

EDITOR'S WORDS

The current issue is a special one celebrating the tenth anniversary of the *International Society for Comparative Studies of Chinese and Western Philosophy* (ISCWP), which consists of five peer-reviewed articles by ISCWP members from different geographic areas in the world, Steve Angle (USA), Chung-I Lin (Taiwan/ROC), Stephen Palmquist (Hong Kong), Henrique Schneider (Austria), and Dean Walsh (USA) together with the "Introduction" by the current ISCWP President Sor-hoon Tan (Singapore). It is not accidental for the Journal and the ISCWP to jointly mark this ISCWP event via the special issue; both share two closely related emphases in philosophical exploration: first, they both stress doing (Chinese) philosophy "*comparatively*"; second, they both accentuate the "*constructive-engagement*" direction in such comparative exploration in philosophy. The two emphases, when comparative philosophy is understood in a philosophically interesting and engaging way, are intrinsically related. Indeed, an open-minded and pluralist attitude in *doing philosophy* does not stop at merely being open-minded and pluralistic for its own sake, but essentially requires that one further reflects on how these distinct resources and approaches from different philosophical traditions in consideration can critically (in the philosophical sense of the term) engage each other to constructively make joint contributions to our understanding and treatment of a range of issues in philosophy and in contemporary society.¹

The reflective practice that more or less, explicitly or implicitly, implements the constructive-engagement strategy in doing Chinese philosophy comparatively (specifically speaking) and doing philosophy comparatively (generally speaking) is not new; however, remarkably during the past decade, some systematic, collective efforts have been made explicitly in the constructive-engagement direction along with further reflection on the nature, function and methodology of comparative philosophy. They are illustrated and evidenced by a series of collective research projects;² they are actively and effectively implemented by some academic

¹ For a brief account of the constructive-engagement emphasis in comparative philosophy, see the front page of the journal website at <http://www.comparativephilosophy.org>; for an overall elaboration of it, see the journal theme introduction on pages 1-32 of Volume 1, No 1 (2012).

² For example, such collective research projects in which many ISCWP members have participated include (but are not limited to) these (named in terms of the titles of their published results): *Davidson's Philosophy and Chinese Philosophy: Constructive Engagement* (2006), *Searle's Philosophy and Chinese Philosophy: Constructive Engagement* (2008), and *Constructive Engagement of Analytic and Continental Approaches in Philosophy: From the Vantage Point of Comparative Philosophy* (2013).

organizational forces – among others, prominently ISCWP (<http://www.iscwp.org>) established in 2003 which formally documents the constructive-engagement direction in its Constitution, and an organized research center expressly for comparative philosophy with the constructive-engagement mission, the Center for Comparative Philosophy at San Jose State University (<http://www.sjsu.edu/centercomphil>) established in 2007; they are further enhanced and channeled by this peer-reviewed, open-access international journal, which is co-published by the Center and now enters its fourth anniversary since its establishment in 2010. The current special issue shows the foregoing academic institutions' joint effort in contributing to the healthy development of the common philosophical enterprise in emphasizing the open-minded attitude and pluralistic pursuit while stressing the constructive engagement of distinct approaches from different philosophical traditions.

The constructive-engagement strategic goal and methodology can be manifested and implemented in various ways, with distinct focuses and/or at different levels that are sensitive to the need and purpose of specific research projects, instead of being restricted to one fixed pattern or merely at one level. Indeed, one ideal situation is that engaging parties like conversation partners who all attend the same event at the same time will directly talk with each other and learn from each other (or explicitly “bi-directional”) at various engaging levels while addressing various relevant aspects of their jointly-concerned issue or subject. However, more often, engaging parties (an engaging party can be either a figure, or a text, or an account, or a movement, or even a generic type of treatment) make joint contributions (directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly) through their respective constructive impacts or roles in enhancing our understanding/treatment of distinct aspects of the jointly-concerned issue/subject at different engaging levels; one can thus have the involved engaging parties jointly contribute to a further account (in a broader framework or with a new vision), which integrally includes reasonable and eligible elements, more or less, from (some distinct dimensions of) each side. As I see it, the five authors' articles in this special issue effectively illustrate some of these distinct ways of implementing the constructive-engagement strategy in comparative philosophy.

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