

## **“East” and “West”: Contradiction or/and Complementarity**

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In this paper, “East” and “West” with their characteristics, especially in the field of thought, are regarded as a pair of two interactive components that have particular relations among themselves. Both Eastern and Western thought have developed different modes interpreting possible relations between the components of such a pair. In my paper, I will present some of these modes: the ideas of opposition as contrary and contradiction developed within the Western thought, the idea of complementarity developed in the Chinese thought, the idea of non-duality of Buddhism and the idea of the three-components interaction presented in the school of Samkhya, the idea of oneness presented in Indian thought. What consequences for understanding of the dialogue follows from these modes and could there be a real mutual understanding will be the opened questions that the paper will discuss.

Key words: East-West dialogue, opposition, harmony, non-duality, oneness

### **Introduction**

The East-West dialogue could be regarded in many aspects and through the prism of different scholar fields and approaches. The very content of the concepts of East and West varies in accordance to the specific aim of the study.

In this paper, I will regard “East” and “West” in terms of philosophy as symbolic indications of two kinds of perception and interpretation of reality. The scope of the concepts will be the most traditional: “East” including the thought of India and East and South Asia; and “West” referring to the European philosophy.

The idea of “dialogue” assumes that there are at least two sides. Therefore, my approach is based on a comparison. The aim of the paper, however, is not to compare neither the two kinds of thought nor the historical phases of the dialogue between them but rather the different modes of interpretation of the possible relations of the two sides. Within the “dialog”, East and West could be regarded as two interactive components of a pair that have

particular relations among themselves. My question is what could be the character of these relations and how, in terms of different modes of relation, the dialogue might look like.

In order to answer this question, I will examine some of the models about relations between components of a pair developed within both Eastern and Western thought. I divide them into two groups: modes of duality and modes of oneness

## **I. Modes of duality**

### **1. Interaction as opposition**

The best known is the interpretation of interaction in terms of opposition. This mode is especially well developed within the Western philosophical thought. Opposition might be a contradictory or contrary.

Opposition as contradiction is this one in which the two components of a pair exclude entirely each other and the characteristics of one are opposite to the characteristics of the other. Such is for example the opposition human – non-human, being – non-being and so on.

Contrary opposition allows many intermediate nuances between two pairs. Such kind is the opposition black-white, for example.

#### ***1.1.Static opposition***

As opposition, East and the West could be regarded in terms of both contradiction and contrary. Usually, however, they are explained as contradictory dichotomy. In this terms, they are viewed as monolithic realities, that have opposite characteristics. From this point of view Eastern philosophy and kind of thinking is described as a philosophy of unity that is mystical, introvert, religious, intuitive, spiritually-practical and developed special psycho-technical practice. Western philosophy from the other side is defined with opposite terms as rational, extravert, secular, theoretical, material and abstract, requiring a relevant vocational education and based on understanding of subject-object differentiation.

The tendency to regard the Eastern world as one whole, that is oppose to the Western world has its first explicate expression in the Hegel's Philosophy of History. Despite the fact that Hegel describes China, India and Persia separately, he insists that "The History of the World travels from East to West, for Europe is absolutely the end of History, Asia the beginning. The History of the World has an East... for although the Earth forms a sphere, History performs no circle round it, but has on the contrary a determinate East, viz., Asia." (Hegel

2001: 121). “West” and “East” for Hegel are not just geographical concepts, but two inherently opposite spiritual worlds.

This mode of contradictory opposition is especially common accepted when comparing Western and Chinese thinking. China is interpreted as “the other pole”, not only geographically but also regarding culture and the way of thinking. “There would appear to be”, writes Michel Foucault in his famous book “The order of Things”, “at the other extremity of the earth we inhabit, a culture...that does not distribute the multiplicity of existing things into any of the categories that make it possible for us to name, speak, and think” (Foucault 2005: XXI). This is a culture, astonishing the Western person with “the stark impossibility of thinking that” (Foucault 2005: XVI). Simon Leys explicitly asserts that "From the Western point of view, China is quite simply *the other pole of human experience*" (Leys 1988).

In this interpretation, China is described in terms of otherness. From one side, it is the perfect otherness: “All other great civilisations are either dead (Egypt, Mesopotamia, pre-Colombian America), or too exclusively absorbed in the problems of surviving in extreme conditions (primitive cultures), or too close to us (Islamic cultures, India) to offer such a *complete otherness*, such a radical and illuminating originality as China” (Leys 1988 – cursive mine).

From the other side, this different kind of thought challenges our own system of classification and understanding of relation between “same” and “other”. As Michel Foucault thoroughly explains, this thinking challenges “all the familiar landmarks of my thought – our thought, the thought that bears the stamp of our age and our geography – breaking up all the ordered surfaces and all the planes with which we are accustomed to tame the wild profusion of existing things, and continuing long afterwards to disturb and threaten with collapse our age-old distinction between the Same and the Other” (Foucault 2005: XVI).

From the third side, otherness always concerns the perception of self. This “another system of thought” (ibid.), is “the limitation of our own”. This limitations are the contours of West’s own identity: what we are and what we are not. It could be a mirror where we should understand ourselves:

“It’s only when we look at China that we can finally take a more exact measure of our own identity and that we begin to see what part of our heritage derives from universal humanity, and what part merely reflects simple Indo-European idiosyncrasies. China is that fundamental Other without which, if it never encounters it, the West cannot really become conscious of the contours and limits of its cultural Self” (Leys 1988).

So, in terms of opposition, the relation between East and West could be understood in terms of relations between the “same” and the “other”.

The theme of otherness is a huge topic that I will not discuss in details here. I will only mention that it concerns the problems of tolerance and acceptance, of integration and assimilation. In all the cases, it is a problem of a reaction to something different and alien. The idea of otherness is always connected with assuming of a concrete position and attitude and it always is centred at one of the poles of the pair, this which is “for us”, “from the Western point of view” as describes Simon Leys. Therefore, it is always some kind of centrism.

The “other” could provoke different attitudes. East as “other” often is interpreted in terms of remote mysticism and charming exotic. Then the other might be a special space beyond the familiar spaces we live and inhabit, “a precise region whose name alone constitutes for the West a vast reservoir of utopias. In our dream world, is not China precisely this privileged site of space? In our traditional imagery, the Chinese culture is the most meticulous, the most rigidly ordered, the one most deaf to temporal events, most attached to the pure delineation of space; we think of it as a civilization of dikes and dams beneath the eternal face of the sky; we see it, spread and frozen, over the entire surface of a continent surrounded by walls... rooted in a ceremonial space, overburdened with complex figures, with tangled paths, strange places, secret passages, and unexpected communications” (Foucault 2005: XX)

Here I could mention that, especially in the German romanticism India, although explained in terms of charming and attractive exotics, was not interpreted in terms of otherness but in terms of the lost unity, a spiritual place where our souls are longing to return. It is interpreted as a real ancestor of the European civilisation as well:

“India is the cradle of the human race, the birthplace of human speech, the mother of history, the grandmother of legend and the great grand mother of tradition” (Mark Twain (1897), Ch. XXXVIII).

The other possible attitude to the otherness besides interest and attraction towards it, is fear, especially fear that this otherness will cross the border and invade the space of the sameness.

In fact, it is a fear of dynamic. Opposition in itself regards its components in their static states and positions. Their communication is a question of dynamic and development.

### ***1.2. Dynamic opposition***

Within the Western mode, the dynamic interpretation of the interaction of a pair is expressed in terms of dialectics. The dialectic mode of opposition describes the relation of the components of a pair as unity and struggle. According to this idea, poles of an opposition could not remain the same after they enter in interaction. This interrelation should lead both to transformation into a new, qualitative different level. While in the classical Aristotelean logic, the double negation ("A is not non-A") would simply reinstate the original thesis, in the dialectical logic the stages of the thesis and antithesis are "overcome and preserved" (or sublated) synthesising them into a new higher rational unity.

This kind of interpretation supposes that it would be possible to synthesise the two types of thinking, the two different ways of perceiving the world representing by East and West and to create a unified world philosophy. As a result of the synthesis, there will appear an "universal", "east-west" philosophy, "cosmic world vision" and all these will bring people closer to the higher values." (Kolesnikov, 2003: 5).

Usually this synthesis is described not in terms of struggle but of mutual merging. According to Northrop, one of the first discussing the meeting of East and West, "the East and the West are in a single world movement, as much Oriental as Occidental in character. The East and the West are meeting and merging" (Northrop 1947: 4). He believes that it is possible to relate correctly "the compatible elements of the two cultures by enlarging the ideals of each to include those of the other so that they reinforce, enrich and sustain rather than convert, combat or destroy each other." (Northrop 1947: 6)

According to some researcher, such a synthesis is impossible because the two cultures are very different.

Beside synthesis that is perceived as a state that is qualitatively richer than the two basis states, the dynamic meeting and interconnection of the two components of the pair contains some dangers. It might lead to unification or/and to assimilation of one of the poles by the other and reduction of one to the other.

It is because when the interaction of the components of a pair is regarded in terms of opposition, which is ultimately the relation between the same and the other, it is very difficult to regard the components as equal.

Usually the other is perceived as something with lower quality. Hegel, who is the first to formulate most clearly the concept of East and West and their content, expresses explicitly this sense of superiority of West over the East in the field of philosophy:

“The first Philosophy in order is the so-called Oriental, which, however, does not enter into the substance or range of our subject as represented here. Its position is preliminary, and we only deal with it at all in order to account for not treating of it at greater length, and to show in what relation it stands to Thought and to true Philosophy. The expression Eastern philosophy is specially employed in reference to the period in which this great universal Oriental conception aroused the East — the land of circumscription and of limitation, where the spirit of subjectivity reigns... That which we call Eastern Philosophy is more properly the religious mode of thought and the conception of the world belonging generally to the Orientals and approximates very closely to Philosophy; and to consider the Oriental idea of religion just as if it were religious philosophy, is to give the main reason why it is so like” (Hegel 1805-6).

Of course, this might have another side as well. In the words of Max Müller, a famous German Indologist, “If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered over the greatest problems of life, and has found solutions of some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant, I should point to India. And if I were to ask myself from what literature we who have been nurtured almost exclusively on the thoughts of Greeks and Romans, and of the Semitic race, the Jewish, may draw the corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact more truly human a life... again I should point to India”. (Müller, 1882, Lecture IV)

The interaction in terms of opposition supposes a hidden centrism masked as tolerance as well.

So, opposition usually leads to some kind of inequality. The attitude assuming inequality is obvious when the poles of interaction are perceived as relatively unchangeable realities. It is valid in terms of dialectical interpretation as well. Then one of the components is regarded as thesis, the other as antithesis. Thesis always has a more static role in the interaction. It is what should be transformed through the activity of the antithesis. In terms of dialectic, relationship between opposites has a progressive spiral development.

We can find an interesting variant of contradictory opposition in the ideas of the Indian school of Samkhya. Its interpretation is based on a strict duality of two basic principles – consciousness and matter. From one side they complement each other forming the living human being. From the other, matter has entirely subordinate place being only a background for the play of individual consciousnesses. In that is only the consciousness that is the real essence of the human.

## 2. **Interrelation of the three components**

Besides the mode of duality, the Indian school of Samkhya presents a three-components mode of interrelations as well. According to Samkhya, the material component of the world consists of three interweaved ingredients (gunas): sattva, radjas and tamas. They have both ontological and ethical characteristics and could be in various interrelations among themselves. Each of these components can be regarded as opposite to either of other two. The main opposition, however, is between sattva, connected with light, construction and goodness, and tamas, connected with darkness, destruction and evil (obviously they have different ethical value). The third component, radjas is interpreted in terms of passion and activity and it realises the connection between the other two. These mediatory component in some aspects is closer to one, in others – to the other of the components, having at the same time its own unique specifics. None of these components is antagonistic to neither of the other. The three components in their mutual and different combinations forms the specifics of the whole. They could not be reduced to each other but in every combination, one of them is prevailing.

Interesting in this respect are the ideas about East-West communication of Poolla Tirupati Raju, Indian philosopher of the XX century, one of the experts in comparative philosophy. He regards three traditions: Western, Indian and Chinese. Each one of them, according to him, has its own value. There is no antagonism (one of the possible issues of opposition) among them, “ the so-called antagonism is not antagonism at all; it is only a difference in the emphasis on various aspects of correlation” (Raju 2001: 297). According to him, neither of these traditions is superior to the others. Each should be considered in its wholeness and continuity. The specifics of Western tradition, which is rational and scientific, is the "struggle for the liberation of the outward". Chinese tradition, described as humanistic, is concentrated on the "human mindfulness". The main topic of Indian tradition, rooted in the sphere of inner development, is the "explication of inwardness." (Raju 1962)

As in the theory of the three gunas, there could be different lines of relation between them. From one side, the Indian and Chinese philosophy are philosophies of life and are opposite to the Western philosophy, which presents ways and methods of thinking. From the other side, Chinese and Western philosophy are similar because both are external, their interest being towards the outer objects. In this sense, they are opposite to the Indian one that seeks for the truth, beauty and goodness in the inner being of the human, not in the human relations or physical reality.

And as the three gunas in their cooperation form the whole of the world, so, he thinks, all traditions could contribute to each other and continue each other. It is absurd to take a demarcation line between East and West, between materialism and humanism, between modern science and spiritual life. He regards human being as the common denominator of comparison of different traditions and insists that every tradition could contribute to the philosophy of life that is necessary for our time. Each would contribute with its specifics and achievements.

Although the Indian thinker – who regards himself as a follower of Advaita-vedanta, not of Samkhya – tries to be objective and to outline the achievements and shortcomings of every traditions, the reader still has the feeling that Indian philosophy with its accent on the inner spiritual life and its practical applicability is more valuable than the other ones.

We may conclude that if the dialogue is within the mode of opposition, there is always a danger of centrism, of imposing the values and conceptual frameworks of one of the participants on the other/others. Heidegger describes such a danger in his “Dialogue on Language between a Japanese and an Inquirer”: the dialogue is in terms of European language with all the connotations of meanings developed within the Western thought, “the language of the dialogue shifted everything into European” (Heidegger, 1982: 4). With the example of the ideas of otherwise very tolerant ideas of Raju we can see that it could be the fact from the position of either of the participants.

## **II. Modes of oneness**

### **1. Interrelation as oneness**

The simplest mode of oneness is just oneness. While the vision of complementarity and non-duality, as we shall see, keep the idea of relative independence of the components of the pair, the mode of oneness is apt to unify them and to ignore the differences.

The mode of oneness is very strong in Indian tradition. Therefore, we can find this kind of interpretation in ideas of Indian thinkers. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, one of the most distinguished researchers in the field of comparative philosophy, expresses it thoroughly in his reflections about East and West. First, he assumes that “there is not an Eastern view which is different from the Western view of life” (Radhakrishnan 1955: 13). He point out that “the distinction of East and West are made with Europe as the centre. Geographical areas are not cultural or anthropological entities. Neither East nor West is a corporate single entity. Each is

a blanket term used to cover a number of separate people and regions in different stages of development. Each had its own individualised cultures” (Radhakrishnan 1955: 16).

Denying the distinguishing of East and West as different and oppose realities, Radhakrishnan, accentuates on their unity. This is a historical unity of origin: “As a matter of fact, Eastern and Western people had common beginnings and developed from them relatively independent views and acquired certain features which marked them from each other” (ibid. 13). Second, this is a union of the problems that should be solved: “Today both of them are tacking the same problem the reconciliation of the values of mind with those of spirit” (ibid.). The most important is our union as human beings who share the same characteristics: “all human beings and their social forms have certain fundamental characteristics which are more primary than the differences which seem to dominate our minds” (Radhakrishnan 1955: 17). Therefore, we have common “human purpose and destiny” (Radhakrishnan 1955: 130).

From this multilevel oneness follows the vision of the union of the future that could be achieved when we “learn from each other and adapt the inheritance of the past to new an ever-changing conditions and reshape it into a new and living pattern” (ibid. 13).

Radhakrishnan insists that “we need, not merely a closer contact between East and West but a closer union, a meeting of minds and a union of hearts” (Radhakrishnan 1955: 130-131). Optimistically he believes that “Mankind stems from one origin from which it has figured out in many forms. It is now striving toward the reconciliation of that which has been split up. The separation of East and West is over. The history of the new world, the one world has begun.” (Radhakrishnan 1955: 131); “We are living at the dawn of a new era of universal humanity” (Radhakrishnan 1955: 130).

This oneness is not unification that could follow from the mode of opposition. As in Indian thought oneness is expressed through plurality, in ideas of this Indian philosopher the future unity “promises to be large in extend, varied in colour, rich in quality”. (ibid.). Therefore, the mode of oneness requires mutual respect and valuing the contribution of each and every aspect consisting the oneness.

Since this oneness is not unification, it supposes plurality of relatively independent centres that might contribute to and enrich the whole.

## **2. Interaction as complementarity**

Chinese thought developed another type of connection between the components of a pair – that of complementarity. The idea of complementarity is presented thoroughly in the theory of

yin and yang. In this relation, neither of the component can exist isolated from the other. They both are necessary and mutually determine each other.

This mode is different from the contradictory opposition regarding components as opposite poles. It suppose that each component has the features of the other. The major tendencies in one are the minor tendencies in the other and vice versa. They are not strictly divided and can smoothly be transformed into one other in due time. Unlike the mode of dialectical opposition that suppose struggle and mutual transformation into a third state, the interaction of complementarity suppose balance and mutual harmonisation. The components keep their specifics forming in their mutuality one whole. With the words of Northrop, whose ideas might be regarded here as well, “the two civilizations are shown to supplement and reinforce each other. They can meet, not because they are saying the same thing, but because they are expressing different yet complementary things, both of which are required for an adequate and true conception of man’s self and his universe. Each can move into the new comprehensive world of the future, proud of its past and preserving its self-respect. Each also needs the other” (Northrop1947: 454). For Northrop “East concerned itself with the immediately apprehended factor in the nature of things”, developing a “doctrine built out of concepts by *intuition*”. The West, from the other hand, “has concentrated for the most part on the doctrinally designated factor”, its doctrine being “constructed out of concepts by postulation” (Northrop1947: 448). Intuition and postulation, however, does not exclude each other. The knowledge as a whole, *all* knowledge, involves both intuition and postulation. They are in relations of complementarity, correspondence and correlation (ibid. 443).

In regard to the supposed connection of East and West with intuition and logic, their relations sometimes are illustrated with the relation between the two brain hemispheres. Each of them has its own specifics and both form a new whole whose characteristics could not be reduced to the sum of its components.

The mode of opposition supposes a relation between the same and the other, which can also be interpreted as a confrontation between the inwardness and the outwardness. The position of the same is the preferable. Therefore, within this mode, every pole is for itself the centre of the coordinate system, the outlook being from the inside out. In the mode of complementarity, the other centre is of equal importance and should be regarded. Therefore, in the mode of complementarity the outlook (or maybe 'inlook') is from outside in.

These two modes – opposition and complementarity, are typical for Eastern and Western attitudes to reality as well. Experiments have shown that the persons formed by Western

culture tend to divide and differentiate things; to consider them in isolation and located in an empty space without the environment having a significant effect on them. Therefore, they perceive the static aspect and are inclined to concentrate their attention in the centre, to put themselves in the centre. This is the starting point from which to observe the world as a subject observes the object (see East and West, Cultural Differences). This is the vision of opposition.

For the human of the Far East, from the other side, things are intertwined, all-encompassing energy provides the universal interplay of everything with everything, so there are no distinct things, but volatile and mutually conditioned processes. In this case, the environment, the situation of occurrence, is essential, the starting position is rather in the direction from the outside, from the object, thus it is no longer a point, but a circle or even a sphere. This circular perception includes only as its sub-elements the limited views through the prism of a certain angle, that are unfolding from the position of the individual observer (see *ibid.*).

This difference in the construction of the coordinate system is obvious in the very sense of the verb "to see". In a Western reading, it expresses the action from the point of view of the subject, the perspective of the observer, the Self – I see. In Eastern reading, the verb is rather "to be seen," "to show, to manifest itself", i. e. things are seen from the point of view of the object, not the subject. Thus, while Western paintings are represented by a frontal position where the seeing eye is the starting point, the centre of the perspective, the East paintings are from the "bird's eye", from the position of a universal view or from the perspectives of the objects themselves, as if the observer is in the objects and not outside.

We might conclude that the mode of complementarity leads to seek for harmony and mutual respect. The "other" keeps its relative autonomy and independence and the position of mutuality is important.

While within the mode of opposition every pole is for itself the centre of the coordinate system, here there are two equally important centres that should be harmonised and balance at the elusive and flexible line of their mutual connection.

### **3. Interaction as non-duality**

When developed, the mode of complementarity leads to the mode of non-duality. Non-duality is developed within Buddhism and Daoism. Non-duality regards opposites in their mutual connections as complementary aspects of the whole. From the position of the whole, every aspect is relative and presents only the relative true. To understand the mutual dependence of

opposites and to achieve a vision from a qualitative new level, a level transcending the plane of their confrontation, is one of the goal of the enlightenment.

It is from the position of non-duality when the "bird's eye", the vision from the position of a universal view is achieved.

From this position, the dialog should be on a different level, a level of no-words of Daoism. While remaining within the frames of duality, new and new pairs of oppositions will arise as Chinese Buddhists expressed.

### **Conclusions. Some open questions**

In this paper, I presented briefly several modes of possible interrelation between components of a pair that were developed on Eastern and Western thought as well as the possible consequences for the dialog that follow from these modes. It is obvious that understanding of the interrelation depends on the system of thought that already is established.

Therefore we could ask: Is it really possible to understand the otherness? How can we understand what the other understands?

A famous proverb of Zhuangzi says:

*“Zhuangzi and Huizi were walking on the dam over the Hao, when the former said, 'These thrissas come out, and play about at their ease - that is the enjoyment of fishes.' The other said, 'You are not a fish; how do you know what constitutes the enjoyment of fishes?' Zhuangzi rejoined, 'You are not I. How do you know that I do not know what constitutes the enjoyment of fishes?’”* (The Floods of Autumn)

Is it really possible an adequate interpretation of otherness? Can we see the other as it is, or do we only see our own projections? And is there at all otherness if in terms of Eastern thought, all is one, as the Upanishads claim:

*"For when there is duality, as it were, then one sees another, one smells another, one tastes another, one speaks to another, one hears another, one thinks of another, one touches another, one knows another. But when to the knower of Brahman everything has become the Self, then what should he see and through what, what should he smell and through what, what should he taste and through what, what should he speak and through what, what should he hear and through what, what should he think and through what, what should he touch and through what, what should he know and through what? Through what should one know That Owing to which all this is known? "This Self is That which has been described as 'Not this,*

*not this.' It is imperceptible, for It is never perceived; undecaying, for It never decays; unattached, for It never attaches Itself; unfettered, for It never feels pain and never suffers injury. Through what, O Maitreyi, should one know the Knower?"* (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 4, 5:15, tr. Swami Nikhilananda).

And is it possible, again in terms of Eastern thought, to speak of the own nature of something, if everything is interdependent, as Buddhism and Daoism claim? In such a case, neither the other nor we could be "of our own" "by ourselves", we are always conditioned:

"This exists - and that exists.

That supports that.

Without this there is no that.

This disappears and that disappears "(Samukta agama sutra)

Therefore, division is always relative and depends on the point of view:

*"There is no thing that is not "that", and there is no thing that is not "this". If I look at something from "that", I do not see it; only if I look at it from knowing do I know it. Hence it is said, 'That view comes from this; and this view is a consequence of that:' - which is the theory that that view and this (the opposite views) produce each the other. Although it be so, there is affirmed now life and now death; now death and now life; now the admissibility of a thing and now its inadmissibility; now its inadmissibility and now its admissibility. (The disputants) now affirm and now deny; now deny and now affirm. Therefore the sagely man does not pursue this method, but views things in the light of (his) Heaven (-ly nature), and hence forms his judgment of what is right. This view is the same as that, and that view is the same as this. But that view involves both a right and a wrong; and this view involves also a right and a wrong - are there indeed the two views, that and this? Or are there not the two views, that and this? They have not found their point of correspondency which is called the pivot of the Dao. As soon as one finds this pivot, he stands in the centre of the ring (of thought), where he can respond without end to the changing views; without end to those affirming, and without end to those denying. Therefore I said, 'There is nothing like the proper light (of the mind)'. (Zhuangzi, The Adjustment of Controversies, tr. J. Legge).*

But, then, is it possible in terms of Eastern thought itself to speak at all about Eastern and Western thought? Don't we in this way fall into the trap of Western perception and attitudes, because it is Western thought that presupposes opposition, bipolarity, and antithetic, while the

East, offers "a total, circular-mirror dialectic, ... in which the positive and negative components are identifying and eliminating each other "and which is" ignoring the antinomic model itself, staying beyond the antinomic "(Antov 2012).

So, the true position of the East should not be centred – neither on the poles, neither on the subject, nor on the object, neither inside nor outside. The accent is reciprocity. An aspect of this reciprocity is the understanding that everything, or more precisely, every process is revealed through a relationship, in a certain relation, not in itself. It is the relation that makes it possible to understand what it is, and the integrity of the interrelation determines the characteristics of the individual components:

"If there was no other, there would not be" I "(非彼無我)

(This passage can be read in another way - "Without other I would be non-I, with a denial of "I," which corresponds to the specific, overwhelming Daoist denial we find in such concepts as "non-knowledge" "Non-doing", i.e., the division of the others is characteristic of the level of plurality, while for the deeper level of unity, neither "I" nor "another" can be distinguished)

The answer of the East about the way in which otherness can be interpreted is that it cannot be done neither through sensory perceptions, nor through logical conclusions. There however is a third opportunity that we can call intuition, following the Way, merging with Dao. It does not need neither words, nor actions.

Therefore, the parable of Zhuangzi and his ability to understand the joy of fish actually goes on:

*“Huizi said, 'I am not you; and though indeed I do not fully know you, you certainly are not a fish, and (the argument) is complete against your knowing what constitutes the happiness of fishes.' Zhuangzi replied, 'Let us keep to your original question. You said to me, "How do you know what constitutes the enjoyment of fishes?" You knew that I knew it, and yet you put your question to me - well, I know it (from our enjoying ourselves together) over the river Hao”.*

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