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## Two Ways of Aesthetic Pluralism: East and West

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- ¶1. In this paper, I am proposing to examine two ways of aesthetic pluralism: East and West. As a paradigm of Western aesthetic pluralism, I will take up Richard Rorty's philosophy and compare and contrast it with East Asian aesthetic pluralism. In *Richard Rorty*[1], David L. Hall characterizes Rorty (along with most other American philosophers) as an aesthetic pluralist. It is a moot question whether most American philosophers including Wilfrid Sellars are indeed aesthetic pluralists. Just the same, I agree with Hall that Rorty is an aesthetic pluralist. What does Hall mean by aesthetic pluralism? And how does this concept fit into the general scheme of relating (or distinguishing) the East to (or from) the West? In *Eros and Irony*,[2] and *The Uncertain Phoenix*,[3] as well as in *Thinking Through Confucius*[4] and *Anticipating China*,[5] Hall distinguishes between two types of order: logical and aesthetic. Hall's distinction is in some sense inspired by F.S.C. Northrop's distinction between concepts by postulation and concepts by intuition, though Hall adapts the Northropian distinction to his own way of distinguishing between substance and process ontology. And Hall is decidedly a champion of process ontology. Hall observes that ancient Greek atomists and sophists, as well as Heraclitus, embraced process ontology only to be eclipsed by the bad Plato the systematizer (as contrasted with the good Plato the ironist) who set the tone for the subsequently predominant logical order of the mainstream of Western philosophy. Hall further notes that process philosophy, though only as a peripheral phenomenon, has recently emerged in the contemporary Western scene, as witness Bergson, Whitehead, American pragmatists (William James in particular), and postmodernists. Hall expresses the view that the claim of Western process philosophy resonates with the theme of ancient Chinese philosophy (notably Taoism and Buddhism): both Western process philosophy and traditional Chinese philosophy exemplify the cluster of aesthetic order, process philosophy, and pluralism. Thus Hall's basic strategy is to help bring about a meeting of East and West via aesthetic order and process philosophy. From his perspective, Rorty fits his scheme perfectly because Hall rightly regards Rorty, who is a pragmatist as well as a

postmodernist, as an aesthetic pluralist. I agree with both Hall's aspirations and his strategy. Just as Newton claimed to be standing on the shoulders of giants, I am proposing to stand on the shoulders of Hall. If by chance Rorty demurs, let him remember the way in which he has recruited, among others, Donald Davidson, Davidson's strong protestation notwithstanding.

- ¶2. In *The Uncertain Phoenix*, Hall says that the mainstream of traditional Western philosophy has been dominated by substance ontology as coupled with the idea of logical order, that is, the idea that one overarching, external principle (whether it be Reason or God) imposes the order on the world. This is a monolithic view, which has found expression in Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Leibniz, Kant, Russell, and Husserl, to name only a few. If the idea of logical order stresses logical consistency, abstraction, comprehensiveness, enclosure, systematic unity, determinism, and finality, then aesthetic order is sensitive to "insistent particularity, novelty, openness, contingency, and creativity." According to Hall and Ames, both orders are necessary and complement each other. However, the aesthetic interest should take precedence over the logical interest if one is to be mindful of the variety, richness and creativity of open-ended human experience. Thus the idea of aesthetic order leads to the idea of process, particularity, and plurality. "Process and particularity are mutually implicative."[\[6\]](#)
- ¶3. Following up on Hall's distinction between logical and aesthetic order, in *Anticipating China* Hall and Ames make the following points. Logical order, typically associated with the mainstream of traditional Western philosophy, is tied up with substance ontology (rest and permanence), the concept of one order, transcendental pretense, search for objectivity and truth, and the method of logical deduction and causal thinking, whereas aesthetic order notably characteristic of the thought of traditional China (read: East Asia) is bound up with process ontology, change and diversity, the spontaneous harmony of myriad things, and the analogical and correlative mode of thinking. Hall and Ames make it abundantly clear that these "typical" characteristics of East and West are not intrinsic to each culture, but are products of contingent conditions of history. Further, these characteristics are by no means exclusive, but there are overlapping features. Eastern thinkers think causally and analytically when it is appropriate to do so.

- ¶4. However, what is important is that Tao, which is an all-pervasive feature of East Asian thought, is not a fixed, transcendent principle; Tao is the very rhythm of the spontaneous harmony of myriad things; the East Asian sense of aesthetic order is not keen on an originative principle or its twin concept of teleology (or the idea of governing purpose, that is, preset purpose or pattern(s)) or the notion of determinism (or the idea of block-universe). Rather, it is alive to the idea of self-organizing and self-renewing of particulars, which is what Chaos "*Hon Tun*" means. Instead of trying to uncover immutable essences, *li* traces out correlated details. If we take aesthetic order as having primacy over logical order, then we are bound to entertain the idea that correlative thinking is more basic than causal thought and metaphors ground literal, scientific language.
- ¶5. Hall and Ames locate an analogue of the Chinese (read: East Asian) sense of aesthetic order in contemporary Western process philosophy, postmodernism, and the new pragmatism. They state as follows:
- Today movements such as process philosophy, postmodernism, and the new pragmatism, by unearthing the analogical, correlative roots of language, have begun to undermine the notion of objectivity as the principal aim of thinking. The priority of change and process, the intuition of manyness, and the plurality of orders these philosophers espouse, signal a return to first order problematic thinking.[\[7\]](#)
- ¶6. By first order problematic thinking is meant the sense of aesthetic order. It is through sharing first order problematic thinking, according to the vision of Hall and Ames, that a meeting of East and West is to be achieved. In the scheme of Hall and Ames, a central figure that is made to emerge is Rorty. If we are to locate a bridge between the East and the West in the contemporary setting following Hall's and Ames' lead, it may be well to do so by looking at how Rorty connects with postmodernism, process philosophy, and the neopragmatism, and then by proceeding to find affinities between each of these philosophies with the general trends of East Asian thought.

- ¶7. In *Die Froeliche Wissenschaft (The Gay Science)*, Nietzsche makes the famous (or notorious) epigrammatic pronouncement that God is dead. This pronouncement should be taken as the proto-postmodernist denial of absolutely given fixed reality, namely, the idea of one order and one world. Nietzsche denies the idea of preset cosmic purpose, the idea of the Truth, and the suggestion that the *Hinterwelt* might exist behind phenomena. Nietzsche countenances the perspectivalist view that "truth is the total of all interpretations." And Rorty's anti-representationalism as coupled with his irenic conceptual pluralism can be easily discerned to have affinities with Nietzschean proto-postmodernism. In fact, one of the many labels that Rorty has invented to demonstrate his would-be solidarity with many and varied groups, and actual and potential (and sometimes unwilling) allies, is the expression "we post-Nietzscheans." Rorty avers that if we give up the idea of God or absolute reality, we may lose what Nietzsche calls "metaphysical comfort" but "we may gain a renewed sense of solidarity" [8] with like-minded fellow beings with whom we share "we-intentions."
- ¶8. One important corollary of Nietzschean perspectivalism is the deconstructionist move to dismantle the idea that there are "transcendentally conditioned" binary pairings, e. g. reality/appearance, being/non-being, male/female, literal/metaphorical, logic/rhetoric, in which the former term is assumed to be necessarily privileged vis-a-vis the latter. What should be noted here, however, is that the deconstructionists do not dispute the concept of the hierarchy of binary pairings. Rather, what they are saying is that the presumed position of privilege in any binary pairing can be reversed.
- ¶9. How does Rorty handle binary oppositions? Rorty is puzzled by the way the deconstructionists get all uptight about binary oppositions. Of course, there are binary oppositions. If there is black, there is white. If there is male, there is female. And so forth. If one member of a given binary pairing is accorded privilege and if we feel uncomfortable about the situation, we can always reweave our web of linguistic usage. We can point out that oppositions are there, and then not take them very seriously. [9] What appears to be Rorty's almost cavalier attitude towards the presumed binary structure of language is an expression of his pragmatism and linguistic pluralism.

- ¶10. Rorty's linguistic pluralism is exemplified by his discussion of incommensurable languages. In chapter two of *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*,[\[10\]](#) Rorty proposes to use the pair of the language of "we terrans" and the language of Antipodeans as a hypothetical example of (mutually irreducible) incommensurable languages. Moreover, Rorty objects to the idea of unified science. The idea of unified science presupposes a fixed hierarchy of languages, the most basic of which is commonly supposed to be the language of physics. This assumption presupposes that the language of physics is what pictures "what is really, real." To be taken in by some such assumption is, however, to fall prey to the Myth of the Given (to use the expression coined by Wilfrid Sellars), which generates foundationalism. And foundationalism is at odds with Rorty's anti-representationalism, which denies the existence of an such reality presumed by metaphysical realism to exist absolutely with its own intrinsic nature antecedently to any language. Rorty's criticism of linguistic and conceptual reductionism, and the Myth of the Given is an essential part of his pluralism-cum-anti-representationalism, which bears cross-cultural features of affinity with Chuang Tzu's outlook.[\[11\]](#) Both Rorty and Chuang Tzu are critics of absolutism, dogmatism, and any form of monolithic conception of Truth.
- ¶11. This leads me to the East Asian scene. I think Hall is absolutely right in suggesting that in China (read: East Asia), binary oppositions play an important and very explicit role in the development of thought. He states, "The role of the ying-yang contraries is central to the rhetoric of Taoism. But these binaries are nominalized in precisely the manner that Rorty suggests."[\[12\]](#) Hall observes:

The Chinese pairing of Being (yu) and Not-Being (wu) is a perfect illustration of this point. Contrary to the Parmenidean contrast which privileges the existential meaning of the copula, wu and yu suggest mere contrast in the sense of the absence or presence of x rather than the existence or non-existence of x. In Chinese, the sense of 'being' overlaps that of 'having' rather than 'existing.'[\[13\]](#)

- ¶12. If Rorty tends to take binary oppositions in a non-serious manner, to the traditional East Asian way of thinking, binary oppositions do not present the "metaphysics of presence." Unlike the deconstructionists, neither Rorty nor the East Asians are bedeviled by the "myth of presence." So, neither Rorty nor the East Asians need to overcome logocentrism or the "metaphysics of presence." If the deconstructionists are still exercised by the language-game and the problematics of old-fashioned logocentrism, neither Rorty nor the traditional East Asians are playing the game. So for both of them, deconstruction is, though for different reasons, a non-issue. (Here I must beg to differ from Hall by not going along all the way with what appears to be his complete assimilation of the East Asian way of handling binary oppositions to Rorty's way.) Call Rorty and the East Asians post-deconstructionist postmodernists. If for Rorty binary oppositions have only pragmatic significance, for the East Asians they tend to complement each other.
- ¶13. Let us turn to the web in which aesthetic order, process philosophy, and pluralism are interwoven. As William James has ably pointed out, there is an intimate connection between radical empiricism (read: aesthetic order) and pluralism. And as Hall aptly suggests, aesthetic order, process, and plurality are mutually implicative. Does it mean that Rorty is committed to process philosophy? Rorty does not openly avow that he is a process philosopher, probably because in his view old-fashioned ontological issues, including substance or process ontology, are outdated and hence uninteresting. However, just because he does not want to face up to the problem, Rorty cannot arbitrarily consign a genuine philosophical problem to oblivion. If Rorty is indeed an aesthetic pluralist, as he seems to be, and if James' and Hall's observations and suggestions are right, as I think they are, then he is willy-nilly committed to process philosophy.
- ¶14. Probably the greatest process philosopher of the twentieth century is A.N. Whitehead. True, Whitehead is not one of the heroes Rorty is wont to flaunt. However, early in his career, Rorty spent a great deal of time poring over Whiteheadian texts. In fact, Rorty's Ph.D. dissertation at Yale was on Whitehead and Aristotle, so it is hard to believe that Rorty has completely disabused himself of the Whiteheadian aesthetic vision. Rorty clearly shares Whitehead's conviction that "the chief danger to philosophy is narrowness in the selection of evidence."<sup>[14]</sup> A major reason why Rorty seems attracted more to aesthetic order than to logical order, and why he prefers strong poets to scientists, is that he associates the creative powers of strong poets with open-ended disclosure of, and appreciation for, subtle nuances of rich and complex varieties of human experience—something which cannot be easily bullied into ready-made pigeon holes of logical order. And Whitehead has become keen on aesthetic order precisely for the reason that scientism seems to be much too narrow for his taste. Even if Rorty may be averse to Whitehead's speculative philosophy, both Rorty and Whitehead are mindful of the need for doing justice to particularity, plurality, and the richness and variety of human experience. This fact also helps explain Rorty's interest in Heidegger and James. But process philosophy has not been an integral part

of the mainstream of traditional Western philosophy. I agree with Hall's interpretation that Anglo-European process philosophers "have more in common with Taoist and Buddhist thinkers than with extant Western philosophic tradition."[\[15\]](#)

- ¶15. If mainstream Western philosophers have accepted substance (rest and permanence) as basic, traditional Eastern process philosophers and their contemporary Western counterparts have taken change as fundamental. In other words, if the process philosophers, East or West, are radical empiricists who rely on intuition, feeling, and immediate experience, the Western substance ontologists have (whether explicitly or implicitly) resorted to theoretical postulation. If immediate apprehension (or "pure experience" to use William James' phrase) reveals what James has aptly termed "booming and buzzing confusion," then even what appears to be ordinary perception of permanent, three dimensionally constructed geometrical objects, involves, as Northrop has observed, an element of postulation, and an aesthetic experience of process is creative, novel, and transitory. As Whitehead phrases the matter, "The creative process is rhythmic: it swings from the publicity of many things to the individual privacy; and it swings back from the private individual to the publicity of the objectified individual."[\[16\]](#) "The novel entity is at once the togetherness of the 'many' which it leaves; ... The many become one, and are increased by one."[\[17\]](#) An aesthetic experience is a unifying moment of many, both past and future, coming together, as evidenced by the dropping sound of a frog into a pond. The locus of an aesthetic experience is the self, which is momentary, transitory, and the very paradigm of process. In the East Asian philosophies, the creative and spontaneous process of many coming together finds expression in Tao. Tao is simply the rhythm of myriad things spontaneously coming together, harmonizing with one another.
- ¶16. Some philosophers have noted striking affinities between Whitehead's principle of universal relativity-the relatedness of actual entities-and the Buddhist notion of dependent co-origination. According to Masao Abe, the Buddhist notion of dependent co-origination implies at least the following four points:
1. All things in the universe are concomitant, conditioned by each other, and interdependent in their origination;
  2. Everything is equally in itself and of itself without one being prior to another;
  3. There is no exception to this interdependence;
  4. Nothing has privileged status.[\[18\]](#)

- ¶17. If there are similarities between Whitehead's notion of the relatedness of actual entities and the Buddhist notion of dependent co-origination, there are also notable differences as well. First, as Northrop has observed, Whitehead's notion of eternal objects is postulational in nature and hence very Western. And I might add that in fact, Whitehead is being inversely Platonic in talking of eternal objects which are ingressive into actual entities. Second, what is more important, even if Whitehead's God is co-extensive with process; nevertheless, on account of God's dipolar nature, God is at once transcendent and immanent, and is the principle of concretion; God may be an actual entity, but unlike other entities which are entirely temporal, God is not an actual occasion. Whitehead's God has privileged status, which is contrary to the Buddhist view, according to which nothing is privileged.
- ¶18. If mainstream Anglo-European (particularly Modern European) philosophy is characterized by the idea of control and manipulation of nature along with the idea of fashioning nature in the image of man conceived as God's surrogate, stress on irenic co-existence of man and nature in East Asian thought has positive ramifications for harmony between man and nature instead of man's control and manipulation of nature; the traditional East Asian thought is in tune with current ecological concerns. A notable exception to the general drift of the mainstream Anglo-European philosophy is Martin Heidegger.
- ¶19. Heidegger is averse to the idea of control and manipulation of nature by man. By distinguishing the meditative from the calculative mode of thinking, Heidegger associates the latter with the idea of control and manipulation. Heidegger's *denken* (the meditative mode of thinking) is related to his openness for Being. What is Heidegger's openness for Being? In his essay entitled "Overcoming the Tradition: Heidegger and Dewey,"<sup>[19]</sup> Rorty says that Heidegger's notion of thought of Being is a Platonic legacy and is a dubious notion. Rorty looks askance at the very crucial distinction between *Sein* and *Seiende*. According to Rorty, to talk of Being (*Sein*) as distinct from beings (*Seiende*) is to be taken in by a Platonic legacy. I think Rorty is mistaken in his interpretation of Heidegger.
- ¶20. In my view, Heidegger's notion of *Sein* resonates with the East Asian notion of Nothingness, and in particular with the Buddhist notion of *Sunyata*. I am not alone in holding such an interpretation. In his interesting book entitled *Eclipse of the Self*,<sup>[20]</sup> Michael E. Zimmerman draws a close parallel between Buddhism and Heidegger. He relates Heidegger's notion of appropriation (*Ereignis*) to the Buddhist notion of dependent co-origination. "Hence, *Ereignis* refers to the mutual appropriating of the elements of the world."<sup>[21]</sup> According to Zimmerman, Heidegger holds the view that the world is constituted by the mutual mirroring of its elements. This interpretation is reminiscent of the well-known metaphor of the jewel net of the god Indra, advanced by the Hua-yen school, into which are set an infinite number of perfect gems illuminating and mirroring one another, symbolizing the dependent co-origination of myriad things. Zimmerman says that for Heidegger, mutual appropriation implies

*Gelassenheit* (releasement). In other words, mutual appropriation means being unlocked or being opened up.<sup>[22]</sup> In this Heideggerian world, instead of being windowless, monads are opening up to one another for mutual illumination and mirroring. Zimmerman reminds us that there is etymological affinity between the word "*Entschlossenheit*" ("resolution") and the word "*Erschlossenheit*" ("disclosedness"), both of which Heidegger uses in *Sein und Zeit*. The word "*entschliessen*" also means opening with a key, that is, unlocking. What Zimmerman is suggesting is that even the "early" Heidegger was virtually "Buddhist" in orientation. Zimmerman concludes, "To follow the Tao and to hearken to the Logos mean "the same:" to be cleared of ego and attuned to the cosmic play which is hidden from the rational intellect."<sup>[23]</sup> In an encouraging sort of transcultural spirit, Zimmerman in effect says that Tao, Logos, *Ereignis*, and Sunyata are virtually "the same," giving expression to "the Void" (or Emptiness).<sup>[24]</sup>

- ¶21. Is Zimmerman's interpretation of Heidegger eccentric? Not at all. In his revealing book entitled *Heidegger's Hidden Sources*,<sup>[25]</sup> Reinhard May documents and discusses Heidegger's philosophy, particularly "the late" philosophy of Heidegger, in relation to East Asian (Chinese and Japanese) philosophies. In the book, the author discusses, *inter alia*, Heidegger's notions of Nothingness (Being), emptiness and clearing, as well as his interest in Dao (Tao). May presents a very convincing argument to the effect that "the late" Heidegger was deeply influenced in both style and substance by Daoist (Taoist) and Zen Buddhist ways of thinking. Heidegger is even quoted as having confessed that, "Nothing ... unlike in the West, is immediately understood in Japan."<sup>[26]</sup> Again, Heidegger is quoted as saying: "This (true) Nothing ... is nothing nugatory (nichts Nichtiges). It belongs to presencing (Being)."<sup>[27]</sup> For Heidegger, Nothing, Being, unconcealedness, the Open and "clearing" hang together and are virtually the same.<sup>[28]</sup> It seems that the relationship between Heidegger and East Asian thought is at least bi-directional. Perhaps Heidegger is a transcultural thinker, in spite of his lack of generosity in acknowledging his debt to the East Asian tradition.
- ¶22. For Heidegger, then, being open for Being (to think, *denken*) is to have a feel for Sunyata, Tao, Logos (in the Heraclitean sense) or Emptiness, which implies loss of one's ego and the disappearance of the subject-object distinction. This is precisely what Northrop means by the undifferentiated aesthetic continuum.<sup>[29]</sup> When William James talks of pure experience as being undifferentiated, he evinces intimations of things Eastern. In spite of his avowal of admiration for James, Rorty simply has no feel for pure experience, let alone for Sunyata. Rorty is not (as yet) as imaginative as James or Heidegger; his imagination does not seem (as yet) to encompass things transcultural.

- ¶23. James is one of Rorty's heroes. James shows a negative attitude toward the idea of block-universe and determinism; James is a radical empiricist-cum-pluralist. James sees an intimate connection between radical empiricism and pluralism. The most crucial concept for James' radical empiricism is that of pure experience.<sup>[30]</sup> Pure experience is the undifferentiated state, before the subject-object distinction arises. Pure experience is the "only primal stuff ... of which everything is composed...."<sup>[31]</sup> "In radical empiricism there is no bedding; it is as if the pieces clung together by their edges, the transitions experienced between them forming their cement."<sup>[32]</sup> James' radical empiricism is the sort of phenomenology which is open to novel particulars, unfettered by preconceived categories. It is evident that Northrop's legendary phrase "the undifferentiated aesthetic continuum" has been inspired by James. The first chapter of Nishida Kitaro's *Zen no Kenkyu (An Inquiry into the Good)* is entitled *junsui keiken* (pure experience); Nishida professes that he owes the title to James. What Northrop refers to as the undifferentiated aesthetic continuum, or what Nishida means by pure experience, is aptly exemplified by Sunyata, or an uncarved wood to which allusion is made in the Tao Te Ching.
- ¶24. What is the relevance of the Jamesian cluster of radical empiricism, indeterminism, and pluralism to Rorty's aesthetic order and the East Asian way of thinking? Radical empiricism implies sensitivity to particularity and novelty not (as yet) captured and harnessed by the network of any conceptual system. Pure experience, ideally conceived, is not filtered through and thus is not determined by any system. Indeterminism implies contingency and pluralism. Contingency and pluralism, taken together, imply genuine possibility of human creativity, unencumbered by any external constraint. And this goal is what exemplars of aesthetic order, East and West, share in common.
- ¶25. It is just that the Eastern notion of Nothingness, whether it be *Tao* or *Sunyata*, is the expression of the most radical form of radical empiricism, indeterminism, and pluralism. If for James, pure experience is in reality a rare, ephemeral, and peripheral sort of experience which only men in semi-coma or newborn babies are assumed to have,<sup>[33]</sup> for the Buddhists and Taoists, pure experience is the very source of human existence from which all sorts of differentiated experience "arise." In the end, pure experience does not seem to have a paramount place in James' scheme; even for James, who according to Northrop, "provides a basis . . . , for understanding the Orient"<sup>[34]</sup> because he is "a genuine empiricist" who is keen on "immediate experience,"<sup>[35]</sup> pure experience could not possibly have the sort of major significance that it does for the East Asians. But why? Quite possibly, his protestation to the contrary notwithstanding, James may feel the constraint of the rationalistic tradition of the West, which, after all, has constituted the mainstream of Western philosophy.

- ¶26. By contrast with James, for the Buddhists, pure experience has central significance. Sunyata is not just relative non-being opposed to being. If non-being were merely opposed to being, it would simply be a being differentiated from another being, thus exemplifying one more duality. If attaining nirvana meant only transcending samsara, thus cutting oneself off completely from samsara, that would be generating another duality. Thus emancipation from samsara means, paradoxically, realizing that nirvana is samsara and samsara is nirvana. Thus Nothingness is not a static state in which one dwells, but the dynamic and endless process of Emptying oneself: Nothingness is not a thing but Nothinging (Emptying oneself), thus approximating the undifferentiated aesthetic continuum. Emptying oneself is the process of getting away from rigidity-siring distinctions, theories, and fixations; Emptying oneself is not being fixated on anything including Buddha. Thus the epigrammatic pronouncement: "Kill the Buddha!" Freedom from any sort of fixation implies Easy and Free Wandering (to borrow the phrase from the *Chuang Tzu*) and infinite possibilities of unencumbered creativity. In the *Tao Te Ching*, the character *p'u* (an uncarved wood) makes its appearance. What is its significance? Since an uncarved wood has no preset patterns, infinite ways in which it could be carved imply contingency and creativity. In my view, James and Rorty, following James' lead, have both aspired to embrace aesthetic order, in the hope of propounding, *inter alia*, a genuinely open and pluralistic universe, genuine human freedom, and creative novelty of human experience. It is just that their aspirations have found more complete expression in the East.

## END NOTES

1. David Hall, *Richard Rorty*, Albany: SUNY Press (1994), 79.
2. David Hall, *Eros and Irony*, Albany: SUNY Press (1982).
3. David Hall, *The Uncertain Phoenix*, New York: Fordham University Press (1987).
4. David Hall and , Roger T. Ames, *Thinking Through--Confucius*, Albany: SUNY Press (1987).
5. David L. Hall and , Roger T. Ames, *Anticipating China: Thinking Through the Narratives of Chinese and Western Culture*, Albany: SUNY Press (1995).
6. David Hall, *Eros and Irony*, Albany: SUNY Press (1982).

- [7.](#) David L. Hall and , Roger T. Ames, *Anticipating China: Thinking Through the Narratives of Chinese and Western Culture*, Albany: SUNY Press (1995), 109.
- [8.](#) Richard Rorty, *Consequences of Pragmatism*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press (1982), 166.
- [9.](#) Richard Rorty, *Philosophical Papers II*, New York: Cambridge University Press (1991), 107-118.
- [10.](#) Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* , Princeton: Princeton University Press (1979).
- [11.](#) I have explored this theme in my paper entitled Kwang S. Lee, [Rorty and Chuang Tzu: Anti-Representationalism, Pluralism and Conversation \(or Resonance of Pipings\)](#), *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 23 1996, 175-192.
- [12.](#) David Hall, *Richard Rorty* , Albany: SUNY Press (1994), 225.
- [13.](#) *ibid.*, 226.
- [14.](#) Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality* , New York: Free Press (1978), 512.
- [15.](#) David Hall, *The Uncertain Phoenix* , New York: Fordham University Press (1987), 182.
- [16.](#) Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality* , New York: Free Press (1978), 229.
- [17.](#) *ibid.*, 23.
- [18.](#) See ch. 7, Masao Abe, [Non-Being and Mu-the Metaphysical Nature of Negativity in the East and the West](#) in W. LaFleur (Ed.), *Zen and Western Thought* Honolulu: University of Hawaii (1989). I have paraphrased Abe's points.
- [19.](#) Cf. Richard Rorty, *Consequences of Pragmatism*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press (1982), 37-59.

- [20.](#) Michael Zimmerman, *Eclipse of the Self* , Athens: Ohio University Press (1981).
- [21.](#) *ibid.*, 236.
- [22.](#) Cf.*ibid.*, 244.
- [23.](#) *ibid.*, 256.
- [24.](#) Cf.*ibid.*, 260.
- [25.](#) Reinhard May, *Heidegger's Hidden Sources: East Asian Influences on His Work*, translated by Graham Parkes, London/New York: Routledge (1996).
- [26.](#) *ibid.*, 25.
- [27.](#) *ibid.*, 24.
- [28.](#) In referring to cross-cultural etymological affinity between the Chinese character "wu" (nothing) and the German word "*Lichtung*" (clearing), May makes the following interesting observation, "*wu* refers to a place that was originally covered in luxuriant vegetation, as in a thicket in a wood, but where trees have been felled so that there is now an open space, a clearing." (32). Here May appeals to Leon Wieger's excellent dictionary entitled Chinese Characters to make this observation.
- [29.](#) See F.S.C Northrop, *The Meeting of East and West* , New York: Macmillan Publishing Co (1946).
- [30.](#) William James, *Radical Empiricism and a Pluralistic Universe* , New York: Green and Co. (1947).
- [31.](#) *ibid.*, 4.
- [32.](#) *ibid.*, 86.
- [33.](#) Cf.*ibid.*, 93.

- [34.](#) F.S.C Northrop, *The Meeting of East and West* , New York: Macmillan Publishing Co (1946), 117.
- [35.](#) *ibid.*, 117.

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