

Introduction: China and the West: *Zhuyi* and *-isms*

On September 26, 2016, a conference on “Discourse Innovation and Bie-Modern Problems in Art and Aesthetics” took place in the Research Center for Aesthetics and Aesthetic Education of the College of Humanities and Communication of the Shanghai Normal University. The conference was initiated by Prof. Wang Jianjiang (SHNU, China) and Prof. Aleš Erjavec (Institute of Philosophy, SRC SASA, Ljubljana, Slovenia). In the conference 40 other speakers presented their papers.

The starting point of the conference was a paper written by Prof. Wang Jianjiang on “The Bustle of the Absence of *Zhuyi*” (published in journal *Filozofski vestnik*, Vol. 37, No. 1, 2016).¹ To this paper Prof. Erjavec responded with the article “*Zhuyi*: From Absence to Bustle.” A response titled “‘Quadrilateral’ in Philosophy, Aesthetics and Humanities and Bie-Modernism” by Prof. Jianjiang followed. Prof. Erjavec then replied by “Some Additional Remarks” and was in this supplemented by an article “Lessons in Equality” by Prof. Ernest Ženko from the University of Primorska, Koper (Slovenia).

Papers by Jianjiang, Erjavec, Ženko, and by other conference participants were concerned with the ways in which national or regional intellectual and expert communities join the global community of experts in humanities, philosophy, and aesthetics. Some of the relevant issues were: Under which conditions can Chinese intellectuals join the global humanities network? How can they promote Chinese tradition and knowledge? How can they become ‘exporters’ and not primarily ‘importers’ of knowledge developed by non-Chinese experts in the humanities and related areas? How did earlier (non-Chinese) protagonists of such processes deal with such issues? How does the Chinese *Zhuyi* differ from western *-isms*? Is the Bie-modern only of local relevance or of universal import? Should China follow international methodological and other standards in the humanities? May we today still speak of ‘national’ philosophy or aesthetics? And so on. While these themes and questions are of relevance today in China, they are to a large extent also to be found in other countries and other cultures. It is for this reason that *AM Journal of Art and Media Studies* is publishing papers by Erjavec, Jianjiang and Ženko. We wish to thank the editors of *AM Journal* for offering to publish these papers with the hope that they will shed some light on issues that we encounter across the globe but rarely discuss from an international perspective.

Aleš Erjavec & Wang Jianjiang
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¹ Wang Jianjiang, “The Bustle and the Absence of *Zhuyi*. The Example of Chinese Aesthetics,” *Filozofski vestnik* 37, 1 (2016): 157–78, <https://ojs.zrc-sazu.si/filozofski-vestnik/article/view/4858/4461>