

Foreword

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Since the establishment of the Department of Asian and African Studies at the University of Ljubljana, its members have been closely cooperating with several Taiwanese universities, academic organizations and foundations. The Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation has provided generous subventions to many representatives of our Chair of Sinology, and thus helped us to carry out various research projects related to Chinese and Taiwanese culture. We have established exchange cooperations with several prominent Taiwanese universities: the National Taiwan University, National Taiwan Normal University, National Chengchi University, Soochow University in Taipei, Fo Guang University in Yilan, Fu-jen University in Hsinchuang, the National University of Education in Hsinchu, the National Chinan University in Nantou, the National Yunlin University of Science and Technology, and the National Chiayi University. Members of our Department have held lectures at most of these universities and we continuously carry out common research projects with our Taiwanese colleagues. Many authors of the present issue of our academic journal have visited Slovenia already. Prof. Lee Chinyun from the National Chinan University obtained her PhD degree at our Faculty in 2000 and taught classical Chinese at our Department for several years. Prof. Lin Ming-chang from Soochow University held a guest lecture on traditional Chinese art at our Department in 2007, and Prof. Lee Hsien-Chung was invited by the Slovenian Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology to hold a series of lectures on traditional Chinese logic at our Faculty in 2012.

Every year, two or three of our undergraduate and at least one postgraduate student spend one or more academic years in Taiwan, mostly financed by

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national scholarship provided by the Taiwanese Ministry of Education. In this respect, I would also like to express our sincere gratitude to the friendly and most cooperative staff of the Taiwanese Representative Office in Vienna, who has always showed much understanding for us and provided our Department with all kinds of support and continuous help.

The academic cooperation, which enabled me and many of my colleagues at our Department to build meaningful bridges between Slovenia and Taiwan in the field of sinological research, is of immense importance for general mutual understanding and cooperation between the two countries. I sincerely hope that this cooperation will lead us to yet further fruitful exchanges and therefore continuously enrich our mutual understanding in the future.

The present issue of our academic journal, *Asian and African Studies*, represents one of the many results of such cooperation. The authors are internationally established and well-known Taiwanese scholars with whom the Department of Asian and African Studies has been collaborating in the areas of social studies and humanities for several years. The articles in this volume are published in Chinese, because it is our firm belief that sinological research cannot remain limited to sources in Western languages. The volume not only represents a bridge which links Slovenian and international sinologists to Taiwanese scholarship; it also provides an opportunity for direct insight into the original sources, defining this discourse. Such a decision of the editorial board is based on the conviction that the incorporation of material in native language into any intercultural research framework provides a more objective, and at the same time, hermeneutically more proper understanding of the complex problems under investigation.

Our aim in compiling this anthology is threefold: to highlight the significance of academic cooperation between Taiwan and Slovenia, secondly, to revise prevailing historical, methodological and intellectual approaches in Taiwanese scholarship dealing with Chinese tradition, and thirdly, to develop and enhance intercultural communication in Chinese studies.

The focus of the studies gathered here is on the current Taiwanese contributions in researches and perspectives concerning various relevant and significant issues in contemporary Sinology. It is our firm belief that their research provides a good path to enrich our knowledge and to understand current guidelines, which prevail in contemporary Taiwanese academic world.

In order to delineate an image of this world and of specific scholarly discourses that are rooted in it, the articles of the present volume explore a multicolored range of diverse theoretical aspects of traditional Chinese culture, its philosophy, literature and history.

The collection opens with an examination of specific methodologies, necessary for any research in traditional Chinese discourse. The first two articles which deal with specifically Chinese theoretic methodologies follow the basic presumption, according to which contemporary (Chinese and Western) Sinological research can easily be led to misinterpretations of its subject matter if it fails to take into consideration the fundamental methodological conditions, determined by specific Chinese historical, linguistic and philosophical contexts. This presumption (and its results) is of special importance because, unfortunately, in current Sinological research, it is still common to project content and form of “Western” discourses, which have still been shielded by the majority of political (and thus also economic) power. This danger has also been recognized by both authors of the first section, who have been—each in his own way—dealing with research and renewed disclosure of traditional Chinese philosophical thought.

The first author, Duh Baurei 杜保瑞 from the National Taiwan University, clearly shows that despite their tendencies towards openness and interdisciplinary approach, the discourses of modern science and humanities are still more or less determined by the core of the “Western” paradigmatic network. In his article *The Methodology of Chinese Philosophy—Exemplified by the Four Square Framework* (中國哲學史方法論----以四方架構為中心) the author critically questions such approaches and provides a new referential framework for a more proper understanding of traditional Chinese theoretical discourses. In conscientious effort to preserve the characteristic structural concatenations of the subject matter, the author thoroughly considers the specific categorical legitimacy of such texts in order to meet the demands of the most important methodological conditions, on the basis of which we can, regardless of the complexity of the problems, attain some reasonably relevant conclusions. In this context, Prof. Duh Baorui advocates the basic research method of traditional Chinese through the lens of traditional categories and methodological processes. This method represents the central element of the proposed theoretical framework which has been named “the methodology of research in the history of Chinese philosophy”. Such a methodology is based on hermeneutical methods in

interpreting original sources. In this aspect, this referential framework differs from the frameworks of the so-called “methodology of Chinese philosophy”. Prof. Duh clearly points out the methodological inconsistency and explains how and why they still permeate modern Western paradigms. His basic approach is rooted in the conviction that the research in specifically Chinese theory has to follow differences in problem conceptions and materials, and should not remain limited to the research in ideologies.

This presumption has also been shared in the work of Dai Zhen, a pre-modern Chinese philosopher, whose theoretical approaches are analyzed by Lee Jer-shiarn 李哲賢 from the National Yunlin University of Science and Technology, who is the author of the second article *On Dai Zhen (1723–1777) and his Philosophy of Evidential Research and Its Reflection* (論戴震 (1723–1777) 之考證哲學及其反思). He exemplifies the work of Dai Zhen, a conceptually innovative pre-modern philosopher who is regarded as the greatest Chinese thinker of the 18th Century, to show the importance of the specific Chinese pragmatism which had always stood in opposition to excessively speculative philosophical currents that led away from concrete social problems. This spirit of pragmatism in solving social and political problems is also undoubtedly reflected in Dai Zhen’s theory of knowledge and methodology. However, Prof. Lee Jer-shiarn points out that Dai Zhen’s contribution to the development of Chinese thought is most evident in his application of scientific procedures based on “proof and evidence” (考證學), which led him to both a substantiated refutation of “empty” Neo-Confucian commentaries and the premise that new problems required new methods for solving them. His elaboration of the new methodologies enabled later theoreticians to perform even more detailed analyses of historical and cultural problems, thereby aiding them in their search for new solutions to the specific theoretical and practical problems of their time. The article does not only highlight the germs of modern scientific methodology within traditional Chinese theories, but also indicates that such framework can further prove itself to be most helpful for the establishment of innovative theoretical approaches in current Sinological studies.

The frameworks that are outlined by the first scope of the present volume also determined the main spirit of its second which deals with studies in classical (ancient and early medieval) Chinese philosophy.

In his article *A Comparison of the Cognitive Perspective Applied in “Referring to Things” and “Equality of Things”* (「指物」與「齊物」的認知觀點比較), Lee Hsien-Chung from the National Taiwan University explores classical Chinese logic from the perspective of cognitive purposes, methods, and their results in the works of Gongsun Long and Zhuangzi respectively. He shows that within the system of specific Chinese philosophy, both scholars have a mutually complementary significance, although belonging to different streams of thought and following different theoretical approaches. Such a view follows the basic presumption according to which it is wrong to interpret those discourses according to the model of traditional Western logic and that it is necessary to reconstruct the autochthonous Chinese logic. This view which leads us to the necessity of cultural interpretations of logic is of utmost importance for the further research in this field. Prof. Lee Hsien-Chung clearly asserts that Chinese logic has autonomous particularities that have to be reconstructed in a systematic way without framing them into methodological and conceptual structures of modern (Western) research paradigms.

The second article belonging to the scope of philosophical studies, *Interpretative Dialects of Wang Bi’s Exegesis of Lao-Tzu* (王弼《老子注》的詮釋辨證) is written by Tsai Jung-Tao from the National Chiayi University. It explores the history of research in Wang Bi, one of the most significant theorists of early medieval China and highlights three different paths that lead to the understanding of his work. These three paths simultaneously represent three important currents in sinological research. The first one has been exemplified by the Taiwanese scholar Lin Lizhen, the second by Yu Dunkang, a theoretician from the P.R. China, and the third by the German sinologist Rudolf Wagner. The author shows that the first approach is hermeneutical, the second belongs to pragmatic philosophy and that the third focuses on philological research. Through his analyses of these particular approaches Prof. Tsai Jung-Tao asserts the mutual complementarity of the three research currents.

The complementary view that permeates these two research articles also manifests itself in both issues which define the central focus in the third scope of the present volume. It contains two articles dealing with studies in traditional Chinese literature.

Lin Ming-chang from the Fo Guang University analyses different expressions of sad emotions in the poetry of Han Yu, who belongs to the most

well-known poets and prose writers from the Tang Dynasty. This traditional scholar is among the most personal and at the same time the most open of Chinese authors. Due to the fact that he often writes most frankly about his own life, his feelings, his career or his friends, Han Yu has been placed in the center of attention in various sinological researches on traditional Chinese literature. In his article *The Sadness of Life—Han Yu's Poetry of Grief and Sorrow* (平生足悲吒----論韓愈詩的憂憤悲懷), Prof. Lin Ming-chang explores his work from the perspective of emotional expressiveness, questioning the prevailing ideological interpretations. On such basis, the author proposes an innovative hermeneutical approach in the research of traditional Chinese poetry which offers new insights into the complexity of its artistic and aesthetic significance. In addition, Prof. Lin points out the fact that Han Yu, being a traditional Confucian, believed in an orderly universe, responsive to human actions and not indifferent to human suffering. Thus, the article offers new possibilities of interpretation showing how Han Yu's poetry is a mode of self-discovery and self-development that opens not only to the paths of inner conversation, but also to substantial dialogues between different research approaches.

Chu Chia Ning from the National Chengchi University is the author of the article *An Analysis of Li Bai's Poetry from the Perspective of Linguistic Stylistics* (從語言風格學看李白詩的賞析) which also deals with research in classical poetry of Tang Dynasty. His article follows a different disciplinary approach: while the previous article in this issue is based on the research in aesthetic dimensions of this poetry, Prof. Chu Chia Ning applies linguistic analysis to the work of Li Bai, the major poet of this "Golden era of Chinese poetry". This prominent writer was not only a master of profound expression, but also set the rules of versification of his time, being famous for the technical virtuosity of poetry and the mastery of verses. Pointing out that the prevailing research on classical Chinese poetry is almost entirely dominated by its contents, concentrating solely on the aesthetic modes of expression, the author follows a new scheme for the inter-relation of linguistic analysis and poetry criticism that is rooted in phonological research. However, he also takes into account the rigid restrictions in the repertory of morphological and syntactic constituents used in Li Bai's poems, simultaneously considering the eliminations inherent to these poems, showing how they permit the reader to follow the masterly interplay of the actualized constituents. The article thus provides possibilities of a more integral insight into the entirety of classical Chinese poetic expression.

However, integral insights into any level of Sinological research are also shaped by historical evidences and various historiographical modes of their interpretation. Therefore, the present volume also provides an example of Taiwanese academic inquiry in the field of critical historiography.

Lee Chinyun from the Chinan University in Puli proceeds in her article *German Trade and the Transportation of Coolies at Pakhoi* (德國商船在北海的經營與勞力運輸) with the awareness for a growing need for intercultural comparison in the field of historiography simply and unavoidably because of the great increase in international and intercultural communication, not only in economics and politics, but also in various fields of cultural life. Through the analysis of their concrete historical conditions in Pakhoi, an important international treaty port located on the extreme southeast of China, Prof. Lee Chinyun illuminates the general role and social functions of Chinese coolies in Western colonies. Her article allows the reader to rethink existing modes of “historical memory” as the universal cultural means of orienting human practical life in its temporal dimensions. Such a foundation allows us to establish new historical consciousness based on constitutive factors and procedures. In a systematized form the relationship of these elements can namely be used to identify the varieties of historical thinking in different contexts over time. One of the objectives of this research is an intercultural exchange of knowledge on history as a medium of identity-forming.

The search for new aspects of cultural identity is also the main paradigm which links various conceptual and methodological approaches applied in the contributions of the present volume. Their thematic diversity reflects the multifaceted potential for theoretical creativity and renewal in the Taiwanese academic world.