

Journal of Continental Philosophy— Editorial Statement

The *Journal of Continental Philosophy* is oriented by a number of convictions and aspirations shared by the Editorial Collective, ones by which we hope the journal will be steered. We begin this inaugural issue with an attempt to articulate these in order to explain what space this journal wants to claim for itself and why we believe this space needs to be occupied.

As with most academic journals, we aim at publishing quality research from scholars around the world. We aim as well at finding an international audience for these essays. The only restriction upon this wish to host international discussions is that we will only publish essays in English, although we will publish translations from other languages when appropriate to the occasion.

“Continental” philosophy has long ceased entailing a geopolitical designation that defines its self-concept with reference to a set of European countries. It now is more accurately understood as referring to a tradition of philosophizing that is more oriented by a set of questions than by any single perspective, methodology, or ideology. The “continental” tradition might well have originated primarily in Germany and France, but it no longer makes any sense to assume that the continental tradition is *centred* there. It has been far too successful in its migration around the world to suggest that it could ever again be defined in terms of geographical coordinates. This tradition has become diverse, conflicted, plural, and is now so multifaceted that it is difficult—if not impossible—to delimit.

We take this development as marking an exciting moment and, correlative, one of the hallmarks of the success of the continental tradition. Insofar as it does let itself be defined, then it seems best to say that, as well as addressing those questions considered typically philosophical—broadly, those concerning reality, knowledge, and value—it also gives its attention

to issues that were long excluded from philosophical investigation; among these one might point to issues of the body, gender, power, art, poetry, technology, and history. In so doing, it also takes up traditional topics in new ways. If we mark the beginnings of this continental tradition biographically, with Kant and the German Idealist tradition, that does not mean, of course, that history starts fresh from that time. It means rather we need to rethink and understand anew the long and complex history of philosophy up to that point. Perhaps nothing will unite the various fields of the continental tradition more than a deep sensitivity to the history of the questions that we need to address. This, of course, includes our own history.

Even though we believe that the most lively debates in continental philosophy today are not geographically constrained, the origins of this tradition as we currently understand them do get defined largely by the efforts of a number of philosophers who wrote and mostly lived on the European continent. A series of proper names can mark what we take as a sort of shared history: one thinks of Kierkegaard, Marx, Nietzsche, Husserl, Benjamin, Adorno, Bloch, Heidegger, Sartre, de Beauvoir, Levinas, Arendt, Gadamer, Ricœur, Derrida, Foucault, and Deleuze. Of course, other names belong here and the list continues into our present and loses its Franco-German accent as it does. It is a list that prompts us to reinvestigate philosophical history and so find fresh efforts to understand how Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Spinoza, Kant, and others might indeed offer real avenues for thinking that have yet to be understood.

Our intention, however, is not to constrain at the outset continental philosophy by tying it to any geography, set of proper names, or historical moment. Instead, our aim is to respect and foster the struggle of the continental tradition, a tradition which remains open, to pose new questions that are critical and press upon the questions that challenge understanding today. So we concede from the outset that continental philosophy will certainly refer to much more than this journal could ever pretend to represent. To be sure, every journal will have its own provincialism, no matter how much it might strive to present the largest horizon. This is what the other geopolitical term in our name confesses.

The journal emerges out of the Philosophy Research Initiative at Western Sydney University (www.westernsydney.edu.au/philosophy). This group of philosophers came together for a variety of reasons—but a common core of shared interests, coupled with a genuine respect for our differences, has enabled us to build a program that we find exciting and a real home for our work and teaching. We have our differences, but we share a sense of belonging

to this large tradition of continental philosophy. We find our differences interesting, as the basis for conversation, not as a matter of contention. As is the case with many philosophy departments we come from different national backgrounds, different languages, and educational histories that have taken us along different paths. No grand design has brought us together and yet it is our collective energies and interests that will animate this journal and give it its initial impetus.

Recognizing our own limitations, we have made concerted efforts to reach out to colleagues who are concerned with similar issues, but who also can broaden our horizons and viewpoints. We have worked to do this as a group in our university, and one of those initiatives has an important role to play in this journal. We have been honoured to have as a part of our group a “College of Fellows.” This College is composed of a distinguished group of philosophers who are given a formal place at Western Sydney University. They participate in a week-long series of events each year in Sydney and maintain collaborative projects with many of us throughout the year. One of those projects is this journal.

The *Journal of Continental Philosophy* will be guided by the Editorial Collective, which will actively consult and draw upon the advice of the College of Fellows and other members of the Advisory Board. We will publish two issues of the journal per year, which will appear both in print and online. We are beginning with solicited articles and with translations, but we hope to expand the sources of our contributions to submitted articles and review essays as well. Details about the length, submission process, style sheets, and other publication matters can be found at our website.

It is not our intention to install a permanent Editor-in-Chief for the journal; rather, each issue will be put together by a single member of the Editorial Collective who might invite colleagues not formally affiliated with the journal to collaborate on that issue. Our aim is that the journal be the product of our group, but we also hope that it will bear the signature and insights of the principal editor for each individual issue. The aim of every issue is to present interesting, innovative, and timely work that is marked by the highest standards of scholarship and philosophical care. We intend to publish work by established and senior academics, but we are especially eager to be talent scouts for new voices and to cultivate the work of younger scholars. In short, we have high hopes. It is up to our readers and contributors to assess the extent to which those hopes have been realised.

—Charles Barbour, Diego Bubbio, Chris Fleming, Alex Ling, and Dennis Schmidt