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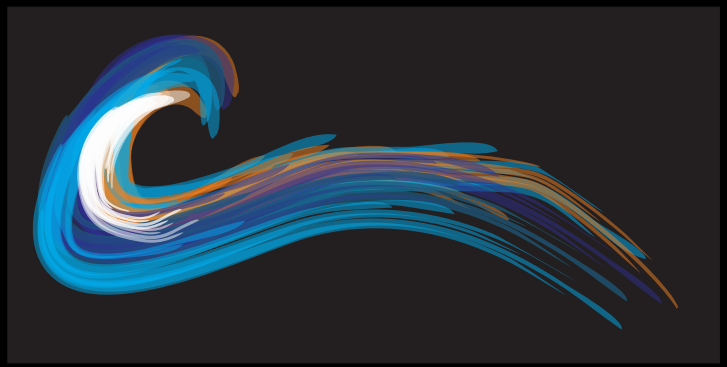

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Confluence: Online Journal of World Philosophies

Confluence: Online Journal of World Philosophies is a bi-annual, peer-reviewed, international journal dedicated to comparative thought. It seeks to explore common spaces and differences between philosophical traditions in a global context. Without postulating cultures as monolithic, homogenous, or segregated wholes, it aspires to address key philosophical issues which bear on specific methodological, epistemological, hermeneutic, ethical, social, and political questions in comparative thought. *Confluence* aims to develop the contours of a philosophical understanding not subservient to dominant paradigms and provide a platform for diverse philosophical voices, including those long silenced by dominant academic discourses and institutions. *Confluence* also endeavors to serve as a juncture where specific philosophical issues of global interest may be explored in an imaginative, thought-provoking, and pioneering way.

We welcome innovative and persuasive ways of conceptualizing, articulating, and representing intercultural encounters. Contributions should be able to facilitate the development of new perspectives on current global thought-processes and sketch the outlines of salient future developments.

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Articles

World Philosophies in Dialogue: a Shared Wisdom?

»Indeed, *philosophy* is not defined directly by wisdom […] but by its strange, complex and unquestioned relation to wisdom […] Philosophy does not know wisdom, does not produce it, but reaches for it, anticipates it like *a gift* one would offer« (Marion 2003: 183).

»All humans are philosophers« (Gramsci 1975: 1342–1343).

Abstract
Martin Heidegger's lecture in 1964 ›*The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking*‹ signalled a crisis and the acknowledgement of substantial changes within Western philosophy. Reflecting upon the concept of critical dialogue among World Philosophies (WP) can be seen as a corrective of this crisis and a novel advancement. I aim to substantiate this by referring to the work of three authors: i) Jean-Luc Marion's reflections on Heidegger will give us the chance to overcome a narrow understanding of ›philosophy‹ and the possibility of discovering »new horizons« for the discipline which are revealed as a »donation« towards »wisdom«; ii) Reyes Mate's considerations on ›*Thinking in Spanish*‹ will offer, aided by Walter Benjamin, a concrete example for renegotiating the space and the place for those »excluded from thinking«; and iii) Paul Ricoeur's meditation *On Translation* puts forward the ethical element of »linguistic hospitality« and transformation of the self when encountering alterity. While it is impossible to do justice to these authors in a short article, I maintain that their work deserves close attention because it depicts the struggle within Western philosophy on its way towards maturity: still entangled with so many challenges derived from its troubled history, this maturity appears only faintly, on the horizon, precisely, in the form of ›traces‹. On these grounds, I believe that Anglo-European

philosophy can no longer postpone opening up to an indispensable dialogue with other systems of thought wherein the presence of WP and the renewed effort of many philosophers committed to this endeavour is recognised.

Keywords
World Philosophies, gift/donation, wisdom, »the voice of the slave«, »monadological universality«, translation, linguistic hospitality.

I Introduction

In April 1964 Martin Heidegger's lecture *The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking* (Heidegger 1972) was delivered for the first time at a colloquium on Søren Kierkegaard.[1] Fifty years later, this essay still prompts us to rethink the questions raised by Heidegger with the intent of asking a further question which revolves around the concept of ›World Philosophies‹ (WP): Could the »end of philosophy« signal the beginning of ›philosophies‹, in the plural, and perhaps of what could be defined as ›World Philosophies‹ ? If this is so, could we also postulate that the »task of thinking« is not the reserve of ›western philosophy‹[2], but concerns other systems of thought, indeed all other possible systems which, by extension and in their totality, could be labelled ›World Philosophies‹ ?

In this article I will concentrate mainly on the task of demonstrating, by way of several authors, how western philosophy might open up and indeed become ready to consider the possibility of the concept WP, not as an expansion and a continuation of western philosophy, but as an encounter/dialogue with other systems of thought which have in fact, at times, developed independently from philosophy in the West. I limit myself to consider western philosophers precisely because I am appealing for a moment of self-reflexivity within

[1] M. Heidegger, »The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking«, in M. Heidegger, *On Time and Being*, New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1972, pp. 55–73.

[2] I take ›western philosophy‹ here in very general terms and as coterminous with ›western thought‹, in order to locate it not as separate from, but part of a wider classification which would include all possible ›systems of thought‹, all of which belong to the ›order of thinking‹ and hence equally committed to delving into »the task of thinking«. At other times, I use the term ›Anglo-European philosophy‹ which has lately gained more currency, as perhaps a more inclusive idiom.

this tradition. At the same time, I am concerned to avoid yet another imposition coming from Anglo-European philosophy. While my main task remains to prove this »possibility«, I am aware that an effort to devise a proper methodology as to how this can be best achieved remains lacking, but this deserves to be treated separately. The present paper, however, serves the purpose of introducing a variety of problematic issues and concepts associated with the ongoing effort of Anglo-European philosophy to disentangle itself from a Eurocentric – or even egocentric – stance; as such, the essay only foretells both a theoretical and a methodological urgency, but postpones a more thorough analysis to future undertakings. Similarly, I purposely refrain here from taking a line of inquiry which might insist on the ›wrongs‹ perpetrated by Western philosophy at the expense of other systems of thought since I would like to avoid transforming this article into an expiatory confession of guilty consciousness. Although this too must at some point be tackled, I prefer here to concentrate on the positive elements shown by western philosophy in welcoming the encounter with other systems of thought and hence offering a possibility of critical dialogue.

II Reflecting on J.-L. Marion, R. Mate and P. Ricoeur

In order to properly engage with the questions raised by Heidegger's lecture, I propose a reflection on the works of Jean-Luc Marion on donation and a »new horizon«, of Reyes Mate and his interpretation of Walter Benjamin's »monadological universality«, and of Paul Ricoeur's »linguistic hospitality«. The three authors under examination offer us a distinct approach: while they are in fact ›sympathetic‹ towards Heidegger's philosophy, they are at the same time critical of his idea of the »closure« of philosophy so as to postulate, in different ways, an effort of self-reflexivity and a movement towards »new horizons« for western philosophy.

Jean-Luc Marion: The Possibility of »Donation« As a »New Horizon«

In his essay, »The ›End of Metaphysics‹ as a Possibility« (2003), Jean-Luc Marion, refusing a polemical interpretation of Heidegger's lecture, stresses its positive aspect »as a possibility« and »as a revival of

thinking« (Marion 2003: 166), precisely because »with the end of philosophy, thinking is not also at its end, but in transition to another beginning« (Heidegger 1973: 96).[3] Weaving in and out of Heidegger's writings, Marion manages to point towards »what remains unthought in, about and by metaphysics« (*ibid.*: 171), thus opening up towards this (new) »possibility«. He sets the pace by clarifying the relevance of the task – »the end of metaphysics« – not as an »end game« but as a »culmination« and a »completion of possibilities«, thus recovering Heidegger's understanding of technology as a fundamental part of this culmination (Heidegger 1972: 59).

Marion identifies the link between technology and the culmination of metaphysics in the concept of ›destruction‹ (Marion 2003: 171) which, in Heidegger, goes hand in hand with the concept of ›nihilism‹ resulting from the »forgetting of Being« (*ibid.*: 173). However, while »the nothing makes itself known with beings« *(ibid.)*, this »forgetting of being arises from a similar powerlessness to think nothingness as such« *(ibid.)*, thus falling back into ›the negation of being‹,[4] to then conclude: »Would overcoming metaphysics then mean overcoming the mode of thinking that has predominated to the point of imperialism – the imperialism of representation, armed with the power of ordering and mathematical calculation« (*ibid.*: 173–174)? »No doubt«, replies Marion. He is, however, committed to pursue the reconsideration of the question of Being, despite its withdrawal, which would also allow the possibility of positing »the task of thinking« differently.

This paradox is expressed also in the almost tautological last sentence of Heidegger's text: »The task of thinking would then be the surrender of previous thinking to the determination of the matter of thinking« (Heidegger 1972: 73).[5] Marion painstakingly retraces the difference between *Sein und Zeit* (1927) and other articles written in the 1960s, in which Heidegger operates a shift from »it is« to »there is« [*il y a*], or *es gibt* (it gives): »In other words, in the final account, in the final question, in the final ›destruction‹, the overcoming of metaphysics depends on the determination of what the ›it gives – *es gibt*‹

[3] J.-L. Marion, »The ›End of Philosophy‹ as a Possibility«, in M. A. Wrathall (ed.), *Religion After Metaphysics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 166–189; M. Heidegger, *The End of Philosophy*, New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1973.

[4] Marion capitalizes ›Being‹ when quoting Heidegger and uses ›being‹ himself.

[5] M. Heidegger, *Time and Being* (Heidegger 1972: 1–24).

involves« (Marion 2003: 177). However, it is not clear if the »it gives – *es gibt*« is »tied to the question of being, or goes beyond it« *(ibid.)*. In short, while the French *»il y a«* and the English »there is« disregard the ›givenness‹ of ›*es gibt*‹, Marion's intent is to »validate the expression ›it gives‹ as a legitimate conceptual formulation« (*ibid.*: 178). In so doing, he can ascertain that the ›end of metaphysics‹ »leads, in the end, all the way to the horizon of donation«, since »the true implement for overcoming metaphysics is found in the donation […]«, as a »new horizon« determined by »the task of thinking« (*ibid.*: 182). Hence, for Marion, the overcoming of metaphysics, which does not require abandoning the name of philosophy, still implies the question of »what it overcomes«. Moreover, especially when (re)defining philosophy, »we cannot follow any other path than that indicated by the question ›What speaks in the *It gives?*‹« (*ibid.*: 184).

I would agree with Marion that »the ›task of thinking‹ will consist first of all in determining this new horizon« and, despite the fact that »*philosophy* is not determined directly by wisdom (or for that matter, by knowledge, and even less so by science or representation)«, it is indeed determined »by its strange, complex, and unquestioned relation to wisdom«. This does not cease, however, to be a multifaceted ›relation‹: »A relation of affinity, of inclination, of familiarity, of desire and of lack as well – a relation to what it lacks and *loves to possess*« (*ibid.*: 183).

If I am not mistaken, the progression adopted by Marion, moving from technology (and imperialism) to nihilism, brings him to postulate, via a novel interpretation of *es gibt*, that the ›donation‹ determined by the »task of thinking« delivers the arrival, as a »new horizon« of the concept of »wisdom«, which seems now to determine philosophy, be it by a »strange, complex, and unquestioned relation to wisdom« *(ibid.)*. Marion seems inclined to justify that the »self-transcendence of metaphysics« does not entail the disappearance or abandoning of the name of *philosophy* as such, and the appearance of ›wisdom‹ – re-translating *philosophy?* – would seem to appeal for an extension of »what [philosophy] lacks and loves to possess« *(ibid.)*. In other words, it is only through the ›yearning of philosophy‹ that the latter sets itself towards the unfulfilled desire of expanding its present, limited horizon, towards a new horizon and novel »task of thinking«, which can only be donated by the renewal and re-translation of ›philosophy (as) wisdom‹. In this sense, metaphysics as an overcoming of the being of beings, must be understood »on the basis

of donation«, and this donation could find its point of arrival and fulfilment in »wisdom«. Hence, wisdom seems to represent the »new horizon« towards which the »task of thinking« directs itself, almost as a corrective and an overcoming of »the mode of thinking that has predominated to the point of imperialism«. Apparently, there seems to be no correlation between wisdom and philosophy, because if there were, wisdom would fall under the hegemony of philosophy. Despite this ambiguous relationship, Marion nevertheless seems to allow for a positive interaction between the two, since »[p]hilosophy does not know wisdom, does not produce it, but reaches for it, anticipates it like *a gift* one would offer« *(ibid.)*. The question, which I will address in the concluding part of this essay, still remains: Is the gift (of wisdom?) offered (presumably) by philosophy dispensed to all, or is it solely the reserve of a few? Or, is it perhaps philosophy itself, which – being placed on this »new horizon« – receives the »gift of wisdom« from a third party?

Reyes Mate: Universality, Benjamin, and the »Voice of the Slave«

Some of the above questions are also addressed in the article by Reyes Mate (2001) ›Thinking in Spanish: Memory of Logos?‹ to which I turn now.[6]

In a famous interview published posthumously in *Der Spiegel* on 31 March 1976, Heidegger seems to imply that »one can think only in German or Greek« (Mate 2001: 247). Mate, without entering into a »nationalistic dispute«, reminds us that for Heidegger the expression *Western* or *European* philosophy is a tautology and he agrees substantially with Heidegger (*ibid.:* 249). However, »[t]his way of understanding existence is both a blessing and a curse, a great mission and a terrible fate«, particularly when we take into account the »forgetfulness of being« *(Seinsvergessenheit)* and the »abandonment of being« *(Seinsverlassenheit) (ibid.)*. This forgetfulness has, according to Mate, triggered the technological control of our planet, »which is the most perverse expression of universality« (*ibid*.: 250) since »[it] can only be a ›bad‹ universality precisely because it is imposed« *(ibid.)*.

The theme of ›bad European universality‹ figures prominently

[6] R. Mate, ›Thinking in Spanish: Memory of Logos?‹, *Nepantla: Views from South*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 2001, pp. 247–264.

in Mate's essay. For instance, when addressing the main question – *What does it mean to think/speak in Spanish?* – Mate argues that »If Hegel was right, and with him modernity, one could not be modern and think in Spanish« (*ibid*.: 254). Modernity might even allow us to now ›ridicule‹ Hegel's arrogant assertions, but that arrogance is still deeply seated within most prejudgements of philosophy »namely, the reduction of thinking to philosophy, the identification of thinking with what is European, or the affirmation that the universal spirit [*Weltgeist*] is European« (*ibid*.: 253). If technology has become the shortcut to impose a ›bad universality‹ on the rest of the world, then, Mate suggests that one adopt the Heideggerian strategy. This evokes the cabalistic doctrine of the *Tsimitsoum:* the vacuum that follows God's self-withdrawal after creating the world ex nihilo.

Rather than giving in to ›reactionary universality‹ or to ›deconstruction of every universality‹, Mate proposes to follow Walter Benjamin's »*monadological universality*« (1968)[7]:

> To remake history and hence to construct a universality following those nearly erased footprints is like brushing history against the grain. Monadological universality (that universality which consists in valuing as absolute each singularity) constitutes a colossal undertaking that goes against all the established and dominant conventions (Mate 2001: 258).[8]

In order to better clarify the concept of monadological universality, Mate refers to Plato's dialogue the *Meno* (Plato 1961: 364 – *Meno*, 81d), concentrating on the question posed by Socrates to *Meno* regarding a slave (»an undocumented and illiterate person«) previously summoned by Socrates: »He is a Greek and speaks our language?« (*Meno*, 82 b), thus prompting the idea of »knowledge as recollection (anamnesis)«.[9]

[7] W. Benjamin, *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968.

[8] With an expression taken from theology *(restitutio in integrum sive omnium)*, Benjamin (1978: 313) »points towards a universality that takes into account the right to happiness, even for the dead. […] The ›now time‹ is a way of acknowledging the actuality and validity of the damage that was caused in the past« (Mate 2001: 257). W. Benjamin, *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, H. E. Jephcott (trans.), New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978.

[9] Aptly, at this point, Mate refers to Levinas's reflection: »The ideal of Socratic truth thus rests on the essential self-sufficiency of the same, its identification in ipseity, its egoism. Philosophy is egology« (Levinas 1969: 44). Plato, *The Collected Dialogues of Plato. Including the Letters*, E. Hamilton, and H. Cairns (eds.), Princeton, New Jersey:

Socrates, however, knows that the slave speaks another language, which is not Greek (Mate 2001: 259). Hence, Mate reaches a partial but vital conclusion regarding his main question, and notices that Maimonides (Mosheh ben Maimon) or Judah Halevi are left out of an inventory of Spanish philosophers, either because they wrote in Arabic, the ›other language‹, »or because rationality belongs exclusively to the modernity that was born after 1492« *(ibid.)*. In either case, this reveals an interiorised attitude »that to philosophize is a thing for Greek or German« *(ibid.)*.

When returning to the main question, Mate is well aware that even Spanish, which was never awarded the status of ›philosophical‹ language, »has shared the theoretical and practical domination of modernity […] a language that has represented an empire and that has been imposed violently on other people, forcing upon them its vision of the world […] There is a thought in Spanish that far from being the memory of logos is the site of forgetfulness« (*ibid.*: 260). How can Spanish then recover the »forgetfulness of logos? Only by recovering the »language of the slave« which narrates »experiences of suffering caused by the reign of that dominating logos«. These are contained in stories, songs, in the memory of the victims' descendants, or in silence kept from generation to generation« *(ibid.)*. Spanish too, like any other language, recalls through these memories. As a result, it projects two opposite visions of history. In order to attain a universality which is based on a common history, the memory, and the language of the slave are indispensable: »In order to reconstruct the whole, in order to advance towards universality, the *language of the slave* is fundamental and irreplaceable« (*ibid.*: 261). Although Mate does not elaborate further, he touches upon the overlooked reality of ›grey zones‹ when analysing the power-structure of language, since also »among the speaker of the language of empire there are experiences of suffering and among the speakers of the language of the slave there are also dominators« *(ibid.)*. Indeed, the violence of the European logos was active for centuries *in loco*, prior to being exported elsewhere, and once in ›new‹ territories, found fertile ground and valuable allies there.

In his conclusions, Mate warns us about judging his considerations as nostalgic and/or romantic, especially in view of a certain kind

Princeton University Press, 1961; E. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Duquesne University Press, 1969.

of ›globalisation‹ taking place also within philosophy, with English becoming its lingua franca. In order to safeguard the diversity of tongues, which is overwhelming in Europe too, Mate suggests that one should not follow the path of ›linguistic uniformity‹. Rather, the strategy of translation, as »the major theme of our time« and the »antidote to homogenizing thought« *(ibid.)* would prove to be more fruitful. Here again, one should engage with Benjamin's intuition regarding the theory of translation. While Mate is more prone to accepting a close similarity between the latter and Heidegger's philosophical recoiling – »namely, that thinking is not exhausted in one thought, even if it has the prestige of philosophy behind it« (*ibid.*: 263) – I am rather more inclined to support Marion's »new horizon« as a departure and »new voyage« towards wisdom. As Mate himself comments on José Saramago's remarks regarding the vocation of Spain and Portugal towards the South: »This new voyage can awaken in us new capacities different from those that we presently carry in the name of Western reason« (*ibid.*: 262).

I will return to Mate's thoughts in the final part of my paper. Here it suffices to emphasise that Spanish is but one example of the trajectory followed by one of the many languages which composes the complex mosaic of WP. While its similarities to other such experiences makes us think in universal terms, its individual characteristics point instead towards a distinctiveness of a ›monadological‹ nature. Both, the ›language of the slave‹ and the task of translation indicate one way of re-discovering a novel approach to »the task of thinking«.

Paul Ricoeur: Language, Translation, Hospitality

Following on from Marion's concepts on donation and wisdom and Mate's views on the ›language of the slave‹, universality and translation, I now propose to bring the two together through the mediation of Paul Ricoeur's *On Translation* (2006).[10]

In the third and final essay of his book entitled »A ›Passage‹: Translating the Untranslatable«, Ricoeur brings to our attention the work of François Jullien (2001),[11] who, describing the relationship between ancient China and classical Greece, postulates that »Chinese

[10] P. Ricoeur, *On Translation*, London, and New York: Routledge, 2006.
[11] F. Jullien, *Du temps*, Paris: Grasset et Fasquelle, 2001.

is the absolute *other* of Greek – that knowledge of the inside of Chinese amounts to a deconstruction of what is outside, of what is exterior, i. e. thinking and speaking Greek« (Ricoeur 2006: 36). While Jullien »maintains that Chinese verbs do not have tenses because Chinese does not have the concept of time« *(ibid.)*, Ricoeur raises the question: »how do we speak (in French) about *what there is* in Chinese?« (*ibid.*: 36–37).

Without disputing Jullien's main thesis,[12] Ricoeur turns it on its head, proving, as a result – by finding support in Marcel Détienne (2000)[13] – that there is a ›construction of comparables‹, found by Ricoeur in the multiple and recurring translations of the Bible. All this induces Ricoeur to say that »*there is translation*« – both, *il y a* and *es gibt?* – and to recognise that, even beyond the translation of sacred texts or masterpieces, »there always were the merchants, the travellers, the ambassadors, the spies to satisfy the need to extend human exchange beyond the linguistic community […]« (Ricoeur 2006: 32).

There is, as should be expected, a fundamental continuity between the way Ricoeur approaches philosophy in general and his style of dealing with the specific problem of translation, making him »a brilliant mediator between competing schools of thought«, but also developing his own brand of »dialogical or diacritical hermeneutics« (Kearney 2006: viii–ix).[14] This intensive dialogue – favouring »the long route over the short cut« (*ibid.*: xi) – assisted him in looking beyond Heideggerian *Dasein* in the search of meaning of human existence, arguing that »the meaning of Being is always mediated through an endless process of interpretations« *(ibid.)*.

While engaging with all major theorists, Ricoeur offers his original interpretation regarding the ›task‹ of the translator, by retracing familiar images of the »uncomfortable position of the mediator/

[12] More recently, some of Jullien's theses have indeed been challenged. Most notably by Wang (2008), in an extensive review of Jullien's *The Impossible Nude* (2007), and by Franke (2014). S. Wang, Review of F. Jullien, ›The Impossible Nude: Chinese Art and Western Aesthetics‹, *China Review International*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 2008, pp. 234–243; F. Jullien, *The Impossible Nude: Chinese Art and Western Aesthetics*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007; W. Franke, ›All or Nothing? Nature in Chinese Thought and the Apophatic Occident‹, *Comparative Philosophy*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2014, pp. 4–24.

[13] M. Détienne, *Comparer l'incomparable*, Paris: Seuil, 2000.

[14] R. Kearney, »Introduction: Ricoeur's Philosophy of Translation«, in P. Ricoeur, *On Translation*, London, and New York: Routledge, 2006, pp. vii-xx.

translator« and his/her »dream of the perfect translation« always in between »faithfulness and betrayal« but still believing in the »dialogicality of the act of translating«, and to »find happiness« in the work of translation through »the work of memory and the work of mourning« (*ibid.*: xvii-xix). Ricoeur's innovative effort is rooted in his critical dialogue with philosophical hermeneutics and the way he problematized ›interpretation‹ and easy access to meaning as opposed to a plurality of meanings, already present in the polysemy of words and the secondary meaning of symbols: »For Ricoeur the matter is clear: there is no self-understanding possible without the labour of mediation through signs, symbols, narratives and texts« given that »[e]very subject […] is a tapestry of stories heard and told« (*ibid.*: xix).

In spite of its »fragile condition«, Ricoeur's »linguistic hospitality« signals a new journey within the task of translation which also implies a deeper, ethical commitment:

> Despite the conflictual character which renders the task of the translator dramatic, he or she will find satisfaction in what I would like to call *linguistic hospitality*. Its predicament is that of a correspondence without complete adhesion. This is a fragile condition, which admits no verification other than a new translation […] a sort of duplication of the work of the translator which is possible in virtue of a minimum of bilingualism: to translate afresh after the translator.[15]

Indeed, as Kearney comments, »Linguistic hospitality calls us to forego the lure of omnipotence: the illusion of total translation which would provide a perfect replica of the original. Instead it asks us to respect the fact that the semantic and syntactic fields of two languages are not the same, or exactly reducible the one to the other« (*ibid.*: xvii). While Ricoeur is telling us that a »perfect language« does not exist and that we must acknowledge our finitude, he allows us to carry on with the task and the commitment to translate:

> Just as in the narration it is always possible to tell the story in a different way, likewise in translation it is always possible to translate otherwise, without ever hoping to bridge the gap between equivalence and perfect adhesion. *Linguistic hospitality*, therefore, is the act of inhabiting the word of the Other paralleled by the act of receiving the word of the Other into one's own home, one's own dwelling *(ibid.)*.

[15] I am following the translation provided by Kearney (2006: xvi) here. In the original text, it is found on pp. 19–20 (P. Ricoeur, *Sur la traduction*, Paris: Bayard, 2004).

The practice – not just the concept/idea – of linguistic hospitality involves a full return journey »by an engaged self which only finds itself after it has traversed the field of foreignness and returned to itself again, this time altered and enlarged, ›othered‹. The *moi* gives way to the *soi*, or more precisely to the *soi-même comme un autre*« (*ibid*.: xix), thus highlighting this »inner translation« as a continuation of the journey into the »outer translation«, together with the discovery of one's own identity and the ethical demands addressed to the self, emphasized by Ricoeur in *Oneself as Another* (1992).[16] This is, in other words, the applicability of »a new translation« or the possibility »to translate otherwise […] *to say the same thing in another way*« (Ricoeur 2006: 25).

III Traces of ›New Horizons‹ and the ›Gift of Wisdom‹ for WP

In different ways, the three authors discussed above provide us with remarkable entry points in responding to the challenges presented by the end of philosophy. Rather than giving in to some form of ›philosophical atrophy‹, their efforts in self-reflexivity show that western philosophy can indeed take a different direction and thus postulate a repositioning towards »new horizons« motivated by the welcoming presence of other systems of thought.

Hence, to return to our initial questions: How can present day Anglo-European philosophy accomplish its ongoing commitment to the task of thinking? Indeed, is Anglo-European philosophy open and ready to interact with other systems of thought, so that a possibility is given for us to consider WP as a viable concept and an operative tool? Has the aggressivity of the Greek all-powerful logos nullified this possibility for ever, despite the recognition of a ›weak logos‹ running through the western traditions?[17] There are some moments of our past philosophical history which signal the presence – as appearance and disappearance – of a weaker logos and, following Ricoeur's lead, we could discover within this history those »hidden traces« (Ricoeur

[16] P. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.

[17] This would be the case, for instance, with Vattimo's concept of *pensiero debole*.

2004: 9–21)[18] which foretell the new horizons announced by Marion, and the new voyage wished for by Mate. It will not be possible to accomplish this here at great length but only in a very sketchy way, with a promise to return to these initial findings, and investigate them in greater depth.

Looking into the past of Western philosophy, we should recollect that all works but two of Aristotle would have been lost forever, had these not been translated into Arabic. Aristotelian influence on Islamic philosophy was already evident during the time of Al-Kindi of Basra (c. 801–873 CE) and Abu Nasr Al-Farabi (c. 870–950), and became even more prominent with Ibn-Sina (980–1037) and Ibn-Rushd (1126–1198) from Cordova in Al-Andalus (Spain), while later on al-Gazali (1058–1111) showed opposition to this rationalism, in favour of Sufism, representing the ›mystical side‹ of Islam.

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the works of Aristotle and his Arab commentators were translated into Latin and they provided the philosophical backbone for the Christian theology of Thomas Aquinas. By making extensive use of Aristotle's philosophy, Aquinas wished to prove the humanistic and rational basis of his theology. Meanwhile the Greek logos, figuring so prominently and achieving a higher status in St. John's Gospel, became the *Verbum*. This philosophy/theology dominated the scene for many centuries to come, but not without challenge. While Aquinas and his Dominican disciples gave prominence to the *Verbum Mentis*, the Franciscans, mainly a mendicant order, placed emphasis on the Augustinian *Verbum Cordis* (Capuzzo 2011),[19] in a fashion similar to al-Gazali's opposition to Aristotelianism.

Closer to our time, at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, despite much euphoria resulting from the Enlightenment and modernity, Europe was plummeted into an unprecedented crisis which culminated in World War I where, for the first time, technology was put to the service of death and destruction. Soon after this war, many intellectuals intervened to express their opinion on the crisis, such as the lecture delivered by Edmund Husserl in

[18] P. Ricoeur, *Ricordare, dimenticare, perdonare. L'enigma del passato*, Bologna: il Mulino, 2004.

[19] L. Capuzzo, ›Il verbum mentis nella polemica tra francescani e domenicani: Ruggero Marston critica Tommaso d'Aquino‹, *Medioevo: rivista di storia della filosofia medievale*, Vol. 36, 2011, pp. 113–136.

Vienna on 10 May, 1935, bearing the emblematic title: *Philosophy and the Crisis of European Man*.[20] In antecedence, this very problematique had been emphasised by Miguel de Unamuno with *The Tragic Sense of Life* (1912).[21]

In a sense it could also be argued that Heidegger's *Being and Time* was a similar response to this crisis, when we take into account in particular the emphasis on concepts such as ›concern‹, ›co-being‹ *(Mit-Sein)*, and authenticity, to counterbalance the ontic, facticity and anxiety of being-fallen. Post-Heideggerian philosophers have offered a variety of responses and interpretations, including Heidegger's student, Hans-Georg Gadamer (2004 [1960]), who went to great lengths to retrace the past history of hermeneutics so as to make progress towards an ›effective historical consciousness‹ and a more meaningful dialogue.[22] His work has certainly had a great impact on philosophy as well as other fields and disciplines. And yet, the suspicion remains in many quarters that a sincere, critical, and all-inclusive philosophical dialogue is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to achieve.

My point, however, is that our Anglo-European philosophy has reached the end of the line of its narcissistic journey precisely because it has remained entangled in the struggle for the pursuit of power and the acquisition of a knowledge which would guarantee even more power, rather than generating an effort to continuously rediscover the task of thinking and with it the gift of wisdom. It might be worth, for argument's sake, to recall that the Greek word *Sophia*, from which Marion presumably derives ›wisdom‹, is a feminine noun and, one would assume, less devoted to the more ›masculine activity‹ of gaining power especially through conquest, violence, and war.[23]

One trait common to the work of the authors discussed above is

[20] E. Husserl, »Philosophy and the Crisis of European Man«, in E. Husserl, *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy*, Q. Lauer (trans.), New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1965, pp. 149–192.

[21] M. de Unamuno, *Del sentimiento trágico de la vida en los hombres y en los pueblos*, Madrid: Editorial Renascimiento, 1912.

[22] H.-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2004 [1960].

[23] This, obviously, raises further questions about male dominance and female subjugation. Currently, women account for twenty-nine percent of full-time academic staff in philosophy departments in the UK, while in the US they make up only seventeen percent. Apparently, this situation cannot be attributed to a lack of talent in, or interest by, young women. One important reason seems to lie in their being sexually harassed, assaulted, or retaliated against (see, *The Guardian*, 5 January 2015). The treatment by male faculty of our female colleagues and students as objects to be used

their critical-ethical stance when reflecting on the task of thinking and its future development within Anglo-European philosophy, thus obtaining a renewed task of critical-ethical thinking, which includes an essential socio-political dimension of philosophical engagement. This is rather evident in the ›monadological universality‹ proposed by Benjamin and adopted by Mate, but also hinted at by Marion, when he refers to »overcoming the mode of thinking that has predominated to the point of imperialism« (Marion 2003: 173–174). Critical ethics is equally crucial to both Ricoeur and Kearney. The latter, following his mentor, radicalises hospitality even further through »the discovery of the wisdom of the stranger« and, although Kearney is applying »an ethics of radical hospitality« here to discuss translation across faith cultures, the same »hermeneutic wager« can be applied to the encounter of WP: »an ethics of radical hospitality presupposes the challenging route of embracing complexity, diversity and ambiguity rather than prematurely endorsing a spiritual Esperanto of global norms« (Kearney 2014: 153).[24] Indeed, the juxtaposition here of religion and philosophy could provide us with a reason to expand our (inadequate) notion of religious pluralism, supposedly dictated by a sort of political correctness, with that of philosophical pluralism, instead of insisting on playing our (mostly inadequate) card: »They have religions, we have philosophy!«. The point is: there cannot be a real, enduring commitment to the task of (critical-ethical) thinking until all those who are capable of thinking are invited to participate in this undertaking. This can be summarily expressed in the Gramscian notion: »All humans are philosophers/thinkers«.[25] Although an extensive philological discussion should accompany this quote, my tentative ›re-translation‹ might be: »no human can ever be considered a slave«, with the implication that the slave is defined as the one who is prevented from thinking or, at least, whose thought is

for our own pleasure seems to question whether we do indeed possess the ethical stamina needed to welcome, or heed, the call for WP.

[24] R. Kearney, ›Translating across Faith Cultures: Radical Hospitality‹, in P. Kemp, and N. Hashimoto (eds.), ›Nature and Culture in Our Time‹, *Eco-Ethica*, Vol. 3, 2014, pp. 145–156.

[25] *Prison Notebook* 10, »The Philosophy of B. Croce«. »Given the principle that all humans are ›philosophers‹, i.e. that between professional philosophers or ›technicians‹ and other humans there is no ›qualitative‹ but only ›quantitative‹ difference […] it must be, nevertheless, ascertained what this difference is« (Q 10, §52, 1342). A. Gramsci, *Quaderni del Carcere*, A cura di Valentino Gerratana, Torino: Einaudi, 1975 [4 Vols].

not even taken into consideration. To validate this hypothesis, which underpins the concept of WP, we must appeal again to Benjamin's »monadological universality« according to which we »value as absolute each singularity«. We must also return to Ricoeur's »linguistic hospitality« in order to welcome the »word of the Other« into our own thinking, and must invoke Kearney's »radical hospitality« so as to re-discover »the wisdom of the stranger«.

To be fair to Marion's concept of ›donation‹, we should take into account his previous, vast output on ›givenness‹ and ›the given‹ (Marion 1998, 2002) and his most recent work on this topic (2011), which is a task beyond the scope of the present essay.[26] I must, however, at least point out that Marion brings together Heidegger's and Levinas' work.[27] Despite strong differences between the two,[28] a deep presence of ethics cannot be totally dispelled, even when Marion wrestles to do so. Moreover, when retracing ›givenness‹ *(Gegebenheit)* all the way back to phenomenology and in particular to Heidegger (Marion 2011: 19–49), Marion has to acknowledge »Heidegger's entire trajectory«, starting with the post-war lectures in January-April 1919,[29] which address »the gap between academic theoretical philosophy and life itself« (*ibid*.: 35), and the text *Zeit und Sein* of 1962:

> For, in the quasi-conclusive text of 1962, when Heidegger takes for the last time the meditation upon »it gives, *es gibt*«, deploying there, it is true, a phenomenological mastery far outstripping the approximations of 1919, the task is still to think ›it gives‹ not only independently of thingliness and theoretical objectivity but especially, this time, beyond being and time. (*ibid*.: 49)

If, on the one hand, we might be puzzled by ›Heideggerian jargon‹ and perhaps by Marion remaining ›caught‹ within it, on the other, we can also appreciate the mighty struggle taking place here, at the very

[26] J.-L. Marion, *Reduction and Givenness, Investigations of Husserl, Heidegger, and Phenomenology*, Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1998; *Being Given. Towards a Phenomenology of Givenness*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002; *The Reason of the Gift*, Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2011.

[27] See his »Substitution and Solicitude. How Levinas Re-reads Heidegger« (Marion 2011: 50–68).

[28] »[…] what is at issue is a combat between two types of thought« (*ibid*.: 68).

[29] M. Heidegger, *Zur Bestimmung der Philosophie*, B. Heimbüchel (ed.), *Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 56/57, Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1987; *Towards the Definition of Philosophy*, T. Sadler (trans.), London: Continuum, 2008.

heart of Anglo-European philosophy (see Lewis 2011).[30] These developments began with the period of time stretching from World War I, the inter-war period – continued through the bewildering developments of Heideggerian philosophy – to reach his later meditation and down to us, at present. This struggle happening within Western philosophy is reflected also in the ambiguity and the difficulty – not solely in Heidegger but the whole of Anglo-European philosophy – to disentangle itself from a domineering logos which prevents us from listening to other, different voices/words, uttered within different languages, »beyond being and time«, often labelled as lesser languages, or the languages of the slaves, perhaps even unwritten and anti-institutional languages. Within this struggle, rather than holding on to the power of a theoretical apparatus,[31] Heidegger himself reverts to an ›event‹ *(Ereignis)*, in which even the certainty of donation as such is lost, so as to give place to a giving which becomes a ›sending‹ *(Schicken)*.[32] But if there is sending – similarly to donation and gift-giving –, there must be a sender and also a receiver and the two together seem to constitute a plurality within which the ›sending is given‹, the event can happen, it can take place. Furthermore, it necessarily constitutes a ›we‹ which did not previously exist. Even if one agrees with Marion that the end of metaphysics »leads all the way to the horizon of donation«, the question mentioned above still remains: Is this *givenness* granted to all, or is it the privilege of a select group? If so, does this group encompass all those who constitute Anglo-European philosophy, or is to be restricted to further subgroups within this tradition? Respecting these laws of gift-giving, the sending and receiving happens within a constituted community where individuals and groups recognise each other and self-understanding is accompanied by mutual understanding and mutual recog-

[30] S. E. Lewis, »Introduction: The Phenomenological Concept of Givenness and the Myth of the ›Given‹« (Marion 2011: 1–17).

[31] »And, here again, the same marker, the *Ereignis*, comes to guarantee the correct understanding of the ›it gives‹. At issue is the strongest, and therefore the most debatable, thesis: ›Being vanishes in the *Ereignis*‹ […]« (Marion 2011: 49).

[32] »In the beginning of Western thinking, Being is thought, but not the ›It gives‹ as such. The latter withdraws in favour of the gift which It gives. That gift is thought and conceptualised from then on exclusively as Being with regard to beings. A giving which gives only its gift, but in the giving holds itself back and withdraws, such a giving we call sending. According to meaning of giving which is to be thought in this way, Being – that which It gives – is what is sent« (Heidegger 1972: 8).

nition. Here again, WP must reckon with this mutuality being extended to the whole of humanity.

For WP to succeed, we must be ready and able to listen to the language of the other, so as to recognise that the stranger can think and hence be able to produce systems of thought and reasoning. This could be, in fact, the new horizon and the gift of wisdom, so that in order to achieve true *Mit-Sein* (co-being) as a global endeavour for humanity, we must also implement *Mit-Denken* (co-thinking) on a universal scale. Heidegger reverted to Husserl in order to prove that ›the end of (European) philosophy‹ could represent an ›opening up‹ of philosophy towards *aletheia* as ›dis-closure‹: thus, Husserl's statement, »The stimulus for investigation must start not with philosophies, but with issues and problems,«[33] provided Heidegger with a possible solution: »The *phenomenon* itself, in the present case the *opening*, sets us the task of learning from it while questioning it, that is, of letting it say something to us« (Heidegger 1972: 66). The problem envisaged by Husserl and highlighted by Heidegger seems to be a loss of direction within (Western) philosophical investigation: the failure of philosophy to be truly itself and hence announcing its end, but not without proposing phenomenologically a new *opening*, one very last task. The issue at stake here is »the task of thinking« and the phenomenon *is* the opening which must take place at »the end of philosophy«, towards a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to thinking which would recognise – while questioning it – that thinking or the gift of wisdom, can no longer be conceived as an exclusive right of Anglo-European philosophy.

Relevant moments which have marked the beginning and development of what has come to be known as ›Comparative Philosophy‹ and/or ›Intercultural Philosophy‹ would be most pertinent at this point. This task, luckily, has been brilliantly covered by the article written by the editorial team for the first issue of this very journal as ›Confluence: A Thematic Introduction‹ (Kirloskar-Steinbach, Ramana and Maffie 2014).[34] Indeed, as we read there: »Comparative philosophy is a vibrant field today, with a steady stream of new books,

[33] E. Husserl, ›Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft‹, *Logos,* Vol. 1, Tübingen, 1910–1911, pp. 289–341.

[34] M. Kirloskar-Steinbach, G. Ramana and J. Maffie, ›Confluence: A Thematic Introduction‹, *Confluence: Online Journal of World Philosophies*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2014, pp. 7–63.

anthologies, journals, and blogs« (*ibid*.: 8). However, in the remainder of the article, the authors take a realistic approach and illustrate the present day scenario in which much resistance towards Comparative Philosophy is still held in many quarters of institutional Anglo-European philosophy. There are, however, also many hopeful signs and the launch of *Confluence* is in itself a proof that new horizons are opening up for Anglo-European philosophy and that philosophers, not only, of the Old Continent are ready for new voyages.

Taking into account our discussion thus far, and before drawing to a conclusion, I would like to clarify some concepts which will help us to identify possible theoretical and methodological lines of enquiry concerning the future of WP. While in principle I am not against the label ›Comparative Philosophy‹ (and to some extent ›Inter-cultural Philosophy‹), it would be relevant to question its validity, or at least to ›decontaminate‹ its deeper meaning, in order to achieve a better result, mainly on two accounts:

a) the original meaning of ›comparative‹ (Latin *com-parare)* contains ›*parare*‹, the idea of preparing for something, in the sense of ›getting ready‹, but also the idea of ›defending‹ and ›shielding‹, which obviously implies a sense of confrontation in act, and a struggle of one against the other;

b) the use of ›comparative‹ also in other disciplines, particularly within the Humanities, has been rather controversial, as for instance in ›Comparative Literature‹ and ›Comparative Religions‹, due to the fact that an established hierarchy was already built within the comparison there, reflecting a knowledge-power component.

Should ›Comparative Philosophy‹ remain in use, we must make every effort to dissociate ourselves from the confrontational character linked with it, which reflects the spirit of the laws of the market. I am not talking here, obviously, about healthy competition and constructive debates, but about a style of organizational approach, apparently based on efficiency, which is putting our departments under considerable stress and preventing us from focusing on our main duty: the task of thinking. We have also better qualified this task as »critical-ethical thinking«, while striving to conceive it as a common effort, as co-thinking *(Mit-Denken)*, derived from our pursuit of co-being *(Mit-Sein)*. This brings us to an alternative paradigm to ›marketplace exchange‹ suggested here: donation and gift-giving.

Donation, even when applied to »the givenness of being that gives itself«, must respect the laws of gift-giving, as seen above. Not-

withstanding the complexity of this discourse and the negativity which can be ascribed to ›the gift‹, I am inclined to support Marion's claim, but with some explanations. Firstly, the being that gives, does not give itself exclusively to professional philosophers, or indeed to some of them, even if these, through their expertise, might claim more sophisticated access to it. As a consequence, Anglo-European philosophy cannot boast sole access to the gift of wisdom coming from this donation. Secondly, the gift received through donation, to remain a proper gift, must circulate and cannot become the possession of a select few. This would atrophise the gift itself. An even worse scenario appears when the gift is transformed into an item of transaction, thus falling into the sphere of a market-dominated economy (see Hénaff 2002), which now seems a prevailing line of action in academia.[35] Thirdly, the flow of gift-giving, once passed from being to beings, cannot be conceived as unidirectional, since all have the right to receive, as much as the right to give, so as to be recognised as part of the one, human community. Given the imbalance that so far has characterised our philosophical exchange, »the voice of the slave« must find a privileged place in our dialogues. Fourthly, professional philosophers, as much as other intellectuals and scientists, are morally obliged to treat with respect the ›data‹ – as datum, that is, a given – which they have received, and of which they cannot claim possession. While they may occupy a position of power in terms of ›knowledge‹, they are called to exercise their profession with utmost humility, so as to be able to communicate unadulterated knowledge. This implies, contrary to current trends in education, that learning and teaching cannot be governed solely by market laws, but by a desire to share and an ability to learn, even by educators. Finally, if we were to accept the perspective that the end of philosophy marks new horizons characterised by the gift of wisdom, we would be already en route – by recognising their presence – to dismantling the many prejudices accumulated within the history of Anglo-European philosophy.

Gift-giving, particularly in line with the idea of ›sending‹ *(Schicken)* – being en route and reaching out – motivates the reciprocal recognition which occurs in dialogue. Despite the controversy surrounding this concept, which still contains the idea of ›logos‹, WP would be assisted enormously by the support of critical-ethical dialogue in which the presence of the ›*dia*‹ announces the event of a weaker logos, ›pulled apart‹ in different directions, but respecting the goodwill of both sender and receiver. Following the logic of the gift, no individual group can appropriate the word to make it its own, since this must continue to circulate, so as to involve as many as possible, in particular those who have been silenced for too long a time.

The desire for connectivity also activates the indispensable connection between philosophy, thinking, and wisdom. Although this is deserving of a full article in itself, let it suffice, for the purpose of the present essay, to confirm that thinking, understood as a task carried out by the philosopher, finds itself between philosophy and wisdom. It originates from the first, but moves towards the second. This seems to be already present in Heidegger's »task of thinking« understood as »the surrender of previous thinking to the determination of the matter of thinking« (Heidegger 1972: 73). The idea of ›surrender‹ implies a willingness to accept that »previous thinking« – identified by Heidegger as philosophy, which for him is only Western philosophy – is superseded by the eagerness to reach for the core, or the matter of thinking, thus exposing the deficiency of previous thinking. While Heidegger, despite the movement of donation proposed by Marion, seems to remain trapped within a restricted – albeit new – way of thinking and doing philosophy, Ricoeur, as paraphrased by Kearney, offers a challenging alternative with his view of a departure and return journey »by an engaged self which only finds itself after it has traversed the field of foreignness and returned to itself again«. This is also confirmed by the ›radical hospitality‹ proposed by Kearney. Could then the »surrender of previous thinking« mean exactly that: a full return journey and a readiness to listen to the language of the other, without giving in to monolingualism but »embracing translation as a vehicle for creating a network of interlinguistic migrations«?[36] Within the perspective of this new horizon, wisdom would not feature any longer as »the exotic outsider«, but as a common goal for the »task of thinking« for every philosophy as an integral part of every philosophical endeavour, as inspired by Benjamin's monadolo-

[35] M. Hénaff, *The Price of Truth: Gift, Money and Philosophy*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002.

[36] Jonardon Ganeri, personal communication.

gical universality. Indeed, even for Heidegger »the attitude of thinking which is able to listen is paramount« (Tercic 2006: 110).[37]

Let me sum up: despite a long history of self-absorbed thinking, Anglo-European philosophy shows signs of receptivity towards other philosophies, thus allowing us to reconsider the »task of (critical-ethical) thinking« as a collective endeavour. If a new horizon discloses itself for Anglo-European philosophy, this must include openness towards other philosophies, in line with »monadological universality« and »linguistic (radical) hospitality«, so as to acknowledge the presence of WP and to share with these the gift of wisdom, through a sustained critical-ethical dialogue. Still further, a true radical hospitality is happening – as an event *(Ereignis)* – when Anglo-European philosophy remains attentive and welcoming to ›the sending of the gift of wisdom‹ which comes to it from other close or distant philosophies. In practical terms, there is a need, in line with Husserl, to address »issues and problems« – the many questions raised in this essay at both theoretical and methodological levels – so as to further stimulate our investigation. For, WP is not a given, but a gift always in the sending.

–Cosimo Zene, SOAS, University of London, UK

[37] V. Tercic, *La dimensione dell'* es gibt *nell'ontologia di Martin Heidegger,* Roma: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2006.

Approaching *Shan Shui* Art through Gadamer

Abstract
Shan shui art is a traditional style of Chinese landscape painting that has had a lasting impact on Chinese culture. This paper attempts to view a masterpiece of this genre of art – the artwork entitled ›Hermit Dwelling in the Qingbian Mountains‹ by Wang Meng – from the perspective of Hans-Georg Gadamer's philosophy of art in order to show how such an artwork can convey an ontological insight for those who experience it. Instead of viewing the artwork as simply an aesthetically pleasing landscape and thereby relegating the experience to the realm of feeling as is common in modern Western approaches to art, I argue that the artwork is best understood as imparting meaning into our lives by opening up a new perspective on reality. Specifically, I show the Daoist principles and concepts that underlie *shan shui* art at work in Wang Meng's (c. 1308–1385) masterpiece. The Gadamerian approach adopted provides an appropriate avenue to respect Wang Meng's artwork and other paintings in the *shan shui* genre on their own terms for those embracing a contemporary Western aesthetic sensibility.

Keywords
Philosophy of art, Chinese landscape painting, Comparative Philosophy, Wang Meng, the Four Yüan Masters, *Truth and Method*.

The Chinese painting style of *shan shui* (山水) gained prominence in the fifth century and has had a lasting impact on Chinese culture ever since (Zhen 2013: 8).[1] In his commentary on *shan shui* art from the eighth to the fourteenth centuries, Wen Fong argues that such painting was »infused with life not so much by the representation of reality as by evocation and reflection and the elicitation of associations

[1] L. Q. Zhen, *Chinese Landscape Painting,* New York: North Light Books, 2013.