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## INTEGRATIVE DIALOGUE AS A PATH TO UNIVERSALISM: THE CASE OF BUBER AND ZHUANGZI

### ABSTRACT

I argue that it is through an integrative dialogue based on the *Ijing* (*Book of Changes*) model of cooperative and cyclical change rather than a Marxist or neo-Marxist dialectical model of change based upon the Hegelian model of conflict and replacement that promises the greatest possibility of peaceful coexistence.<sup>1</sup> As a case study of a dialogue between civilizations, I utilize both a mythical and an historical encounter between Martin Buber, representing the West, and Zhuangzi, representing the East. I show that despite the vast temporal, historic, linguistic and cultural differences, that the dialogue between Zhuangzi and Buber is complementary and not adversarial.

**Keywords:** Buber, Zhuangzi, Huntington, comparative philosophy, clash of civilizations, *Ijing*, *The Book of Changes*, integrative dialogue, Dao, Ch'an, Zen, the Baal-Shem-Tov, Yin and Yang

### THE BACKGROUND

This paper can be seen as antidote to the viewpoint set out by 20th century political scientist, Samuel Huntington in his influential essay, *The Clash of Civilizations?* in 1993.<sup>2</sup> The *Clash of Civilizations* was itself a rejoinder to Francis Fukuyama who argued that with the advent of democratic capitalism, there would be no further conflicts in the world as ideological differences would in the words of William James, be differences that did not make a difference.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> While the thesis-antithesis model of change is identified with Hegel, it originates with Fichte.

<sup>2</sup> Cf., Huntington, S. P. 1993. "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs*, Summer. The continued influence of Huntington's viewpoint is evidenced by: Barker, J. P. (Ed.). 2013. *The Clash of Civilizations Twenty Years On*. WWW.E-IR.INFO

<sup>3</sup> For a full view of Fukuyama's viewpoint, Cf., Fukuyama, F. 1992. *The End of History and the Last Man*. New York: Free Press, Simon & Schuster. The attribution of the description of difference created by William James to Fukuyama is the present writer's allusion.

Huntington disagreed and pointed to the dangers that lay ahead which were embedded in the differing values that lay in deep cultural traditions that cut across national boundaries and formed, in his view, ultimately conflicting civilizations. Integrative Dialogue, carried out in the manner suggested in this approach, is one means at our disposal of dissolving or, at the very least, reducing these deep cultural differences. The first condition for integrative dialogue is each side to a dialogue must relinquish any cultural value that denies the rights of the other.

### **INTEGRATIVE DIALOGUE: THE *IJING* (THE BOOK OF CHANGES HERITAGE)**

In the *Ijing*, the two opposites, unlike the Hegelian clash, do not cancel out each other. They are retained and the process is one of cyclical replacement rather than a progressive spiral. In the model herein proposed, the philosophical integration borrows from the *Ijing* the concept of complementarity. In this neighborly borrowing, the attitudes and values that appear to be too different to be assimilated are retained as complementary opposites, as a shadow cabinet, reserved for later assimilation when the historical conditions are ripe. The integrative model allows for a gradual movement between the poles of the two value systems that over time, lend and borrow from each other such that the integration varies over time in terms of the percentages of each set of values that characterizes the whole. This is the nature of the integration that borrows from the *Ijing* model of change.<sup>4</sup>

### **MARTIN BUBER AND ZHUANGZI ON THE MASCULINE AND THE FEMININE: A PRELUDE TO OUR CASE STUDY**

The example of the cultural alteration of the values of masculinity and femininity provides us with a societal example of integrative “dialogue.” The example of the masculine and the feminine is chosen advisedly as it well illustrates the integration of the Yin and the Yang in the *Ijing* since the Yin and the Yang are themselves the feminine and the masculine principle. In the *Ijing* these two values are complementary and need each other for the proper development of the human being. Buber comments on the masculine and the feminine principles in his commentary on *Zhuangzi*:

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<sup>4</sup> For an earlier exposition of this method, Cf., Allinson, R. E. 2003. “Hegelian, *Yi-Jing* and Buddhist Transformational Models for Comparative Philosophy.” In: *Comparative Approaches to Chinese Philosophy*. Mou, B. (Ed.). Aldershot (UK)–Burlington (USA)–Sydney–Singapore: Ashgate Publishers, 60–85.

“The oneness of the masculine and feminine elements that exist not for themselves but only for another, the oneness of antitheses that exist not only for themselves but only through one another; the oneness of things that exist not for themselves but only with one another. This oneness is the Dao in the world.”<sup>5</sup>

This extraordinary comment reveals Buber’s intimate acquaintance with Daoist philosophy. One may object that the masculine and feminine only exist with and through each other and not for another, but this only reveals that Buber’s understanding of Daoism and the *Ijing* is imperfect.

As cultures go through transitions, the predominance of one or the other of these two traits alters through time. For example, there is, one might consider, a confusion of these two values of the masculine and the feminine that characterize present Western culture. This confusion can betoken the advent of great cultural contribution as it was during the ancient Greek culture which reflected a moment of history in which multiple gender sexual preferences predominated over single gender preferences. The current confusion appears to be a moment in history in which one senses that a movement towards the predominance of the feminine principle is poised to occur. This is still on the horizon and only shows itself in the most incipient manner. At the moment the confusion or fusion is nearly complete. One sees for example, the fashion of women in the Western world cutting their hair short and men at the same time cutting their hair short to the point of baldness. At the same time, one sees a proliferation of signs of gender fusion in the phenomena of women in the Western world serving in the military, unisex clothing, unisex toilets, etc. The period before reflected the predominance of the masculine principle in which women were accorded less power, less human rights, less status, etc. When the apex of gender identification is reached, the suggestion that a movement towards feminine dominance is on the horizon as evidenced by the advent of a possible female President in the United States of America, regarded as one of the most masculine dominated Western cultures in the past.

The male principle resists such a neutralization and begins to assume feminine traits. Males begin adorning themselves with earrings, as an example. Transvestitism and even transsexualism then emerge as social phenomena. Females cannot sustain such neutralization. A period of mutilation takes place in which the background of the gender identity is obscured as if awaiting a new phase. Tattoos and nose rings begin to proliferate. Both males and females shave their heads in an effort to erase the differences in a stage that immediately precedes the advent of a new dominance. What is needed is a shift in the per-

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<sup>5</sup> Buber, M. 1996. “Commentary on Chuang Tzu” [*Reden und Gleichnisse des Tschuang-tse*]. Herman, J. R. (Trans.). In: *I and Dao, Martin Buber’s Encounter with Chuang Tzu*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 84.

centage of masculinity and femininity that will characterize the new human being. What is needed is a greater awareness of the need for the complementary dimension of the model of change indicated by the *Ijing* in which the Yin and the Yang are always paired together as complementary opposites that need each other in order to make up the whole of which each is a necessary and vital part.

### INTEGRATIVE DIALOGUE VERSUS COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHY

In the method of attempting to bring together disparate cultural outlooks, one does not step back and objectively compare and contrast the two cultures from a neutral perspective. The method of integration involves a subjective immersion in the philosophies that form the foundation of the cultural interlocutors to the dialogue such that one attempts not to stand back and observe from the sidelines, but to immerse oneself in and enact the philosophies within one's life experience. With such a guideline in mind, there is no sense of holding onto one philosophy and "tolerating" the other or taking bits and pieces of one philosophy and rejecting other bits and pieces as one might do as an eclectic thinker. What the model proposes is a total immersion into the philosophies insofar as that is culturally possible and in this very process the subject-object dichotomy is eventually transcended.<sup>6</sup> In Zhuangzian terms, the two philosophies are in a Yin-Yang relationship in the Dao; in Buberian terms, the two philosophies enjoy an "I-Thou" relationship.<sup>7</sup>

There are no parts of each philosophy that are held back from the circle of comparison and left as unassimilated and extrinsic portions of the orientation. This approach is not to say that each and every difference is or should be dissolved. It is only to state that the existence of differences plays a very different role than they would in a orientation of comparative philosophy that focuses on the toleration of the other.<sup>8</sup>

In the model of tolerance, one recognizes differences and agrees to "tolerate" them. The problem with this approach is that there is a tendency to consider that

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<sup>6</sup> Such integration is not designed for any cultural approach that advocates violence or hatred. When there is no attempt at integration, the unfortunate result can be a pseudo multiculturalism in which divergent subcultures coexist as pluralistically divided monocultures in prejudiced and alienated feudal enclaves even within the same society or nation state. Cf. Malik, K. 2015. "The Failure of Multiculturalism." *Foreign Affairs*, [www.foreignaffairs.com/print/1113818](http://www.foreignaffairs.com/print/1113818).

<sup>7</sup> The choice of the present author to italicize the "Thou" in the English translation of Buber's, original German "Du," is inspired by the wish to emphasize a hitherto unknown benefit of translation, and hence an indirect benefit of comparative studies, to wit, that in this case, the use of the English word "Thou" conveys Buber's point better than his original German since the "Thou" for English readers possesses a religious significance that is absent in the ordinary German word "Du" which is totally secular.

<sup>8</sup> This model was first introduced in Allinson, R. E. 1998. "Complementarity as a Model for East-West Integrative Philosophy." *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 25, 4, December, 505-517.

one's own approach is superior, but that one will "tolerate" the other approach. With the model undertaken here, while an identity with no differences is not sought, the role of differences is, in fact, to illuminate the commonalities and to enrich those commonalities such that the commonalities themselves become on the one hand, more mature, and on the other, and more fruitfully intelligible and applicable.

In some cases, the values of one culture may even supplant the values of the other. Contrary to the consensus model of dialogue which aims at agreement, at times the integrative dialogic approach may "favor" one culture over another. One culture may indeed and genuinely come to prefer the values of the other culture and alter its own commencement point in such a way that it does not return to it as it previously existed. The example of female mutilation being given up as a cultural value is an illustration. This "favoring" may take its turn as the needs of history dictate.

#### **A PARABLE AS AN ILLUSTRATION OF INTEGRATIVE DIALOGUE**

A parable told in the style of Zhuangzi may illustrate how, in a certain period of historical development one value from one culture may both supersede and become incorporated into the value structure of the other culture. The parable of the transformation of one cultural value by another may be drawn from the present writer's participation in the 1989 East–West Philosophers' Conference in Honolulu during a session on ethics in which the participants included Hilary Putnam, Karl-Otto Apel, Alistair MacIntyre, Richard Rorty, Liu Shu-hsien and the present writer. At the seeming conclusion of a highly spirited debate a consensus seemed about to be reached that one culture should not "impose" its values upon another culture, Liu stood up and told the story of Tiananmen (The Gates of Heaven) Square when PRC Chinese troops and tanks were called in to squash a relatively peaceful student protest (it will be remembered by China scholars that the students sought repeatedly to dialogue with the appropriate authorities of that time). Professor Liu there related that the students were inspired by a small statue that they dearly held in their possession which they called "The Goddess of Democracy." It was, in fact, a miniature replica of the Statue of Liberty that France gifted to the United States of America and that graces the New York City Harbor. Professor Liu stated that he and the students were very grateful, in that case, for the existence of the values of Western democracy. This story silenced all further talk of such notables as mentioned above regarding how it was so important that one culture not impose its values upon another and that we must be careful always to preserve and not intrude upon cultural differences.

One may draw from history the examples of dictators overthrown by the West in order to ostensibly achieve Western democracy with the ensuing advent

of unrest and bloodshed. The example of the recent invasion of Iraq by the United States of America and the consequent loss of the balance of power in the Middle East and its devastating implications comes to mind. The loss of power of a dictator need not issue from an external invasion.

### BUBER AND ZHUANGZI: OUR CASE STUDY BEGINS

Now, what of Zhuangzi and Buber?<sup>9</sup> With regard to the goals of these two philosophers, we can regard their mutual goal to be that of self-transformation.<sup>10</sup> They differ both with regard to how this transformation is to be achieved and the nature and character of the transformation that is to be achieved.

### THE EGO TRANSCENDED

That the ego is transcended is common to both Zhuangzi and Buber. The “how” this is affected is what is different. In the words of Zhuangzi, “Forget Things, forget Heaven, and be called a forgetter of self. The man who has forgotten self may be said to have entered Heaven.”<sup>11</sup>

In Zhuangzi, through parable, monstrous images, humor, mythical creatures, legendary figures, paradox and poetic images, one is brought to a state of higher understanding, a state that while allowing for and even insisting upon earthy living, ideally brings about enlightened and thus transformed understanding. In both philosophies the way of entering the philosophy is one best described by Buber’s description of dialogue in which each party to the dialogue (in this case the reader as interlocutor), abandons her or his prejudices (prejudgments) and fully enters into the words of the book such that there is no line of demarcation or difference between that of the reader and the book. The *I-Thou* relationship, as Buber tells us, need not only be between two living human beings. For Zhuangzi, this point is hinted at as well. One recalls Ziqi informing his disciple

<sup>9</sup> Previously, the present author has attempted a comparison between Zhuangzi and Nietzsche. Cf., Allinson, R. E. 1986. “Evaluation and Trans-Evaluation in Chuang-Tzu and Nietzsche.” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, 13, 4, December, 429–443. Abstracted in *Philosopher’s Index*. 1987 Cumulative Edition, XXI, 326.

<sup>10</sup> For self-transformation as the goal of Zhuangzi, cf., 1989, 1996, 2000, 2004. *Chuang-Tzu for Spiritual Transformation: An Analysis of the Inner Chapters*. Neville, R. (Series Editor). Series in Philosophy, State University of New York Press, [cloth-bound and paper issued simultaneously]; 1989. Sixth Impression, 1996, 203. Published in CD-ROM, Boulder, 2000. (Published in a Chinese language version by Liu Dong, Beijing University, Editor of China Studies Overseas, Jiangsu People’s Press Overseas, Nanjing, China, 2004, 4th impression; 2013. Published in a Korean language, translated by Greenbee Publishing Co., Korea, 2004, 366.

<sup>11</sup> Watson, B. 1968. *Complete Works of Chuang-Tzu*. New York: Columbia University Press, 133.

that he has lost his soul, of his asking his disciple if he has heard the pipes of heaven.<sup>12</sup> Here, there are two and one of the two, Ziqi, has lost his soul or his ego and suggests to his disciple, metaphorically, that he needs to transcend to a completely different state.

With regard to Zhuangzi, as is well known, the art of parable forms one of the most powerful literary techniques both of suggesting the goal of transformation and of bringing that transformation into actual being. For example in Chapter One of the *Zhuangzi*, the story of the medical salve, as relayed below, tells the intention of the philosopher, to produce a permanent transition to a higher spiritual state of understanding and both embodies and prefigures the work as a whole.

### BUBER

For Buber, edifying discourse lies at the heart of the methodology utilized by him to attain the goal of self-transformation. The purpose of Buber, in the end, is to bring about a state of ethically relevant character transformation. His goal is to break down completely the separation of you and me and to replace it with I and *Thou*, a replacement that, to a very considerable degree, must, by its very nature, transcend the ego of the “I”. While Buber does not spend an equal share of intellectual discourse indicating that the “you” must also perform this transition, this implication follows. Since he emphasizes the transition of the “I”, which every “I” must make this, obviously, will, by logical sequence, include the “you.”

### ZHUANGZI

While Zhuangzi utilizes multiple methods, for reasons of space, we have selected his use of parable. As a choice of parable, we have selected the narrative of the healing ointment which comes toward the end of the first chapter of the *Zhuangzi*. We must remember that the *Zhuangzi* is not a children’s story, a how-to of silk bleaching, a book of Chinese medicine, a manual for getting rich, a book of military strategy or how to be successful in the political sphere. Hence, this story of a medical ointment that is told, that involves silk bleaching, buying and selling, naval battles and interactions with kings is not literally about any of these described contents. Clearly, this is a story that stands for a higher, implicit message. This story leads upward and is, as a story, a metaphor for developing and reaching a higher understanding. A family has in its possession a recipe for making an ointment that allows them to bleach silk without causing chapped hands. A traveler appears, offers to buy the recipe for gold, and they sell the recipe to the traveler for immediate profit and gain. The first use,

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<sup>12</sup> In Chapter Two of the *Zhuangzi*.

the incorrect use, is to sell the recipe—let us refer to it as the “prescription”—for immediate gain. The next use is a higher use. The stranger offers it to King Wu. There is a definite hierarchy of usage here. The King uses it in turn for his navy who defeats the King of Yueh. He thus ensures the safety of his own kingdom. His usage, the preservation of his people, is a higher usage than the initial sale of the prescription for a monetary gain for an individual family. The reward offered by the King in turn is a permanent gift of land to the traveler. The permanent gift of land represents a permanent state of spiritual understanding. The metaphor is that the proper use of healing ointment (a philosophical prescription) if used for the highest purpose (transcendence)—the king of the land analogically stands for the highest earthly purpose which in turn stands for the highest spiritual purpose—carries with it enormous, permanent value. The relative value, the obtaining of gold is clearly not as highly valued as the higher value of the permanent gift of land. To adhere to the meaning of the extended metaphor, the permanent gift of land is a metaphor for a permanent spiritual state. The present author’s interpretation of the end of the chapter coheres well with its beginning with the transformation of K’ un the huge fish bounded by the ocean to P’ eng, the huge bird that soars through the air. It both begins and ends with a message of transformation and transcendence.

### THE BLEND

For Buber, the “how” is affected by exalted language aimed at producing the transformation of the ego by elevating it to a holy state in which the ego disappears and in which the other is identified with the Divine.<sup>13</sup> However, strictly speaking, there is no “Other.” The *Thou* is a state, as the Dao, that admits of no contrariety. This *Thou*, though more religiously colored in Buber, possesses great affinity with the Dao of Laozi and Zhuangzi. In the words of Zhuangzi, “When the self and the other (or the this and the that) lose their contrariety, there we have the very essence of the Dao.”<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Irene Eber writes that “Although he [Buber] never explicitly described *Tao* as synonymous with God, he attributed to *Tao* the quality of the divine (*das Göttliche*). Cf., Eber, I. 1994. “Martin Buber and Taoism.” *Monumenta Serica*, 42, 459. Maurice Friedman writes that, “In a 1901 essay on the great German mystic Jacob Boehme, Buber quotes Ludwig Feurbach’s statement that the meeting between men—between I and Thou—is God.” Cf., Friedman, M. 1976. “Martin Buber and Asia.” *Philosophy East & West*, 26, 4, October, 413. In contrast, according to I. A. Ben Josef, “... the Jewish philosopher Rosenzweig held that because of a lack of a living god, philosophical Taoism cannot reach the ‘I-Thou.’” Cf., I. A. Ben Yosef. 1988. “Confucianism and Taoism in the *Star of Redemption*.” *Journal for the Study of Religion*, 1, 2, September 1, 31.

<sup>14</sup> This inspired description English translation of this passage from Zhuangzi is that of Wing-tsit Chan. Cf., de Bary, Th. (Ed.). 1970. *Sources of Chinese Tradition*. New York: Columbia University Press, 71. Compare this with the inspired rendition of Maurice Friedman who writes of Buber’s *meeting* between men, “We experience an absence of all otherness.” Cf., Friedman, M. 1976. “Martin Buber and Asia.” *Philosophy East & West*, 26, 4, October, 420.



When these two traditions, Chinese and Western, confront each other, what then? From the tradition of Zhuangzi, what may be meaningfully borrowed, is the notion that one can reach a state of transformed understanding in addition to a state of religious ecstasy. Of course it is an obvious oversimplification to reduce Buber's intentioned state purely to one of religious ecstasy, but the comparison with Zhuangzi assists in making this state one of more clear understanding and adds an epistemological element to the feeling dimension.<sup>15</sup>

From Buber's side, the feeling produced by the recognition of the Holy, is redemptive. It aids the course of parable and paradox by infusing the end product with a higher union with the Other that goes beyond both the Self and Other. The Self and Other, for Buber, and especially in the present author's mythical encounter between these two figures, stay in dialectical relation. The *Thou*, the state that is sought, just as the Dao, is not a fixed or static state. Like the tides, it ebbs and flows. Both techniques hold it in place. The *Thou* makes it vivid what the state is like that is to be reached; the parables and paradoxes help to ease the transition, to make light of the troubles that attend its gain and its loss. The two together are far more powerful and elegant than the one alone.

We can use Daoist understanding to realize more fully the path to the goal and the stages along its way. We can use Buberian exaltation both to accelerate the pace of the journey and to give more content to the state that is to be reached and hence make the goal more accessible. Paradoxically, one knows more clearly with the attainment of the religious feeling both what is and when one is in the state of the Dao. Paradoxically, the understanding of the Daoist narrative enables one to achieve a state of clarity, an understanding of the previous confusion that the obtainment of the exalted feeling state alone, cannot bring. The two complement each other.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Friedman points out that, "Buber gave up his tendency to mystic ecstasy after he found that he was not really present for a young man who, in despair, had come to see him and was later killed in the First World War out of that same despair." Cf., Friedman, M. 1976. "Martin Buber and Asia." *Philosophy East & West*, 26, 4, October, 1976, 413. Nevertheless, the texts of Buber, including his lasting monumental, *Ich and Du*, for which he is best known, contain this ecstatic element irrespective of Buber's personal life changes. If we consider an analogy with Aristotelian ethics, we can say that just as Aristotle said that we should perform noble acts for their own sake and this performance brought happiness, that Buber's "I-*Thou*" relationship with men (and even inanimate beings) was sought for its own sake and not for the feeling state that was its crown.

<sup>16</sup> According to I. A. Ben Josef, Martin Buber advanced the view that Judaism was not Western but represented the East. Cf., Ben Josef, I. A. 1988. "Confucianism and Taoism in the Star of Redemption." *Journal for the Study of Religion*, 1.2, September 1, 34, n. 2. Friedman advances a similar view when he writes that for Buber, Judaism is more Asian than Greek. Cf., Friedman, M. 1976, op. cit., 414.

### THE MERGING OF TRADITIONS: THE CONVERGENCE OF CIVILIZATIONS

In order to achieve integration, one must be willing at first, to voluntarily abandon one's own standpoint. One can, borrowing from Husserl's concept of the *epoché*, itself borrowed from the ancient Greek skeptics, avoid the fear of losing one's identity, by putting one's standpoint on a shelf, later to return to it if one needs to retrieve it so that one need not fear that it will totally be lost. If the method of *epoché* is unfamiliar to one, one can take the notion of returning to one's original mind that is the method of Buddhism, should one be more familiar with that tradition. In that return, as in the *epoché*, one leaves behind the standpoint one empirically happens to occupy or advocate in the effort to find, as did the ancient Skeptics, the truth.

In this state of existential abandonment, one is ready to merge oneself into the opposite, unknown tradition. One's own standpoint is kept, in *Ijing* fashion, on the back burner, should one need to return to it, either for a total return, or for a nuanced alteration that is the result of the first efforts at integration. In the case of Zhuangzi, one must understand that the new standpoint to be achieved is one of a spiritual transformation that enables a new level of intellectual understanding. Unlike its close cousin, Ch'an or Zen, Daoism permits and even encourages philosophical speculation that ensues upon reaching spiritual understanding.<sup>17</sup> The unity that spiritual understanding brings is broken with speech. The speech of the philosopher follows upon the silence of the sage. For Zhuangzi, this is all right. Zhuangzi, like his famous goose, likes to cackle.

Such intellectualizing is alien to Ch'an or Zen proper, as with those philosophies, the object is to attain the spiritual transformation, not to comment upon it. Such commentary is a distraction and may impede the spiritual transformation.<sup>18</sup> With Zhuangzi and Buber, however, such intellectualizing is not to be gainsaid. They have other fish to be caught, though self-transformation remains their highest and most central ambition. With Husserl, the intellectualizing becomes the higher goal and the fruits of the *epoché* do not lie in the state of mind achieved by the *epoché*, but in the intellectual insights afforded by the kind of thinking that one engages in from the phenomenological standpoint achieved by entering into the *epoché*.

The level of intellectualizing that occurs in Zhuangzi and Buber provides a bridge that enables the individual to freely travel between their two perspectives. For the level of intellectualizing is both that which is a product of the

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<sup>17</sup> For an example of integrating the viewpoints of Daoism and Zen, one may be referred to Allinson, R. E. 2002. "Intercultural Hermeneutics, Chinese and Western Philosophy." In: *Encyclopaedia of Chinese Philosophy*. Cua, A. S. (Ed.). London–New York: Routledge, 315–320.

<sup>18</sup> For a fuller exposition of the relationship between Daoism and Zen. Cf., Allinson, R. E. 1988. "Zen in the Light of Daoism: An Exercise in Intercultural Hermeneutics." *Zen Buddhism Today*, 6, 23–38.

states of transformation that are reached and neutral territory that enables each to travel to the other's site.

The transformation that is achieved for Zhuangzi, similar to that which is achieved through Ch'an or Zen, is one which is more intellectual and less emotive than the level of transformation that is achieved through following the writing of Martin Buber. For both Zhuangzi and Buber, the moment of transformation is achieved through the overcoming of the attachment to the empirical ego. For Zhuangzi, this is attained through a slow process, akin perhaps more to Soto than to Rinzaï Zen, of breaking down viewpoints, showing their shortcomings, mocking their adherents, confusing the rational mind with paradoxes and using parables to provide illustration and encouragement, to enable the mind to break free from its attachments and soar like P'eng to a higher viewpoint.<sup>19</sup> The higher viewpoint so obtained is not one characterized by emotive fervor.

In the case of Buber, the introduction of the religious element provides the reader both with a different motivation and a different level of feeling that is to be obtained that characterizes the end state. This difference provides one of the barriers that prevents total assimilation of one side to the other. This is a difference that makes a difference. Or, is it?

Let us return to the beginning. In the beginning, one must abandon one's starting point. In a proper integration, the starting point of a goal that is either emotional or spiritual/intellectual has already been abandoned. Now, we are free both to use parable and edifying language. After all, if we are to read in each other's tradition, we can do nothing less. We can restrict ourselves to commentaries about the other tradition and avoid this level of existential experimentation, but then we are not attempting any sort of genuine dialogue between the two traditions.

If we take the plunge and allow our minds to be taken on P'eng's journey, we can enter the realm of a higher, non-conflictual spiritual outlook. At the same time, lifted by Buber's edifying discourse, we can raise our emotional level to a point of higher feeling. These are two ways and in the process of interchange, both must be attempted.

Here enters the difficult part. To properly transcend in Zhuangzi, we do not need a transcendent Deity. The paradoxes and parables are enough. Perhaps, for a Buberian, such paradoxes and parables are insufficient. Here is where the true integration must take part. For the Daoist, abandoning a tradition (placing on the shelf), that does not emphasize religion in the Western sense, one can allow Buber's edifying discourse to lift oneself emotionally. If too difficult, one can expand one's reference point, and remembering the General of the *Platform Sutra*, recall how his emotionality provided the motivation for his initial desire to obtain enlightenment. For the General, emotions and very strong ones, played

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<sup>19</sup> For a discussion of Rinzaï, cf., Allinson, R. E. 1975. "The Buddhist Theory of Instantaneous Being: The Ur-Concept of Buddhism." *The Eastern Buddhist*, VIII, 1, Kyoto, May.

a crucial role in his eventual achievement of ego loss.<sup>20</sup> If this example takes one too far astray, one can remain within the text of the *Zhuangzi*, remembering how emotions were not alien to Zhuangzi. How sad he felt when Huizi was no longer on earth to parry with him and how he sad he was when his dear wife passed.<sup>21</sup> No, emotions were not absent in Zhuangzi. Consider a passage, commonly overlooked, which makes its notable entrance in the celebrated Chapter Two of the *Zhuangzi*. Its entrance in such a crucial chapter is so obvious that its invisibility to commentators reminds us of Hans Christian Anderson's story of the Emperor's New Clothes in which no one, save a child, was able to notice that the Emperor's "clothing" was missing and that he was stark naked.

Here follows Zhuangzi's existential soliloquy:

"Once a man receives this fixed, bodily form, he holds on to it, waiting for the end. [...] he runs his course like a galloping steed and nothing can stop him. Is he not pathetic? [...] His body decays, his mind follows it—can you deny this is a great sorrow?" (Burton Watson translation)

As noted, this very moving passage occurs in the significant chapter, *Qiwulun*. While this chapter is the most influential of all chapters for the interpretation of Zhuangzi, and by far the most widely cited chapter in *Zhuangzi*, it is surprising that this memorable passage is overlooked. Perhaps, it is not so surprising since taking it into account would radically alter the commonplace view of Zhuangzi as an untroubled skeptic or relativist for whom all events and all values amount to more or less the same thing. His 'Discourse on Equality' (the present writer's translation of *Qiwulun*) in the context of this passage appears ironic, pointing out the parody of holding that all things are equal, that life is a galloping steed and then it is followed by decay. This is sorrow, not happiness. Sorrow is not equanimity. Sorrow is not equality.

How can the reader of Zhuangzi not see this? Zhuangzi provides the answer: "We can't expect a blind man to appreciate beautiful patterns or a deaf man to listen to bells and drums. And blindness and deafness are not confined to the body alone—the understanding has them too."<sup>22</sup>

If one argues that the passages cited are in the minority of the Zhuangzian corpus, it may be said that In the Zhuangzian immersion with his Buberian interlocutor, the Zhuangzian self allows oneself more openness to emotion than one does in the pure Daoist state. With the integration towards Buberism, they are allowed a more dominant role. This is integration.

<sup>20</sup> For a discussion of the emotions of the General, kindly see Allinson, R. E. 2005. "The General and the Master: The Subtext of the Philosophy of Emotion and its Relationship to Obtaining Enlightenment in the *Platform Sutra*." *Revue Internationale de Philosophie*, April, 213–229.

<sup>21</sup> Chapters Twenty-four and Eighteen respectively of the *Zhuangzi*.

<sup>22</sup> *Zhuangzi*. 1968. Chapter One. Watson, B. (Trans.).

For the Buberian, it is equally difficult, initially, to abandon (to put on the shelf) the state and goal of religious ecstasy. For the Buberian, however, there are also internal resources. One can find commonalities in the earthy tradition of Hasidism from which Buber's philosophy finds its nourishment. One can think of illustrations from Buber's *Tales of the Hasidim* to find common points in Zhuangzi's humor and paradox that offer a more Zhuangzian transformation than a state of religious ecstasy. Remember Rabbi Wolf whose house is robbed by thieves and who runs after the thieves shouting that they should accept what they have taken as gifts so that they will not think of themselves as thieves. He warns them not to drink from a particular jug because a sick man has drunk from it. Afterwards, he reminds himself daily that all his property is common property so that if thieves come again they would not be guilty of theft.<sup>23</sup> One can, without religious fervor, reach enlightenment with this story of ego transcendence. Or, and here is a key point, such a story can also invoke religious ecstasy in the Daoist partner to the dialogue. The ego transcendence of the Rabbi can arouse a sense of awe and exaltation in the Daoist. Both partners can appreciate the modalities of the other. Such is the road to true integration.<sup>24</sup>

In the Dao, as cited above, in the wonderful translation of Wing-tsit Chan, "When the self and the other (or the this and the that) lose their contrariety, there we have the very essence of the Dao." This state is the state achieved by Buber's meeting, what he references by his famous phrase, "All real living is meeting."<sup>25</sup>

What of the meeting between Buber and Zhuangzi? Is this not exactly what we are discussing? That each abandons his own starting point only to reach over to his partner's book shelf to take her/his abandoned starting point for his very own? Is this not true integration, whereby one becomes the other and the other becomes the one?

## INTEGRATIVE DIALOGUE AS THE PATH TO UNIVERSALISM

Dialogue, in the end, leads to unity. This is why we find in the *Zhuangzi*, the following passage: "But the unity and what I say about the unity have ceased to be a unity [...] Therefore, I say, we must have no-words! With words that are no-words you may speak your life long and you will never have said any-

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<sup>23</sup> Buber, M. 1947. *Tales of the Hasidim*. Marx, O. (Trans.), with a foreword by Chaim Potok. New York: Schocken Books, 161.

<sup>24</sup> One can also contend that Buber, as illustrated in this story, is more concerned with ethics and Zhuangzi, as illustrated by his many parables such as the one related above about the medical salve, is more concerned with the self-transformation of the Other, in this case, the reader. While space does not allow a full discussion of this, it is just this kind of difference in emphasis that, in the process of integration, can be a source of enrichment and enhancement for each of the two philosophies in dialogue.

<sup>25</sup> Buber, M. 1958. *I and Thou*. Smith, R.G. (Trans.). New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, II.

thing.”<sup>26</sup> Zhuangzi is more explicitly paradoxical than Buber. But his meaning is the same. Any language of description, (word that are words), the “I-it” language in Buber’s terms, creates the subject-object duality and ipso facto destroys the unity of realization. In the words of Zhuangzi, “Where can I find a man who has forgotten words so that I can have a word with him.”<sup>27</sup> In the case of his use of monstrous characters such as Mr. Lamé-Hunchback-No-Lips of Chapter Two of the *Zhuangzi*, his speech is never recorded though it is said that he spoke with Duke Ling. His speech, with no lips, must not have been ordinary speech.<sup>28</sup> In this instance Zhuangzi and Buber nearly merge.

For Zhuangzi, we must remember his dialogical partner, Huizi and how much those dialogues meant to Zhuangzi. We must remember that when Huizi died the regret that Zhuangzi felt was that *he no longer had anyone with whom to talk*.<sup>29</sup> And, we also must remember his parables. Some of the transcending insights of Zhuangzi are related in dialogical stories as in the story of Zhuangzi visiting the house of an old friend for supper. The son of the host asks which of two geese to kill for the supper, one which is silent and one which cackles. Without meeting his old friend, without the question posed by the son of the host to the host as to which goose to cook, the insight afforded by the choice, could not have occurred. The transforming and transformational insight required the dialogue. The killing of the silent goose caps the argument. It is the *cackling* goose that survives.

There are differences between these two paradigmatic figures that cannot be gainsaid. For Buber the purpose of the dialogue is to bring two people into a relation. Sometimes, Buber writes, for the purpose of transforming the other from evil into good. Buber himself stresses the differences between Jewish wisdom and ancient Chinese thought. In the *Hasidism and Modern Man*, Buber writes:

“For him who is not a perfect zaddik, the Baal-Shem-Tov gives the supplementary teaching: ‘If it happens to anyone that he sees something sinful or hears of it, let him mark that in himself there is a small particle of this sin, and let him make it his business to set it to rights. [...] For the evil man too will accomplish the turning if you include him in the unity, since in fact all men are one. Then in addition you will cause it to turn out according to the saying ‘and make the good,’ for you make good out of evil. *Here Jewish wisdom of faith meets from a wholly other side with the ancient Chinese: He who brings himself into unison with the meaning of being brings the world*

<sup>26</sup> *Zhuangzi*, Chapter twenty-seven (Watson translation).

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Cf., Allinson, R. E. 2015. “How Metaphor Functions in the *Zhuangzi*: The Case of the Unlikely Messenger.” *New Visions of the Zhuangzi*. Kohn, L. (Ed.). *Three Pines Press*; for a fuller discussion of monstrous characters in *Zhuangzi*.

<sup>29</sup> *Zhuangzi*, Chapter Twenty-four. (Italicized—by the author).

*with him into unison; but here, the Hasidic saying, stands what is lacking in all Daoist ones: One must include the other in the unity, then one has a good influence on him. One must guard oneself before this eternal distinction between oneself and the other, before this arrogance of distinction, before this whole triumphal world of illusion built upon a self-satisfied distinction ...*<sup>30</sup>

In integrative philosophy, this is the element of the other that can expand the Daoist standpoint. The Daoist can incorporate more of this other directedness into the Daoist standpoint. It is of interest that Buber himself thinks that this is lacking in Daoism.

For Zhuangzi the purpose of the dialogue is variable. At times, it is to point out the follies of convention; at times, it is to baffle, at other times, to astonish; at still other times, it may be to bring the interlocutor to a higher level of insight. But, rarely if ever is it to bring two humans into essential and special relation. Rarely if ever is discourse in Zhuangzi edifying discourse. Rarely is there the attempt to transform evil into good. For Zhuangzi the encounter between two interlocutors edifies and transforms, but not through the device of edifying language.

On the other hand, these differences are to some extent moot. One recalls Zhuangzi referencing Ziqi who has lost himself. It is an indirect dialogue since Zhuangzi is relating (and thus dialoguing with the reader) a story about someone else who is in dialogue with a yet someone else (a further Other). The point of the story, however, must be to implicitly suggest that the Other (in this case the reader), can also be so transformed. There is an ethical interest in the Other. The goal is the same. The other is to lose her or his ego state. It is a more subtle and indirect invitation. And, it is not directly to the ethical. But, in the state of ego loss, there would be no evil intent.

These are subtle differences. These differences are a factor in the richness of bringing these two philosophies together in dialogue. In this genuine and proper dialogue, we learn from each other and expand to a third viewpoint that transcends the previous two standpoints proper. The importance of dialogue in affecting the level of understanding in Zhuangzi by shocking discourse adds a dimension to Buber's religious and ethical dialogue. The value of dialogue in Buber to bring human beings into a special relation adds a dimension to Zhuangzi's frequently paradoxical discourse. With the two together, we have crescendo and decrescendo. Buber draws together; Zhuangzi draws apart. The two are perfect Yang and Yin. They cannot exist apart. They only make sense together.

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<sup>30</sup> Buber, M. 1958. *Hasidism and Modern Man*. Friedman, M. (Trans., Ed.). New York: Harper & Row, 254–255 (italicized—mine). On the other hand, Irene Eber writes that, “[Buber’s] description of the *tzaddik* does not differ greatly from that of the Chinese sage.” Cf., Eber. I. 1994. “Martin Buber and Taoism.” *Monumenta Serica*, 42, 453.

All of the foregoing exegesis has been the portrayal of an ideal, of merging of one tradition into the other and the other into the one. In the real world, such a bringing together or juxtaposition of two world outlooks, let us call them for convenience, the religious and the secular, is not so smooth. There is friction and periods of hostility and alienation. Here, one must call upon the services of the *Ijing* to rescue our idealistic Hegelian merger. As misunderstanding occurs, one can retreat, for the time being, to one's initial starting point and regroup one's forces until one (or the Other) is ready to enter the fray again. The merger, as it develops, develops over time. Sometimes, we may say, the secular tradition predominates; sometimes, the religious (as in periods of history). The advantage of the *Ijing* is that there is always a balancing act. The percentage of dominance of Buber and/or Zhuangzi also can change. The Other is not totally absent. Unlike the pure Hegelian model, the Other is not submerged totally into the One. It also divides itself and retains its former self for the purposes of cyclical change. The integration of viewpoints moves forward in a vertical spiral and it also flattens out and descends into cyclical alterations. The two movements progress or regress, expand or contract as well as transform.

If religion, for example, is bringing the world to a state of conflict (the fear of Huntington), we have recourse to the Zhuangzian more intellectual transformation. On the other hand, if the world becomes too secular, ethically anesthetized, vapid of sparkling inspiration, we can have recourse to a heightened redemption of feeling that we find in the work of Buber. Neither standpoint is totally lost. The integrated standpoint is dynamic, is constantly moving. What is important is that we keep both traditions alive so that we may continue to fruitfully benefit from each other. In the Dao, there is no self and no other, but in Buber and in Zhuangzi, there is room for expansion. This room is provided by the intellectual dimension that each philosopher contains within it. These philosophies are not only means of self-transformation; they are also means for dialogue and growth. When we need the cool (for the most part) transcendence of Zhuangzi, he is always there for us. When we need the emotional incentive and satisfaction of a religious state that Buber offers, it is always there for us. We do not need to live in the state of Either-Or. The Dao is not only the absence of opposites; it is also the complementary whole containing each opposite in a constantly changing rhythmic cycle. Conflict is not the only outcome of the clash of civilizations; let us consider rather, in Buberian terms, the coming together, that is, the genuine *meeting* of civilizations.

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