,” says Heidegger (GA 4: 39/57). Germans can speak to other Westerners, and they can converse with the texts of the ancient Greeks, because the Western tradition has unfolded as one long conversation. As Gadamer will later work out in his philosophical hermeneutics, we can understand the classical texts of the Western tradition ever anew because they belong to what he calls in the preface to *Truth and Method* “the historical tradition to which *we* all belong.”⁵⁰ The “we” here indicates the readership Gadamer has first and foremost in mind, namely, those who have inherited what he calls, later on in the book, the “single horizon”⁵¹ of the West. But how is it that “we” can read texts that don’t belong to the horizon of the Western tradition? How can we engage not just in an *intratraditional* dialogue but in an *intertraditional* dialogue?⁵² When Heidegger says that “essential thinkers always say the Same [*das Selbe*]” (GA 9: 363/275), does this include non-Western thinkers? What is the enigmatic selfsame region that would encompass such different

horizons? Is there a language that includes all the houses of being; is there a house that includes all the languages of being; is there a language of languages?

In the essay “The Way to Language,” Heidegger, taking up a suggestion from Novalis, claims that “language *is* monologue [*die Sprache* ist *Monolog*]” (GA 12: 254/OWL 134). After all that has been said of the conversational nature of language, what does it mean to say that language is monologue? As paradoxical as this seems, we recall that Heidegger thinks conversation, *Gespräch*, as a gathering of language, indeed as *logos* in the sense of “the gathering toward the originally all-unifying One” (GA 77: 224/145). We also recall that he says that “language speaks” (*die Sprache spricht*), and that humans speak only insofar as they listen and respond to this speaking of language (GA 12: 30/OWL 210). Now, it is important to point out that this monological speaking of language is not simply a unilateral dictation from above; it calls for a human response (*Entsprechung*). To say that language is monologue, Heidegger writes, means that it speaks “lonesomely” (*einsam*), but this implies: “the same in what unites that which belongs together.” What belongs together is the call of being and the response of the human, and together these are the monological conversation that is “the Saying” (*die Sage*) that is the speaking of language. “Saying is in need of being voiced in the word,” and so needs the human voice. “But the human is capable of speaking only insofar as he, belonging to Saying, listens to Saying, so that in resaying it he may be able to say a word” (GA 12: 254/OWL 134). And what first of all must be listened to is the way in which language speaks most primordially as “the peal of silence” (*das Geläut der Stille*).

What is appropriated, the essence of the human, is brought into its essence through language, it remains appropriated over to the essence of language and the peal of silence. This appropriating occurs [*Solches Ereignen ereignet sich*] insofar as the *essential unfolding* [*das Wesen*] of language, the peal of silence, *requires* mortals in order to sound out [*verlauten*] as the peal of

silence for the hearing [*Hören*] of mortals. Only insofar as humans belong [*gehören*] within the peal of silence are humans as mortals, in *their* manner, capable of vocalized speech [*verlautende Sprechen*]. (GA 12: 27–28/OWL 208, tm)

What is demanded of us humans is that “we bear in silence the appropriating, initiating movement in the essential unfolding of language [*die ereignende Be-wägung im Sprachwesen zu er-schweigen*] – and do so without talking about silence” (GA 12: 255/OWL 135, tm).

In a supplementary note to the first of the *Country Path Conversations*, Heidegger suggests that it is in “true conversation” that “the unspoken” could be “purely kept, heeded” (GA 77: 159/104). In “The Nature of Language” he writes: “Perhaps the mystery of mysteries of thoughtful Saying conceals itself in the word ‘way,’ *Dao*, if only we let these names return to what they leave unspoken” (GA 12: 187/OWL 92, tm). Putting these thoughts together, would it not be the case that it is precisely in radically intertraditional dialogue that the essential provenance of language could be most radically thought, or at least attended to in its silent withdrawal?

The engagement in the gathering of language that takes place in a true *Gespräch* “leads the speakers into the unspoken,” that is, into “*that* realm and abode about which they are speaking” (GA 8: 182/178). That realm in this case would be nothing less than the selfsame origin, that is, what the “Conversation on Language” calls the “single source” (*die einzige Quelle*) of Eastern as well as Western languages and thought (GA 12: 89/OWL 8). Heidegger’s “Conversation on Language” ends with a conversation on silence and the role it plays in genuine dialogue (GA 12: 144/OWL 52–53).⁵³ It suggests that a genuine dialogue – and especially one that would attempt to open up a conversation between different linguistic houses of being – must remain attentive to the depths of a shared silence. Only if the speakers learn to speak and listen to one another from out of, and back into, this silent origin of language, can they bridge the abyss that separates, and connects, the radically different traditions of East and West.⁵⁴

Notes

- 1 For an overview of Heidegger's interest in East Asian thought over the course of his career, with references to the principal literature on this relation, see my "Heidegger and Asian Philosophy," in *The Bloomsbury Companion to Heidegger*, eds. François Raffoul and Eric S. Nelson (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 459–71. For my previous treatment of Heidegger's comportment toward East-West dialogue, see my "Heidegger's Orientations: The Step Back on the Way to Dialogue with the East," in *Heidegger-Jahrbuch 7: Heidegger und das ostasiatische Denken*, eds. Alfred Denker et al. (Freiburg/Munich: Alber, 2013), 153–80. The present essay supplements the latter.
- 2 Unless otherwise noted, all translations in this paper are my own. Note that Chinese and Japanese names will generally be written in the order of family name first, except in cases where the Western order has been used for publications in Western languages.
- 3 Heidegger also rejects biologicistic, rather than metaphysical or ontological, interpretations of Nietzsche (GA 6.1: 465–74/N3 39–47; GA 6.2: 278/N3 231). However, the development of Heidegger's thinking about "race" during the 1930s is complicated and controversial. In his 1933 Rectorial Address, Heidegger writes that "the *spiritual world* of a *Volk* is not its cultural superstructure ... rather, it is the power that comes from preserving at the most profound level the forces that are rooted in the soil and blood of a *Volk*" (GA 16: 112/SA 33–34). In 1934 he acknowledges that "Blood and soil [*Blut und Boden*] are indeed necessary and powerful," even if his point is that "they are *not sufficient* conditions for the *Dasein* of a people [*Volk*]" (GA 36/37: 263/201; see also GA 38: 65–68, 153–57/57–59, 131–34). More essential than the givenness, or "thrownness," of blood, soil, and biological race, claims Heidegger, is how a people "projects" itself through knowledge and spirit (see also GA 94: 189; GA 95: 339; GA 65: 42–43/35). Although written before the publication of the *Black Notebooks*, the

following articles by Robert Bernasconi are insightful critical treatments of Heidegger and the problem of racism: “Heidegger’s Alleged Challenge to the Nazi Conceptions of Race,” in *Appropriating Heidegger*, ed. J. Faulconer and M. Wrathall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 50–67; “Race and Earth in Heidegger’s Thinking During the Late 1930s,” *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 48: 1 (2010): 49–66. Bernasconi compellingly argues that “Heidegger’s efforts at this time [of the mid-1930s] were not directed to excluding ‘the racial element,’ but rather to attacking the idea that race was primary” (“Heidegger’s Alleged Challenge,” 52). In *Besinnung* (1938–39), Heidegger writes that “history alone endows a people with national cohesion and distinctness of its ownmost. ‘Space’ and ‘land,’ climate and blood, never have the power to shape nor the will to cohere” (GA 66: 167/145; see also GA 65: 399/316). As Bernasconi notes, “this is a significant step beyond calling blood and soil a necessary but not sufficient condition of the Dasein of a *Volk*” (“Race and Earth,” 60), even if it still leaves the problems accruing to an historical ethnocentrism unresolved.

- 4 As Peter Trawny points out, however, already in the winter semester of 1933/34, according to the seminar protocol, Heidegger had remarked that “the nature of our German space” would “perhaps never at all become disclosed to Semitic nomads”; Peter Trawny, *Heidegger and the Myth of a Jewish World Conspiracy*, trans. Andrew J. Mitchell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 115. See “‘Über Wesen und Begriff von Natur, Geschichte und Staat.’ Übung aus dem Wintersemester 1933/34“ in Alfred Denker and Holger Zaborowski (eds.), *Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus. Dokumente. Heidegger-Jahrbuch 4* (Freiburg: Karl Alber, 2009), 82; *Nature, History, State: 1933–1934*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 56.
- 5 See also Heidegger’s provocative criticisms of Judeo-Christian monotheism in notebook entries from 1947–48 (GA 97: 357, 369, 409, 438).

- 6 In one passage in the *Black Notebooks*, Heidegger accuses Jews themselves of racism: “The Jews, *with their marked gift for calculation*, have already been ‘living’ for the longest time according to the principle of race, which is why they also defend themselves as vigorously as they can against its unrestricted application” (GA 96: 56, trans. Richard Polt). In what is undoubtedly the most disturbing anti-Semitic passage, Heidegger seems to characterize the impending Holocaust as a form of “self-annihilation”: “When what is ‘Jewish’ in the metaphysical sense combats what is Jewish, the high point of self-annihilation in history has been attained – supposing that the ‘Jewish’ has everywhere completely seized mastery, so that even the fight against ‘the Jewish,’ and it above all, becomes subject to it” (GA 97: 20, trans. Richard Polt). In other words, Heidegger accused the Nazis of being “metaphysically Jewish.” As Bernasconi points out, however, neither the accusation of Jewish racism nor this “idea of Jewish self-annihilation” was entirely unique to Heidegger: the former reiterates a long history of criticism of the Jewish claim to being a “chosen people,” and the latter was “another familiar trope within German anti-Semitism” that “can be traced back at least as far as Richard Wagner’s ‘Judaism in Music.’” See Bernasconi, “Another Eisenmenger? On the Alleged Originality and Clear Complexity of Heidegger’s Anti-Semitism,” forthcoming in *Heidegger’s “Black Notebooks”: Responding to Anti-Semitism*, eds. Andrew J. Mitchell and Peter Trawny (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017).
- 7 For a concise and judicious orientation to the problem of Heidegger’s relation to National Socialism and anti-Semitism, albeit one that was written before the publication of the *Black Notebooks*, see Charles Bambach, “Heidegger, National Socialism, and the German People,” in *Martin Heidegger: Key Concepts*, ed. Bret W. Davis (New York: Routledge, 2014), 102–15.
- 8 See Trawny, *Myth of a Jewish World Conspiracy*, 2–3, 94–95.
- 9 Trawny, *Myth of a Jewish World Conspiracy*, 97; see also 14–15.

- 10 As late as 1966, in the *Spiegel* interview, Heidegger continues to
 avow a “special inner relationship of the German language to the
 language of the Greeks and its thinking” (GA 16: 679/MHNS 63).
- 11 The passage is from chapter 26 of the *Zhuangzi*. For an English
 translation, see *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, trans. Burton
 Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), 299. The
 original Chinese that corresponds to Heidegger’s “die Notwendig-
 keit des Unnötigen” is 无用之爲用 *wu yong zhi wei yong*: *Sōshi*
 (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1983), vol. 4: 24.
- 12 Heidegger in fact prefers the word *Gespräch* (conversation) to
Dialog (dialogue), apparently because, while the latter might be
 (mis)understood as a subsequent speaking that takes place be-
 tween two subjects about something predetermined, the former
 can be understood as an originary gathering (*Ge-*) of language
 (*Sprache*) which first determines who is speaking and what is
 spoken about: “a conversation first waits upon reaching that of
 which it speaks. And the speakers of a conversation can speak in
 its sense only if they are prepared for something to befall them
 in the conversation which transforms their own essence” (GA 77:
 57/37). Neither the term “dialogue,” which implies a *speaking*
across, nor “conversation,” which implies a *turning toward one*
another, is able to carry over into English the sense of *Ge-spräch*
 as a gathering of language or of speaking. Yet, in letting such
 terms resonate with the sense given to them through Heidegger’s
 texts, we can also let them add something of their own. For ex-
 ample, the turning toward one another of “conversation” need not
 be thought of strictly in terms of “intersubjectivity,” but can be
 understood as the convergence between the address of being and
 the response of human being, a response that always occurs by
 way of a conversation among human beings and a conversation
 with the texts of a tradition – and sometimes, at decisive times, a
 conversation between traditions, between Athens and Jerusalem,
 for example, or between the Presocratics and the thinkers of the
 Indian Subcontinent, or between Freiburg and Kyoto. In this way,

translation can become “an awakening, clarification, and unfolding of one’s own language with the help of an encounter with the foreign language” (GA 53: 80/65–66). While Heidegger in 1942 bemoans the fact that “both we [Germans] and the Japanese learn the Anglo-American language,” and while we today should bemoan the hegemony of the English language in the oxymoronic “global village,” we can agree with Heidegger that “a historical people *is* only from the dialogue [*Zwiesprache*] between its language and foreign languages” (GA 53: 80/65). Although in this text from 1942 Heidegger is stressing the connection between the Greek and German languages, we can pluralize his point so as to say that philosophical thinking is nurtured by interlinguistic and intertraditional dialogue.

- 13 Heinrich Wiegand Petzet, *Encounters & Dialogues with Martin Heidegger 1929–1976*, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 18.
- 14 See Heidegger’s 1963 letter to Kojima Takehiko, in *Japan und Heidegger*, ed. Harmut Buchner (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1989), 225; and GA 12: 103/OWL 19. On the resonances and differences between Heidegger’s conceptions of “das Nichts” and the Zen Buddhist notion of “Nothing” (*mu*), see my “Heidegger and Asian Philosophy,” pp. 464–68.
- 15 Martin Heidegger, “Europa und die deutsche Philosophie” (1936), in *Europa und die Philosophie*, ed. Hans-Helmut Gander (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1993).
- 16 Heidegger is much closer to Hegel than to Schelling here. For the latter, “positive philosophy” can, at best, trace its origins back to the mythical. See F. W. J. Schelling, *Historical-Critical Introduction to the Philosophy of Mythology*, trans. Mason Richey and Markus Zisselsberger (Albany: SUNY, 2007). On the contributions Schelling, as opposed to Hegel, makes to opening up the Western tradition to dialogue with the Indian tradition, see Jason M. Wirth, *The Conspiracy of Life: Meditations on Schelling and His Times* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2003), especially chapter

8. Incidentally, Heidegger later rejects the idea that philosophy is born as a separation of *logos* from *mythos*: “*mythos* and *logos* are not, as our current historians of philosophy claim, placed in opposition by philosophy as such; on the contrary, the early Greek thinkers (Parmenides, fragment 8) are precisely the ones to use *mythos* and *logos* in the same sense. *Mythos* and *logos* become separated and opposed only at the point where neither *mythos* nor *logos* can keep to its original nature” (GA 8: 12/10).
- 17 As late as 1962 Heidegger still claims that “the *Auseinandersetzung* with the Asiatic was for the Greek *Dasein* a fruitful necessity” (GA 75: 228/s 25). He goes on to say that “it is for us today, in an entirely different manner and to a far greater extent, the decision about the fate of Europe and of that which is called the Western world.” The question is whether the “completely different way” of carrying out the *Auseinandersetzung* he envisions may entail cooperative dialogue with, rather than confrontational separation from, the various traditions of Asia.
- 18 Graham Parkes, “Rising Sun over Black Forest: Heidegger’s Japanese Connections,” in Reinhard May, *Heidegger’s Hidden Sources: East Asian Influences on His Work*, trans. with a complementary essay by Graham Parkes (New York: Routledge, 1996), 100.
- 19 Ban Kazunori, *Kakyō kara hanarezu: Nishitani Keiji sensei tokubetsu kōgi* [Without Departing from Home: Special Lectures of Professor Nishitani Keiji] (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1998), 189–90, 201.
- 20 Paul Shih-yi Hsiao, “Heidegger and Our Translation of the *Tao Te Ching*,” in *Heidegger and Asian Thought*, ed. Graham Parkes (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987), 93, 96.
- 21 The only other text he composed in this form is “Das abendländische Gespräch” from 1946/47–1948 (GA 75: 57–196).
- 22 Rolf Elberfeld, “Heidegger und das ostasiatische Denken: Annäherungen zwischen fremden Welten,” in *Heidegger Handbuch: Leben-Werk-Wirkung*, ed. Dieter Thomä (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2003), 469.

- 23 From Heidegger's letter to the editor of a special edition of *Philosophy East and West* 20: 3 (July 1970): 221, on the theme of "Heidegger and Eastern Thought."
- 24 The interconnectedness and alteration of contraries (see GA 77: 167-68/108) is a topic shared by Heraclitus and the *Daodejing*. In *Country Path Conversations*, however, Heidegger no longer refers to Heraclitus's notion of *polemos*, which had earlier played such an important role in his thought, but now speaks of non-willing (*Nicht-Wollen*) and *Gelassenheit*, themes that strongly resonate with the notion of *wu-wei* 無爲 in the *Daodejing*. (On Heidegger's turn from the will to *Gelassenheit*, see Bret W. Davis, *Heidegger and the Will: On the Way to Gelassenheit* [Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2007]). Other themes in *Country Path Conversations* that reveal connections with the *Daodejing* include the emptiness of the jug (GA 77: 130/84-85) and the notion of a "way" (*Weg*) that "moves [*bewegt*] us" (GA 77: 118, 202/76-77, 131).
- 25 As late as 1963 Heidegger claims that "Hölderlin's poetry is a destiny for us" (GA 4: 195/224). Who is the "us" here? Heidegger continues: "It waits for the day when mortals will correspond to it" (GA 4: 195/224). Insofar as the "us" for whom Hölderlin's poetry is a destiny is not simply Germans, nor even merely Westerns, but "mortals" (*die Sterblichen*) as such, Heidegger's onto-historical ethnocentrism can be heard here echoing through his writings to the end.
- 26 See the mere passing mention of the latter in GA 4: 83/108. On the necessity of taking Hölderlin's references to Egypt into consideration, see Andrzej Warminski, *Readings in Interpretation: Hölderlin, Hegel, Heidegger* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), Part One.
- 27 Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode, Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 1 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1990), 375; *Truth and Method*, 2nd rev. ed., trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald Marshall (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1989), 369.

- 28 The figure of the “guest” appears in Hölderlin’s poem “The Ister” as Heracles, who is invited to cool himself in the shade by this German river. Heidegger interprets: “The guest, that is, the Greek poet of the heavenly fire, is the presence of the unhomely in the homely. The guest makes the thinking of the homely into a steadfast remembrance of the journeying to the foreign (to ‘colony’)” (GA 53: 177/142).
- 29 Bernasconi maintains that this passage, which suggests the possibility and indeed the necessity of a radically intertraditional dialogue, remains an anomaly that is unsupported by any other of Heidegger’s writings: Robert Bernasconi, “Heidegger and the Invention of the Western Philosophical Tradition,” *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology* 26: 3 (1995): 251. I have been concerned to show that this is not the case, and that it reflects at least one significant current of Heidegger’s thought-path. Indeed Bernasconi himself, when he repeats the claim, offers as evidence a reference to texts which in fact suggest the necessity of a *bilateral* East-West dialogue: “For example, in the mid-1950s, in the context of a discussion of ‘planetary thinking,’ Heidegger noted the inability of either European languages or East-Asian languages to open up *on their own* an area of possible dialogue between them” (GA 9: 424/321, em; see also GA 12: 89/ 8): Robert Bernasconi, “Heidegger’s Other Sins of Omission,” *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 69:2 (1995): 344.
- 30 Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode*, 5; *Truth and Method*, xxv, em.
- 31 Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode*, 309; *Truth and Method*, 304, tm.
- 32 See Raimundo Pannikar’s distinction between diachronic and diatopical hermeneutics in “What is Comparative Philosophy Comparing?” in *Interpreting Across Boundaries*, ed. Gerald James Larson and Eliot Deutsch (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 116–36. See also my “Sharing Words of Silence: Panikkar after Gadamer,” *Comparative and Continental Philosophy* 7: 1 (2015): 52–68.

- 33 See my “Heidegger’s Orientations: The Step Back on the Way to Dialogue with the East,” 179–80.
- 34 A version of this paper was presented at a meeting of the *Kansai Haidegā Kenkyūkai* (Kansai Heidegger Research Group) at Kyoto University on 19 July, 2015. I would like to thank Abe Hiroshi for the invitation to give this lecture and all the participants for the lively and lengthy discussion that followed. Three points on which I think we all agreed were (1) the need for a more differentiated understanding of “East Asia” than Heidegger allowed for with his references to “the East Asian world”; (2) a better appreciation of the fact that the East-West dialogue Heidegger was cautiously preparing for was already well underway in places like Japan; and (3) the need for approaching this East-West dialogue, and indeed our very understanding of such matters as “dialogue,” from both (or rather from many) directions. With regard to the third point, allow me to note that, three days later, I gave a lecture at Kyoto Sangyo University entitled “Jiyū-na hinjugokan: Ueda Shizuteru no Zen-tetsugaku kara mita taiwa no kakushin” (“The Free Exchange of Host and Guest: The Core of Dialogue According to the Zen Philosophy of Ueda Shizuteru”). Other articles I have written in this vein include “Dialogue and Appropriation: The Kyoto School as Cross-Cultural Philosophy,” in *Japanese and Continental Philosophy: Conversations with the Kyoto School*, eds. Bret W. Davis, Brian Schroeder, and Jason M. Wirth (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 33–51; “Conversing in Emptiness: Rethinking Cross-Cultural Dialogue with the Kyoto School,” in *Philosophical Traditions*, ed. Anthony O’Hear (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 171–94; and “Nishida to ibunkakan-taiwa: Kongen-teki sekaishiminshugi no kanōsei” (“Nishida and Intercultural Dialogue: The Possibility of a Radical Cosmopolitanism”), in *Shisōkan no taiwa: Higashi-ajia ni okeru tetsugaku no juyō to tenkai* (Dialogue between Ways of Thinking: The Reception and Development of Philosophy in East Asia), ed. Fujita Masakatsu (Kyoto: Shōwadō, 2015), pp. 40–56.