**beauty/美(Měi)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Final Remarks | LIU Chengji, Alain le Pichon | 28 Jun 2022 |

LIU Chengji: 1) In the West, since Baumgarten referred to the Meixue as Aesthetic and regarded it as a low-level epistemology, the discipline has struggled to get a positive assessment in philosophy. Ironically, the field has been prominent in East Asia, particularly in China and Japan. While this is undoubtedly related to the inclination of Chinese or Eastern philosophical thinking towards sensuality, it also calls into question whether Western philosophy's metaphysical tradition can provide a truthful elucidation of the universe. If this elucidation is invalid, then the aesthetic is the intellectual situation that man has to embrace.

(2) The diffusion of Western academic discourse in China since the modern era has caused Chinese scholars to narrate China's modernity in Western terms and re-establish China’s history. This current transformation of academic discourse has squeezed “Chinese Aesthetics” into a historical concept and made the relevant research an effort to find the chapter and verse in Chinese history according to the modern disciplinary paradigm. In this context, the question of how to remain faithful to the history of “Chinese Aesthetics” while finding a commonality of aesthetic experience cross-culturally has become a question worth pondering. At the conceptual scale, the belief in common humanity and a common sensorium can undoubtedly overcome this barrier between the East and the West. However, in practice, there is still a reasonably long journey.

Alain le Pichon: I have no doubt that Umberto Eco would have reacted positively and with great interest to Professor Liu Chengji’s closing remarks. Without pretending to speak on his behalf, I think, based on the experience of thirty years of collegiality and meetings within Transcultura and of his numerous interventions in our transcultural debates, I can testify to the fact that he would have undoubtedly agreed with and endorsed, Prof. Liu’s two proposals.

I would like to remind you first of all that Umberto Eco’s philosophical work is based on his great thesis on the aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas. His philosophical work is therefore based on aesthetics and on the immense semantic and epistemological critical work that he carried out on the categories of the beauty in medieval thought.

I have no doubt that he would have accepted the challenge of envisaging a refoundation of philosophy taking into account alternative, even contradictory, positions to those of Western metaphysics based on the proposals of Chinese aesthetics. In his preface to the republication of his thesis on the aesthetics of Thomas Aquinas, Eco wrote “to identify the contradictions of the systems does not represent a defeat, but rather a victory, for those who believe in the philosophical activity as something that is continuously remade”.

It is for this reason, for this openness to alternative systems of thought, to the discovery of different semantic, philosophical, and epistemological categories, that we have created Transcultura. The Professor’s proposal could only delight him, and the references and gustatory criteria inherent in Chinese aesthetics could not but seduce the gourmet, gastronome, and passionate oenologist, as attached to the good things in life, that he was...