

Heidegger and Asian Thought

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Introduction

The prospects for a thinking that strives to correspond to the essential being of language remain veiled in their vastness. And so I do not yet see whether what I am trying to think as the being of language is *also* adequate to the nature of East Asian language—whether ultimately . . . the thinking experience can be reached by a being of language that would ensure that Western European and East Asian saying can enter into dialogue in such a way that there sings something that wells up from a single source.

“A Dialogue on Language between
a Japanese and an Inquirer”
On the Way to Language

I

Some speculate that Plato or his predecessors had contact with India. It is in any case instructive to compare Plato's understanding of things with ideas in early Hindu and Buddhist thought, comparative philosophy being generally more enlightening between unconnected philosophies. Leibniz's encounter with the philosophy of Neo-Confucianism and also the *I Ching* is the first case of a major Western thinker's seriously engaging Asian philosophy.¹ Interest in Oriental thought developed gradually, until Hegel, commanding a more expansive view of history than any before him, declared his philosophy (not without justification) to be the culmination of Western metaphysics. Eastern thought he considered to have remained in a state of relative immaturity—even though some of its products were worthy of being incorporated into his own system. Schopenhauer, as more Asian texts began to be available in better translations, saw greater depth in those philosophies, and maintained that Western thought had much to learn from the wisdom of the East. Nietzsche considered his “revaluation of all previous values” finally to have overcome the Western metaphysical tradition. His understanding of Indian philosophy appears to have gone deeper than Schopenhauer's, and while his attitude toward Buddhism is ambivalent, he acknowledges parallels between aspects of Buddhist philosophy and his own subversive lines of thought.²

Much of Heidegger's lengthy engagement with Nietzsche is concerned with depicting him as still trapped in the Western metaphysical tradition, and with presenting himself as the first to re-open the question of Being

and thus as the ultimate overcomer of metaphysics in the West. Recently, however, Jacques Derrida has criticized Heidegger's thinking, from a perspective that takes full account of the difference between languages with phonetic and nonphonetic scripts, for being too "logocentric" and thereby still enmeshed in the Western metaphysical tradition. We may therefore have to wait even longer for the last overcoming.

Rather than pursue this issue further, I should like simply to suggest that Heidegger's claim to be the West's first thinker to have overcome the tradition should be taken more seriously if his thought can be brought to resonate deeply with ideas that arose in totally foreign cultural milieus, couched in more or less alien languages, over two millennia ago. (The same applies, naturally, to the radicality of Nietzsche's subversion of the Western tradition.) The question of influence—of Eastern thought on Heidegger's work—while interesting, is of secondary significance in comparison with the independent congruence of ideas. This last contention, and my initial claim that comparative philosophy is most fruitful between unconnected philosophies, perhaps call for some expansion.

"East-West" comparative philosophy is in principle no different from "comparative" philosophizing within a single tradition—and most philosophy practiced with an appropriately historical sensibility involves comparisons. In order to understand, say, Kant's theory of causality, it is clearly helpful, if not indispensable, to know Hume's ideas on the relations between cause and effect. In order fully to appreciate Schopenhauer's views on almost anything, we have to understand Kantian philosophy. But these are perhaps simply examples of doing philosophy in a historically responsible way—in which we try to understand the nature of the problems a thinker takes over from the tradition, what he retains from the answers of his predecessors, and in what ways his responses differ from theirs. The philosophy of Plato in particular can serve as a kind of pattern, or map, to give the student a basic orientation in the cosmos of Western philosophy. It often helps in acquainting oneself with the ideas of subsequent thinkers if one pictures the later philosophy in relation to the structure of Plato's thought.

Perhaps the image of a network of interconnections inscribed on some transparent sheet can be helpful. In drawing a picture of the thought of Plotinus, for example, one can begin by placing the blank transparency on top of the Plato diagram in order to guide the initial sketching in of the broad outlines. The Plato map can then be put aside in order to allow one's readings of Plotinus' texts to fill in the details of the new pattern more freely. When the drawing gets difficult, it can help to pick up the Plato picture again and slip it underneath. And as in the course of time one's understanding of Plato becomes more sophisticated, one can go back and redraw some of the lines on the original transparency.

The comparative approach is equally helpful, though in a somewhat different way, in cases where there is relatively little influence, or where the thinkers are in different but overlapping disciplines. It is illuminating, for example, to compare the ideas of libido and *erōs* in Freud with the notion of *erōs* in Plato. Freud read and revered the latter enough to refer to him as “the divine Plato,” but the context and goals of his inquiry were obviously different. Nevertheless, a thorough comparison of the similarities and divergences between the two conceptions can serve to hone our understanding of both philosophical psychologies.

Then one can compare two ideas across philosophies in the same tradition (which are thereby subject to similar influences), but between which there is no influence either way. Kierkegaard’s and Nietzsche’s understandings of time and eternity are two complex theories of temporality which diverge from traditional treatments in some fascinatingly similar ways. To compare the roles played by the “moment” (Kierkegaard’s *Øjeblikket* and Nietzsche’s *Augenblick*) in their respective theories provides bilateral insights, in spite—or even because—of the fact that neither influenced the other. This is not to deny that the tracing of the influence of one thinker upon another can be an interesting exercise in the history of ideas. The major concern of comparative philosophy, however, is an understanding of the philosophies themselves—and thereby, to a greater or lesser extent, of the world. And the deepening of such understanding can take place independently of a study of influence.

Finally there is the case of two philosophies from different cultural contexts in which the possibility of influence can be ruled out completely. In lifting the philosophies out of their historical context we do, of course, lose something. But as long as our interpretations of the texts keep the appropriate linguistic and historical contexts in view, and refrain from projecting anachronistic or culturally incongruous meanings on to them, the losses can be outweighed by the gains. More important than the contexts themselves are the situations of the thinkers in relation to their backgrounds. It would be perverse, for example, to compare Nietzsche’s philosophy with the thought of the Legalists in Chou dynasty China. However, though the contexts of Nietzsche and Chuang-tzu are totally disparate, and Nietzsche seems to have known little or nothing about Taoism, their relationships to their respective traditions have enough in common to make a comparison of their philosophies worthwhile.

What are the gains from such comparisons? Let us suppose that we can sketch out some fairly broad morphological congruences between the two philosophies. The lines we draw on the transparencies do not represent anything absolute but rather denote connections among the major ideas of the discourses. We might, for example, find that the representation of the notion of *te* (power, *virtus*) in Chuang-tzu in its relationships

to other major elements of his thought constitutes a pattern that is remarkably similar to that generated by sketching out the notion of *Wille zur Macht* ("will to power") on the Nietzsche slide. These are both difficult and generally poorly understood ideas, and so a careful mapping of each on to the other can first of all serve to dispel major misconceptions about them. Then comes the more interesting part. Looking through both transparencies, given that we see considerable areas of overlap, the places in which one pattern does not have a counterpart in the other will be conspicuous (especially if we imagine them drawn in different colors). Or, put another way: we follow out a particular parallel for some distance until we find that in one pattern the line of thought stops sooner than in the other. This can send us back to the texts and set us thinking: does this idea really have no counterpart in the other pattern? Sometimes the answer will be "no"; but often we may find that there *is* a corresponding feature in the second philosophy which commentators have persistently overlooked. And where there are differences, we can take it upon ourselves to articulate them as clearly as possible. The fruits of these labors consist in a better understanding of both philosophies and of the topic in question.

However, given a comparison which demonstrates congruity between totally unrelated philosophies or systems of thought, there may be a temptation to say something more—perhaps that both thinkers are "saying the same thing about the same thing." Suppose we discern substantial similarities between, say, the Presocratic notion of *logos* and the Taoist understanding of *tao*, would some (part) of us not want to say that these terms refer to the same non-Thing—*das Selbe*, or Being? But Heidegger, though he sometimes speaks of Being as *das Selbe*, would be reluctant to speak of "the same" between languages as different as ancient Greek and classical Chinese. Or one could go further and side with Nietzsche and the Derrideans, who would deny the existence of any "transcendental signified" outside the various realms of discourse.

What prompts us to want to say that in such cases thinkers from disparate traditions are saying the same thing is the desire, when faced with congruent patterns in different discourses, to posit some *ground* for the congruences, to say that the discourses are being patterned by the same thing, or event, or process. But if one is uncomfortable with anything approaching a *Weltgeist*, one could hypostasize less by saying that the patterns reflect underlying similarities in "forms of life," or deeper truths about what it is to be a human being.

There can be a genuine problem concerning the significance of the "and" in titles of books or papers which engage in comparisons, and the question "So what?" can often be posed legitimately as the final page is turned. But ultimately the criteria for the success of a comparative study

of two thinkers from different traditions are no different from those pertaining to a discussion of a single philosopher. The question in both cases is, simply: does the study enhance our understanding of the philosopher's thought, of the problems engaged by it—and of ourselves and the world?

II

Hans-Georg Gadamer, the foremost living thinker among Heidegger's many eminent students, has said that Heidegger studies would do well to pursue seriously comparisons of his work with Asian philosophies.³ This kind of research has, however, been slow to be undertaken—especially in view of Heidegger's considerable interest in Asian thought. The grounds for this relative lack of enthusiasm deserve some consideration.

The major reason is that both Heidegger's thinking and Asian philosophy have been regarded—at least until fairly recently—as quite marginal enterprises by the mainstream of the Anglo-American philosophical tradition. For decades Heidegger was dismissed by many eminent analytical philosophers as a hopelessly pompous and muddle-headed obscurantist. It seems now, however, thanks in part to the work of such broader-minded thinkers in the analytic tradition as Richard Rorty, that Heidegger's place in the annals of twentieth-century philosophy as a whole is finally secured. The increasing number of competent translations and greater sophistication in the secondary literature published in the past several years provide further confirmation.

The same kinds of analytical philosophers who dismissed Heidegger have generally been even more dismissive of Asian philosophy, often questioning with blatant chauvinism whether such a thing is not clearly a contradiction in terms. However, as the number of scholars with sufficient training in the appropriate languages and in Western philosophy increases, the field of Asian and comparative philosophy is becoming more firmly established, though full acceptance by the philosophical community at large will presumably take some time.

A major source of resistance to both Heidegger's and Asian thought stems from a complex of prejudices to the effect that: the proper medium for philosophical writing is the treatise rather than any more literary form; philosophy must work with intellectual concepts rather than play with poetic images; in such work reason is primary and imagination secondary, if not downright counter-productive; and rational and logical argumentation is the only appropriate method. If these are taken as criteria for philosophy, then most of Heidegger's writings and the majority of the major texts of Asian thought fail to qualify. Heidegger's claims that his thinking is more rigorous (*strenger*) than the exactness of logical ratiocination fall on deaf ears, as do the warnings of Asian specialists

that standards of exactness set up by Western philosophy are simply inapplicable to most kinds of thinking conducted in languages unrelated to the Indo-European family. However, as the approaching bankruptcy and increasing irrelevance of the narrowest forms of analytical philosophy become apparent, there are signs that the Western conception of what counts as philosophy is gradually broadening once again.

Another factor that has hindered the acceptance of Asian thought on a larger scale is the difficulty of finding an appropriate terminology into which to translate Asian philosophical materials. The understanding of such texts in the West was initially vitiated by the tendency on the part of the early translators to translate them into the language of traditional (Platonic/Christian) metaphysics. While this language was appropriate for some works, it subjected the majority to gross distortion. The employment of the vocabulary of contemporary analytic philosophy does not generally fare much better. The realization has dawned recently, however, that the European Continental tradition—and existentialism and phenomenology in particular—has developed philosophical terminologies that are far more in harmony with many strains of Asian thought than are those of Anglo-American philosophy.

Much of Heidegger's language, because it reflects and embodies a way of thinking that is quite different from traditional Western metaphysics, appears to offer a wealth of resources for comparative endeavors. There is good reason to suppose that the development of comparative researches on Heidegger will be bilaterally illuminating: if done well, they should induce people interested in Heidegger to be more open to Asian thought, and on the other hand can provide Asian specialists (and especially translators of philosophical texts) with an appropriate vocabulary and numerous points of reference in a contemporary thinker whose understanding of the history of Western philosophy is rivaled by few others. Western comparativists can look to the East for encouragement in these endeavors, since Heidegger's interest in Asian thought has generated considerable reciprocal interest in his work on the part of the Oriental philosophical world.

A further reason for the relative lack of enthusiasm for comparative work on Heidegger (relative to the general resurgence of interest in his thinking over the past several years) is probably that the extent of his knowledge of Asian philosophy is not yet widely appreciated. The few, relatively cursory references to Asian thought in Heidegger's published writings do not suggest that he was any better acquainted with it than the average German scholar of his day. The story related by William Barrett in his introduction to *Zen Buddhism: Selected Writings of D. T. Suzuki* about Heidegger's laudatory remarks about Zen is, if not apocryphal, at least worn thin through constant citation (usually without further reflec-

tion). It will come as a surprise to many Heidegger scholars to learn from Professor Pöggeler's contribution to the present volume the extent of Heidegger's interest in and acquaintance with Asian culture in general—and particularly that he was familiar with the work of at least one Taoist thinker as early as 1930.

Given this information, the question arises: if Heidegger was so impressed by and enthusiastic about Taoist thought over a period of half a century, why then did he mention it only twice during those fifty years of publishing works of philosophy? I put this question to Professor Gadamer not long ago, and his response is well worth relating (though it is impossible to convey a sense of the subtle smile which accompanied his answer): "You have to understand that a scholar of the generation to which Heidegger belongs would be very reluctant to say anything in print about a philosophy if he were himself unable to read and understand the relevant texts in the original language."

While a number of articles have appeared comparing Heidegger with various Eastern thinkers and philosophies, no book-length study has appeared on the topic. A symposium on "Heidegger and Eastern Thought" was held at the University of Hawaii in 1969 in celebration of his eightieth birthday. In a letter sent to the organizers of the conference 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." During the past fifteen years such a dialogue has been pursued in various forums, one of the major voices having been that of Chang Chung-yuan, Professor Emeritus at the University of Hawaii, who has published the only book devoted to a study of Heidegger and Taoism.⁴ Hawaii therefore seems an appropriate location for gathering the fruits of some of these subsequent reflections—essays by authors of seven different nationalities relating Heidegger's thought to Indian, Chinese, Japanese and Tibetan philosophies. Most of the papers have been written especially for this volume or are appearing in English for the first time. Of particular interest are the contributions by the five Japanese philosophers, since so little modern Japanese thought has so far been available in translation.

III

Given the tradition of interest in Indian thought on the part of such philosophers as Hegel, Schelling, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, combined with continued enthusiasm from his contemporaries (Rudolf Otto, Max Scheler and Karl Jaspers, for example), it is remarkable that Heidegger hardly ever mentions Indian philosophy. J. L. Mehta in his essay on Heidegger and Vedānta suggests that a partial explanation for this lack of interest was Heidegger's critical attitude towards the neo-Kantian pre-

suppositions with which most of his older contemporaries approached Eastern thought. Also, Sanskrit, being an Indo-European language, is close to Greek (and far from East Asian languages) in having a subject-verb-object structure which tends to promote “metaphysical” thinking. Nevertheless, while Heidegger wants to “think what remains unthought” in the beginnings of philosophy with the ancient Greeks, he is still attempting this by way of an Indo-European language—and so in spite of his apparent lack of interest in “how Sanskrit speaks,” the comparison with another of the world’s great beginnings in philosophy is fruitful. Rather than undertaking morphological comparisons between Heidegger’s sense of Being and Śaṅkara’s understanding of Brahman, Professor Mehta’s essay explores both paths of thinking *as questioning*, paying careful attention to the medium as an integral part of the message. By focusing on the non-dual aspect of Advaita Vedānta (which corresponds to the theme of “the between”—*das Zwischen*—in Heidegger, though Mehta does not mention the term in this context), the author uncovers some significant similarities among the differences between Vedānta thinking and Heidegger’s, as in the dimension of the Holy they both attempt “the thinking of the unthought in what has been thought.”

Otto Pöggeler is, next to Gadamer, the foremost Heidegger scholar in Germany, and has written his essay on Heidegger and Taoism especially for the present anthology. Given the paucity of references to Chinese philosophy in Heidegger’s published works so far, it will be a revelation to most readers to learn of Heidegger’s interest in Asian culture generally dating from quite early in his career. Professor Pöggeler provides a fascinating account of the extent of Heidegger’s acquaintance with Chuang-tzu and Lao-tzu, of his contacts with scholars from Asia, and of his interest in Oriental art and culture. One of the author’s major theses, which needs to be taken into account by subsequent studies of the development of Heidegger’s later thinking, is that his engagement with Chinese philosophy, and with the *Tao Te Ching* of Lao-tzu in particular, exerted a decisive effect on the form and direction of his later thinking. The significant factor here is Heidegger’s encounter with a philosophy couched in a language with a structure totally different from that of Indo-European languages.⁵

Paul Shih-yi Hsiao’s contribution is a personal account of his collaboration with Heidegger on a partial translation of the *Tao Te Ching* during the summer of 1946. The essay presents a vivid picture of Heidegger as a painstaking questioner—such an industrious inquirer into the Chinese language that the translation proceeded at a rate of only a line or two per week—and above all a modest and attentive listener in his conversations with guests from the Orient. One hopes that the fruits of these collaborative labors, which are presumably buried amid piles of Heidegger’s unpublished materials, will some day come to light.

Joan Stambaugh, herself an accomplished translator of Heidegger's work into English, offers some delightful meditations upon the related themes of *Weg* (way) and *Gelassenheit* (releasement), which point up their resonances with Taoist ideas. While the primary focus is upon later texts and on ideas such as *Ereignis* (appropriation) and *Inständigkeit* (indwelling), her discussion of the early appearances of the notion of *Weg* serves to point up the essential continuity of Heidegger's path of thinking.

My own contribution to the discussion is concerned to show the extent to which there appears to have been a "pre-established harmony" between Heidegger's thinking and Taoism, by uncovering a number of quasi-Taoist themes in Heidegger's early work—and in *Sein und Zeit* in particular—on the assumption that this work antedated his contact with Chinese philosophy. To see that the germs of the later poetic meditations on themes such as "releasement toward things" are already there in the early work again enhances our sense of the integrity of the development of his thought.

The reception of Heidegger in Japan has been the most enthusiastic of any country—perhaps even including Germany itself. A remarkable indication of the zeal with which Heidegger scholarship has been pursued there is the fact that a Japanese translation of *Sein und Zeit* was published only twelve years after the book's first appearance in 1927, and that during the following thirty years no fewer than *five* further translations were published. By contrast, the first translation into English did not appear until 1962, and though this valiant effort can now be perceived to be woefully inadequate, no further English translation has reached print.

Japan's foremost living philosopher is Keiji Nishitani, who for many years was the "Dean" of the Kyoto School of philosophy, and since his retirement from Kyoto University has been teaching at Otani Buddhist University in Kyoto. Heidegger's influence on Nishitani has been greater than on any other prominent Japanese philosopher, and the latter's understanding and assimilation of Heidegger's thought is deeper, in my opinion, than that of his predecessors or contemporaries. This is most evident from his major work, *Shūkyō to wa nani ka?*, which was recently translated into English as *Religion and Nothingness*.⁶ I am reprinting here (with the author's kind permission, and with slight modification of the translation) his commentary on two addresses by Heidegger delivered in his home town of Messkirch, since it is the earliest example published in English of a view of Heidegger's thought from the perspective of Zen.

In this connection it is worth mentioning the source of Heidegger's acquaintance with Zen ideas, as related by Professor Nishitani in his foreword to one of the volumes of the Japanese edition of the *Collected Works* of D. T. Suzuki. In 1938 Nishitani was doing research in Frei-

burg, where Heidegger was teaching, and ordered from Blackwells in England the first volume of Suzuki's *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, which he presented to Heidegger for his birthday. Shortly thereafter, Heidegger sent a card inviting Nishitani to visit him at his home; it turned out that he had already read Suzuki's book and was eager to discuss it. He was particularly interested in the well-known story in the *Rinzai Roku* (the *Lin-chi Records*) about Rinzai and Ōbaku (Chinese: Huang-po) and Daigu. Rinzai, while a pupil of Ōbaku's, went to the monastery of Daigu, another Zen master, and on being asked what Ōbaku had to say, Rinzai replied: "I asked him three times what was the essence of Buddhism, and three times he beat me." When he went back to Ōbaku the latter asked him what Daigu had to say, and Rinzai told him what had happened. Ōbaku then said, "Just wait, I'll beat you up!"—to which Rinzai replied, "What do you mean about waiting? Get it right now!" and accordingly struck his master with considerable force. Nishitani explained to Heidegger the "living logic . . . of the oneness of Rinzai's affirmation and negation of Ōbaku" and the "complex transformation between self and other" evidenced by "Rinzai's identifying Ōbaku with Daigu . . . and himself with Ōbaku." Heidegger then said with a smile that he had got "a rough idea" (no pun in the Japanese) of what Zen was about.⁷ Heidegger's interest in Zen was such that Suzuki's book prompted him to take out and read the only book on Zen he could find in the university library (*Zen: der lebendige Buddhismus in Japan*, by Ohazama and Faust), which he found "also very interesting."⁸

Yasuo Yuasa provides a comprehensive account of the salient details of the history of the reception of Heidegger's thought in Japan beginning from the early twenties. It is well known that the development of the Kyoto School of philosophy was considerably influenced by Heidegger's thinking, but the details are inaccessible to the Western scholar who does not read Japanese. Professor Yuasa's essay is thus of particular interest insofar as it discusses Heidegger's influence on three prominent philosophers of the Kyoto School whose work is almost unknown in the West: Hajime Tanabe, Shūzō Kuki, and Kiyoshi Miki. The essay concludes with an account of Heidegger's influence on the somewhat better known philosopher Tetsurō Watsuji, and an evaluation of the latter's understanding and criticisms of Heidegger's thought.

Akihiro Takeichi examines the problem of nihilism in Heidegger, orienting us to the issue by way of a preliminary discussion of its genesis in Nietzsche's thought. He discusses the way in which the oblivion of Being in Western metaphysics has led to a distorted and deficient view of beings that is manifest in the "enframing" (*Ge-Stell*) of modern technology. Through invoking the notion of *karma* and related ideas from Mahayana Buddhism, the author outlines a corresponding understand-

ing of nihilism in the Eastern tradition and reflects on ways in which the Buddhist response to the issue of karma might illuminate Heidegger's discussion of the problems generated by the age of technology.

Kōhei Mizoguchi, in his essay on Heidegger's Bremen lectures of 1949, undertakes something that has not, as far as I know, been attempted in the secondary literature in English—namely, an examination of all four lectures together that focuses on their internal relations. While the author alludes to a comparison of Heidegger's thought with that of Kitarō Nishida, the founder of the Kyoto School, his essay consists mainly of a close and careful reading of Heidegger's four texts. These lectures are particularly important because they constitute a critical transition between Heidegger's "middle period" and his later thought, and Professor Mizoguchi's discussion circles around these four presentations in a pleasingly hermeneutical manner.

The hermeneutical approach informs the last of the Japanese contributions, an essay by Tetsuaki Kotoh on the roles of language and silence in the process of self-inquiry according to Heidegger on the one hand and Zen on the other. The author shows that while language, as "the house of Being," has always been of crucial importance in Heidegger, it has its ultimate source in a certain kind of silence—and that in this respect his position (which is more or less unique in the Western tradition) is remarkably close to that of Zen philosophy.

The topic of *the body* has not been a prominent one in Western philosophy. In general, it has been taken up only to be put down in unfavorable comparison with the soul or mind. Under the influence of the ascetic aspects of Plato and the Christian tradition the body has been largely dismissed as a proper object of philosophical reflection—except as it encroaches upon the sphere of the psychical and mental through the phenomena of sensation and perception, the emotions and instincts, and so on. Nietzsche was the first Western philosopher in a long time to rectify the impression that man is only contingently embodied by devoting a considerable amount of thought to the body and its mysteries. Merleau-Ponty has continued the trend by undertaking comprehensive phenomenological analyses of human embodiment. However, a number of contemporary phenomenologists—and not just devotees of Merleau-Ponty—reproach Heidegger for furthering the traditional philosophical neglect of the body. The analytic of *Dasein* in *Being and Time* is often accused of being overly mentalistic and of dismissing the somatic aspects of our being-here. Such criticisms stem from short-sighted literalism, based presumably on the fact that the words *Leib* and *Körper* appear only rarely in the text. But one of Heidegger's major motives in choosing to use the term *Dasein* was to undercut the Cartesian dualism of mind and body. The language of *Being and Time* has more body to it than that of most

philosophical texts, being—especially in the original German—quite muscular, if not always supple, prose. If one insists on making the distinction between mind and body, then the existential structures elaborated by Heidegger refer just as much to our somatic presence as to our psychical or mental being.⁹

Attending as much to the somatic as to the psychical, Hwa Yol Jung opens the discussion out into a more cosmopolitan arena, beginning by situating Heidegger's encounter with Eastern philosophy in the context of the previous European engagement with Oriental thought from Hegel through Husserl to Merleau-Ponty. The *leitmotiv* of this essay is "the piety of thinking," where thinking is understood as a *Handwerk*, a work of the hand, the consummate product of which would be the Chinese ideogram as a manifestation of "the human body in graceful motion." Thinking and speaking and doing are inseparable in Heidegger—just as in Chinese philosophy, and especially for Confucius, the words of the thoughtful person have extraordinary ("performative") power. Professor Jung explicates the piety of thinking, with its emphasis on the closeness of the aural rather than the distance of the visual, as the appropriate mode or pathway for "gathering or orchestrating our thoughts—both Eastern and Western."

If the problematic of the body appears to be no more prominent in the Eastern tradition than in the West, this is not merely because the body has been similarly summarily dismissed by certain ascetic philosophies (as in some forms of Hinduism and Buddhism). The deeper reason is that in other philosophies, such as most Chinese and Tibetan thought, the human being is regarded *in toto* rather than as split into dichotomies. One of the concerns of David Levin's essay, "Mudra as Thinking," is "to interpret Heidegger in a way that brings out the embodiment implicit in his thinking," thereby rectifying a number of misconceptions of the nature of his enterprise. At the same time the author presents some corresponding ideas from Tibetan Buddhist philosophy—a field not yet well known or understood in the West—and shows through a carefully phenomenological discussion the importance of somatic awareness on the path of enlightenment in the Vajrayana Buddhist tradition.

IV

In his letter to the organizers of the East-West Philosophers' Conference in Hawaii, Heidegger wrote:

The greatest difficulty in the enterprise [of a dialogue between Eastern and Western thinking] always lies, as far as I can see, in the fact that with few exceptions there is no command of the Eastern languages either in Europe

or the United States. . . . May your conference prove fruitful in spite of this circumstance.

The conference has borne fruit, and the exceptions have become more numerous. Still, the difficulty remains hard to overcome, since most of the scholars who are competent in Asian languages are in fields other than philosophy. To learn sufficient Sanskrit or Chinese or Japanese to be able to read what needs to be read is a long and arduous task—as is the acquisition of a good understanding of Heidegger's thought, together with the requisite grounding in ancient Greek and subsequent Western philosophy. Few mortals have time and energy to undertake both. Nevertheless, even a modest acquaintance with Asian languages can help; and the more one understands the language, the deeper one's understanding of the philosophy. Many philosophers in Asia have learned Western languages; if we are to respond to Heidegger's call for "planetary thinking" it is time to make a reciprocal effort. If we in the West can add our voices to the dialogue in other tongues and learn to read with wider opened eyes and ears, we may then be able to engage Asian thought in such a way that "there sings something that wells up from a single source."

It was in connection with the necessity of making our way back to the place from which nihilism and metaphysics can be overcome that Heidegger wrote of "planetary thinking."¹⁰ It involves cultivating the polysemy of the saying of thinking (*die Sage des Denkens*)—though Heidegger expressed doubts, back then in the fifties, as to whether we were equal to the task. However, the words he used encourage the spirit in which the present anthology is presented:¹¹

[These doubts hold] equally for both European and East Asian language, and above all for the realm of their possible dialogue. Neither side can of itself open up and establish this realm.

Notes

1. See Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Discourse on the Natural Theology of the Chinese*, trans. Henry Rosemont, Jr. and Daniel J. Cook (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1977); and David E. Mungello, *Leibniz and Confucianism: The Search for Accord* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1977).

2. An excellent treatment of this topic is Freny Mistry, *Nietzsche and Buddhism* (Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1981), which will be of interest to readers concerned with comparative approaches to Heidegger also (though he is not explicitly discussed). Mistry deals exclusively with early Buddhism; for some points of comparison with contemporary Buddhist thought, see Graham Parkes, "Nietzsche and Nishitani on the Self through Time," *The Eastern Buddhist* 17, no. 2 (1984).

3. Personal communication, 1985.

4. Chang Chung-yuan, *Tao: A New Way of Thinking* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975).

For a bibliography of the secondary literature, see Hans-Martin Sass, *Martin Heidegger: Bibliography and Glossary* (Bowling Green, Ohio: Philosophy Documentation Center, 1982). This is a most comprehensive work containing several useful indexes, a glossary of Heideggerian terminology in numerous languages, and a broad selection from the voluminous secondary literature in Japanese.

5. In this connection see the latter half of Johannes Lohmann's insightful and thorough study, "Heidegger's Ontological Difference and Language," in J. J. Kockelmans (ed.), *On Heidegger and Language* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1972), pp. 303–363.

6. Keiji Nishitani, *Religion and Nothingness*, trans. Jan Van Bragt (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1982); *Was Ist Religion?*, trans. Dora Fischer-Barnicol (Frankfurt: Insel Verlag, 1982). The German translation is particularly recommended since it was completely proofed by the author and in the process considerably expanded. Part 2 of Hans Waldenfels, *Absolute Nothingness* (New York: Paulist Press, 1980) offers an exegesis of Nishitani's work with frequent reference to Heidegger, though more from a theological than a philosophical perspective. Also of interest in this context is Yoshinori Takeuchi, *The Heart of Buddhism* (New York: Crossroad, 1983), a profound and lucid exposition of the "existential" aspects of Shin Buddhism that makes frequent and illuminating reference to Heidegger.

7. Suzuki recounts only the first part of the story: see D. T. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism, First Series* (New York: Grove Press, 1961), pp. 306–307. The fuller story can be found in *The Zen Teaching of Rin'zai*, trans. Irmgard Schloegl (Berkeley: Shambhala Publications, 1976), pp. 78–79.

8. My thanks are due to Dr. Shigenori Nagatomo for translating these excerpts from Professor Nishitani's essay.

9. If we look at the basic elements of the words Heidegger uses to denote the structures of being-in-the-world we find: hand-ling (*das Zuhandene/Vorhandene*), grasping (*ergreifen*), holding (*Verhalten*), standing (*Verstehen; Selbstständigkeit; Ekstasen*), stretching (*sich erstrecken*), throwing (*Geworfenheit; Entwurf*), jumping (*voraus-springend*), running (*vorlaufen*), falling (*das Verfallen*), and so on.

The section entitled "Intoxication as an aesthetic condition" (*Der Rausch als ästhetischer Zustand*) in the first volume of Heidegger's *Nietzsche*, one of the few occasions on which he speaks explicitly of the body (*Leib*), shows the central importance Heidegger accords to the phenomenon of human embodiment. There he writes, for instance, "We do not 'have' a body but rather 'are' bodily [*wir 'sind' leiblich*]" and "we live in as far as we 'body' [*wir leben, indem wir leiben*]" (*Nietzsche* [Pfullingen: Neske, 1961], pp. 118–119; English translation by David F. Krell, *Nietzsche: The Will to Power as Art* [New York: Harper and Row, 1979], sec. 14).

10. In the letter to Ernst Jünger which constitutes the text of *Zur Seinsfrage* (1955), in *Holzwege* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1967); *The Question of Being*, trans. William Kluback and Jean T. Wilde (New York: Twayne, 1958).

11. *Holzwege*, p. 252.