

Preface

The 21 century is proving to be a new age of scientific booming as well as humanistic rethinking. With the integration of the world as a whole, the originally local, national or ethnic problems are carrying more and more the color of universality, whereas at the same time, human beings are still separated by the nation-state system. Therefore, it has been a cross-disciplinary hot topic to view the cultural consciousness of variety on the one hand, and on the other, to promote the interaction and communications among them.

For this issue, Professor Yue Daiyun from Peking University has kindly let us publish her paper, regarding some new inspiration of the 21st century cross-cultural dialogue from the perspectives of both comparative literature and comparative culture. She illustrates the necessity of bridging the gap between the elite and the commoners in terms of the local-international discourse relationship.

Cross cultural dialogue has marched from theory to practice. Professor John D. Kelly and Professor Martha Kaplan, from University of Chicago and Vassar College respectively reveal some new trends in American anthropology in the interview at Sichuan University. In analysing the neo-colonialism and the nascent definitions around nation-state, the interview provides different angles, helping us to think deeply about the post-cold war global situation in general and the Chinese case in particular.

In responding to the recent heated debate around cultural diversity, this issue has chosen to include a group of papers centred on “ethnic culture and identification”, all of which take multiethnic China as a case. Xu Xinjian questioned the historiography of Chinese literature based on its multinational background; Frederique Darragon of France, the tower expert, provided us with her paper entitled “The Star-shaped Towers of the Tribal Corridor of Southwest China”, with an abundance of material she collected during years of fieldwork. Young scholars, such as An Qi who obtained her masters degree in History in SOAS, Liang Zhao, visiting scholar in Harvard University, and Li Fei, PhD Candidate at Sichuan University, offered their papers from diverse perspectives on different topics. Whether on the Miao Studies, the oral tradition of the south Chinese minority groups, or the self representation of ethnic minority scholars in modern society, the papers join the debate on cultural diversity from various aspects.

In addition, many a scholars visiting Cambridge, such as Zhu Weidong, Bi Huicheng and Xiao Qinghua submitted their updated essays, whether it be education, law, philosophy, history or linguistic, their works demonstrate the wide range of research into which Chinese scholars are delving.

Founded by the Committee of the Association of Cambridge Studies in 2006, the *Journal of Cambridge Studies* provides a platform for broader and deeper cultural exchange. Since 2009, the *Journal* has chosen to focus on one central topic each issue, aiming at wider academic recognition, whilst continuing to encourage contributions from all sides to the cross cultural dialogue.

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