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INTRODUCTION: CHINESE AND AMERICAN PHILOSOPHIES: BROADENING A COMPARATIVE HORIZON

This special issue of the *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* is dedicated to new comparisons in Chinese and American philosophies. This designation implies, of course, that there exist “old” comparisons, or at least conventional ones. As a prime example, much attention has been paid to connections between the philosophies of Confucius and John Dewey.¹ This attention is well deserved, given the time that Dewey spent in China (1919–1921)² and the long-standing and far-reaching influence of each thinker on his respective philosophical tradition. Indeed, Confucius and Dewey may be regarded as the philosophical ambassadors of their respective places in their respective times. If one wishes to place Chinese and American philosophies in dialogue, it is sensible to choose first to engage Confucius and Dewey. The problem is that this first choice too often sediments into the one and only choice. This special issue seeks to address this problem, broadening a horizon of comparative philosophy containing rich and provocative depths waiting to be explored.

An effort at precisely this broadening has been made previously in the pages of this journal. The March 2009 issue of the *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* is dedicated to American Pragmatism and Chinese philosophy. In the preface to this issue, Editor-in-Chief, Chung-ying Cheng expresses some disappointment. While he invited some scholars in American philosophy to engage Chinese philosophy and develop interaction with it so as to bring about a broader spectrum of interests and views in both traditions, “[u]nfortunately, this did not happen; people still went the easy way and focused on Dewey as *the* representative of American philosophy.”³ Cheng has not been alone in lamenting the relative lack of variety in scholarship engaging Chinese and American philosophies.⁴ At the April 2009 meeting of the Pacific-American Philosophical Association (APA), Joseph Grange presented “Confucian Values and American Pragmatism” for

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Journal of Chinese Philosophy 39:2 (June 2012) 169–173
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the International Society for Chinese Philosophy group session. Grange echoed Cheng's hope, calling comparative scholars to widen the scope of their analyses of American pragmatism beyond John Dewey, citing the vast richness of the classical American tradition.⁵

Motivated by the comments of Cheng and Grange, I organized a group session for the International Society for Comparative Studies of Chinese and Western Philosophy at the Eastern-APA meeting on December 29, 2009. The theme of the presentations was "Human Nature and Nature in Chinese and American Philosophies." On the strength of this session, Dr. Linyu Gu, the Managing Editor of this journal, invited me to organize a special issue of the journal including these articles. Consequently, edited versions of each of the four articles from this session (those by Gregory M. Fahy, Carl J. Dull, Mathew A. Foust, and William Day) appear in this issue. To these, two additional articles (those by Michael L. Raposa and John Kaag) have been added. Although the authors of these additional articles were not asked to address the theme of the conference panel, but instead the broader theme of new comparisons of Chinese and American philosophies, their contributions nonetheless blend harmoniously with the others.

While Gregory M. Fahy focuses on Dewey in his "*Huayan* Buddhism and Dewey: Emptiness, Compassion, and the Philosophical Fallacy," he provides a novel comparison with Chinese philosophy in his focus on *Huayan* Buddhism. Fahy believes that *Huayan* Buddhism and Deweyan pragmatism offer two of the most promising ethical standpoints based on the understanding of persons as temporally limited and relational. At the same time, Fahy locates important differences between these standpoints, which he traces to the scope of their respective metaphysics. For *Huayan* Buddhists, the infinite relatedness of all things leads to an ethic of compassion, while for Dewey, social constructions foster aesthetically unified experiences. Fahy's contribution to this issue quite effectively extends the scope of Chinese comparative scholarship dealing with Dewey.

In his "Zhuangzi and Thoreau: Wandering, Nature, and Freedom," Carl J. Dull demonstrates the critical concern with human engagement with nature shared by Zhuangzi and Thoreau, holding that for each thinker, the manner in which we engage nature is largely indicative of how we engage life in general. Asserting that neither thinker presents a coherent framework of experience, Dull argues that their similar attitudes toward nature indicate a shared concern with human experience in general. Dull then places their attitudes toward nature in relation to their attitudes toward language, social conformity, and the danger of politics, with the benefit that both philosophers see in the virtue of wandering serving as something of a thematic thread.

Dull thus helps us to build connections between Chinese Daoist and American Transcendentalist philosophies.

Daoism and American philosophy are again brought into conversation by Michael L. Raposa in his “Musement as Listening: Daoist Perspectives on Peirce.” Raposa argues that Daoist “listening” and Peircean musement are both to be regarded as a disciplined form of attentiveness, directed to phenomena both external and internal to the one who pays attention. By attending to no predetermined thing, a person thus disciplined is “ready” for the encounter with what might otherwise remain unperceived in his or her experience, prepared to listen to voices that might otherwise remain mute. According to Raposa, despite the obvious differences between a Daoist world view and Peirce’s vague theism, both supply a context within which this kind of attentiveness can be judged to be religiously significant. Scholars of philosophy of religion may find Raposa’s comparative engagement of Daoism and Peircean pragmatism particularly compelling.

In his “Emptiness, Selflessness, and Transcendence: William James’s Reading of Chinese Buddhism,” John Kaag offers readers an especially personal glimpse into the mind of James. Kaag explores marginalia made in James’s personal copies of Buddhist texts, showing that James was particularly attracted to the notions of selflessness and transcendence found in Chan and Pure Land Buddhism. Kaag argues that not only do James’s marginalia help one to draw connections between these forms of Buddhism, but they furnish a fuller picture of James’s ethical philosophy. To take a cue from Raposa, we might say that Kaag shows how “listening” to philosophers’ private ruminations can enrich our understanding of philosophers and philosophies alike.

In my “Loyalty in the Teachings of Confucius and Josiah Royce,” I offer a comparative account of the centrality of loyalty in the philosophies and pedagogies of Confucius and Josiah Royce. Focus is given to the importance of concepts of *zhong* (“loyalty,” “other-regard,” or “dutifulness”) and *xiao* (“filial piety” or “filiality”) in Confucius’s *Analects* and to the concepts of loyalty and loyalty to loyalty in Royce’s *The Philosophy of Loyalty*. I argue that for both Confucius and Royce, the theoretical is continuous with the practical. While loyalty holds a significant place in their ethical and social philosophies, it is also integral to their interactions with disciples and students. Through the centrality of loyalty in the thought and action of Confucius and Royce, we can come to see compelling similarities between the two, while acknowledging what makes each thinker and teacher distinct in his own right.

The final contribution to this issue is William Day’s “*Zhenzi* and Acknowledgment in Wang Yangming and Stanley Cavell.” Day contends that while much interest in Wang Yangming revolves around his

descriptions of how one comes to embody real knowing, what stands in the way of real knowing is oneself, so that ordinary knowing is less a positive form of knowing than a form of self-deception, and its giving way to real knowing requires a kind of therapy on the self. Moreover, such a diagnosis is advanced by Stanley Cavell, in his discussion of the form of life appropriate to our engaged life with others, what he calls “acknowledging.” Day’s article observes and deepens the sympathies between Wang’s and Cavell’s notions of knowing. Moreover, on the basis of his comparative engagement with Cavell, Day recommends an alternative understanding of Wang’s doctrine than that recently advanced in scholarly literature.

This special issue has benefited from the influence and input of several individuals. It is possible that it would never have been conceived if not for the aforementioned scholarly provocations of Chung-ying Cheng, and Joseph Grange, each of whom have proven to be enthusiastic advocates of work in comparative philosophy bridging Chinese and American traditions. Equally indispensable was the invitation from Sor-hoon Tan, on behalf of the International Society for Comparative Studies of Chinese and Western Philosophy, for drafts of four of the six articles contained herein to be presented at the December 27–30, 2009 meeting of the Eastern-APA. The success of this collaboration reinforced the notion that such a collection of articles would be of service to comparative philosophical scholarship. Finally, this issue could not have come to fruition without the invitation, encouragement, and feedback of the Managing Editor of this journal, Dr. Linyu Gu. Her tireless efforts and distinct professionalism were sources of inspiration and assurance throughout the development of the issue.

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ENDNOTES

1. See, for instance, David L. Hall and Roger T. Ames, *The Democracy of the Dead: Dewey, Confucius, and the Hope for Democracy in China* (Chicago: Open Court, 1999); Sor-hoon Tan, *Confucian Democracy: A Deweyan Reconstruction* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004); Joseph Grange, *John Dewey, Confucius, and Global Philosophy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006).
2. For a book-length discussion of Dewey’s time in China and its influence on his social-political thought, see Jessica Ching-Sze Wang, *John Dewey in China: To Teach and to Learn* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007).
3. Chung-ying Cheng, “Introduction,” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 36, no. 1 (2009): 1 (emphasis in original).
4. I choose “relative” here because *some* scholarship fitting Cheng’s and Grange’s desired criteria does exist; the problem is that there could be, and should be, an abundance of

such scholarship. Recent book-length examples include Yong Huang, ed., *Rorty, Pragmatism and Confucianism: With Responses by Richard Rorty* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999); Haiming Wen, *Confucian Pragmatism as the Art of Contextualizing Personal Experience and World* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2009).

5. Each of Cheng and Grange has published scholarship on American philosophers, including and going beyond Dewey. See, for instance, Chung-ying Cheng, "Peirce's Probabilistic Theory of Inductive Validity," *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society* 2, no. 2 (1966): 86–112; Chung-ying Cheng, "Charles Peirce's Arguments for the Non-probabilistic Validity of Induction," *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society* 3, no. 1 (1967): 24–39; Chung-ying Cheng, *Peirce's and Lewis's Theories of Induction* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969); Joseph Grange, *Nature: An Environmental Cosmology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997); Joseph Grange, *The City: An Urban Cosmology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999); Joseph Grange, *Soul: A Cosmology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2011).