

Guest Editors' Introduction

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What is Sino-Japanese philosophy? It may simply mean the philosophical movements in China and Japan. As is well known, the term “philosophy” was first translated into Japanese with two ideographic characters, *tetsu* 哲 and *gaku* 學, by NISHI Amane 西周 in early Meiji 明治 period. Since then the term has come into common use in both Japanese and Chinese languages. This indicates that the philosophical developments in Japanese- and Chinese-speaking regions are closely related to each other and should not be overlooked. More importantly, Japanese and Chinese philosophers, particularly the contemporary ones, do not merely receive “Western” philosophy as such but also construct their own or “new” philosophical discourses. This special issue attempts to unveil the insights given by the Sino-Japanese philosophical interchange.

In so doing, instead of confining the interchange to a “comparative” study, which somewhat betrays a kind of “cultural essentialism” and/or nationalism, we believe that a “transcultural” approach may further open up its philosophical potentials. Without upholding a belief of pure “Japanese-ness” or “Chinese-ness,” this special issue is intended to demonstrate a dynamic philosophical confrontation embedded in hybridity rather than homogeneity. After all, *tetsugaku* is not a simple assimilation of either “Western” philosophy or “Chinese” philosophy, particularly Confucianism. It is indeed a dissimilation of various philosophical terms and concepts, which, as a result, leads to a creative hybrid philosophizing.

As seen in the four papers of this special issue, the activity of philosophizing in contemporary Japan is a profound and thought-provoking transcultural movement in line with a dynamic exchange with philosophy in Chinese, including but not limited to Buddhist, Daoist, and Confucian elements. While the research of philosophy in Japanese mainly focuses on its encounter with “Western” philosophy, this special issue offers an alternative yet promising horizon.

With the launch of *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy* in 2001 and the book series of *Dao Companion to Chinese Philosophy* in recently years (both by Springer)

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and their success, Chinese philosophy has again drawn much attention in the academia. In the case of Japanese philosophy, the first academic department was set up in 1995 at Kyoto University; a 1360-page sourcebook was published in 2011 (*Japanese Philosophy: A Sourcebook*, edited by James W. Heisig, Thomas P. Kasulis, and John C. Maraldo, published by University of Hawai'i Press); and *The Journal of Japanese Philosophy*, the first and only peer-reviewed journal in Japanese philosophy, was released in 2013 (editor-in-chief: UEHARA Mayuko, published by the State University of New York Press). We are also planning to launch a book series on Japanese philosophy in the near future.