Inter-culturality and Philosophic Discourse

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Edited by

Yolaine Escande, Vincent Shen
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INTRODUCTION

YOLAINE ESCANDE,
VINCENT SHEN AND CHENYANG LI

The theme of this book "Inter-culturality and Philosophic Discourse" responds to a deeper and universal need of philosophizing today in the context of intensive intercultural interaction among all philosophical traditions process of globalization. Meanwhile, there is a world-wide expectation that the emergence of China will lead to innovation not only at the economic level but also at the cultural level, that the best aspects of Chinese culture, including Chinese philosophy, could bring to a world facing the post-modern challenge a sense of profundity. Thus "Chinese philosophy" today not only concerns itself with the sinological study of Chinese thought, but also involves new approaches with philosophical, historical, anthropological, sociological tools modelled in other cultural regions interacting with China. Therefore, the concepts of "philosophy" and "Chinese thought" are transformed, and the boundaries between such domains of thought as "ancient", "modern", "comparative", "cultural" philosophies are becoming blurred, thus benefiting mutual understanding and mutual enrichment.

All the papers presented in this volume are the result of the International Society for Chinese Philosophy's 17th Conference, held at the EHESS, Paris, in July 2011. Different topics were examined under the general theme of "Inter-culturality and Philosophic Discourse: Prospect and Retrospect," such as (1) comparative philosophy: inter-translatability East-West; (2) cultural philosophy; (3) philosophy, art and ethics; (4) value of art and aesthetic appreciation; (5) new philosophical discourses resulting from inter-culturality; (6) openness, self-enclosure, and dialogue with other in Chinese philosophy; (7) theories of knowledge, argumentation, and consensus in Chinese philosophy.

Among all these topics, this volume focuses on the three components that are most crucial for intercultural conversations: inter-translatability, art, and ethics. Instead of opting for a "comparative philosophy" that suggests the superiority of philosophy in comparison with other forms of thought, we have chosen to explore “inter-translatability East-West,” since any dialogue between heterogeneous cultures and systems of thought has to start with translation, as well as the will for and the capacity of mutual understanding. Thus the meaning of “inter-translatability” involves an unending exchange between ever-changing cultures. Art and ethics are the two areas that most obviously link philosophies of the past and the present. Also they constitute a fundamental part of Chinese long-living and practical philosophy. The value of art and aesthetic appreciation, no less than ethics, is at the core of Chinese culture and, indeed, promises a great deal for the future world. This topic corresponds to the main research interests of the host and co-organiser of the conference along with the ISCP, that is, the CRAL. Therefore, the papers selected for publication in this volume are organized in these three categories.

Part One

Given the importance of intercultural dialogue between different philosophical and cultural traditions in the era of globalization in which all traditions reach out to many others, this volume begins with its first part on inter-translatability. In current multilingual conditions the present modes of interaction, intercultural conversation, depend to a very large extent on translation, which is the source of both mutual understanding and misunderstanding between different traditions. A philosophical enquiry into the problem and East-West experience of translatability is thus necessary. This is why we have place inter-translatability in the first part.

Vincent Shen’s chapter gives us a general introduction to intercultural philosophy with a focus on the interpretation and translation of Chinese philosophical texts. In the context of his most recent considerations on the meaning of “globalization,” “multiculturalism,” and “intercultural philosophy,” Vincent Shen proposes viable philosophical strategies of “language appropriation” and “strangification” for the mutual understanding and mutual enrichment of different philosophical traditions. For him, “strangification” means the act of going beyond one’s familiarity to reach out to strangers on linguistic, pragmatic and ontological levels, and he considers “dialogue” as an “act of mutual strangification.” He proposes four hermeneutical principles: the principles of intratextuality and intertextuality, coherence, minimal amendment and maximal reading, applicable to the act of interpretation in both reading and translation.

Then we have J.-M. Schaeffer’s chapter, in which he proposes a theory of cultural transmission. Seemingly focused on art, in fact he is considering more generally the process of cultural transmission, taking art as a sample case. He considers cultural traditions as emerging from the accumulation of transmission processes organized as networks with built-in feedback loops, the dynamics of which governs also the birth, development and death of artistic traditions. For J.-M. Schaeffer, transmission always involves a transmitted content; transmission dynamics comes in various forms such as vertical, oblique, horizontal and retrograding transmissions. Depending on which is the dominant form, the construction of a tradition will follow different lines. Though a tradition always depends on the continuity of the chain of transmission, it is not determined by the latter and therefore still has a possibility of creativity and novelty irreducible to the acts of transmission.

These philosophical considerations on general theories of interpretation and cultural transmission seem to offer the best possible practice in interculturality and inter-translatability. However, misunderstanding is always and everywhere a fact. Thus we come to F. Flahault's chapter on the difficulty for the Chinese people to understand Western culture and hence the misunderstandings between China and the West. Misunderstanding is not only caused by the difference between them, but also by a less visible difficulty among Western academics who hardly grasp the foundations of their own culture, while well-founded self-understanding is crucial for intercultural conversation. Although Western universities favour the study of great philosophers and different philosophical systems, they do not make enough efforts to uncover the common fundamental preconceptions that remain through the centuries. Further, as philosophy is considered a specific discipline, it is separated from other cultural expressions originated from both pagan and Christian traditions. In this self-criticism of Western philosophical and cultural studies, Professor Flahault alerts us to the importance of a well-founded self-understanding, one which is particularly urgent now for Western academics, in order to allow Chinese researchers to properly understand the fundamental features of Western culture, so as to avoid distortion in the inter-cultural dialogue.

After this self-critical reflection on the part of Western philosophy, we move to a more optimistic view in Chungying Cheng's chapter on how Chinese philosophy can make a positive difference to world philosophy. Cheng argues that Chinese philosophy can make a difference on three levels: logical, cosmological, and ethical. On the logical level, Cheng refers to Aristotle and Xunzi to illustrate their philosophical difference: while Aristotle tends to stress categories of thought, Xunzi consistently strives for experience as the basis of conceptual distinctions. On the cosmological level, Cheng refers to Whitehead and the *Yizhuan* to illustrate their common concern in regard to seeing reality as a process of change. However, he would feature *Yizhuang*'s emphasis on novelty deriving from Taiji's creativity, which is different from Whitehead's appeal to the conceptual feelings based on eternal objects transcending all human experience. On the ethical level, Cheng highlights the Confucian *ren* and other virtues, in comparison with Socrates' virtues.

Then we come to a concrete case in modern Chinese Philosophy with He Jinli's chapter on Wang Guowei's critical essay, the *Hongloumeng Pinglun* (Critique of the *Dream of the Red Chamber*). In exploring the idea of tragedy, especially "the third-kind-of-tragedy" in both Wang's and Schopenhauer's works, He Jinli shows the double movement in Wang's appropriation of Schopenhauer, one of application (action) and another of reaction, for and against Schopenhauer's idea of tragedy, with an appeal to traditional Chinese thinking. This paper shows that the encounter with the other, such as Wang's encounter with Schopenhauer's philosophy of tragedy, is also an occasion for the self-aware return to one's own cultural tradition.

The last two chapters of this part focuses on the inter-translatability of two Chinese philosophical concepts: Rafal Banka's is on the concept of *dao*, and M'Bondjo's on the concept of *cheng*. Rafal Banka attempts to show the difficulties in interpreting Chinese ontology, such as the concept of *dao*, from the perspective of Western philosophical thinking. Applying existing Western concepts in translating and understanding Chinese ontological thinking can lead to modifications that would cause misunderstandings of the original ontological intuition. Rafal Banka focuses on the concept of *dao* in the *Dazhuan* and the *Laozi*, in comparison with some examples of interpretation in Western philosophical discourse, in search of some common ground where Chinese and Western philosophies can interact. He calls upon the "indescribable" aspect of the *dao* and Derrida's *Khora* to examine the problems one might encounter and the common ground both sides might share.

This part ends with Maud M'Bondjo's chapter on the concept of *cheng* 誠. *Cheng* has played a significant role in the history of Chinese philosophy. It has been translated in many different ways. Particular attention is paid to the philosophy of Zhou Dunyi (1017-1073), generally considered as the pioneer of the revival of Confucianism in the Song Dynasty. For Maud M'Bondjo, Zhou is the first thinker to raise the notion of *cheng* to a conceptual level, while adopting it as the foundation of his philosophy. From this perspective, Maud M'Bondjo attempts to clarify how the notion of *cheng*, within its own cultural tradition, turns into an exclusive neo-Confucian concept during the Song dynasty; she then goes on to show how, on the intercultural level, *cheng* could become a conclusive example of interculturalism, and, moreover, how it could be translated in a transcultural perspective.

Part Two

The part on ethics includes chapters that investigate the ethical connection in the Chinese philosophical tradition. In "Mencius' Four Sprouts of Virtue and Two-Level Utilitarianism," Byung-do Moon presents a novel interpretation of the ethics of Mencius. Showing how Mencius's four heart/minds as sprouts of virtue are related to the utilitarian method of moral decision, Moon argues that Mencius' ethical theory can be reconstructed into a twofold-structured utilitarianism. On the conventional level a person as a well-trained utilitarian decides intuitively what is right and wrong in accordance with the rules of *li*. The second or reflective level requires ethical deliberation under three conditions. The first is when two rules within the set of general rules of *li* are, in rare cases, in conflict and there is no given solution device within the existing set of rules itself. Second, when one encounters highly unusual cases in which one questions whether the general rules of *li* fit in the specific situation. Third, and most important of all, is when, for practical use in actual (not fantastic) situations, one tries to choose general rules of *li* modelled after rules governing ideal family life. Or when one tests the validity of the rules of *li* questioned, facing a reformer or a rival philosopher who tries to renovate a certain part of the existent rules of *li*. Thus, a utilitarian interpretation sheds new light on Mencius' ethical theory.

In her chapter of "From Environmental Ethics to the Ethics of Life: Cross-Cultural Dialogue on Zhuangzi," Jiang Dandan focuses on Zhuangzi's ethics of life from an ecological perspective and reconstructs a cross-cultural dialogue around the philosophy of Zhuangzi. She explores the ethical implications of some of Zhuangzi's theses, such as the practice of "inaction", the priority of "naturalness", the choice of "return", the principle of "blandness", and compares them with Michel Henry's "phenomenology of life" and then with Pierre Hadot's "spiritual exercises." From this perspective, she articulates a reinterpretation of Zhuangzi's "self-cultivation" and "care for life". Drawing upon these contemporary French philosophers, the author reexamines Zhuangzi's significance for a possible passage from environmental ethics to the ethics of life. In this way, Jiang explores a potentially helpful approach to the "ecology of mind."

The chapter by Wing-cheuk Chan, "Mou Zongsan's Typology of Neo-Confucianism: Its Hidden Sources," focuses on a major founder of contemporary Neo-Confucianism. Mou Zongsan revolutionized the study of neo-Confucianism by introducing the threefold typology of Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism. According to Mou, besides the School of Principle (*li*) as represented by Zhu Xi (1130-1200) and the School of Mind (*xin*) as represented by Lu Xiangshan (1139-1193) and Wang Yangming (1472-1529), a third lineage was formed by Hu Wufeng (1105-1162) and Liu Zongzhou (1578-1645). No study, however, has been conducted to identify the possible sources of Mou's argument. Chan argues that there are some hidden sources of this provocative typology. First of all, it can be traced to the influence from the early Heidegger's idea of the threefold transcendence (or difference) in his manuscripts for the second volume of *Being and Time*. Secondly, to some extent, Heidegger's distinction of three types of ethics also contributes to Mou's classification of Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism. All this will not only uncover Heidegger's decisive influence upon Mou other than his appreciation of Heidegger's interpretation of Kant's schematism, but also give rise to a deeper understanding of the distinction between the early and the later Zhu Xi.

The next chapter "The Chinese Culture as Ethical and National Spirit in Some Works of Liang Shuming" is authored by Victor Vuilleumier. The author argues that Liang's philosophical purpose is the "spiritualization" and "moralization" of society with an ethical action, and this is matched by the form of Liang's analysis of culture and of his cultural discourse. Liang Shuming advocates a cultural philosophy, which essentially aims at recapturing a specific cultural spirit in the mode of action expressed by a particular national history. Liang's cultural philosophy is not interested in the analysis of the development of different cultures and their mutual relations, nor in establishing any "objective" overall view of the culture in a scientific anthropological way. For Liang, this would fall under the category of the "pure reason" (*lizhi*), and not of the practical reason (*lixing*) for which he seeks. This way of thinking on the Chinese culture and history represents one of the characteristics displayed by the modern New Confucianism in the 20th century.

In the final chapter of this part, Wang, Wen-Sheng's "Divinity and Beauty in Process of Indication – A Phenomenological Approach" presents a comparative study of Chinese ethic-ontological thought with Heidegger. This chapter explicates Heidegger's phenomenological method, formal indication, as a way in which divinity and beauty for Heidegger obtain their authentic meaning, and compares it to Husserl's phenomenological method, which is manifested in the constitution of signs

(*Zeichen*) instead of that of indications (*Anzeichen*). The author shows that indications are different from signs, because indications not only serve as equipment but also as symbol, which aims at disclosing Being. Then the author turns to Chinese philosophy and further discusses how divinity and beauty are manifest in the process of indication. Through a review of Tang Junyi's interpretation of Chinese image language, the author makes a refreshing comparison with Heidegger. This chapter extends from ethics and ontology to aesthetics. As such, it serves as a nice transition to the next part of this volume on Chinese aesthetics.[1]

Part Three

The part on aesthetics deals not only with inter-culturality and inter-translatability East-West, but also with exchanges between several research fields, and with inter-culturality across historical periods. All the chapters involve hermeneutics, taken in the sense of reconsidering traditional issues, applying a contemporary methodology. The first essay, Yolaine Escande's "Chinese Aesthetics: a Hermeneutical Approach," introduces, in a general discussion, some of the main issues encountered in Chinese aesthetics at the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century, starting with the question of mutual understanding. Concepts such as "the arts", "aesthetics", "painting" etc., that everyone has in mind, seem to have a clear meaning but actually, when considered in an inter-cultural dialogue, they may lead to erroneous representations, false ideas or, even worse, in some cases, to tacking Western thought onto Chinese theory. Therefore the essay tries to establish a method in order to avoid such errors and to enable a possible dialogue between East and West in the field of aesthetics.

This kind of dialogue is not new, and until now it has led to some fruitful *mis*understandings, like those pointed out by Wan Xiaoping in his essay "Zhu Guangqian on Wang Guowei's Theory of Poetical States: A Reappraisal." This study on Zhu Guangqian's (1897-1986) reading of Wang Guowei (1877-1927) leads to a multi-levelled understanding of inter-translatability in aesthetics. On the first level is Wang Guowei's understanding of Kant, Burke and Schopenhauer concerning the beautiful and the sublime, based on some misreadings; on the second level is Zhu Guangqian's understanding of Wang Guowei. These lead to a re-examination of traditional Chinese aesthetic categories as *qingjing*

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[1] We would like to thank Mr. Rohan Sikri for his assistance with copyediting chapters in the Ethics part.

jiaorong, “interfusion of feeling and scene,” using the prism of Western scientific methods of the first half of twentieth Century China. These multi-layered misreadings have in turn led to a general misunderstanding of Zhu Guangqian’s thought, which this essay attempts to clarify.

The following three essays are concerned with fertile inter-cultural dialogue on aesthetics. Sandra A. Wawrytko’s “Aesthetic Principles of Epistemological Awakening: Juxtapositioning (Bi 比 and Xing 興) in Bashō’s Haiku Pedagogy” highlights a dialogue between the twentieth-century Chinese neo-Confucian philosopher Li Zehou and the seventeenth-century Japanese Buddhist poet Bashō (1644-1694), using tools provided by modern hermeneutics. The chapter demonstrates that aesthetics is a transformative component of philosophy and proves crucial for understanding Buddhist philosophy, especially in haiku poetry, as inspired by the Chinese poetic tradition of contrapositioning, perfected by the Japanese literary master Bashō. The chapter helps to clarify the distinct goals and methodologies of Confucian and Buddhist philosophies with reference to Li Zehou’s theory of sedimentation.

The study by Jérôme Pelletier *et al.*, “Brushstrokes with Emotion,” puts into practice inter-culturality across different research fields, and between heterogeneous aesthetic theories, with promising results. The chapter matches experimental protocols from psychophysics and affective neurosciences, applied to Chinese calligraphy and pictorial arts, with the theoretical tradition of Chinese graphic arts. The hypothesis in this reflection is that emotions play a fundamental dynamic role in our relationship to works of art, especially in graphic arts such as painting. The study draws upon the Chinese calligraphic tradition in order to examine emotional strategies involved in brushstrokes, and to study their effects on non-Chinese viewers. The first results of such a study show that the emotionality invested by the calligrapher in a brushstroke can be perceived by non-specialists. This sheds new light on a centuries-old tradition.

Park So-Jeong’s chapter “Sound, Tone, and Music in Early China: The Philosophical Foundation of Chinese Sound Culture,” discusses the validity and meaning of Confucian musical aesthetic categories from the pre-Qin period. The hermeneutical approach allows the author to undertake a close study of what has often been called the “ritual and music” discourse while taking care not to defend an anachronistic viewpoint or a vision of the discourse as a monolithic whole or unitary system. Indeed, the author shows through the study of Confucian pre-Qin sources on music and ritual that there was no monopoly of musical norms; it points out some shortcomings and enables an understanding of a musically-rich culture from the distant past.

The last two essays concern inter-culturality in the field of landscape. The topic of landscape is examined from two very different viewpoints, methodologies and objectives. “Landscape culture” is one of the most representative elements of Chinese culture, and its importance is fundamental in aesthetics. But landscape is also an important issue and research field in Western thought, especially in phenomenology. Antonio Mezcua López’s “Struggles for Power: The Relation between Entertainments, Sports and Landscape Design in the Song Dynasty” can be seen to follow a deconstructionist approach to Chinese garden culture with the aim of demonstrating that the common representation of Chinese landscape culture is built on a false conception of the garden. The notion of the garden, upon which modern scholars, both Western and Chinese, have constructed the image of an ideal, spiritual Chinese civilization, has been dismantled in the past two decades by several scholars. But the essay in fact closely examines several activities practiced inside the traditional Chinese garden that can be described as “sports” and that have not attracted much attention up to now. This study uses a hermeneutical approach to show the importance and the role of such activities in Song dynasty Chinese culture—one that has had considerable influence on later Chinese culture—whereas, since the late nineteenth century, most Western scholars have ignored Chinese practices similar to sports in Western civilization.

Huang Kuan-Min’s chapter “Passage in and from Landscape” deals with the question of the dynamic experience of landscape by the moving body. The concept of landscape that has emerged in Europe usually belongs to several quite different fields, notably geography, architecture, and painting. In this tradition, theories of landscape emphasize the subject-object relationship, which the author considers inappropriate to render the experience of landscape. The chapter adopts a hermeneutical approach, based on a phenomenological descriptive methodology, in order to grasp the living part of landscape, which is at once outside and inside the one who experiences it.

All in all, chapters in this volume help us understand various inter-cultural issues that are important to the world today. It is our hope that their voices will contribute the on-going inter-cultural discourse in the increasingly globalized age of the twenty-first century.

PART I:

INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE/ INTER-TRANSLATABILITY

CHAPTER ONE

INTERCULTURAL PHILOSOPHY AND THE INTERPRETATION OF CHINESE PHILOSOPHICAL TEXTS

VINCENT SHEN

1. From Comparative Philosophy to Intercultural Philosophy

In the past, comparative philosophy was limited to the studies of similarities and differences between two or several philosophers, philosophical systems or traditions. Even if doing comparative philosophy in this manner could lead to a kind of relativism in philosophy, and thereby de-absolutize the truth of any philosophical discourse, it would not really help self-understanding, not to say mutual understanding, and would not contribute much to the practice of philosophizing itself. Quite often comparative philosophy was done in the service of a nationalism that claimed the superiority of its own philosophy over those of other nations, and/or through the looking glass of an orientalism that imposed its own conceptual framework on the scholars of the colonized areas to look at their own cultural and philosophical traditions and to understanding its own tradition thereby.

Nowadays, different cultural and philosophical traditions are meeting each other in the process of globalization. I define 'globalization' as "a historical process of border-crossing, in which human desire, human interconnectedness and universalizability are to be realized on this planet as a whole, and to be concretized in the present as global free market, trans-national political order and cultural glocalism."[1] This historical process pushes all peoples of the world beyond themselves to meet many others. In fact there is no place where there is no presence of many others.

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[1] Vincent Shen, "A Book Review of Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri's *Empire*" in *Universitas: Monthly Review of Philosophy and Culture,* Number 361, Taipei, June, 2004, 109–112.

In this situation, we should work toward a dialogue of/for mutual understanding and enrichment. Without these things, we may well find ourselves in situations of vehement conflict and violent confrontation, with all the suffering that this entails.

We live now in an age of global multiculturalism, in which there is an urgent quest for cultural identity and respect for cultural difference, which needs, as Charles Taylor proposes, ‘politics of recognition.’[2] Indeed, multiculturalism means for me, at the outset, that each and every culture has its own cultural identity, and that each should respect the other’s cultural difference; then, it should mean, above all, mutual enrichment by cultural exchange and the unceasing search for the universalizable elements embodied in various cultural traditions.[3] As I see it, Charles Taylor’s “mutual recognition” presupposes the idea of intersubjectivity which itself is the extension of the philosophy of subjectivity so much cherished by modern European philosophy. For me, it is now time to move from the minimalist “mutual recognition” to an optimal “mutual enrichment.” Knowledge of the different ways of doing philosophy in different cultural traditions could enrich our vision of the multi-layered and multi-faceted nature of reality. Any philosophy capable of facing this challenge has to include within itself an intercultural dimension. In view of the times in which we live, then, it is now time to move from comparative philosophy toward intercultural philosophy.

The real objective of doing intercultural philosophy is to contrast rather than simply compare different philosophical traditions,[4] so as to find the universalizable elements within them and to lead to their mutual-enrichment. I understand ‘contrast’ as the rhythmic and dialectical interplay between difference and complementarity, continuity and discontinuity, by which universalizablility could be made manifest. For example, ancient Greek philosophy concerns itself more with theoretical universalizability (*theoria*), while Chinese philosophy concerns itself more with practical universalizability (*praxis*). Nevertheless, both of them try to go beyond particular interests and to transcend the limit of particularity towards a universalizable value. In a certain sense, both of these philosophies target universalizability, and in this light *theoria* and *praxis* might be seen as complementary.

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[2] Charles Taylor, “Politics of Recognition,” in *Multiculturalism*, edited and introduced by A. Gutmann, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994, 25–36.

[3] Vincent Shen, *From Politics of Recognition to Politics of Mutual Enrichment*, in *The Ricci Bulletin 2002*, Taipei: Taipei Ricci Institute for Chinese Studies, number 5, February 2002, 113–125.

[4] I have worked out a philosophy of contrast in my works, especially in my *Essays in Contemporary Philosophy East and West*, Taipei: Liming Publishing, 1985. There, ‘contrast’ was defined as the rhythmic and dialectical interplay between difference and complementarity, continuity and discontinuity, which leads eventually to the real mutual-enrichment of different agents, individual or collective, such as different traditions of religion or philosophy.

2. Epistemological Strategies useable in Intercultural Philosophy and Dialogue

Let us now consider the epistemological strategies we can adopt in order to achieve an effective intercultural philosophy and intercultural dialogue. I will propose two consecutive strategies here: language appropriation and strangification.

First, language appropriation means learning the language or discourse of other philosophical traditions. From early childhood, learning language leads to the construction and understanding of meaningful worlds. As Wittgenstein says, different language games correspond to different life-forms, therefore the appropriation of other’s language would give us access to the life-form implied in that specific language. By appropriating the different languages of different cultural/philosophical/religious traditions, we can enter into the different life-worlds of many others and thereby enrich the construction of our own world.

By the second strategy, *waitui* 外推 (strangification), I mean the act of going beyond oneself to many others, from those with whom one is familiar to strangers, from one’s cultural/philosophical world to many others’ cultural/philosophical worlds.[5] Strangification could be practiced on three levels: linguistic, pragmatic and ontological, as I have developed elsewhere.[6] Upon them, I conceive “dialogue” as a process of mutual strangification.

These two strategies could help us to avoid both radical relativism, which amounts to a contradiction in affirming its validity by claiming that everything is absolutely relative; and absolute universalism, which doesn’t work in the human world constituted by historicity. In the historical process, what one can do is extend the universalizability implicit in one's own tradition and look for mutual enrichment by way of language appropriation and strangification.

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[5] Given this term means the act of reaching out to strangers, even if it looks a bit strange in English, I still want to keep it in honor of the root “stranger” in it.

[6] These three strategies, originally developed by F. Wallner for the use only in the area of interdisciplinary research, have been extended and developed by myself to the areas of intercultural exchange and religious dialogue. See my *Confucianism, Taoism and Constructive Realism*, Vienna: Vienna University Press, 1994, and my *Duibi, waitui yu Jiaotan* (Contrast, Strangification and Dialogue), Taipei: Wunan, 2003; and *Kuawenhua Zhexue yu Zhongjiao* (Essays on Intercultural Philosophy and Religion), Taipei: Wunan, 2012.

In the context of intercultural philosophy, I conceive philosophical dialogue as a process of mutual *waitui* 外推 (strangification). This proceeds on three consecutive levels, as follows: On the level of linguistic strangification, cultural/philosophical tradition A (abbreviated as TA) should translate its propositions or ideas/values/belief system into a language understandable to cultural/philosophical tradition B (abbreviated as TB). Meanwhile, TB should translate its propositions or ideas/values/belief system into language/discourse understandable to TA. If they are still valid there, this would mean they have larger universalizability. In the case that one's ideas/values/belief system becomes absurd or unintelligible after the translation, then one should examine one's own principle and methods, rather than hold that others are wrong.

On the level of pragmatic *waitui* 外推 (strangification), TA should draw its propositions, supposed truths/cultural expressions/value/religious beliefs out from its own social, organizational contexts and put them into the social, organizational context of TB, to see whether they could still work there. Meanwhile, TB should draw its propositions, supposed truths/cultural expressions/value/religious beliefs out from its own social, organizational context and put them into the social, organizational context of TA. If they still can work there, this would mean they has larger universalizability. In the case that they become unacceptable and cannot work, one should examine them rather than hold that others are wrong.

On the level of ontological *waitui* 外推 (strangification), TA should make effort to enter into TB's micro-world, cultural world or religious world through the detour of his experience with Reality Itself, such as a person, a social group, Nature, or the Ultimate Reality. Meanwhile, TB should also make effort to enter into TA's micro-world, cultural world or religious world through making a detour from its own experience of Reality Itself.

Dialogue in the form of mutual *waitui* 外推 (strangification) is more fundamental than Habermas's notion of communicative action as argumentation. For me, the Habermasian argumentation presupposes a previous effort of *waitui* 外推 (strangification) in expressing one's proposal(s) in the other's language or in a language understandable to the other, without which there will be no real mutual understanding and no self-reflection in the process of argumentation. Habermas' four ideal claims of understandability, truth, sincerity and legitimacy will not work in the real world without previous mutual *waitui* 外推 (strangification): I think I'm sincere, but you think I am a hypocrite; I think I'm telling the truth, but you consider that absurd; and, since a commonly acceptable norm doesn't exist yet, or since the law to legitimize is still an issue under debate, there is no accepted legitimacy so to speak.[7]

Chinese Philosophy encourages strangification, as we find in the Confucian concepts of *shu* (恕) *and tui* (推), Buddhist concepts of *geyi* (格義) and *huixiang* (迴向) and Daoist idea that 'the more the sage gives to others the more is his life enriched." We also find the idea of "many others" in Chinese philosophy, instead of the concept of "the Other" expounded in the philosophy of Lacan, Levinas, Derrida, Deleuze etc., that presupposes an implicit dualism between Self and Other. The Daoist idea of "milliard things," the Buddhist concept of "all sentient beings," and the Confucian idea of "five relations," are all telling us that we are born into and grow up among many others.

3. Intercultural Philosophy's Hermeneutics for Philosophical Texts

How should one interpret philosophical texts in general, and Chinese philosophical texts in particular, in the context of intercultural philosophy? My hermeneutics for interpreting philosophical texts is based on what I call a "dynamic contextualism" that takes the meaning of a term, a sentence, a paragraph in the context of it's relation with other terms, sentences and paragraphs, and the situation of a term in the sentence, the sentence in the paragraph, and the paragraph in the texts…etc., in the dynamic unfolding of the meaning of a text. In a certain sense, this is inspired by Schleiermacher's concept of the "whole-part" circle, wherein the more one understand the parts, the more one understand the whole; and the more one understand the whole, the more one understand the parts. Thus, the second canon of Schleiermacher's grammatical interpretation reads "the meaning of every term in one paragraph should be determined in terms of the context in which it appears."[8] For example, when reading Plato's dialogues, the more one understands each word, sentence, paragraph etc., the more one understands the whole dialogue; while the more one understands the whole dialogue, the more exactly one understands the meaning of each word and sentence. And again, if one understands other works of Plato, and even when one is able to extend one's understanding to other works related to Plato, then one's understanding of a particular dialogue of Plato will be even better.

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[7] See also Vincent Shen, *Chuantong de zaisheng* (*Rebirth of Tradition*), Yeqiang Press, 1992, 78–79, where I point out that Habermas' argumentative consensus presupposes a pre-linguistic, tacit consensus; and *Duibi, waitui yu jiaotan* (Contrast, Strangification and Dialogue), Taipei: Wunan, 172–173, where I argue the effectiveness of Habermas' communicative action presupposes the act of strangification in order to achieve mutual understanding.

For me, the acts of both writing and reading belong to the process of expressing and interpreting, and can therefore be seen as a pragmatic movement. While an author creates a meaningful piece of work, his readers interpret its meaning. However, both writing and interpreting should allow the movement of words, sentences, paragraphs, sections and the whole text involved, to develop a dynamic process of meaning unfolding in a dialectics of whole and part.

This way of reading the movement of a text differs from the reading by key words, key concepts or key sentences. The later way of reading picks out some major concepts and propositions that proceed to dominate or at least to lead the reading of the whole text. However, when attention is paid only to some key concepts and key propositions, the pragmatic movement of the text is somehow neglected, and attention is not paid' to the different layers of the textual meaning.

Dynamic contextualism applies also to the process of translation, which is an urgent issue in today's globalizing world, and indeed crucial for the mutual understanding and mutual enrichment envisaged by an intercultural hermeneutics. Originally, *hermeneuia*, the Greek term for interpretation, means: to say, to explain and to translate. To say is to mediate between thought and language. To explain is to mediate between what is said and the reason why it is said. To translate is to mediate between one form of language and another form of language. It is true that any meaningful expression, be it in the form of images, sounds, writing or speech, always involve some basic activities of understanding and interpretation. In the case of translation, a language other than the original (for example, English) is used to tell its understanding and interpretation of the original language (say, Chinese) in order to make it understandable to people in another linguistic and cultural context. The exchange between peoples of different languages and cultures requires a dialogical process that involves what I call 'language appropriation' and 'mutual strangification,' by which a person goes beyond the language and culture that is familiar to them, to learn to express their ideas/values/beliefs in a language understandable to others, and others should do likewise with regard to them. Thus I understand "translation" as an essential component of strangification.

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[8] F. Schleiermacher, *Hermeneutics: The Handwriting Manuscripts*, Montana: Scholars Press, 1977, 127–129.

4. First Level Principles: Four General Principles of Interpretation

I will now discuss the four general principles of interpretation that belong to the first level of principles, before entering into hermeneutic principles of a more specialized nature. The following four general principles of interpretation, applicable to all philosophical texts of the East and the West, are to be practiced consecutively, which means that the latter rules presuppose the former:

First, the principle of intratextuality and intertextuality, where the principle of intratextuality precedes that of intertextuality: the meaning of a text must be completely contained within, and extractable from, the text itself and only that text. Taking the *Zhuangzi* as an example, all possible meanings of the texts in the *Zhuangzi* should be read only from the text present to us, not to be imposed on the text by theories or views outside of the text. In the case of a corrupted text that invites revision or correction, this should be done only with support from other texts, either newly discovered ones or texts from other contexts. For me, only with the support of intratextuality can we proceed to what J. Kristeva calls "intertextuality," which means the vertical and horizontal relations of a specific text with other texts.[9] I agree with Kristeva that each text is constituted from its reference to many other texts and is itself an absorption and/or transformation of other texts. Each text is resulted from a continuous dialogue among its author, its ideal readers and external texts, that could be read horizontally (author and readers) and vertically (previous textual traditions). However, the decisions about intertextuality and the proper horizontal and vertical relations always depend on the intratextual meaning constituent of all texts thus concerned.

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[9] Julia Kristeva,"Word, Dialogue and Novel", in *The Kristeva Reader,* edited by Toril Moi, Oxford: Blackwell, 1986, 36-37. Notice Kristeva says, "À la place de la notion d'intersubjectivité s'installe celle *d'intertextualité,* et le langage poétique se lit, au moins, comme *double*". Cf. Julia Kristeva, « Le mot, le dialogue et le roman », in *Recherches pour une sémanalyse.* Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1969, 146.

Second, the principle of coherence: a philosophical work should have its own coherence. This so-called “coherence” means that, on the negative side, a text should be able to avoid holding self-contradictory or self-oppositional views; on the positive side, the concepts, ideas and propositions proposed in the work should constitute a reasonable whole. We may presume that a philosophical text with a higher degree of coherence is philosophically more significant and valuable than a text with a lesser degree of coherence. A great classical philosophical text with lasting impact must be a text of great coherence. On the other hand, a text, fragmentary or not, containing inconsistency and contradiction, though it might still have great historical value, does not have great philosophical value. Of course, we should leave texts as they are; if there is contradiction, let them be read as contradictory; if there is incoherence, let them be read as incoherent. If indeed a text is found illogical, contradictory and incoherent, let it be read as such. Thus, even though it may have great historical value, it should be deemed as having less philosophical meaning accordingly, except in case where the text is playing with dialectics, such as Laozi’s notion that right words can be said in seeming contradiction, or when contradiction is shown among the appearances to illustrate the absolute otherness of the Ultimate Reality. Except in the case when the text itself is contradictory or fragmentary (intratextuality), or is shown to be thus by other texts (intertextuality), a deliberate reading of a text as contradictory or fragmentary is against the principle of charity.

Third, the principle of minimum amendment: when reading a text, Chinese or otherwise, there should be no impulsive correction of the original. In case the text says things that differ from our own theory or our imagined view of the text, it is our theory or view that needs to be corrected in light of the text, rather than correcting the text to conform to our theory or view.

Fourth, the principle of maximal reading: when all the principles described above, that is, the principle of intratextuiality and intertextuality, the principle of coherence, and the principle of minimal amendment, are all followed, we may maximize our reading of the meaning of the text in question and to interpret the text in a way so as to obtain a maximal degree of meaningfulness. The degree of meaningfulness of a philosophical text is judged according to the principle of meaning saturation. This is to say, when we have read the reading of a text intratextualy/intertextually, coherently, and with minimal amendment, we may try to obtain the maximal degree of saturation of meaning in interpretation. It is in the nature of human beings to be always hungry for meaningfulness, and to aim for the most satisfactory answers that can be obtained critically through philosophy. If we are doing research into the history of philosophy, the first three principles (intratextuality/intertextuality, coherence, and minimal amendment) might suffice. However, if we are doing philosophical interpretation and philosophizing on a text, the principle of maximal reading is needed.

5. Second Level: Respect the Special Nature of a Philosophical Tradition

Besides the first level principles applicable to all texts, when we deal with Chinese philosophical texts, we have to respect their special nature. Generally speaking, in comparison with Western philosophy's preference for conceptual analysis, Chinese philosophy employs the use of metaphors; in contrast to Western philosophy's concern with argumentation, Chinese philosophy uses narratives to communicate its ideas. Since metaphors and narratives are all put into words in the pragmatic process of speaking and listening, writing and reading, in which meaningful discourses are produced, they must be understood also in terms of dynamic contextualism.

Ancient Chinese philosophers, when seeking enlightenment and insight into Reality Itself/Ultimate Reality by speculative reason, tend to form a kind of Original Image-Ideas, something between Pure Idea and Iconic/sonoric Image, such as *tian* 天 (heaven), *dao* 道 (the Way), *xin* 心 (Heart),…etc., keeping thereby the holistic character of the manifestation or the intuitive reception of Reality Itself. These Idea-Images are seen as expressive and evocative of, though never exhausting of, the richness of Reality Itself and therefore given the status of metaphor. Chinese artistic creativity, by means of *poietic* transformation and creative imagination, would render the Idea-Image into a sort of concrete iconic/sonoric image and thereby materialize it. In moral and ethical actions, the practical function of reason would bring the Idea-Image into the judgment of events and the intervention of one's own action into the course of events and thereby takes responsibility. In narrating histories, the function of historical reason is to reveal human historicity and existential meaning implicit in the historical events, and their plots in the historical account. Indeed, telling our own stories to others and listening to others' stories bring us hope that they may reveal to us the meaning of existence and eventually Ultimate Reality, though always in a metaphorical way. Compared with the Original manifestation of Reality Itself, these three ways of realization in Idea-Image possess an *As*-structure in the sense that they allow us to see Reality Itself *as* Idea-Images, the later thereby serving a certain metaphorical function.

By contrast, in Western philosophy, as I see it, the pre-Socratic philosophers such as Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Heraclitus etc., still keep a very intimate relation with the original Ideas-Images, in relating, for example, the ideas of *Arché* and *Physis* with regard to water, to the unlimited, to the air, to the fire,…etc. However, mainstream Western philosophy since Parmenides and Plato consists in turning the Idea-Image into pure idea, and then, with intellectual definition, conceptualizing it and relating one concept with other concepts in a logical way. Concepts are detached deliberately from images, things and events, and are defined and related one to another logically in descriptive and argumentative sentences and discourses. By this detachment, concept and argumentation could help the human mind to develop the critical function of human reason, in not limiting itself to the particularity and materiality of images, things and events, and by paying attention to the abstract universalizability of concepts and the rigor of their logical relation. Even if the validity of concept and argumentation might be absolutized so as to claim for universalility and rational structure per se, in fact, they can only allow us to see Reality and its structure in an abstract way. On the other hand, metaphors, mostly related to one another by poetic verses and stories, are different from abstract concepts and well-structured argumentation yet still keep an intimate relation with images and events.

6. Third Level: Hermeneutic Principles of the Philosopher/School under Discussion

Each philosopher or school of philosophical thought may be said to have offered their own view of language and guidance for interpreting texts. This is true both for Confucians and Daoists. I should point out that my dynamic contextualism is much closer to the Daoist spirit of letting texts show their own meaning in the movement of reading.

Example One: Confucius

Confucius, in interpreting texts, prefers a way of reading that highlights some key words or key sentences. This is different from what I call dynamic contextualism and it tends to neglect the pragmatic movement of the text. Confucius' "appropriation of meaning by cutting/selecting text (*duanzhan quyi* 斷章取義)" or "featuring key verses" way of reading is very similar to the reading by way of key concepts or key propositions that exists today. For example, in the bamboo slips of *Konzi Shilun* 孔子詩論 (*Confucius on Poetry*), we find Confucius commenting on poems by