EDITOR’S WORDS

The current issue is a special one commemorating the first anniversary of the International Society for Comparative Studies Toward World Philosophy (CPWP, <cpwponline.org>), which was formally established in May 2022 as one significant project effectively complementary to this journal’s enterprise in some unique way: the CPWP has become one of the Journal’s co-publishers and partially contributes relevant resources in need; to effectively fulfill their shared mission, they strengthen each other with distinct academic-exchange channels and critical discussion platforms that have their complementary ways of quality control and engagement enhancement.

The CPWP as a new international philosophical association has been established to meet the following needs and challenges, and expectations. (1) Generally speaking, there is the genuine need for an international association with its distinct identity and emphasis on comparative philosophy (whatever one would like to label) as a general way of doing philosophy through cross-tradition engagement toward world philosophy and for the sake of contemporary development of philosophy and society (‘comparative philosophy toward world philosophy’ for short), whose coverage is not limited to, say, the East (the Asian, the Chinese, etc.) and the West but more inclusive. (2) Moreover, the world of tensions and conflicts at deep levels as evidenced by a range of events in the past years (especially since the burst of COVID-19) augments the need for the due role that comparative philosophy toward world philosophy can play via its methodological and theoretic resources concerning how to enhance dialogues and mutual understanding and thus learn from each other (in a constructively engaging way) between contraries in a more widespread social setting. (3) This new association is to share the same fundamental aim as that of this journal, Comparative Philosophy (as shown by the journal’s subtitle: “An International Journal of Constructive Engagement of Distinct Approaches toward World Philosophy”); as briefly addressed above, both can be strongly complementary to each other in effectively fulfilling the shared mission by strengthening each other with distinct academic-exchange and critical-discussion platforms that have their complementary ways of quality control and engagement enhancement. (4) It is known that the current available philosophical associations have this or that boundary/limit to meeting these needs, either because of emphasis difference or because of coverage boundaries or because of a lack of due flexibility or because of some other limits that are not expected. The CPWP sets out to be constructively complementary to, and friendly open for academic cooperation with, other academic associations that (more or less) share the goal and concerns and/or have distinct complementary emphases/coverages. (5) It is also noted that powerful internet communication resources, as resorted to by the Journal’s open-access approach in the past decade, has been further strengthened by recent development of Zoom-like virtual
communication tools and their widespread efficient applications during the pandemic period. *Their current availability can effectively facilitate the joint efforts in meeting the needs in the foregoing connections.* In this way, to effectively meet the foregoing needs and challenges, and to provide the interested colleagues with more opportunities for academic exchanges and critical discussions, the CPWP has been established as a non-profit, independent philosophical association in the international academic arena.

The CPWP is to start in a natural and constructive way, sensitive to situations; there is neither need for excessive pushing nor burden of having to be a certain “representative” in an absolute fixed way. The point is quite simple and straightforward: it is to constructively promote comparative philosophy as a general cross-tradition engaging way of doing philosophy toward world philosophy; being sensitive to the due needs, it is to provide the interested colleagues with more effective and flexible academic-exchange channels and engaging discussion platforms (say, via powerful internet and open-access resources especially recently developed).

Indeed, in one sense, what is important is not one’s current “location” (“one” covering both each of us as one and our association as one) but one’s direction: no matter where each of us is located with whatever identities (this or that) and status (lower or higher), we worldwide (including all of us in ancient times and modern times, in this and that philosophical traditions) move toward one strategic “world philosophy” direction: we worldwide endeavor to talk to (communicate and understand), engage with (rather than passing by) and learn from each other (regarding either distinct eligible perspectives, or distinct adequate guiding principles, or distinct effective instruments, etc.) and constructively make joint contributions to the contemporary development of philosophy and society.

The foregoing point is highlighted by the opening statement of the Society’s Constitution on the CPWP strategic goal: “The Society aims at…promoting comparative philosophy as a general way of doing philosophy through cross-tradition engagement toward world philosophy, which seeks dialogue, mutual understanding and learning, complementarity, and joint contributions by distinct approaches and resources from different philosophical traditions worldwide for the sake of the contemporary development of philosophy and society” (Clause 2.1). In view of this strategic goal, the CPWP endeavors to facilitate academic exchange and discussion of ideas among interested philosophers in various regions worldwide and provide them with effective channels and platforms. Recently around its first anniversary, this has been substantially implemented by the CPWP’s first international virtual conference, co-organized by the journal *Comparative Philosophy*, and co-sponsored and hosted by the SJSU Center for Comparative Philosophy, through the effective Zoom channel. The conference panels are on a range of joint-concerned issues in various areas of philosophy, whose topics and contents are expected to be philosophically interesting in a general and cross-traditional way and in view of the contemporary development of philosophy, instead of being only locally interesting to ones working merely in one tradition or merely on historical/descriptive topics. The discussions are carried out in the form of either roundtable-discussion panels or “author-meets-critics” panels.

The main body of this special issue of the Journal commemorating the first
anniversary of the CPWP consists of three sections that result from three selected sessions of the conference event, the quality level of whose further work has met the expectation for this journal’s publication. The first section is the “Special Theme (1)” section on “Comparative Philosophy as a General Way of Doing Philosophy through Cross-Tradition Engagement Toward World Philosophy” which is on the conference theme. This section consists of two parts: the first is on the theme to which this editor makes a contribution; the second gives illustrating cases of cross-tradition engagement worldwide: Nevađ Kahteran, Joseph Kaipayil, and Hongyin Zhou & Jiabin Ye present their papers respectively on the cases in Southern Europe, India, and China. The second section is the “Special Theme (2)” section on “Cross-Tradition Engagement on Philosophy as a Way of Life and Worldview: Perspectives from African, Asian, Islamic, Latin-American and Western Perspectives” in which three authors, Michael Chase, Manuel Vargas, and Casey Woodling, present their contributing essays on the theme. The third section is the “Constructive-Engagement Dialogue: Author meets Critic” section on “How to Look at Contraries: An Overall-Complementarity-Seeking Account and a Confucian Harmony-Seeking Account” in which Bo Mou makes his commentary on Chenyang Li’s Confucian “harmony-seeking” account in view of Mou’s overall-complementarity-seeking account, and Chenyang Li makes his engaging “Reply” further elaborating his account. [Further selections from the sessions of the Conference event, when ready, are forthcoming in some subsequent issues of the Journal.]

The other parts of this special issue are also closely related to the shared mission of the CPWP and the Journal. The “Recent Work” section presents Kathleen Higgins’ book review on the book *A Grand Materialism in the New Art from China* by Mary Wiseman, a recent cross-tradition engaging exploration in aesthetics.

The “In Memoriam” section includes two memorial articles, written respectively by Nevađ Kahteran and this editor, of two pioneer advocates and well-esteemed scholars in comparative philosophy toward world philosophy: Abdulah Šarčević (1929-2021) and Xianglong Zhang (1949-2022). Xianglong, one founding advisor and co-founder of the CPWP, passed away last month when the CPWP turned to its first anniversary: his death is an immense loss to the Journal and the CPWP. Indeed, this loss for the CPWP anniversary occasion would render inappropriate using the usual conventional word “celebrating” for an anniversary occasion; a more suitable word ‘commemorating’ is thus employed here. This ending part of the special issue in memoriam of the meaning and value of Xianglong’s distinguished life is to contribute to his genuine longevity; the effective and successful completion of the CPWP international conference as its major anniversary achievement would be a special memorial gift to Xianglong who would thus smile in relief in the nether world.  

Bo Mou  
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1 I am thankful to Joe Glover for his helpful suggestion of modifying several expressions in the draft of this writing.