



Epistemic diversity and cross-cultural comparative research: ontology, challenges, and outcomes

Xin Xu

To cite this article: Xin Xu (2022) Epistemic diversity and cross-cultural comparative research: ontology, challenges, and outcomes, Globalisation, Societies and Education, 20:1, 36-48, DOI: [10.1080/14767724.2021.1932438](https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2021.1932438)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767724.2021.1932438>



© 2021 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group



Published online: 31 May 2021.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 2257



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)




Citing articles: 1 View citing articles [↗](#)



OPEN ACCESS



Epistemic diversity and cross-cultural comparative research: ontology, challenges, and outcomes

Xin Xu 

Centre for Global Higher Education, Department of Education, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK

ABSTRACT

This paper reflects on the transpositional comparison in Marginson and Yang's article in this special issue, with a focused discussion on epistemic diversity and cross-cultural comparative research. It argues that in global research, epistemic diversity largely co-exists with epistemic inequity and injustice, despite long-standing normative appeals. Against this backdrop, cross-cultural comparative studies have significant value, albeit facing a range of challenges. There are five outcomes of cross-cultural encounters: *assimilation*, *immiscibility*, and *being different together* (including *unity in diversity*, *harmony with diversity*, and *together with diversity*). Although East–West encounters demonstrated all possible outcomes, *being different together* is both possible and valuable, not only for East–West encounters but also for cross-civilisational comparisons.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 4 May 2021
Accepted 15 May 2021

KEYWORDS

Epistemic diversity; global research; cross-cultural comparison; Chinese tradition; Western tradition; Chinese higher education

Introduction

This paper reflects on the transpositional comparisons in Marginson and Yang (2021) in this special issue, with a focused discussion on epistemic diversity and cross-cultural comparison in research. The paper starts with exploring the ontological understandings of *what it is* and *what it ought to be* about epistemic diversity. It proceeds with discussions on the challenges and value of cross-cultural comparative studies, followed by a theorisation of five outcomes of cross-cultural encounters: *assimilation*, *immiscibility*, and *being different together* (including *unity in diversity*, *harmony with diversity*, and *together with diversity*). The paper concludes with a brief reflection on East–West encounters and their outcomes.

Ontology of epistemic diversity in global research

This paper approaches ‘epistemic diversity’ as both the existence of a diversity of knowledge, and the recognition of and respect for such diversity. In academic research, ‘epistemic diversity allows for different hermeneutical horizons of experience and reservoirs of knowledge to inform scientific production’ (Dübgen 2020, 79). In reaching an ontological understanding of epistemic diversity in academic research, this section addresses two questions: *what it is* and *what it ought to be*. The former is about facts, and the latter concerns values (Hume 1888). Although the *is-ought* dichotomy is not without problems (Schurz 1997), they are helpful here to illustrate tensions between positive and normative statements about epistemic diversity.

CONTACT Xin Xu  xin.xu@education.ox.ac.uk  Centre for Global Higher Education, Department of Education, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK

© 2021 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

In the reality of *what it is*, epistemic diversity exists in global research, but not in full terms. The global knowledge pool is an open and shared space with diversified languages, cultures, agents, agendas, theories, and paradigms. For example, one of the most comprehensive databases of periodicals – UlrichsWeb – covers publications in more than 180 languages, and from more than 900 subject areas (Ulrichsweb: General FAQ 2018; UlrichsWeb 2021). The variety of UlrichsWeb-indexed publications are not exhaustive of the global knowledge pool. An abundance of knowledge is produced, embodied, materialised and mobilised in forms other than academic publications, and in publications not indexed by UlrichsWeb. Furthermore, global research consists of open networks and ‘invisible colleges’ (Wagner 2009) involving diversified agents. Agents collaborate freely beyond visible and invisible borders; and vary in their professions (such as researchers, teachers, practitioners), cultural contexts, affiliations, personal characteristics (such as gender, age, race, religion, health condition), theoretical perspectives, research agenda, and research paradigms.

Nonetheless, epistemic diversity co-exists with epistemic inequity and injustice. The global research system includes not only knowledge and agents, but also power. In the power-knowledge regime or what Foucault terms as ‘games of truth’ (Fornet-Betancourt et al. 1987, 1), knowledge and power are intimately associated with each other (Foucault 1980). Power acts not *on* knowledge and agents as a coercive force, but *through* knowledge – the *capillary* power pervades and circulates throughout the entire social body (Foucault 1980), ‘defining what counts as knowledge’ (Mumby 1997, 18). In global research, power acts in hegemonic forms (Gramsci 1971), which privilege certain epistemic traditions at different facets: structure, knowledge, and agents (summarised in Table 1). The hegemonic power creates an inclusion/exclusion divide in the global knowledge pool, where only certain knowledge is legitimated and codified to be seen, used, trusted, and valued. The exclusion of certain knowledge is particularly evident in global humanities and social sciences research (Connell 2007). The inclusion/exclusion dichotomy conflicts fundamentally with the ontological understanding of global knowledge as an open space. Here, I use the term ‘open’ not ‘inclusive’, as ‘inclusive’ still denotes the necessity to ‘include/exclude’, thus raising questions of *who* to decide *what* to include? *Why* need to ‘include’ if all are in the open knowledge pool already?

The *what it is* question encompasses temporal dimensions like *what it was* and *what it will be*. Compared to the past, global research has been increasingly diversified, with the rise of China and other middle powers, as well as with decolonisation movements (Marginson and Xu 2021). But with the continuing Anglo-European dominance, there is a danger that the decolonisation agenda is still haunted by the colonial past and continues to reproduce pre-existing hierarchies. For instance, the ‘English imperialism’ (Phillipson 1992) persists in global research. Agenda, paradigms, theories, methodologies, perspectives and the temporalities of knowledge remain largely shaped by Anglo-European culture and reality (de Santos 2014). Certain knowledge and knowledge produced by certain agents continue to be wronged, marginalised, ignored, exploited, unseen, unheard, and untrusted. This particularly concerns non-Anglo-European cultures and endogenous knowledge, and agents from disadvantaged groups (such as female, non-White, disabled groups) (Dübgen 2020; Kidd, Medina, and Pohlhaus 2017; de Santos 2014).

Regarding *what it ought to be* with epistemic diversity in research, there have been long-standing normative appeals for epistemic diversity, decolonisation, democratisation and justice. Arguably, epistemic diversity can be enabled by epistemic justice, which questions who has the right to create and own knowledge, and to be respected, heard, seen in their capacity as a knower (Dübgen 2020; Fricker 2007). Critiques on epistemic injustice, blindness and insensitivity often engage with perspectives like decolonisation and postcolonialism (e.g. Connell 2014; de Santos 2014; Tlostanova and Mignolo 2012), postmodern discourses (e.g. Lyotard 1984), critical race theory (e.g. Medina 2017), and feminism (e.g. Blackmore 2021). The discourses come from both the Anglo-European and non-Anglo-European realms, or in other terms – Global North and Global South, West and non-West, normative ‘centres’ and ‘periphery’ – all terms too simplistic to capture all the complexities and nuances, and continue to reproduce the ‘Northern’/ ‘Western’/ ‘Centre’s’ gaze (for instance

Table 1. Demonstrations of epistemic hegemony and inequity in global research.

Different facets of global sciences	Embodiments of global sciences	Demonstrations of epistemic hegemony and inequity
Structure	Scholarly indices	Globally influential scholarly indices dominated by the English language and a handful of Anglo-European-based commercial companies
	Publishers	Globally influential publishers (academic books and journals) dominated by Anglo-European-based commercial publishing companies
	Research universities, institutions, centres*	Globally influential research universities, institutions, and centres dominated largely by Anglo-European ones, with Western-dominated world university rankings reproducing the hierarchy. The landscape has shifted with the rise of non-Anglo-European institutions
	Research funding and infrastructure	Anglo-European countries lead R&D spending and infrastructure provision. The landscape is shifting with the rise of non-Anglo-European systems in their research funding
	Policies and regulatory frameworks	Global regulations largely dominated by Anglo-European frameworks. Non-Anglo-European systems recycle the global hegemony by translating the existing global hierarchy into regional, national, or institutional research system and policies, while some challenge the inequality and emphasis endogenous agency
	Research cultures	Global research cultures and norms strongly influenced by Anglo-European ones, while some individual systems are asserting endogenous cultural frameworks
	Doctoral education	Worldwide doctoral education largely following Anglo-European models that inherit their cultures via the education of future academics (if entering academia)
	Scholarly associations*	Influential international associations concentrated in Anglo-European countries and led by Anglo-European scholars, while associations hosted in non-Anglo-European systems and by non-Anglo-European scholars are growing
Knowledge	Language	English language acts as the <i>lingua franca</i> in global research, and dominates globally influential scholarly indices, books, journals, conferences, and communications
	Episteme	Global knowledge entrenched with Anglo-European agenda, research methods, theories, but non-Anglo-European epistemologies have long existed and are becoming increasingly visible in global research
	Publications and citations	English publications dominate indexed publications and have higher citation possibilities; among all English publications, a large proportion is produced in Anglo-American systems, which often have higher citation rates
	Translations	More translations are made from English to other languages than the other way around or across different languages
Agents	Authors	Increasingly diversified demographics in terms of cultural, geographical, gender, racial, class identities, but still dominated by certain groups of academics (e.g. Anglo-European, male, white)
	Co-authors	Increasingly diversified collaboration patterns while unequal power relations exist in co-authorship
	Editors	Increasingly diversified demographics in terms of cultural, geographical, gender, racial, class identities, but still dominated by certain groups of academics (e.g. Anglo-European, male, white)
	Peer reviewers	Increasingly diversified demographics in terms of cultural, geographical, gender, racial, class identities, but still dominated by certain groups of academics (e.g. Anglo-European, male, white)
	(Global mobility of) academics/students	Largely from non-Anglo-European systems to Anglo-European ones and from socially-advantaged groups. The mobility directions are changing to a more diversified pattern. Increasingly diversified demographics of people are participating in academic mobility while inequities still exist

Note*: Arguably, research universities, institutions, centres, and scholarly associations are both structure and collective agents comprising individual academics; the category ‘agents’ in this table focuses on individual human agents.

Source: Author, partly draws on Marginson and Xu (2021) and Kidd, Medina, and Pohlhaus (2017)

see a critique on the use of ‘centre-periphery’ framework in Marginson and Xu (2021)). Nonetheless, academic voices from the non-dominating spaces are often again marginalised, ignored, appropriated or excluded, demonstrating yet another layer of epistemic injustice (Moosavi 2020).

Normative appeals for epistemic diversity and justice have sketched various blueprints. Some propose radical agendas to transcend predominant epistemologies, and develop new concepts from different epistemological roots (Posholi 2020). Some suggest moderate proposals, to bring in new perspectives while scrutinising the predominant epistemologies without abandoning them (Connell 2007; Posholi 2020). For instance, de Santos (2007, 45) pointed out the pitfalls of ‘abyssal thinking’ in the modern Western tradition, which suppresses, excludes and denies the possibility of copresence of different forms of reality. Rejecting this ‘either-or’ mindset, de Santos (2014) suggests ‘postabyssal thinking’ and an ‘ecologies of knowledges’, which ‘lies in the idea of radical copresence’ (191) and leads to infinite and hybrid understandings of different knowledges.

In sum, epistemic diversity is still becoming, despite affluent normative appeals for it to come into being in full terms. Concrete actions from all agents are needed to bridge the gap between *what it is now* and *what it ought to be*. Against this backdrop, scholarships engaging different epistemological and cultural perspectives equally are particularly valuable. Such scholarships form the bridges and exemplify that epistemic diversity is not only *desirable*, but also *viable*. Marginson and Yang’s (2021) examination based on the trans-positionality approach (Sen 2002), which compares the Anglo-American and Chinese standpoints without privileging either, constitutes a powerful testimony to this possibility.

Challenges and the value of cross-cultural comparative studies

Episteme and culture are closely associated (Foucault 1974). Cross-cultural comparisons inevitably involve a diversity of knowledge, hence is an approach to materialise epistemic diversity. The comparative method is widely applied in humanities and social sciences research, such as in comparative education, literature, philosophy, arts, economics, and political sciences.

Comparative studies face a range of interpretative, methodological, linguistic, cultural and ethical challenges. The first major challenge is to generalise each intrinsically complex and evolving culture, which Marginson and Yang (2021) also noted. Each culture is not a static or monolithic enterprise without variations. Cultures evolve over time, diffuse across spaces, and transform in contexts. Local cultures are not immune to the global diffusion of ideas, concepts, and practices (Conrad 2016). Cultures are also not contained by national borders. The ‘continuous border crossing and negotiation of boundaries’ in comparison (Dallmayr 2004, 252) creates ambivalence in defining the borders of each culture.

Marginson and Yang (2021) examined their chosen ‘typical of the traditions’ in Anglo-American and Chinese political cultures. But the ‘typical’ excludes certain sub-cultures and timespans, a limitation also acknowledged by the authors. Their discussion on the ‘older Chinese tradition’ is largely Confucianism-based. But as one of the leading New Confucianism scholars Tu Weiming (1999) noted: ‘No matter how broadly we define Confucianism, it is only one of many traditions that constitute the cultural resources of Cultural China. Next to Daoism, Buddhism, folk traditions, Christianity, Islam, all kinds of traditions, Confucianism is only one of them’. An example for Marginson and Yang (2021) is the collective punishment regulation (连坐 *lian zuo*) in Chinese Legalism, which also emphasises collectiveness but has not been captured in their Confucianism-oriented discussion.

The second major challenge is the applications of generalised comparative results to individuals. While cross-cultural comparisons can reach conclusions about differences and similarities of various cultures as a whole, as Marginson and Yang’s (2021) conclusions luminously show, those cultural features are not necessarily embodied by all individuals, institutions, and micro-contexts. This echoes Sen’s (1999, 2006) recognition of plural cultural identities, that one can simultaneously have multiple contrasting or non-contrasting identities. Furthermore, one’s identity can change across time and space, notably through (global) mobility. Global diffusion of cultures also means that people cannot be immune from global (mostly ‘Western’) influence and stay fully localised. While individuals are nested in each culture, their individuality is unneglectable.

Racism, prejudice, othering, stereotyping, and stigmatising could happen at the individual level, if one is not perceived in their own right, but labelled with a generalised (sometimes even misrepresented) cultural badge.

For instance, the Chinese cultural identity has multiple references, which can be geographically specific, as well as culturally, politically and historically relevant. Being ‘Chinese’ can mean sharing one of or a mixture of the following: Chinese (including Greater China) nationality, Chinese ethnicity, Chinese ancestry, Chinese family, Chinese diaspora, Chinese ideologies and cultures (Splitter 2017; Tu 1991). Therefore, one ‘Chinese’ student can be utterly different from another ‘Chinese’ student. In line with this argument, when reading Marginson and Yang (2021), we should note that not every individual embodies the cultural specifications summarised in the conclusion. For example, not all Anglo-American students embrace individualism, not all Chinese students are self-cultivating and highlight the importance of family. Particularly in international higher education, when students and academics move across cultural contexts (such as Chinese students in Anglo-American systems), their pre-existing individual cultural identity may or may not conflict with the cultural context of their destination. Those from the same cultural background may face similar or different cultural shocks. In sum, both commonality and individuality are essential to understanding and interacting with individuals. By freeing people from the necessity of locating ourselves in one category or another, it ‘opens the door to a more generous, caring and empathetic understanding, not only of ourselves (*Who I am*), but of others – both other persons and the world in general’ (Splitter 2017, 21).

The third major challenge concerns the agency, autonomy, and sovereignty of knowledge in the comparison: Whose knowledge is legitimated, valued, and respected? By whom? Cultures can be positioned unequally in comparison. For instance, in a brief review of critiques on Western positionality in Anthropology in the late 1980s, Mumby (1997) summarised that when Western researchers articulate ‘a seamless, invulnerable, “God’s-eye view” of another culture, the people of the culture are characterized frequently as “cultural dopes”’ (Giddens 1979, 71) whose only interest to Western eyes lies in their “exotic nature”’ (14). The positioned inferior status of non-Western knowledge and the appropriation of it towards Western frameworks have been widely challenged, such as in cultural relativism’s challenges to Western ethnocentrism (Herskovits 1973), Edward Said’s (1977) criticism on Orientalism, and postcolonial resistance to ‘epistemicide’ (de Santos 2014).

Unequal comparisons often stem from a lack of interest, respect, imagination, capacity, and humble attitudes for mutual learning. Daoist Zhuang Zi (n.d.) had a vivid depiction of the difficulties in communications:

A frog in a well cannot be talked with about the sea – it is confined by its space;

An insect of the summer cannot be talked with about ice – it knows nothing beyond its season;

A scholar of limited views cannot be talked with about Dao – one is bound by the teaching one has received.

井蛙不可以语于海者，拘于虚也；

夏虫不可以语于冰者，笃于时也；

曲士不可以语于道者，束于教也。

One can be restrained by their vision, time, experiences, learning, vision, imagination and capacity to understand their outside world. To paraphrase the *Sound of Silence*, people can be hearing without listening, talking without communicating, writing without conveying, reading without understanding. ‘The darkness around us is deep’ – wrote William Stafford in his poem *A Ritual to Read to Each Other*. To break through the darkness and facilitate cross-cultural understandings, Marginson and Yang (2021) calls for ‘mutual learning’. Mutual learning does not happen in a void though. Fruitful mutual learning grows out of ethical grounds nurtured with intellectual

humility and humbleness, mutual respect, and an open mindset (Church and Samuelson 2017; Whitcomb et al. 2017). As previously discussed, unfortunately, such grounds do not yet exist everywhere or in everyone.

A final major challenge concerns the (im)possibility of perfect correspondence across cultures. Ideas, concepts, discourses, expressions, imaginaries, and practices are embedded in respective cultures, which do not mobilise entirely across cultures. Some concepts only exist in specific contexts, thus become unthinkable, unimaginable, incommensurable and incomprehensible to others even with an open mindset and humbleness to learn. Moreover, some concepts exist in multiple contexts, but differ in their meaning, connotation, and historical relevance in each culture. The comprehensive examination on public/*gong* and private/*si* in Marginson and Yang (2021) is a telling example of how the seemingly universal concepts do not mobilise easily across cultural contexts. The non-correspondence makes comparisons possible and valuable – if everything is the same everywhere, comparisons are unnecessary. While at the same time, they have made an impeccable ‘transpositional coherence’ (Sen 2002) impossible.

The non-correspondence also creates an impossible mission for translation. Finding translations with linguistic, functional, cultural, and metric equivalence is always difficult in research (Peña 2007). The challenge is not merely lexical, but lies in the untranslatability of the metaphor, connotation, and particularly the ‘tacit knowledge’ (Polanyi 1958, 1966) – something is always lost in translation. Moreover, in English-dominated global academia, knowledge produced in non-English languages faces inevitable misrepresentation, misinterpretation, or appropriation to Anglophone cultures. Comparative studies tend to rely on works published in the English language, which can be produced by scholars from or outside non-Anglophone cultural contexts. One pitfall is that such scholarships have already been English-cised, linguistically and culturally. Relying on those sources is like observing the world through a distorting mirror, where the mirrored image is already twisted from the reality. Questioning English as the *lingua franca* is a recurring theme in my own research (e.g. Xu 2020) and self-reflection. But I note the paradoxes: I (along with academics like Marginson and Yang) write in English to critique the use of English as the *lingua franca*, and call for respect for non-Anglophone knowledge. Personally, I attempt to resolve the paradoxes by engaging with different cultures with equal respect, publishing in Chinese besides English, and coupling translations with the original phrases when possible. But when writing in Chinese, a reversed quandary occurs: to translate, articulate, and explain non-Chinese concepts perfectly is not always easy. The quandary stems not mainly from language skills. It is the cultural baggage behind each language that is too difficult to unpack perfectly.

Considering all the challenges, why do, would, or should academics keep conducting comparative studies? This paper resonates with Marginson and Yang’s (2021) argument, that cross-cultural comparison is intrinsically valuable. Researching diverse traditions, theories, cultures, and practices contribute to epistemic diversification. In higher education studies, this means numerous bridges are being built across different higher education systems and various cultural spaces. In addition, comparison facilitates self-reflection and cultural self-awareness (Fei 2015), which can advance both understandings of one’s own culture and collective understandings of different cultures – ‘He who knows one, knows none’, said philologist Max Muller (1893, 13). Furthermore, the dominating language, ideas, reality, and traditions are often better known in other systems, than the other way around. Therefore, using non-dominating cultures as reference points in comparison challenges the asymmetrical mobility of knowledge and the consequent epistemic injustice.

Outcomes of cross-cultural encounters

What happens when different cultures and epistemes encounter? Comparing them is one of the possibilities. Other possibilities are infinite: clashes, conflicts, competition, colonisation on the ‘dark’ side; also co-existence, connection, collaboration, cooperation, communication,

Table 2. Outcomes of cross-cultural encounters.

		Being Different Together			
Possible outcomes	Assimilation	Unity in diversity	Harmony in diversity	Together with diversity	Immiscibility
Outcomes of differences	Disappear	Remain	Remain	Remain	Remain
Possibilities of integration and hybridisation	Unification and hybridisation	Unification and chances for hybridisation	Non-unified but with a certain level of harmonious integration and hybridisation	Co-existence with a certain level of non-unified and non-harmonious integration and hybridisation	Impossible for integration or hybridisation

complementation on the ‘bright’ side. There are different understandings of the possible outcomes of cross-cultural encounters, which can be placed onto a spectrum (outlined in Table 2):

- One end of the spectrum is *assimilation*, where homogeneity replaces heterogeneity;
- The other end is *immiscibility*, where differences remain unmergeable;
- In between the two ends, sits the status of *being different together*, where differences, togetherness and hybridity co-exist. It can be divided into three forms due to the nuances of ‘togetherness’: *unity in diversity*, *harmony with diversity*, and *together with diversity*.

Note that this spectrum draws on certain ‘prototypes’ as a starting point for discussion, but the outcomes of cross-cultural encounters are messier, blurrier and more complicated than these clear-cut categories. The outcomes of certain cultural encounters also do not follow an ‘either this category or the other’ pattern, which is exemplified by the East-West encounters discussed in the next section.

The *assimilation* outcome can be illustrated by the ‘melting pot’ metaphor. In this understanding, togetherness, similarities, homogeneity transcend and replace heterogeneity. Various cultures are mingled into a (new) form of holistic entity, where differences are eradicated. The idea of cultural/ethnic assimilation is representatively reflected in immigration policies and scholarships, particularly in popular migration destinations like Anglo-American countries; but it has long been criticised for its Anglo-centrism and neglect of cultural diversity (e.g. Berray 2019). Furthermore, the idea of ultimate unification or ‘oneness’ is problematised. Although hybridisation could occur in the process, when different cultures can be integrated, sutured, complemented or recombined with each other (Marginson 2014b); assimilation can be patronising, when some cultures are to assimilate *into* other cultures. Outside the immigration discussion, postmodern scholars challenge the search for universal consensus, which could lead to totalitarian and totalising ways of thinking (Lyotard 1984). The notion of ‘a Truth’ together with the assumption that there are ‘any standard, universal practices by which to articulate truth’ (Mumby 1997, 14) are also challenged. Scholars working in comparative studies caution against epistemic unification: ‘Comparative philosophy cannot accept a method that reduces all visions to the view of one single philosophy’ (Panikkar 1988, 123). The same is true for other comparative studies. In comparative education, the ‘oneness’ and ‘universality’ risk being determined by dominating powers, and act as the normative templates for others to imitate (Marginson 2014a).

The other end of the spectrum is *immiscibility*, which highlights the co-presence of differences while emphasising the inability for differences to integrate or hybridise. American poet Allen Grossman stated that one condition for poetry is ‘the immiscibility of minds’ (Grossman and Halliday 1992, 209). Here, immiscibility can be understood as the impossibility for people’s minds to fully integrate with each, across different temporal and spatial boundaries, thus making homogeneity of ideas impossible but poems possible. Just like the immiscibility of water and fuel will result in rainbow patterns, the immiscibility of minds and cultures can provide conditions for creation,

even not necessarily through integration. Another relevant idea is Samuel Huntington's (1996) 'clash of civilisations', which suggested that irreconcilable cultural differences are foundations for conflicts in the world. However, Huntington's arguments have been widely challenged. Scholars argued that the incompatibility of cultures does not necessarily lead to conflicts; rather, different cultures can co-exist and be mutually enriching (e.g. Seifert 2012).

In-between *assimilation* and *immiscibility*, sits the idea of *being different together*. This idea emphasises diversity while suggesting the possibility of a certain level of integration and hybridisation. Since 'togetherness' has different interpretations, there are three forms of being different together: *unity in diversity*, *harmony with diversity*, and *together with diversity*. A relevant concept here is multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is seen as a push-back towards the assimilation concept by rejecting the diminishing of differences. But multiculturalism is a loaded term with varieties like conservative, liberal, left-liberal, critical, and resistance multiculturalisms (Goldberg 1994). The varieties are related to the different forms of *being different together*. It is beyond the scope of this paper to elaborate on multiculturalism, but the following sections will draw on ideas and critiques of it when relevant.

Unity in diversity stresses an ultimate oneness that encompasses diversity. Although this term can be used figuratively to mean 'harmony with diversity', without suggesting unification; this paper uses its literal meanings to better illustrate the nuances between *unity* and *harmony*. *Unity in diversity* and the 'melting pot' ideas seem both similar to John Lennon's imagination that 'the world will live as one'; however, they are fundamentally different. Diversity remains in the former but disappears in the latter. The *unity* comes in different forms. For instance, some may understand the fundamental unity for the human world as 'humanity'; and in higher education, some may understand one form of unity as educational justice. The 'unity' may also derive from hybridisation of different cultures. Although the unity does not override distinctive cultures, the idea of having one ultimate oneness generates critical reflections, such as who to define what is universal, on which grounds? This echoes previous critiques on unification in *assimilation*. Critiques on multiculturalism are also relevant here. Scholars argued that although multiculturalism promotes multiplicity, it can act as a hegemonic enterprise to sustain the colonial and capitalist power structure, due to its hidden agenda to push capitalism as the universal. Under the umbrella of 'equality for all', multiculturalism can disguise the materialised structural injustice across cultures, foster separatism among the oppressed, legitimise the capitalist exploitation, stratification, and oppression in the guise of celebrating plurality (Hall and Jefferson 1976; San Juan Jr 2000; Zizek 1997).

Harmony with diversity recognises differences, argues for togetherness, but rejects unification. Harmonisation does not mean assimilation or uniformisation, but to identify shared features across differences and achieve a certain level of integration and hybridisation. *Harmony with diversity* is close to the Chinese *he er bu tong* (和而不同) concept, where 'he' refers to 'harmony' that encompassing the co-existence and hybridisation of differences (Yue 1996). One illustration of *he er bu tong* in Chinese higher education is the National Southwestern Associated University (西南联合大学, *xi nan lian he da xue*), a legendary multi-university comprised by south-fled Peking, Tsinghua, and Nankai universities during the Sino-Japanese War period. Each university sustained their unique culture during and after the cooperation. They did not merge into one unity, but all managed to complement and enrich each other in various dimensions. In the essay written for this multi-university, Chinese philosopher Feng Youlan commented: 'The matching of different colours leads to greater beauty. The ensemble of different music brings peace and harmony' (五色交辉, 相得益彰。八音合奏, 终和且平). The concept of harmony also manifests in various expressions worldwide, such as *ubuntu* in Africa, *gwaashkwadiziniwin* in Anishinaabe, *convivencia* in Spain (Hernando-Lloréns 2018; Li and Düring 2020a, see more in their edited special issue 'Philosophy of Harmony: East and West', 2020b; Poupart 2015). Harmony is a concept broader than unity, as the former indicates multiplicity and allows the existence of multiple oneness, therefore avoiding the questions about a universal oneness. In particular, the 'Confucian idea of harmony

articulated a form of *ethical pluralism* that endorses, rather than denies, the humanist commitments to individuality and freedom' (Li and Düring 2020a, 6). The status of being harmonious is not determined by any single party, but to be agreed upon by all parties on equal grounds.

Together with diversity suggests a non-harmonious multiplicity with a certain level of integration and hybridisation. Russian literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin's (1984) 'polyphony' concept is useful here. In analysing Dostoevsky's work, Bakhtin borrowed the term 'polyphony' from music, to describe the simultaneous co-existence of multiple voices, not unified or subordinated to the authoritative author's voice. Each voice has the equal communicative capability, narrative weight, and interpretative significance (Bakhtin 1984). 'Polyphony' can be orchestrated to reach a harmonious equilibrium, but there could be dissonances that are either reconciled, or left as they are to form part of the polyphony. Dissonance does not mean conflicts. A similar notion in cross-cultural research is 'critical syncretism' proposed by Chen (2010) in his book *Asia as Method*, which means the simultaneous coexistence of various cultures and perspectives, but not necessarily unified into harmonious status.

To conclude, *being different together* asserts heterogeneity but consists of various potentials for integration and hybridisation: unified, harmonious, or non-harmonious. But *being different together* has the same dilemma multiculturalism faces (Zizek 1997): If allowing diversity and equalitarianism as suggested by the idea itself, it means no normative approach is on moral high ground. Consequently, the *being different together* perspective or any of the three versions of it cannot be asserted as the only or the optimal perspective to understand the encounters of cultures.

Concluding remarks: encounters of the East and the West

What comes out of the encounters of the East and the West, the pair chosen for comparison in Marginson and Yang (2021)? Arguably, all five possibilities discussed above appeared in various Eastern/Western discourses in different historical periods. The encounters of the East and the West have experienced assumptions of *immiscibility*, attempts for *assimilation*, as well as the current status and understandings of *being different together*.

Both the 'East' and the 'West' are constructed with a differentiation against 'the rest' and imagination of 'the other' – for instance see Edward Said (1977) on 'the Orient' or Stuart Hall (1992) on 'the West'. In China and East Asia, 'the West' is a frequently used reference point and almost equivalent to 'the international'. The West is more culturally related than geographically specific, it can include countries and regions sharing occidental cultures, such as Australia and New Zealand, not geographically located in Europe or North America. Several decades ago, Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset (1949) had suggested that the East and the West could 'fall in love'. He wrote in a response to Bertrand Russell's book *The Problem of China* (1922):

Today, the struggle between East and West has the whole demeanour of falling in love. Europe, touched by the deepest spiritual crisis that it has ever suffered, has just discovered Asia sentimentally and is experiencing a phase of enthusiasm. At the same time, the East, especially its most profound manifestation, China, has discovered Europe and fallen in love in equal proportion. (Ortega y Gasset 1949; cited from Lu and Jover 2019)

The East and the West did not 'discover' each other until the 1900s, the East–West exchanges before the Western colonial era, the enduring colonialisation of Asia by Western colonisers (and by Imperial Japan, following its 'leaving Asia to enter Europe' rhetoric) happened long before the 1900s. The East and the West have long developed a love-hate relationship: To China and East Asia, the West is both a friend and foe. The dual-perception of the West is never fully resolved in East Asian higher education and research.

In the continued colonial imaginary, the West is symbol of modernity, model of democracy, superior 'teacher' and 'leader' that the East need to catch up with. Incessant internal conflicts within East Asia also makes the continuing external presence of Western power welcome in some countries (Holcombe 2017), for the West can be their political and military ally. Simultaneously,

the East experiences and sees the West as a conqueror, coloniser, competitor, oppressor and exploiter, who should be cautioned against. To uproot the colonial aftermath, China and East Asian systems push back against the continuing Western influences through reasserting endogenous identity, some to a larger degree than others. Contemporary China's vigilance towards the West is further layered by Cold War memories, recurring ideological conflicts, and the current perception from the West of China as a noticeable competitor.

The East and the West are seen as distinct from each other. But they are not immiscible, as demonstrated by the asymmetrical Western influence in the East. Higher education and research systems in China and East Asia are engraved and still entrenched with Western imprints, through Western colonisation, 'West-following' modernisation, 'Western-oriented' internationalisation, and neo-liberal globalisation (Marginson and Xu [forthcoming](#)). The Western influences are particularly evident in social sciences research that includes (comparative) education studies (Yang 2019; Yang, Xie, and Wen 2019). The neo-colonial mindset feeds into the persisting white supremacy and Anglo-European hegemony in China and East Asia, where the 'the foreign moon is fuller' (a Chinese saying, meaning the foreign is always considered better) and where Western knowledge, methodologies, theories, models, traditions, universities, students, and academics are given more privilege than the local equivalents. In the West, although China and the East were not entirely misinterpreted as in the previous Oriental imaginary (Said 1977), the West still understands the East to a substantially less extent than the other way around, a point Marginson and Yang (2021) also made. The asymmetrical East–West encounters exhibit a realistic portrayal of the global epistemic inequity and injustice.

Nonetheless, the East and the West have never and will never reach assimilation. This is due to both the fundamental East–West cultural differences, and the resilience of endogenous Eastern cultures that spring from its long-established traditions, seep through coloniality and modernisation, and flow into the contemporary reality. As a result, China and East Asia are never fully Westernised. East Asian higher education systems are increasingly active in exercising their agency, to work with not only global benchmarks but also national-cultural models. There are push-backs from all of academics, institutions, and governments against the reproduction of Western supremacy into national higher education systems (Marginson and Xu [forthcoming](#)). De-Westernisation also happens in comparative studies on Asia and especially from Asia. Japanese Sinologist Yoshimi Takeuchi (1961) expressed the idea of replacing the East–West dichotomy with a broader reference framework, in his discourses on 'Asia as method'. The 'inter-referencing' approach proposed by Chen Kuan-Hsing (2010) in the book *Asia as Method* again raised this possibility to compare Asia with Asian characteristics, not against Western standards or Western theories. Asian scholarly gradually own the voices and studies on the region. The decline of Asia Studies in the West is coupled with the rise of knowledge on the regions from the region itself (Kelley 2020).

Revisiting José Ortega y Gasset's (1949) appeal that East and West could 'fall in love', there is growing space for this to happen under a *being different together* framework, be it in unity, harmony, or co-existence with hybridity. Each culture has much to offer, not just to each other, but to the world as a whole. For instance, Chinese philosopher Qian Mu (1990) concluded in his final piece, that Chinese culture could make substantial contributions to humankind with its unique anthropocosmic vision of 'tian ren he yi' (天人合一, meaning 'the unity of heaven and humanity'). In China, there have been ideas of Eastern–Western exchanges and hybridisation, such as in the *zhong ti xi yong* (中体西用, meaning 'keep Chinese knowledge as the essence and use Western knowledge for practical purpose') rhetoric in the late 1800s. The Chinese idiom *xue guan zhong xi* (学贯中西, meaning 'conversant in Chinese and Western knowledge') is used to depict scholars respected for their profound knowledge about both China and the West. The examination in Marginson and Yang (2021) also showcases that the Eastern–Western comparison and hybridisation are possible, and that equal dialogues can offer a conduit between different cultures to foster greater common understandings – a demonstration of *being different together* approach.

The world has entered an era with the co-existence of ‘very different visions of what this common world should look like’ (Macaes 2018, 3). In the changing geopolitical landscape, East–West relationships are becoming increasingly important. But the world does not bifurcate into only the East and the West. Rejecting Eurocentrism or Anglo-American-centrism is not to create China/East/Asia-centrism. The rebuttal to ‘the East and the West’ dichotomy is also not to create another ‘the East and the rest’ paradigm. Returning to the Latin etymology of ‘compare’ – com-par (*with-equal*) – equal respect and attention are vital to comparison (Stengers 2011), not only between the East and the West, but across all cultures. Interestingly, the Chinese equivalent ‘*bi*’ (比, meaning ‘compare’) delivers the same message about equality, as it is a pictographic character originally denoting two people positioned side by side (Xu n.d.).

In concluding their article, Marginson and Yang (2021) suggested extending the comparison beyond the Anglo-American and Chinese worlds. I strongly echo this proposal. A wealth of comparative enterprises beyond the East–West pair already exist, such as in the comparative examination of the Chinese concept *tianxia* and the Egyptian notion *maat* (Carlos and García 2020), or the comparison of ‘harmony’ in ancient Chinese and Greek philosophies (Li 2008). In the diverse space of global higher education and research, I look forward to witnessing more and more cross-civilisational bridges, hearing more and more meaningful dialogues, experiencing more and more mutual learning. Epistemic diversity exists not only in normative appeals, but in a reality we all share responsibilities to create.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

ORCID

Xin Xu  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-9972-8995>

References

- Bakhtin, M. M. 1984. *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*. Edited by C. Emerson. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Berray, M. 2019. “A Critical Literary Review of the Melting pot and Salad Bowl Assimilation and Integration Theories.” *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies* 6 (1): 142–151.
- Blackmore, J. 2021. “Governing Knowledge in the Entrepreneurial University: a Feminist Account of Structural, Cultural and Political Epistemic Injustice.” *Critical Studies in Education* 00 (00): 1–17.
- Carlos, J., and M. García. 2020. “Maat and Tianxia: Building World Orders in Ancient Egypt and China.” *Journal of Egyptian History* 13: 227–270.
- Chen, K.-H. 2010. *Asia as Method: Toward Deimperialization*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Church, I. M., and P. L. Samuelson. 2017. *Intellectual Humility: An Introduction to the Philosophy and Science*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Connell, R. 2007. *Southern Theory: Social Science and the Global Dynamics of Knowledge*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Connell, R. 2014. “Using Southern Theory: Decolonizing Social Thought in Theory, Research and Application.” *Planning Theory* 13 (2): 210–223.
- Conrad, S. 2016. *What is Global History?*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Dallmayr, F. 2004. “Beyond Monologue: For a Comparative Political Theory.” *Perspectives on Politics* 2 (2): 249–257.
- de Santos, B. S. 2007. “Beyond Abyssal Thinking: From Global Lines to Ecologies of Knowledges.” *Review* 30 (1): 45–89.
- de Santos, B. S. 2014. *Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide*. Boulder: Paradigm.
- Dübgen, F. 2020. “Scientific Ghettos and Beyond. Epistemic Injustice in Academia and Its Effects on Researching Poverty.” In *Dimensions of Poverty: Measurement, Epistemic Injustices, Activism*, edited by V. Beck, H. Hahn, and R. Lepenies, 77–95. Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-31711-9_5.
- Fei, X. 2015. *Globalization and Cultural Self-Awareness*. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer.

- Fornet-Betancourt, R., H. Becker, A. Gomez-Müller, and J. D. Gauthier. 1987. "The Ethic of Care for the Self as a Practice of Freedom: an Interview with Michel Foucault on January 20, 1984." *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 12 (2–3): 112–131.
- Foucault, M. 1974. *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. Translated by A. S. Smith. London: Tavistock Publications.
- Foucault, M. 1980. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*. Edited by C. Gordon. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Fricker, M. 2007. *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Giddens, A. 1979. *Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure and Contradiction in Social Analysis*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Goldberg, D. T. (Ed.). 1994. *Multiculturalism: A Critical Reader*. Cambridge: Blackwell.
- Gramsci, A. 1971. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. Edited by Q. Hoare and G. Nowell-Smith. London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- Grossman, A. R., and M. Halliday. 1992. *The Sighted Singer: Two Works on Poetry for Readers and Writers*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Hall, S. 1992. "The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power." In *Formations of Modernity*, edited by S. Hall and B. Gieben, 275–332. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Hall, S., and T. Jefferson. (Eds.). 1976. *Resistance Through Rituals*. London: Hutchinson.
- Hernando-Lloréns, B. 2018. "Differentiating Citizenship, Criminalizing Diversity: Problematising Convivencia in Education in Spain." *Curriculum Inquiry* 48 (5): 521–539.
- Herskovits, M. J. 1973. *Cultural Relativism: Perspectives in Cultural Pluralism*. New York: Random House.
- Holcombe, C. 2017. *A History of East Asia: From the Origins of Civilization to the Twenty-first Century* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hume, D. 1888. *A Treatise of Human Nature*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Huntington, S. P. 1996. *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Kelly, L. C. 2020. "The Decline of Asian Studies in the West and the Rise of Knowledge Production in Asia: An Autoethnographic Reflection on Mobility, Knowledge Production, and Academic Discourses." *Research in Comparative and International Education* 15 (3): 273–290.
- Kidd, I. J., J. Medina, and G. Pohlhaus. 2017. *The Routledge Handbook of Epistemic Injustice*. New York: Routledge.
- Li, C. 2008. "The Ideal of Harmony in Ancient Chinese and Greek Philosophy." *Dao* 7 (1): 81–98.
- Li, C., and D. Düring. 2020a. "Introduction – Harmony: Origin of Totalitarianism or Patron of Pluralism?" *Journal of East-West Thought* 10 (2): 1–8.
- Li, C., and D. Düring. 2020b. "Philosophy of Harmony: East and West (Special Issue)." *Journal of East-West Thought* 10 (2): 1–142.
- Lu, Y., and G. Jover. 2019. "An Anthropocosmic View: What Confucian Traditions Can Teach us About the Past and Future of Chinese Higher Education." *Higher Education* 77 (3): 423–436.
- Lyotard, J.-F. 1984. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Vol. 10). Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Macaes, B. 2018. *The Dawn of Eurasia: On the Trail of the New World Order*. London: Allen Lane.
- Marginson, S. 2014a. "Academic Freedom: A Global Comparative Approach." *Frontiers of Education in China* 9 (1): 24–41.
- Marginson, S. 2014b. Student Self-Formation in International Education. *Journal of Studies in International Education* 18 (1): 6–22.
- Marginson, S., and X. Xu. 2021. *Moving Beyond Centre-Periphery Science: Towards an Ecology of Knowledge* (No. 63; Centre for Global Higher Education Working Paper Series).
- Marginson, S., and X. Xu. Forthcoming. "The Ensemble of Diverse Music: Internationalisation Strategies and Endogenous Agendas in East Asian Higher Education." In *Changing Higher Education in East Asia*, edited by S. Marginson and X. Xu. London: Bloomsbury.
- Marginson, S., and L. Yang. 2021. Individual and Collective Outcomes of Higher Education: A Comparison of Anglo-American and Chinese Approaches. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*.
- Medina, J. 2017. "Epistemic Injustice and Epistemologies of Ignorance." In *The Routledge Companion to the Philosophy of Race*, edited by P. C. Taylor, L. M. Alcoff, and L. Anderson, 247–260. New York; Abingdon: Routledge.
- Moosavi, L. 2020. "The Decolonial Bandwagon and the Dangers of Intellectual Decolonisation." *International Review of Sociology* 30 (2): 332–354.
- Mu, Q. 1990. "Possible Contributions of Chinese Culture to the Future of Humankind [Zhongguo wenhua dui renlei weilai keyou de gong xian]." *United Daily*.
- Muller, F. M.. 1893. *Introduction to the Science of Religion*. London: Longmans, Green Co.
- Mumby, D. K. 1997. "Modernism, Postmodernism, and Communication Studies: A Rereading of an Ongoing Debate." *Communication Theory* 7 (1): 1–28.
- Ortega y Gasset, J. 1949. "El problema de China. Un libro de Bertrand Russel." In *Goethe desde dentro y otros ensayos*, edited by J. Ortega y Gasset (2nd ed., 157–162). Madrid: Revista de Occidente.

- Panikkar, R. 1988. "What is Comparative Philosophy Comparing?" In *Interpreting Across Boundaries: new Essays in Comparative Philosophy*, edited by G. J. Larson and E. Deutsch, 116–136. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Peña, E. D. 2007. "Lost in Translation: Methodological Considerations in Cross-Cultural Research." *Child Development* 78 (4): 1255–1264.
- Phillipson, R. 1992. *Linguistic Imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Polanyi, M. 1958. *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Polanyi, M. 1966. *The Tacit Dimension*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday.
- Posholi, L. 2020. "Epistemic Decolonization as Overcoming the Hermeneutical Injustice of Eurocentrism." *Philosophical Papers* 49 (2): 279–304.
- Poupart, L. M. 2015. "Anishinaabe Ways of Knowing and Being by Lawrence W. Gross." *Wicazo Sa Review* 30 (2): 140–143.
- Russell, B. 1922. *The Problem of China*. London: Unwin Brothers.
- Said, E. 1977. *Orientalism*. London: Penguin Books.
- San Juan Jr, E. 2000. "The Multiculturalist Problematic in the Age of Globalized Capitalism." *Social Justice* 27 (1): 61–75.
- Schurz, G. 1997. *The is-Ought Problem: An Investigation in Philosophical Logic (Vol. 1)*. Dordrecht: Springer Science & Business Media.
- Seifert, J. 2012. "Clash or Kiss of Peace Between Civilizations? Reflections on Cosmopolitanism?" *Journal of East-West Thought* 2 (4): 51–74.
- Sen, A. 1999. "Global Justice: Beyond International Equity." In *Global Public Goods: International Cooperation in the 21st Century*, edited by I. Kaul, I. Grunberg, and M. Stern, 116–125. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sen, A. 2002. *Rationality and Freedom*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Sen, A. 2006. *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*. London: Penguin Books.
- Splitter, L. J. 2017. "Identity and Morality: Cultivating Persons in the Asia-Pacific Region." *Journal of Moral Education* 46 (1): 12–23.
- Stengers, I. 2011. "Comparison as a Matter of Concern." *Common Knowledge* 17 (1): 48–63.
- Takeuchi, Y. 1961. "Asia as Method [Hoho to Shite no Ajia]." In *What is Modernity? Writings of Takeuchi Yoshimi*, edited by R. F. Calichman, 149–165. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Tlostanova, M. V., and W. D. Mignolo. 2012. *Learning to Unlearn Decolonial Reflections from Eurasia and the Americas*. Columbus: The Ohio State University Press.
- Tu, W. 1991. "Cultural China: the Periphery as the Center." *Daedalus* 120 (2): 1–32.
- Tu, W. 1999. Interview with Tu Wei-ming. *Philosophy Now*.
- UlrichsWeb. 2021. <http://ulrichsweb.serialssolutions.com>.
- Ulrichsweb: general FAQ. 2018. [https://knowledge.exlibrisgroup.com/Ulrich's/Product_Documentation/Frequently_Asked_Questions_\(FAQs\)/Ulrichsweb%3A_General_FAQ](https://knowledge.exlibrisgroup.com/Ulrich's/Product_Documentation/Frequently_Asked_Questions_(FAQs)/Ulrichsweb%3A_General_FAQ).
- Wagner, C. S. 2009. *The new Invisible College: Science for Development*. Washington: Brookings Institution Press.
- Whitcomb, D., H. Battaly, J. Baehr, and D. Howard-Snyder. 2017. "Intellectual Humility: Owning Our Limitations." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 94 (3): 509–539.
- Xu, S. n.d. *Shuo Wen Jie Zi* 说文解字.
- Xu, X. 2020. "China 'Goes Out' in a Centre-Periphery World: Incentivizing International Publications in the Humanities and Social Sciences." *Higher Education* 80 (1): 157–172.
- Yang, R. 2019. "Riddled with Gaping Wounds: A Methodological Critique of Comparative and International Studies in Education: Views of a Professor." In *The SAGE Handbook of Comparative Studies in Education*, edited by L. E. Suter, E. Smith, and B. D. Denman, 63–78. London: SAGE Publications.
- Yang, R., M. Xie, and W. Wen. 2019. "Pilgrimage to the West: Modern Transformations of Chinese Intellectual Formation in Social Sciences." *Higher Education* 77 (5): 815–829.
- Yue, D. 1996. "Cultural Relativism and the Principle of 'Compatibility in Diversity' [文化相对主义与'和而不同'原则]." *Chinese Comparative Literature* 01: 22–28.
- Zi, Zhuang. n.d. *Qiushui* 秋水. In *Zhuangzi Waipian* 庄子·外篇.
- Zizek, S. 1997. "Multiculturalism, or, the Cultural Logic of Multinational Capitalism." *New Left Review*, 225: 28–51.