CONFUCIAN MULTICULTURALISM:
A COMMUNITARIAN THEORY OF INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

by

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Department of East Asian Studies
University of Toronto

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ABSTRACT
This paper argues that the liberal-communitarian debate in political philosophy is still significant today. While some have argued that communitarian concerns have been absorbed by liberal approaches to the accommodation of moral and cultural diversity, I show that such efforts are not properly sensitive to and respectful of other cultures because they do not acknowledge the particularity of the liberal tradition. To emphasize this, I draw on the intellectual resources of a particular communitarian tradition – Confucianism – to develop a more sensitive and respectful accommodation of cultural diversity called Confucian multiculturalism. I show that Confucian multiculturalism can be realized through an intercultural dialogue that, in the modern context, should take place in universities which can provide the right intercultural education and environment. I conclude that the liberal-communitarian debate, when taken seriously, can be expanded to take the form of an intercultural dialogue that enriches all cultures and probes our common humanity.
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Introduction

Liberal modernity is a characteristic feature of the Western world today – a world in which politics and economics aim to be free, open and equal to all. Spurred by the dominance of Britain and North America in the past century, such a brand of liberal modernity has been propagated and claimed by many as the normative goal of modernizing societies. Against this universalization of liberal modernity is the counterclaim that there are “alternative modernities,” ways of modernizing that do not draw its intellectual resources from the liberal philosophical tradition.

Along such lines of thinking, Part 1 of this paper will challenge the universality of liberal modernity, arguing that it is a particular tradition which should not be regarded as wholly universalizable. In order to do this, I first revisit the liberal-communitarian debate in contemporary political philosophy, showing the key communitarian insight that our lives find direction and meaning within a metaphysically-substantive community that differs according to the history of each culture. Given this insight, I further argue that liberalism needs to recognize itself as one such historical community, and that modernity needs to take into account the plurality of such communities which each embody their own comprehensive conceptions of the good.

In the aftermath of the liberal-communitarian debate, many scholars took seriously the call for further accommodation of cultural diversity, which spawned the extensive literature on multiculturalism and the accommodation of differences. John Rawls published Political Liberalism and The Law of Peoples, works which revised A Theory of Justice in order to feature and accommodate moral plurality within his brand of liberalism. Charles Taylor generated a
debate with his essay “The Politics of Recognition,” and the definitive work on liberal multiculturalism, Will Kymlicka’s *Multicultural Citizenship*, set the tone for discussions on cultural diversity in the Anglo-American world by advancing a theory of minority rights that sought to accommodate national minorities and ethnic immigrants within a liberal society.

I perceive the failure of the liberal approaches to accommodating cultural diversity to be attributed to their inability to recognize liberalism as one of the many particular and comprehensive conceptions of the good. While liberals have attempted to properly account for the fact of cultural diversity in our world today, their efforts are insufficient because they do not acknowledge the particularity of liberalism. This leads to an accommodation of cultural diversity within liberal society *only* and an expectation that all societies will confirm to liberalism.

At this point, readers might be confused by the shifting between terms such as “community,” “culture,” “tradition,” “comprehensive conceptions of the good,” “diversity,” and “plurality.” In order to clarify, by “community,” I mean a community of people that is rooted in a tradition based on a particular conception of the good. These conceptions of the good are comprehensive inasmuch as they are metaphysically-substantive and attempt to give an account of the good human life and how it should be lived as an individual and as a society. Examples include liberalism, Marxism, Islam and Confucianism. These conceptions of the good can be thought of as cultures or traditions inasmuch as they give substance to a way of life that has continued over a period of time for a distinct community of people. Along such lines, Alasdair MacIntyre similarly argues that “a tradition is an argument extended through time in which certain fundamental agreements are defined and redefined in terms of [internal and external] conflict” (12; emphases are mine). “Plurality of conceptions of the good” and “cultural diversity”
both point to the fact that many such distinct and particular traditions exist, none of which can claim universality or neutrality.¹

What, then, could be a proper accommodation of cultural diversity in our modern world today? I suggest that a proper accommodation should take the form of an intercultural dialogue that attempts to bridge the gap between cultures and allow for mutual respect and mutual benefit. In order to demonstrate this, in Part 2, I consider Confucianism as a communitarian philosophy and develop a theory of Confucian multiculturalism to contrast with liberal approaches to accommodating cultural diversity. While there is no explicit mention of the term “multiculturalism” in Confucian philosophy, there are strong intimations of such a concept found in classical Confucian texts. As such, I argue that it is possible to derive a Confucian philosophical approach to the fact of cultural diversity by analyzing approaches to the accommodation of conflict and difference within and without the tradition. I will call this Confucian multiculturalism.² I will show that Confucian multiculturalism is based on communitarianism with an added cosmological dimension. Furthermore, it requires moral and intellectual cultivation and practice on the part of the individual.

Given this sketch of a theory of Confucian multiculturalism, I further argue in Part 3 that Confucian multiculturalism can be realized through an intercultural dialogue. An intercultural

¹ While there are certainly further possible nuances in the use of these terms, I do not think that my use of them significantly deviates from commonsensical notions of them (where they do exist), nor does it significantly vary from the use of such terms in the established literature. Furthermore, inasmuch as my main aim is to further elaborate on communitarianism and its implications, I think that the use of these terms in the arguments to follow is sufficient. Of course, this will ultimately be for the reader to judge.

² Even though the term “multiculturalism” has come to be narrowly associated only with theories of liberal multiculturalism, part of the aim of this paper will be to reclaim the term multiculturalism and expand on its application.
dialogue supports the cosmological communitarian thesis and demands moral and intellectual cultivation and practice. To show this, I first analyze Professor Vincent Shen’s idea of intercultural dialogue as mutual strangification in depth before suggesting some theoretical modifications that make it more suitable for realizing Confucian multiculturalism. In the process, I point out the indispensability of moral and intellectual cultivation and practice to the strategy of intercultural dialogue. I then propose that the practice of an intercultural dialogue in our modern context should take place in universities where an intercultural education can be provided to students and academics for the purpose of building and sustaining intercultural dialogues.

Inasmuch as Confucianism is a communitarian philosophy in the sense of being a comprehensive conception of the good that equally emphasizes the value of community in contrast to the primary emphasis on individual free choice in liberalism, contrasting Confucian and liberal accounts of accommodating cultural diversity returns us to the liberal-communitarian debate, albeit in a more specific form. Even so, far from bringing us to an impasse, it inspires a brighter future for the politics of difference by aiming at the idea of an intercultural dialogue in accommodating cultural diversity. I conclude with some observations about the continuing significance of the liberal-communitarian debate and the value of studying other non-liberal cultures and traditions in the spirit and method of an intercultural dialogue.
1. Rethinking Liberal Approaches to Difference and Diversity

In the 1980s, a debate between liberals, or individualists, on the one hand, and communitarians, on the other hand, ensued within Anglo-American political philosophy. Communitarianism arose as a response to contemporary liberalism, challenging the primacy of the concept of the atomistic individual existing within a neutral and liberal modern nation-state (Bell; Taylor 1991, 9). By drawing attention to the importance of context, dialogical relationships, and communal associations for the formation of our identities, communitarians also challenged the political ideal of a “liberalism of neutrality” and paved the way for deeper understandings of liberalism and modernity (Taylor 1991, 17).

Much has been written about the demise of this debate from the 1990s onwards, with commentators claiming a variety of reasons. Michael Murphy claims that it was the “lack of conceptual precision and determinacy [that] turned out to be a major contributing factor” to the demise of the debate (2012, 49), while Ronald Beiner writes that communitarianism is today a “spent force [because] its insights were too easily accommodated by the liberal-individualist theories it meant to challenge, and in part because the theoretical energies it released were diverted in other directions (such as multiculturalism and other forms of identity politics)” (2014, 190).

I think that there is much truth in Murphy’s claim, which coincides with Beiner’s first claim as well. Even though communitarianism was primarily a push against the strand of liberalism popularized by John Rawls’ *A Theory of Justice*, the debate soon drew in a variety of liberal views that placed their emphases on different aspects of liberalism – minimal government, basic individual rights, autonomy, equality etc. (Avineri and De-Shalit 1, 11; Bowie and Simon
In response, communitarians also based their counterarguments on these different aspects of liberalism, and it became difficult to identify a single comprehensive theory of communitarianism that could provide clear definitions of key concepts or a systematic political program (Avineri and De-Shalit 10; Murphy 49). What one is left with is a “number of broad streams of communitarian thought” that were soon easily accommodated by the broadness of liberal theories as well (Murphy 49; Beiner 190).

Nonetheless, as noted in Beiner’s second claim above, the “energies” from the debate gave rise to new fields in contemporary political philosophy – multiculturalism and identity politics. In spite of the apparent lack of conceptual clarity across the entire liberal-communitarian debate, the broad central theses of both liberalism and communitarianism could still be identified and inspired the debate on the accommodation of moral and cultural diversity in liberal society. The most influential and systematic work published on the topic was Will Kymlicka’s *Multicultural Citizenship*, which defended a liberal theory of minority rights in order to accommodate cultural diversity. The vision of liberalism which Kymlicka defended was based primarily upon the principles of individual freedom and autonomy, and this allowed him to argue for a case of minority rights that *promoted* the freedom of individuals.

Constructing a broad vision of liberalism, as Kymlicka attempted to do, is actually not too controversial. Murphy argues that in spite of the deep disagreements within the liberal tradition,

“virtually every liberalism agrees with some version of the Kantian notion that respect for the *equal dignity and moral worth* of every individual is a core element of a liberal political philosophy, and a key benchmark for assessing the legitimacy of liberal institutions and public policies. Respect for the moral equality of individuals in turn
entails a commitment to the *principle of individual freedom* – in public and in private life – and to a measure of *toleration* such that the members of a liberal polity are at liberty to imagine and pursue their own vision of what constitutes a meaningful and fulfilling human existence. In addition, most liberals believe that liberty and equality should be supported by a *regime of individual rights* that places limits on the power that can be exercised over us by the state and our fellow citizens, and which grants us the tools necessary for individual and collective self-rule” (47; emphases are my own).

While all of the key concepts I have emphasized in the passage above are found in virtually every form of liberalism, liberals have chosen to emphasize different aspects of this generalized liberalism. Kymlicka based his on autonomy, Chandran Kukathas on toleration and freedom of conscience and association (2003), and John Rawls (1971) and Brian Barry on equality (2001).

Yet, it is worth remembering that contemporary liberalism found its strongest expression in Rawls’ *A Theory of Justice*, which has been often been cited as “the rebirth of normative political philosophy” in analytic philosophy (Kymlicka 2002, 10; Gray 3; Koikkalainen 550; Beiner 2014, xi). It is in this regard that Kymlicka professes to drawing “heavily on the works of Rawls” in his chapter on liberalism (1995, 81) and Barry defends the earlier Rawls in his egalitarian critique of multiculturalism (16).

On the other side, Daniel Bell, in his entry on communitarianism in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, summarizes the three central claims to communitarianism as follows: the first is a “methodological claim about the importance of tradition and social context for moral and political reasoning;” the second is a “metaphysical claim about the social nature of the self;” and the third is a “normative claim about the value of community” (2013). We will consider all three in more detail as our discussion on liberalism and Confucian communitarianism continues to unfold.
Bearing all the above in mind, I will focus the subsequent discussions on liberal approaches to difference and diversity to Rawls, Kymlicka and Charles Taylor. Taylor is considered a communitarian in the liberal-communitarian debate and I will use his insights on the accommodation of cultural diversity to fill in what I think is lacking in the accounts of Rawls and Kymlicka. To begin with, I will consider the efforts of Rawls to incorporate the key communitarian insight (that our lives find direction and meaning within a metaphysically-substantive community that differs according to the history of each culture) into *A Theory of Justice*, as demonstrated by his later works *Political Liberalism* and *The Law of Peoples*. I argue that Rawls’ liberal accommodation of moral plurality in these two works, which is applicable to the case of cultural diversity as well, is still much too steeped in the liberal tradition to be properly sensitive to and respectful of other moral worldviews. Even though Rawls recognizes his earlier liberalism as a particular and comprehensive tradition, he is mistaken in thinking that it is possible to morally distinguish political liberalism from comprehensive liberalism in order to allow for freedom of conscience in the non-political realm while demanding liberalism in the political realm. As such, his political conception of justice can still be viewed as an imposition of liberal values on other cultures and traditions.

Next, I consider Kymlicka’s liberal accommodation of cultural diversity that is built upon the comprehensive liberalism of earlier Rawls as found in *A Theory of Justice*. Kymlicka rejects Rawls’ political liberalism in accommodating moral plurality, and instead defends a theory of minority rights, presumably offering us a more thoroughly liberal account of the accommodation

3 While it is common to broadly identify communitarianism with Charles Taylor, Michael Sandel, Michael Walzer and Alasdair MacIntyre (Avineri and De-Shalit 3-4; Bowie and Simon 183; Beiner 2014, 190; Bell), I have chosen to focus on Taylor only because of his specific contributions to the later literature on multiculturalism through his essay “The Politics of Recognition.”
of cultural diversity. Given his reliance on comprehensive liberalism, I show that Kymlicka’s account is even more steeped in the liberal tradition, as compared to Rawls. As such, contrary to his underlying purposes, his liberal accommodation of cultural diversity is also not properly sensitive to and respectful of other cultures and moral worldviews. Even though he attempts to incorporate the key communitarian insight, he is mistaken in not recognizing liberalism as a particular and comprehensive conception of the good.

Finally, I compare and contrast the liberal approaches of Rawls and Kymlicka with Taylor’s communitarian approach to the accommodation of cultural diversity found in “The Politics of Recognition.” I argue that Taylor’s approach offers us a more sensitive, respectful and nuanced approach in the accommodation of differences by recognizing the implications of the key communitarian insight and remaining true to it. In order to further draw out the specifics of a communitarian accommodation of cultural diversity, I then turn to an analysis of Confucianism in Part 2 of the paper.

1.1. Rawls’ Political Liberalism

In A Theory of Justice, Rawls advanced the idea of justice as fairness as a counterweight to the predominant utilitarianism of the time, drawing renewed interest and attention to a rights-oriented liberalism (Sandel 1765; Wenar). In this early account, Rawls argued that since the principles governing the basic structure of society can greatly affect the rights and prospects of citizens, these principles need to be rationally derived from behind a veil of ignorance where each participant in this original position does not know his or her specific circumstances in the society they are to enter into. From here, Rawls further argues that participants in the original
position would rationally prefer his two principles of justice since the principles are in accord with the participants’ shared moral nature (1971, 11, 125).

In the wake of the communitarian critique of contemporary liberalism that begun in the 1980s, Rawls came to revise his account of egalitarian liberalism in *Political Liberalism*, noting that it did not properly take into account the fact of *reasonable pluralism* in modern liberal-democratic society (1993, xvi). Given the plurality of reasonable, yet incompatible, comprehensive doctrines (or conceptions of the good[^4]), Rawls realizes that he cannot ground the principles of justice within comprehensive liberalism, as he had done in *A Theory of Justice*. Instead of expecting citizens to accept liberal values within all spheres of life (private and public), Rawls restricts liberal values to only the political (public) realm, therefore giving rise to a political conception of justice that is “free-standing” and not reliant on deeper, metaphysical resources (1993, xix). In this way, citizens are able to endorse such a political liberalism through an *overlapping consensus* that allows them to affirm the same principles found within a political conception of justice through different resources found in each of their reasonable comprehensive doctrines (Rawls 1993, 39).

[^4]: In this paper, I shall use these two terms interchangeably. Rawls does not elaborate on the similarities or differences between the two, but his definitions of both do seem to overlap. He argues that “a conception of the good normally consists of a more or less determinate scheme of final ends, that is, ends we want to realize for their own sake, as well as attachments to other persons and loyalties to various groups and associations […] We also connect with such a conception a view of our relation to the world – religious, philosophical, and moral – by reference to which the value and significance of our ends and attachments are understood” (1993, 19-20), while “a doctrine is fully comprehensive when it covers all recognized values and virtues within one rather precisely articulated scheme of thought” (1993, 175). In his first chapter on “Fundamental Ideas,” he also uses the terms “conceptions” and “doctrines” interchangeably (1993, 13). The one difference that I perceive is that “conceptions of the good” is used in the context of what persons *possess*, while “comprehensive doctrines” refer to standalone “scheme[s] of thought,” or the ideas themselves. In this sense, comprehensive doctrines are abstracted conceptions of the good. Even so, this nuance does not affect the use of these terms in this paper.
Central to the legitimacy of the political conception of justice is the idea of public reason, which is the reason of a democratic people, “of those sharing the status of equal citizenship” (Rawls 1993, 213). Public reason means that citizens justify their decisions in the political realm with reference to public values that are found in the political conception of justice (such as equal political and civil liberty and equality of opportunity) and according to public standards of inquiry (such as reasonableness and “a readiness to honor the duty of civility”) (Rawls 1993, 224). While such public values and standards are clearly liberal, since they apply only to the political realm, the idea of public reason can likewise still be affirmed by citizens from within their own reasonable comprehensive doctrines, and used to justify their political decisions to each other.

On such grounds, comprehensive doctrines are thus judged to be reasonable only if they endorse political liberalism. Unreasonable comprehensive doctrines which do not tolerate other comprehensive doctrines or which deny the political rights of their members are not to be tolerated themselves and have no place in a pluralistic liberal-democratic society. These will need to be contained so that “they do not undermine the unity and justice of society” (Rawls 1993, xvi-xvii).

Rawls extends political liberalism to the global arena when he considers relations within a society of peoples in The Law of Peoples. A “people” is distinct from the state in that it lacks the “traditional sovereignty” that states have, has a moral nature and acts through a reasonably just regime (Rawls 1999, 25, 27). It is a parallel of the conception of a citizen found in a political conception of society (Rawls 1999, 23). The parallel to reasonable pluralism here is the plurality of “reasonable peoples with their different cultures and traditions of thought, both religious and nonreligious” (Rawls 1999, 11). Just as in the case of a pluralistic liberal-democratic society,
Rawls imagines an original position, but this time on a global scale, with representatives of liberal peoples deliberating on global principles of justice (1999, 32-33). Subjected to a veil of ignorance that prevents them from knowing the details and circumstances of the peoples they represent, these representatives come to agree on seven global principles, called the Law of Peoples, that are politically-liberal in nature (Rawls 1999, 37).

How would non-liberal peoples relate to the Law of Peoples? Rawls notes that there are non-liberal peoples who would reject these principles outright, in which case they are to be labeled “outlaw states” and subjected to constraints (1999, 48). On the other hand, there are also decent hierarchical peoples that, while non-liberal, ought to be tolerated because they do not engage in aggressive war, have a common good idea of justice, and protect the basic human rights of their people (Rawls 1999, 69). In view of such characteristics, decent hierarchical peoples would agree to the seven principles of the Law of Peoples and should be treated equally in a Society of Peoples.

Having given a sketch of the main ideas of political liberalism and its extension to the global arena, I want to now consider some problems with political liberalism as an approach to accommodating moral plurality. Even though Rawls emphasizes that political liberalism does not depend on a comprehensive conception of liberalism, it is hard to see how this is the case when political liberalism, ultimately, is derived from and still has its moral roots in comprehensive liberalism.

Central to my critique are the underlying premises in political liberalism that liberalism is capable of being neutral and, therefore, universal, when it ought to in fact be recognized as being a particular conception of the good. Within a liberal-democratic society, it is arguably justifiable
that its people would recognize liberal principles and adhere to a liberal public reason. In this case, however, the dominance of liberalism and the recourse to liberalism as a means of structuring/facilitating plurality in society should not be given the guise of neutrality and universality.

The point I am trying to make becomes more obvious when we consider the extension of political liberalism to the global arena. In the global Society of Peoples, the dominance of liberalism is not assured and the acculturation of peoples with differing comprehensive doctrines to liberalism, which could come about if one were to live in a liberal society for an extended period of time, is also less likely. Rawls pins his hopes of attaining legitimacy and stability within a Society of Peoples, governed by a politically-liberal Law of Peoples, on the presence of decent hierarchical peoples that would also endorse the Law of Peoples. But I think he is too optimistic to think that there is a global analogue of liberal public reason to be found among such peoples, given the fact that the comprehensive doctrines on the global scale cannot be assumed to be acculturated to liberalism.

Furthermore, if public reason within liberal society is seen as the reason “of those sharing the status of equal citizenship,” what is the global analogue of this status of equal citizenship (Rawls 1993, 213)? Does the notion of a “global citizen” exist yet? Given the primacy of the nation-state model today and the fact that liberalism is not a global tradition, it is difficult to conceive of a global liberal public reason that would give legitimacy to the Law of Peoples and stability to the Society of Peoples.

Finally, even if it were the case that there existed a limited kind of global liberal public reason among some liberal societies in the world, an important question remains: why should
their political liberalism set the standard for all other peoples on the global scale? As pointed out by Kok-Chor Tan, a central motivation for Rawls’ extension of political liberalism to the global arena was to show that a liberal conception of political justice does not “appear to be historicist and to apply only to societies whose political institutions and culture are liberal” (Rawls as quoted in Tan 284). But besides imagining what a decent hierarchical society could be like, in the form of Kazanistan (Rawls 1999, 75), I find it problematic that Rawls does not appeal to a study and understanding of real peoples and cultures in his construction of the Law of Peoples. It seems all too easy for Rawls to construct an idealized Islamic people that fit into his model of a decent hierarchical people in order to show that political liberalism does indeed have global appeal when peoples and cultures are actually a lot more complex and possibly less ready to endorse political liberalism.5

The heart of the matter, I think, is that Rawls has failed to show that political liberalism is morally distinct from comprehensive liberalism. The only way that an overlapping consensus could work in society is if citizens are already morally committed to liberal principles, either because they are already comprehensive liberals or because they have been acculturated to liberal values. It is possible to conceive of liberal Christians, liberal Confucians, and liberal

5 While it is certainly common to read of the merger of liberalism and other cultures in academic circles (see Bell, Massad and Sen), the reality on the ground seems to be quite different. We see this in the unfolding of the model of “liberal democracy” in Japan, Turkey, South Korea and Taiwan. While many will tout the triumph of democracy in these countries, I think important differences are being overlooked in these examples of democracy. In many ways, these democracies do not have a liberal foundation because of their different histories and traditions. Therefore, even if they were to endorse the Law of Peoples, it might be more for diplomatic expediency than for any real moral commitment to those principles. Without a real moral commitment to those principles, the Society of Peoples remains unstable.
Muslims, as Rawls conceives of in the imaginary Kazanistan, but it is important to note that “liberal” is an important prefix that already speaks of a shared moral commitment to liberalism. In this regard, I do not think that it is possible to clearly separate moral and political commitments, as I think Rawls hopes to achieve in his limiting of liberalism to the political realm only.

Given such an understanding, it is hard to see how the global analogues of an overlapping consensus and of public reason could exist to lend legitimacy to the Law of Peoples and stability to the Society of Peoples. Why would an Islamic people endorse the Law of Peoples given that liberalism, a *particular* and *comprehensive* doctrine, has never been a culture or creed in its tradition? How can we expect them to be liberal Muslims from the start? Rawls’ expectation of decent hierarchical peoples seems unrealistic and too hopeful, and the codification of a Law of Peoples seems like an imposition of liberal values.

Returning to domestic liberal society, it is possible now to also imagine how the political conception of justice could be seen as an imposition of liberal values. Given that a political conception of justice depends on an overlapping consensus and public reason which both depend on the citizens already sharing a moral commitment to liberalism, those who do not share such a commitment, such as newly-arrived immigrants from a different culture or staunch Muslims, would find themselves pressured to abide by a liberal public code or risk alienation. Such pressure points to an imposition of liberalism, and the label of being “unreasonable” only by

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6 Whether or not such liberal Christians, Confucians or Muslims are considered legitimate in the eyes of their moral authorities is unimportant to this example; the point is that the morality of an individual can be composed by a mix of influences that forms a coherent and reasonable whole for him or herself. In this regard, I think that it is also possible to conceive of Confucian Christians etc.
liberal standards seems to not be properly sensitive to moral and cultural plurality in our world and in our societies today.

1.2. Kymlicka’s Multiculturalism

So far, I have argued that Rawls’s political liberalism is not properly sensitive to and respectful of other cultures and moral worldviews because it is morally indistinguishable from comprehensive liberalism. In this regard, it is still an implicit imposition of particularistic liberal values. In *Multicultural Citizenship*, Kymlicka makes a similar argument when he claims that “Rawls has not explained why people who are communitarian in private life should be liberals in political life” (1995, 162). His conclusion, however, is that we should embrace the comprehensiveness of liberalism and “endorse the traditional liberal belief in personal autonomy” (Kymlicka 1995, 163).

Kymlicka’s approach in *Multicultural Citizenship* draws on the resources of liberal political theory (in particular, early Rawls and Joseph Raz) to defend a theory of minority rights that aims at the accommodation of cultural diversity within the boundaries of a liberal nation-state. Building on the liberal principle of individual freedom of choice, Kymlicka argues for the need for group-differentiated rights in order to protect the societal context within which meaningful individual choices can be made (1995, 75, 83).

Given the grounding of his theory in comprehensive liberalism, the “stronger” form of liberalism, it is easy to see why I think that Kymlicka’s accommodation of cultural diversity is also not properly sensitive to and respectful of other cultures and moral worldviews. Even though he attempts to incorporate communitarian concerns, he also continues to be mistaken in not recognizing liberalism as one of the many particular and comprehensive conceptions of the
good that should not be universalized. However, it is still important to consider his approach in some detail because of the significance it has had on debates in multiculturalism today.

Kymlicka attempts to incorporate communitarian concerns into liberalism by acknowledging cultures as a context of choice and the value of cultural membership. He defines culture as that which provides

“its members with meaningful ways of life across the full range of human activities, including social, educational, religious, recreational, and economic life, encompassing both public and private spheres. These cultures tend to be territorially concentrated, and based on a shared language […] they involve not just shared memories or values, but also common institutions and practices […] in the modern world, for a culture to be embodied in social life means that it must be institutionally embodied – in schools, media, economy, government, etc. ” (1995, 76)

Given this understanding, Kymlicka further argues that cultures are just as important as access to information and education and the freedom of expression and association in allowing the liberal individual to make meaningful, autonomous choices (1995, 84). Furthermore, just access to any culture is insufficient. People need access to their own culture because there is a strong, almost inexplicable bond between people and their culture (Kymlicka 1995, 90). Breaking this bond is a denial of a basic “nonsubsistence resource” to which they are reasonably entitled; thus, a demand for such a resource becomes a legitimate claim of justice (Kymlicka 1995, 86).

Yet, Kymlicka is quick to point out how he is different from communitarians who seem to emphasize the society at the expense of the individual. He claims that the communitarian conception of the self denies an individual the ability to “revise one’s deepest ends,” thereby forcing the individual to pursue the ends of the wider community even in the case when it might
be against the will of the individual (Kymlicka 1995, 91). While it is true that communitarianism, broadly understood, does endorse the importance of the community in determining some ends for the individual, I do not think that it entirely precludes the ability of an individual to revise her ends or the ability of individuals, as a community, to revise their collective ends. In fact, the claim that communitarians are trying to make is in fact not dissimilar from the earlier claim that Kymlicka makes – that cultures form an important context for making choices and do exert an important influence on the final choices we make.

But why does Kymlicka not see this similarity? It seems that his inability to recognize liberalism as one such particular culture is the primary cause. Indeed, based on his own definition of culture, I find it odd that Kymlicka does not come to recognize liberalism as a particular culture which prioritizes choice in its conception of the good life. In other words, the maintenance and enlargement of choice is the predetermined end for a liberal society. This misrecognition prevents Kymlicka from seeing the irony of his claim against communitarianism – his insistence on a life that is always open to revision is in fact an imposition of a way of life that not all cultures may find palatable because of their own particular histories and moralities. Only by being raised in a liberal context will one find such a liberal way of life so natural, unimposing and final.

In part, I think that his failure to recognize liberalism as one particular culture is linked to an inadequate understanding of other cultures. In spite of his insistence on the value of cultural membership, he seems to prize culture only as an instrumental medium for an individual’s choice-making. While he claims that each culture is different and that people are entitled to their own culture, he makes no attempt in his book to understand the “shared memories or values [and] common institutions and practices” of any other culture and how those might produce
alternative conceptions of the self that are non-liberal. As I will argue in Part 2, a Confucian conception of the self is communitarian and approaches the accommodation of cultural diversity differently.

Ultimately, Kymlicka does not waver from his grounding and faith in the basic liberal principles of individual freedom. In this regard, he endorses the concept of cultures and a theory of minority rights only inasmuch as “they are consistent with respect for the freedom or autonomy of individuals” (Kymlicka 1995, 75). His faith in liberalism also means that in the treatment of non-liberal cultures, “liberal reformers inside the culture should seek to promote their liberal principles, through reason or example, and liberals outside should lend their support to any efforts the group makes to liberalize their culture” (Kymlicka 1995, 168). Yet, he does not make clear why other culture should conform to liberalism, especially in the case when they are not found within the boundaries of a liberal state, but are sovereign states of their own.

In his conclusion, Kymlicka suggests that the idea of a dialogue between nations is important when he says that “relations between national groups should be determined by dialogue […] to talk as if the world was divided into completely liberal societies on the one hand, and completely illiberal ones on the other, inhibits a constructive dialogue between cultures” (1995, 171). Yet, his approach to such a dialogue is one that presumes the truth and infallibility of liberalism since it involves only the “spelling out [of] the implications of the liberal principles of freedom and equality” (Kymlicka 1995, 171) and the promotion of “the liberalization of societal cultures” (Kymlicka 1995, 166, 172), not an understanding of other cultures in order to engage in mutual learning and benefit. Therefore, his vision of a dialogue takes the form of liberalism talking down to other cultures, and aims only at the liberalization of
those cultures. In the next section, I consider the communitarian roots of a more equal and culturally-sensitive vision of a dialogue.

1.3. Taylor’s Politics of Recognition

So far, I have shown that Rawls and Kymlicka are mistaken in not recognizing the particularity of liberalism in all its forms, and that their accommodations of moral and cultural diversity along such lines are not properly sensitive to and respectful of other cultures. What, then, could be a proper accommodation of cultural diversity in our modern world today? I suggest that a proper accommodation should take the form of an intercultural dialogue that emphasizes the moral worth of each culture on its own terms, thus allowing for mutual respect and learning. In this section, I will show how the communitarian approach to accommodating cultural diversity found in Taylor’s politics of recognition works towards such an idea. I then consider a specific communitarian approach – Confucianism – in Part 2 in order to further support and develop the idea of an intercultural dialogue.

In The Malaise of Modernity, Taylor had previously outlined the two changes that have made a modern preoccupation with identity and recognition inevitable. The first is the “collapse of social hierarchies which used to be the basis for honor,” and the second is the development of the “modern notion of dignity that is used in a universalist and egalitarian sense” (Taylor 1991, 46). This concept of dignity is what we find in liberal-democratic societies, which is the context within which Taylor, Rawls and Kymlicka frame their individual analyses (Taylor 1991, 45).

In “The Politics of Recognition,” Taylor further develops his argument on the need for recognition, extending it to cultural differences within Western liberal society, reiterating also the ideal of authenticity and the fundamentally dialogical feature of human lives. This
dependence on others for the definition of our identity, coupled with the “development of an inwardly-generated identity,” means that recognition has become of greater importance in our modern age where “the conditions in which the attempt to be recognized can fail” (Taylor 1992, 34-35). Since an authentic identity is partly shaped by recognition, nonrecognition or misrecognition can be forms of oppression and inflictions of harm insofar as individuals become imprisoned in a “false, distorted, and reduced mode of being” (Taylor 1992, 25, 36).

Within the public sphere, the politics of recognition and the two changes that have brought its rise have also brought about a politics of universalism and a politics of difference. The politics of universalism was brought about by the shift from honor to dignity, and it emphasizes the equal rights and dignity of all citizens. The politics of difference was brought about by the development of the modern notion of identity, and it asks us to recognize “the unique identity of this individual or group, their distinctness from everyone else” (Taylor 1992, 37-38).

The tension between universal equal rights and the particular identities of individuals and groups should be apparent here. Even though there is a universal demand for an acknowledgement of particularity within the politics of difference, this universal demand actually calls for “nondiscrimination as requiring that we make these distinctions the basis of differential treatment,” a conclusion that is at odds with the difference-blind treatment that universal and equal rights require (Taylor 1992, 39). For minority cultures, the nondiscriminatory, “homogenous mold” that the politics of universalism calls for strips them of their distinct identity. Furthermore, inasmuch as the politics of universalism is driven by “one hegemonic culture […] masquerading as the universal,” it is “highly discriminatory” and far from being fair or difference-blind (Taylor 1992, 43-44).
The politics of universalism, equal dignity and equal respect appears inhospitable to moral and cultural differences and is closely linked to the liberal tradition found in the Anglo-American world (Taylor 1992, 56). Taylor thinks that liberal society need not be so inhospitable to differences; he proposes “a liberal society that singles itself out by the way it treats its minorities, including those who do not share public definitions of the good, and above all by the rights it accords to all of its members” (1992, 59). This form of liberalism allows for strong collective goals to be prioritized if basic and fundamental rights are protected and those who do not share the common goals are respected. In this way, a society may choose to emphasize the survival and flourishing of a particular culture, thereby prioritizing the collective good over the individual good while still allowing for minimal notions of personal autonomy.

Finally, Taylor concedes that liberalism “can’t and shouldn’t claim complete cultural neutrality [as it] is also a fighting creed” (1992, 62). Accommodating cultural plurality with this understanding means dealing with other cultures’ “sense of marginalization without compromising our [i.e. liberalism’s] basic political principles” (Taylor 1992, 62). For Taylor, this entails a further demand of recognizing the equal value of different cultures by not only allowing them to survive, but by also acknowledging their worth. Recognition is crucial here because dominant groups can “entrench their hegemony by inculcating an image of inferiority in the subjugated;” yet, such recognition must first presume the equal worth of other cultures (Taylor 1992, 63-64). Subsequently, the validity of the claim of equal worth needs to be substantiated by actual study of other cultures. This allows for a Gadamerian “fusion of horizons” that allows us to transform our standards and acknowledge worth based on the standards of other cultures (Taylor 1992, 67).
One clear difference that sets Taylor apart from Rawls and Kymlicka is his historicist approach to understanding the development of liberal society. While all three begin their attempt to accommodate the fact of diversity within the framework of liberal-democratic society, Taylor adopts a more historically-sensitive approach that allows him to cast liberalism as a *particular* tradition that is but one of the many *comprehensive* doctrines. This also allows him to make the communitarian claim that our lives find moral meaning and significance only in dialogue with others; the liberal vision of individuals rationally choosing their own paths in life with no or little reference to others misunderstands human nature and seems hollow. Inasmuch as liberalism is a particular and comprehensive conception of the good, it has a history and a community which sustains it, allowing liberals to find moral meaning in their own lives.

Given this understanding, what role does Taylor ascribe to rights in liberal-democratic society? In “The Politics of Recognition,” Taylor shows why a procedural liberalism as advocated by Rawls is actually inhospitable to differences, and that while there exists fundamental rights that cannot be violated (like the rights to life, liberty, due process, free speech), some forms of uniform treatment prescribed by rights can be reconsidered to allow for collective cultural goals to be achieved (1992, 59-61). In that section, he addresses rights as they feature importantly in liberalism, but does not clarify if he thinks that rights could play a *proactive* role in the accommodation of differences. Would he, like Will Kymlicka, opt for a scheme of minority rights that allows minority groups to sustain their own cultures and ways of life?

In a review of Kymlicka’s *Multicultural Citizenship*, Taylor asserts twice that “a case can be made for measures that help to protect and promote minority cultures that may be under great pressure in the larger society,” but he shies away from using the language of rights and makes no
reference to it at all, which is surprising given that the subtitle of the book he is reviewing is *A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (1996, 408). It appears that he does not wish for rights to feature prominently in his approach to the accommodation of diversity, and the avoidance of the language of rights, in this respect, is significant because he once again draws our attention to a language of good.7

As I see it, the good that Taylor draws our attention to in “The Politics of Recognition” is ultimately the need to recognize others and to work towards a Gadamerian “fusion of horizons.” Such recognition entails the presumption of equal worth and the study of other cultures in order to judge their moral standards and ways of living by their standards, and without constant reference to our liberal standards only. Furthermore, a “fusion of horizons” aims at establishing commonalities among different conceptions of the good. Therefore, I think that Taylor offers us an approach that is more sensitive and respectful of other cultures, in a way that Rawls’ political liberalism and Kymlicka’s multiculturalism are not since they do not try to engage with other comprehensive conceptions of the good on their own terms. This also means that, while extending Rawls’ political liberalism or Kymlicka’s multiculturalism to the global arena seems to accentuate the insensitivity of liberalism to other cultures, extending Taylor’s politics of recognition to the global arena, on the other hand, seems to accord greater respect and

7 In “Taylor and Feminism,” Melissa A. Orlie argues that Taylor’s main contribution lies in his formulation of a “politics of the good [which] presses us to say what our visions of the good are, to say what we consider it good to do and to become” (140). In Chapter 4 of *What’s the Matter with Liberalism?*, Beiner explicitly argues for the advantages of using a language of good, not a language of rights.
understanding to other peoples and cultures, making it a more appropriate approach to the global accommodation of diversity.  

1.4. Conclusion

In Part 1, I revisited the liberal-communitarian debate in political philosophy, commenting broadly on its development, demise and rebirth in the debates on liberal approaches to accommodate moral and cultural diversity. I showed that even though prominent liberals such as Rawls and Kymlicka have tried to incorporate communitarian concerns into their work, their efforts are unconvincing because they continue to regard liberalism as an infallible and universal good for all. Instead of recognizing liberalism for the particular conception of the good that it is, they assume that liberal principles are the only proper principles for organizing all societies today.

In contrast, communitarians like Taylor have remained true to the communitarian insight in their accommodation of cultural diversity as seen in Taylor’s analysis of liberal society and sketch of a politics of recognition. Presuming the equal worth of other cultures and engaging in a study of other cultures in order to judge their moral standards and ways of living by their standards are real steps towards a dialogue of mutual benefit and learning. Building on this idea, Parts 2 and 3 consider Confucianism as a specific communitarian philosophy which gives a distinct communitarian basis for the idea of an intercultural dialogue in accommodating cultural diversity.

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8 I think it is important to consider the extension to the global arena because cultures cannot ever just exist within the boundaries of a liberal-democratic state (like the US and Canada); they are very much alive and evolving in their places of origin, lived out by large groups of people that can be non-liberal. In this sense, any talk of cultural diversity must take into account first the diversity on the global scale that is a significant cause of diversity within state boundaries. Limiting the application of their approaches to the boundaries of a liberal nation-state or society ignores the places of origin of cultures, in which cultures continue to change and evolve, and fails to capture the global dimension of cultural diversity and the need to resolve conflict within a diverse, non-liberal world.
diversity. By drawing on the intellectual resources of Confucianism, I show that Confucian multiculturalism provides us an alternative to liberal accommodations of cultural diversity that is best realized in the idea of an intercultural dialogue.
2. Towards A Theory of Confucian Multiculturalism

In Part 2, I hope to make explicit a theory of Confucian multiculturalism in response to the shortcomings of liberal approaches to accommodating cultural diversity. Given the fact of cultural diversity in our world today, Confucianism, as a distinct and particular tradition, ought to be put in contrast and dialogue with liberalism. I show that Confucianism, as a specific form of communitarianism, is able to address the weaknesses of liberalism (and hence liberal multiculturalism that is based on it). In this regard, Confucian multiculturalism is able to have a broader, worldwide perspective that goes beyond the boundaries of a liberal nation-state or society and is properly sensitive to and respectful of other cultural traditions.

In the Introduction, I mentioned that there are antecedent ideas of a Confucian approach to accommodating the fact of cultural diversity found in the classical Confucian texts. Thus, we see in the 洪範 Hongfan (Grand Model) chapter of the 尚書 Shangshu (Book of Documents) that 無黨無偏，王道平平; 無反無側，王道正直, which can be translated as “without partiality, without deflection, the royal path is level and ease[;] without perversity, without one-sidedness, the royal path is right and straight” (Legge 1991, 331-332 as quoted in Shen 2014 Dao Companion, 29). As Shen argues, the Hongfan is considered a divine revelation to Yu 禹 of the 夏 Xia Dynasty, one of the sage-kings highly revered in Confucius’ teachings, of a “structural vision of the world in nine categories constituting the earliest Chinese vision and concepts of Nature, human activities and their excellence, [and] politics and good governance” (Shen 2014

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9 Hanyu pinyin will be used for the Romanization of Chinese names and terms. In the case of Chinese names, the last name will follow the first name when Romanized (e.g. Chung-ying Cheng) in order to follow publishing conventions adopted by those scholars. Translations are adopted from the James Legge versions found on ctext.org unless otherwise stated. Full citations of these translations can be found in the “Works Cited” section.
The above quotation comes from the fifth category, called the Huangji (Royal Ultimate), and was meant to be part of the “ultimate principle of royal power” (Shen 2014 Dao Companion, 29). This suggests that the ideas of impartiality and fairness, especially as they pertain to governance, were of great importance to early Confucian thinkers. One can extend such impartiality and fairness beyond individuals to other social and cultural groups as well (Shen 2014 Dao Companion, 29).

Furthermore, we see in the乾 Qian hexagram of the易經 Yijing (Classic of Changes) that乾道變化，各正性命，保合大和, or “the method of Qian is to change and transform, so that everything obtains its correct nature as appointed (by the mind of Heaven); and (thereafter the conditions of) great harmony are preserved in union” (Emphases are mine). Since everything is to obtain its correct nature, this implies that even cultures and traditions are to establish their own natures before coming together to “optimize harmony” (Shen 2015).

Even though these passages contain important antecedent ideas of a Confucian approach to accommodating the fact of cultural diversity, they do not explicitly refer to or attempt to construct a systematic approach. In order to make explicit a theory of Confucian multiculturalism, I will analyze the approaches of contemporary Confucian scholars to accommodating conflict and difference in Part 2. To my knowledge, there is only one contemporary Confucian work that attempts to harness the intellectual resources of Confucianism to specifically contribute to the philosophical debate on multiculturalism in
Western academia. Comparative political philosophy has tended to focus on Confucian models of democracy, human rights and, more recently, cosmopolitanism. Nonetheless, much has been said about the accommodation of conflict and difference in Confucianism. Hence, I will turn to these contemporary sources for an understanding of a Confucian approach to accommodating conflict and difference in order to work towards a theory of Confucian multiculturalism.

In particular, I will focus on the works of Antonio S. Cua 柯雄文, Chung-ying Cheng 成中英, and Chenyang Li 李晨陽. These scholars base their approaches primarily on the classical Chinese texts the 易經 Yijing (Classic of Changes) and 中庸 Zhongyong (Doctrine of the Mean), even though there will be references to other important classical texts as well. Hence, I will draw on their analysis of and inspiration from these texts to outline their arguments for the accommodation of conflict and difference from within Confucianism.

In the process, it will become apparent that the Confucian concepts of 和 he (harmony) and 中 zhong (centrality) are extremely important in the accommodation of conflict and difference, given that these concepts are seen as diametrical opposites of strife and conflict. From

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10 See Shen 2014 Address, in which Shen engages with Charles Taylor’s politics of recognition to argue for the idea of mutual strangification and mutual enrichment. In Part 3, I will compare and contrast the theory of Confucian multiculturalism worked out here with the approach to intercultural philosophy worked out in Shen 2011 and Shen 2014 Address in order to expand on the theory and practice of Confucian multiculturalism.


12 In his review of Kymlicka’s Multicultural Citizenship, Taylor reflected on the importance of the book, given that “the problems of difference and how to live with it are forcing themselves onto the political agenda just about everywhere” (1996, 408). As Taylor’s comment shows, cultural diversity is just one of the many forms of “difference” that is facing our world today. It is in this sense that I hold that Confucian approaches to accommodating conflict and difference are able to generate a theory of Confucian multiculturalism.
an understanding of zhong and he within Confucianism, I consider how the implicit premises of these concepts could provide a basis for a theory of Confucian multiculturalism. I show that Confucian multiculturalism is based on a cosmological communitarian conception of the good which presumes the equal importance of the individual and the cosmos. In addition, I show that it requires moral and intellectual cultivation and practice. In Part 3, I argue that Confucian multiculturalism can be best realized in the idea of an intercultural dialogue since it stays true to these two features of Confucian multiculturalism.

2.1. Contemporary Confucian Approaches to Conflict and Difference

In “The Yijing as Creative Inception of Chinese Philosophy,” Cheng provides a detailed analysis of the Yijing and its importance as the “basic mode of Chinese philosophical thinking” (2008, 215), while in “The Fading of Political Theology and the Rise of Creative Humanism,” Shen traces the development of the Yijing from divination to ethical interpretation to philosophical construction, showing the importance of the Yijing in laying out a vision of “the relation between ethics, cosmic creativity and the Ultimate Reality” (2014 Dao Companion, 33-47; 45). The implicit philosophy of change and harmonization in the Yijing is key to our understanding of he, but before delving into a detailed analysis of the Yijing, I will draw on the works of Cheng and Shen to provide a brief historical context for this classical Chinese text.

The Yijing is a book of divination that dates to the Zhou dynasty (c. 1200 BCE). It is divided into two parts: the first and older part being the 周易 Zhouyi (Zhou’s Book of Changes),
and the second and newer part being the 易傳 Yizhuan (Interpretations of the Zhouyi). 13 The Zhouyi consists of 64 卦 gua (hexagrams) that are composed of 6 stacked horizontal lines called爻 yao. There are accompanying gua statement and yao statements which are the historical records of divinations in the late Shang and early Zhou dynasty. These records became “exemplary divinatory texts” for subsequent dynasties given the recognition of the kings of the Zhou dynasty, who commented on the divinations, as sages, resulting in a “change from manifestation-revealing to hermeneutic-revealing” in the use of the Zhouyi (Shen 2014 Dao Companion, 25).

The Yizhuan, on the other hand, comprises commentaries on the Zhouyi that are usually attributed to Confucius and his disciples. It features the 象傳 Xiangzhuan (Symbolism Interpretations), 卦傳 Tuanzhuan (Judgment Interpretations), 繫詞上 and 繫詞下 First and Second Xici (Great Appendixes), 文言 Wenyan, 序卦 Xugua (Sequence of the Hexagrams), 設卦 Shuogua (Remarks on the Trigrams), and 雜卦 Zagua. In these commentaries, an explicit attempt is made to systematically interpret and explain concepts found in the Zhouyi, giving rise to a comprehensive philosophy of change that is extendable to “all realms of existence, not limiting itself to the function of divination and telling the good/bad fortune of human affairs” (Shen 2014 Dao Companion, 36). It is in this sense that Cheng calls the Yizhuan the “explicit source and beginning of Chinese philosophy” that covers ethical, political and cosmological concerns (2008, 203).

13 Here, I adopt Shen’s translations as found in 2014 Dao Companion, 35. All subsequent translations of the other section titles of the Yijing are also adopted from the same source and page.
Cheng helpfully brings our attention to the fact that the kind of divination practices associated with the *Yijing* are not to be confused with shamanism and an appeal to supernatural powers. As recorded in the Second *Xici*, Section 2, 伏羲 *Fu Xi* “contemplated the brilliant forms exhibited in the sky, and looking down he surveyed the patterns shown on the earth [in order to devise] the eight trigrams,¹⁴ to show fully the attributes of the spirit-like and intelligent (operations working secretly), and to classify the qualities of the myriads of things.” This section of the Second *Xici* tells us that the *gua* are based on an observation and understanding of the patterns of nature (comprising 天地, or heaven and earth), as opposed to a deference to supernatural beings. It is from this understanding that we come to appreciate the *Yijing* as an embodiment of a “cosmic view that is consonant with man’s engagement with both the natural environment and the human environment composed of cultural, political, economic and social activities” (Cheng 2008, 202), and as capable of producing a comprehensive philosophy that gives meaning and orientation to human life.

But how does this comprehensive philosophy of change as embodied in the *Yijing* contribute to an approach to accommodating conflict and difference? In “On Harmony as Transformation: Paradigms from the *I Ching*,” Cheng shows how the philosophy of the *Yijing* contributes to an understanding of 和 *he* (harmony as a “unity of opposites” that allows for the “interpenetration of things” and the formation of harmony in a metaphysical and creative sense 1988, 245-246). Here, *he* is the primary concept that is juxtaposed against the concept of strife or conflict, which occurs because of difference.

¹⁴ These eight trigrams were later developed into the sixty-four hexagrams.
In order to explain the Confucian concept of he, Cheng first points to a pre-Confucian discussion of he as recorded in the 左傳 Zuozhuan (Commentary of Zuo),\textsuperscript{15} 昭公二十年 20\textsuperscript{th} year of Duke Zhao (1988, 227). Here, harmony of sound in good music and harmony of taste in food is described as being composed of various elements that, though different from each other, combine together in a “virtually supportive and mutually strengthening relationship” (Cheng 1988, 228). This shows that harmony allows for difference – in fact, requires difference in order for mutual complementation and transformation to a harmonious unity to take place.

Yet, such a harmonious unity ought not to be confused with the concept of 同 tong (uniformity); while he allows for difference in a harmonious unity, tong allows for no difference at all. Difference is constructively brought together into a harmonious unity when there is a \textit{transformation} of the conflicting elements into “different things or states different states of their existence through a natural force which integrates or unifies them into a totalistic system” (Cheng 1988, 230). This happens through a \textit{dialectics of harmonization} that is implicit in the \textit{Yijing}, and which we will revisit later. On the other hand, tong comes about through the \textit{elimination} of difference, thus requiring the destruction of other elements or points of view.

Cheng considers he to be a central concept in Confucianism and considers the basic Confucian virtues of 仁 ren (benevolence), 義 yi (righteousness), 禮 li (ritual propriety) to be important foundations for the development of he in the individual, to the family, to the

\textsuperscript{15} This is a commentary on the 春秋 Chunqiu (Spring and Autumn Annals), which, together with the Yijing, is part of the traditional Confucian canon known as the 五經 Wujing (The Five Classics). The other three works belonging to the Wujing are 詩經 Shijing (Classic of Poetry), 尚書 Shangshu (Book of Documents) and 禮記 Liji (Book of Rites). See Appendix 1a of this paper for the section of the Zuozhuan that discusses he and for Cheng’s translation of it.
community, to the world and finally, to the cosmos. We see the importance of harmony for the individual in Analects 13.23, where Confucius says “君子和而不同，小人同而不和,” which can be translated as “the superior man lives in harmony with others, not in uniformity; the petty man lives in uniformity with others, not in harmony.” While in Analects 1.12, we see the importance of li in developing he when Confucius says “禮之用，和為貴,” which Cheng has translated as “the use of li has its precious value in achieving harmony” (Cheng 1988, 232).

In “Towards Constructing a Dialectics of Harmonization,” Cheng fleshes out the idea of a dialectics of harmonization which he had only briefly mentioned in his earlier work discussed above. He again stresses the importance of he in Confucianism, arguing that the “overall tendency of cosmic and social processes as well as individual life conduces to unity and harmony [in Confucianism]” (Cheng 2006, 28). Once more, he appeals to the metaphysics of the Yijing, summarizing the essential principles of the Yijing as follows (Cheng 2006, 28-29):

1. Reality (called the 道 Dao or “the Way”), which encompasses Heaven, Earth, humans and the myriad things, is both a process of change and an ordered structure.  

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16 I have followed Cheng’s use of “superior man” as a translation for 君子 junzi. For a detailed discussion of various interpretations and translations of junzi, see Cua 2014, 293-298.

17 I have modified Cheng’s translation in 1988, 232 in order to translate tong as “uniformity,” and not “identity.”

18 There are important relationships among the basic Confucian virtues of ren, yi and li, which due to the constraints of space, will not be discussed here. It is sufficient to note here that li is derived from yi which is derived from ren, all in a system of priority, not hierarchy (Shen 2015). Therefore, one might again surmise that ren, yi and li are important foundation for the development of he. For a deeper understanding of the Confucian virtues and their role in cultivating the junzi, see Cua 2014; Cheng 1988, 231-233; Shun 2014.

19 In order to see how the system of gua in the Zhouyi represents a process of change, creativity and transformation that is later philosophically interpreted as harmonization and harmony in the Yizhuan, see Cheng’s “Interpreting Paradigm of Change in Chinese Philosophy” (2011), especially pages 343-346.
2. Creativity of life is the essence of change, and the capacity of the *Dao* for producing life is unlimited. [This is an explanation of “生生之謂易,” found in the First *Xici*, Section 5.]

3. There are always two opposite and yet complementary forces or momenta in the process of change: they are referred to as the 陰 *yin* (the female principle-force-aspect) and the 陽 *yang* (the male principle-force-aspect). [This partly explains “一陰一陽之謂道，繼之者善也，成之者性也” found in First *Xici*, Section 5]

4. The *Dao* is one and is the source and origin of all momenta of change, and so is the fountainhead of all polarities. In this sense the *Dao* is referred to as the 太極 *Taiji* (the “Great Ultimate”) of all things. [see First *Xici*, Section 11]

5. The difference and differentiation of things are manifestations of the interaction of the *yin* and the *yang* and are therefore identifiable with the *Dao*. [see above quotation found in First *Xici*, Section 5]

6. That all things come into being is due to the nature (性 *xing*) of the *Dao*, and for anything to be able to develop or follow the nature of the *Dao* there is goodness. [see above quotation found in First *Xici*, Section 5]

7. Humans can understand the dynamics of change, can conform to its principles in their conduct, and so achieve all-comprehensive goodness in the world.

8. On achieving understanding of change humans can also participate in the activity of change and realize harmony between themselves and the world.

9. Discord, misfortune, and imperfection issue from humans’ failures to understand the reality of change and their consequent incapacity to harmonize with the world.

This metaphysical scheme of the *Yijing* demonstrates a number of key insights. The first is that the world aims at achieving a generative or creative unity through a process of harmonization (see also Cheng 1988, 247). The second is that “temporal progression is an unlimited creation of life” and harmony can be achieved by the efforts of humans to unify themselves with the *Dao*. The third is that polarities make up the generative unity, and they exist
in opposition and in complementation. These polarities are identifiable with the Dao and display harmony in a dynamic sense (Cheng 2006, 29-30).

As a result, conflict emerges because people are unable to appreciate the intricacies and nature of change and are thus unable to harmonize themselves and the world. It is only “by cultivating one’s understanding and adjusting one’s action in a proper way with respect to a propitious time” that conflict can be avoided. In such cases, not understanding the Dao and not cultivating oneself leads to a lack of harmony between the individual and the situation, time, or the actions of others, thus further leading to conflict (Cheng 2006, 31).

From here, Cheng proposes a dialectics of harmonization as follows (Cheng 2006, 35):

1. All things come into existence by way of polarities (and relativities).
2. Polarities at the same time contain relativities, opposition, complementation, and mutual generation.
3. All differences and distinctions of things are generated by (and explained by) polarities of principles, forces, and aspects.
4. Polarities specifically produce the unlimited creativity of life […] as well as reversion.
5. Conflicts can be resolved by locating a relevant framework of polarities and their generative relationships in which the ultimate reality of oneness and the ontological equality of all things can be asserted.
6. Humans can relate to and discover ways of resolving conflict through understanding reality and themselves.

Having understood that the Dao is the unification of all polarities and that polarities, though appearing as sources of conflict, are necessary for complementation and mutual generation, we can come to see “the different sides of conflict and antagonism as ontologically equitable and dialectically identifiable in the infinite hold of the Dao”. A dialectics of harmonization, then,
requires a “moral (practical) transformation of humans together with an ontological
(metaphysical) transformation of human understanding (of the world)” in order for conflict to
disappear” (Cheng 2006, 35).

However, the *Yijing* is not the only important source of the Confucian concept of *he*.
Cheng notes in “On Harmony as Transformation: Paradigms from the *I Ching*” the importance of
the 中庸 *Zhongyong* (Doctrine of the Mean) in further developing the concept of *he* by linking it
to 中 *zhong*20 (centrality) (1988, 235). The *Zhongyong* is an important chapter from the 禮記 *Liji*
(Book of Rites) and one of the 四書 *sishu* (Four Books) in the classical Confucian canon. In the
often-quoted first passage of the *Zhongyong*, it is said:

“What Heaven (天命 *tianming*) has conferred is called The Nature (性 *xing*); an
accordance with this nature is called The Path of duty (道 *Dao*); the regulation of this
path is called Instruction (教 *jiao*). The path may not be left for an instant. If it could be
left, it would not be the path. […] While there are no stirrings of pleasure, anger,
sorrow, or joy, the mind may be said to be in the state of Equilibrium (中 *zhong*). When
those feelings have been stirred, and they act in their due degree, there ensues what may
be called the state of Harmony (和 *he*). This Equilibrium is the great root from which
grow all the human actings in the world, and this Harmony is the universal path which
they all should pursue. Let the states of equilibrium and harmony (中和 *zhonghe*) exist
in perfection, and a happy order will prevail throughout heaven and earth, and all things
will be nourished and flourish.”21

20 *Zhong* has been variously translated as “mean,” “equilibrium,” or “centrality.” I have maintained the use of
“Doctrine of the Mean” for the translation of *Zhongyong* since this is a widely recognized translation, and I have
also preserved Legge’s translation of *zhong* to “equilibrium” in the passage below. However, I will use “centrality”
as a translation for *zhong* throughout my own writing for reasons which will become clear in our analysis of 時中
shizhong later.

21 See Appendix 1b for Chinese text.
From this passage, Cheng notes how *he* is rooted in the nature of man, which is in turn derived from *tianming*, or the mandate of heaven, and is therefore rooted in the Ultimate Reality of heaven. The nature of man expresses itself through feelings and judgements in response to events of the world, and it maintains *zhong* when it “lets out feelings in proper measure with proper intentionality and proper restraint relative to an event or situation in the world,” thereby also achieving *he*. In this way, *he* is a “state of resonance and consonance between a person and the world in a responsive, interactive relationship” which helps to maintain centrality in the individual and in the world and therefore, order and sufficiency in the world as well (Cheng 1988, 235).

In one sense, *zhong* helps to realize *he* and is thus the foundation to *he*. But in another sense, *zhong* is also the “state of *he* where differences are organized and integrated, and in this sense, *zhong* is the way of harmonizing differences and producing a unity necessary for the totalistic integration of differences as parts” (Cheng 1988, 237-238). This suggests to us the importance of linking *zhong* and *he* together, to not see them as necessarily sequential or distinct, but as dependent on each other. This point is reinforced by two other contemporary Chinese philosophers, Chenyang Li and Antonio Cua.

In “*Zhongyong* as Grand Harmony,” Li challenges Ames and Hall’s interpretation of the *Zhongyong* by arguing that the central argument of the *Zhongyong* is not about “promoting acts of focusing the familiar,” but is about harmony and harmonization (Li 2004, 174-175). Li, in agreement with Cheng, considers *he* “the most significant contribution that Confucianism can offer to world philosophy and world politics today.” His own reading of the above passage of the *Zhongyong* does not differ very much from Cheng’s reading: our *xing*, or nature, is endowed by *tianming*, heaven, and to realize *xing* is to follow the *Dao*. In order to follow *Dao*, one has to be
educated or instructed according to li, and the person who realizes xing through li is a junzi. When there is Dao in the world, there is harmony and harmonization which allows everything to flourish (Li 2004, 175).

In Li’s reading above, we are reminded of Analects 1.12, in which Confucius is noted as saying that the importance of li lies in developing harmony. In addition, Li notes that zhong and he “should not be treated as two separate concepts in the Zhongyong, they are coupled together to form one inseparable notion in Confucianism” (Li 2004, 177). In this sense, zhonghe is often used together and there is a dependency of both on each other. But why should the way of Zhongyong be interpreted as the way of he?

Li quotes Zhongyong, Section 2 here to make his point (2004, 182):

“The junzi practices zhongyong; the petty person is contrary to zhongyong. As for zhongyong, the junzi being a junzi exercises appropriately timed centrality (時中 shizhong); as for zhongyong, the petty person (小人 xiaoren) being a petty person does not have the requisite caution and concern.”

This passage parallels Analects 13.23, which we had analyzed earlier, in the contrast drawn between the junzi and the petty person. In this case, the junzi is described as practicing zhongyong, while in Analects 13.23, the junzi is described as practicing he, showing the togetherness of zhongyong and he once again.

In addition, Li notes the importance of 時中 shizhong in this passage. Shizhong here emphasizes that zhong does not refer to the mean or to achievement of equilibrium, but to an

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22 This is Li’s translation. See Appendix 1c for Chinese text.
appropriately timed” or timely action guided by zhong that matches a specific time and situation (2004, 182). It is significant that this understanding of zhong is in agreement with Cheng’s understanding of he which we had previously analyzed when we considered his dialectics of harmonization derived from the Yijing.

This shows once again the togetherness of zhong and he in that both must be practiced with respect to the specific time and situation for both to be established in the individual and in the world. The element of time and space is of especial importance to an understanding of zhong and he, and also contributes to our understanding of both being “inseparable.” The importance of timely centrality is further emphasized by Cheng when he writes of all Confucian moral action being a matter of shizhong, “for only in seeking shizhong can an action be considered moral” (Cheng 2002, 731).

Returning back to the idea of the togetherness of zhong and he, it is apt to now bring in the ideas of Antonio Cua. In “Confucian Vision and Experience of the World,” Cua draws on the work of Wang Yang-ming to argue that “equilibrium [zhong] as an achieved state is a result of harmony; harmony as an achieved state is a result of the activation of the incipient tendency toward equilibrium [zhong]” (Cua 1998, 28). In other words, zhong and he are dependent on each other and there is no “dichotomy” (Cua 1998, 28). In “Harmony and the Neo-Confucian Sage,” he again mentions that “the two words zhong and he together may be regarded as the ideal of central harmony” (Cua 1998, 125-126).

Given the importance of zhong and he being together, what does Cua say about dealing with strife, conflict and differences now? We have seen that Cheng, through his explanation of a dialectics of harmonization and his emphasis on shizhong, and Li, through his explanation of the
Zhongyong and recognition of harmony as “the highest ideal for Confucianism as a whole,” (2006, 588) both advocate for he and zhong as approaches to accommodating conflict and difference. In the same vein, Cua recognizes both zhong and he as “non-contentious ways of dealing with human conflict” (Cua 2014, 321-324). In “Principles as Preconditions of Adjudication,” he writes also that “a reflective, sincere Confucian would regard conflict, especially among humans, to be a matter of regret, yet, also as an invitation to […] bring about a state of harmonious co-existence or equilibrium [zhong] (Cua 1998, 320). Clearly, zhong and he are agreed-upon Confucian approaches to accommodating conflict and difference.

2.2. Features of Confucian Multiculturalism

From our analysis of zhong and he above, it seems to me that there are two important implicit premises that can contribute to the building of a theory of Confucian multiculturalism. I argue that basing Confucian multiculturalism on these premises will make it distinct from and a better alternative to liberal accommodations of cultural diversity. The first is cosmological communitarianism, by which I mean the emphasis on harmony among 天 tian (heaven), 地 di (earth) and man. The second is moral and intellectual cultivation and practice, which refers to the emphasis on cultivating the moral and intellectual capacities of the individual in order to understand the nature of change and to respond appropriately according to the time and situation. In light of these two features, I will further argue that the realization of Confucian multiculturalism in practice is best achieved through the idea of an intercultural dialogue. Before that, I will elaborate on the two features of Confucian multiculturalism.
2.2.1. **Cosmological Communitarianism**

The importance of harmony in Confucianism mirrors the importance placed on community and the social context by the communitarians. As we have seen, the contemporary Confucian scholars surveyed in this paper all place an emphasis on drawing on the Confucian tradition and cultural context in their visioning of society and the world. Furthermore, the emphasis on harmony within the self is in order to generate harmony in the world and to allow “a happy order [to] prevail through heaven and earth, and all things [to be] nourished and flourish” (*Zhongyong*, Section 1).

In our very first analysis on *he*, we noted the analogies of harmony of sound in good music and harmony of taste in food in understanding the Confucian concept of harmony. A deeper analysis of those analogies will show that the purpose of *he* in music and food is to help bring peace and harmony to the mind of the *junzi* who will then conduct himself and the government harmoniously, leading to peace and harmony for the people (Cheng 1988, 228). This incipient idea of the realization of outer harmony of the world through inner harmony of the individual is an important theme that continues to be further developed in the other classical Confucian texts. Thus, from the reading of *Zhongyong*, Section 1 above, Cheng further concludes that *he* is “not simply a state of nature, nor simply a state of mind, but a creative process of harmonizing the world by the mind which results in a better state of the world” (Cheng 1988, 236).

We see this idea at work again in the later emphasis on 誠 *cheng* (sincerity) in the *Zhongyong*. In *Zhongyong*, Section 20, it is said:
“Cheng is the way of tian. To be cheng is the human way. The one who is cheng hits the target without toil, and comes up with ideas without contemplation. Such a person treads the central way at ease, he is a sage.”

Here, Cua notes the importance of the individual attainment of cheng in the individual, who through the development of this aspect of his moral nature and intellect, is able to create a link between tian, di and man. Cheng becomes a “creative and transformative force in uniting the Way of the world and the Way of man” (Cua 1998, 29), and it begins from the individual and reaches out to other men and the world.

Li also takes up an interpretation of cheng in his work, noting that it is through cheng that our xing (nature) can be realized and man can form a trinity with heaven and earth to partake in the transformation and nourishment of everything (Li 2004, 187). This is the vision of a grand harmony that also finds support in the 大學 Daxue (Great Learning), another one of the 四書 sishu (Four Books). In the Daxue, Section 2, it is written that (Legge 1885 IV, 412 as quoted in Li 2014, 89):

“Once a person’s will becomes cheng, his heart-mind can be set upright. Once his heart-mind is set upright, he can cultivate his self. Once his self is cultivated, he can harmonize the family. Once he harmonizes the family, he can put the country in good order. Once he puts the country in good order, he can achieve peace in the entire world.”

It is through personal cultivation of harmony through cheng that our wider social circles begin to harmonize as well, starting from the family, to the country, to the world.

23 This is Li’s translation found in 2004, 186. See Appendix 1d for the Chinese text.

24 See Appendix 1e for Chinese text.
In this regard, it is easy to see the “metaphysical claim about the social nature of the self” and a “normative claim about the value of community,” the other two of the three central claims of communitarianism we had seen in Part 1, in contemporary Confucian approaches to conflict and difference. The self is seen as intricately tied to its communities in its duty of cultivation for the realization of harmony in the communities outside of the self. This also shows the normative value of sustaining those communities and allowing “all things [to be] nourished and flourish” (*Zhongyong*, Section 1).

At this point, it is also worth clarifying how our understanding of Confucian communitarianism differs from the picture of communitarianism we briefly saw in our earlier analysis of Kymlicka in section 1.2. There, Kymlicka seemed to suggest that communitarianism places society above the individual, therefore neglecting (and, at its worst, oppressing) the will of the individual. While an argument for such a strong version of communitarianism might exist, Confucianism does not belong to such a brand of communitarianism.

As we have seen from the analysis so far, Confucianism matches the three central claims of communitarianism as argued by Bell, none of which forgoes the role of the individual at the expense of society. As Beiner also notes, what the prominent communitarians have collectively drawn our attention to is “the “pre-constitution” of individual identity by shared social self-understanding,” not a rejection of the individual (2014, 191). In this sense, it is the relational or social self that is important in Confucianism, not society in and of itself. In the next section, the
importance of the individual in the Confucian world-view becomes clearer when we consider in more detail the significance of moral and intellectual cultivation of the individual.\(^{25}\)

Having made clear the communitarian feature of Confucian multiculturalism, why do I further call such communitarianism cosmological? Going back to the *Yijing*, I think it is important not to forget the importance of change in nature and the cosmological links between heaven, earth and man. We have seen that harmony in the self and an extension of harmony to other human communities are of paramount importance, but we should not forget the metaphysical demand in the *Yijing* for us to “understand the dynamics of change” in order to participate with heaven and earth in the transformation and harmonization of the world (Cheng 2006, 28).

In this sense, the notion of community that is cherished by the Confucian does not end at the boundaries of the largest human community – the world; rather, it extends beyond human communities to encompass nature, the cosmos and the divine. Harmony is comprehensive and the individual is embedded within human communities and the wider cosmos.\(^{26}\) Hence, what we have is a cosmological communitarianism.

### 2.2.2. Moral and Intellectual Cultivation and Practice

This second feature of Confucian multiculturalism has already been briefly touched upon in the argument for cosmological communitarianism when we considered *cheng*. As our

\(^{25}\) See de Bary 132-165 for more on the importance of the individual in Confucianism.

\(^{26}\) See Li 2014, 148-165 for more on harmony with nature. See also Thomé Fang’s *The Philosophy of Comprehensive Harmony* (1980).
discussion of *cheng* has also shown, the principal intent in attaining *cheng* is a moral one (Cua 1998, 28). With reference to *Zhongyong*, Section 25, Li considers *cheng* to be “self-consummation” (*成己 chengji*) in the sense of consummating oneself to become a person of 仁 *ren* (benevolence) (Li 2004, 186). This again emphasizes the moral cultivation of the individual.

However, harmony requires not just moral cultivation, but intellectual cultivation too. As we have seen previously, the dialectics of harmonization that is derived from the *Yijing* asserts that “humans can relate to and discover ways of resolving conflict through understanding reality and themselves.” This understanding of “reality and themselves” demands intellectual cultivation and a study of things, in the same spirit of the derivation of the *gua* in the *Zhouyi* (Second Xici, Section 2; Cheng 2008, 202). In the *Zhongyong*, Section 27 as well, we see a similar admonishment for the junzi to “honor his virtuous nature and maintain constant inquiry and study” (*君子尊德性而道問學*) in his pursuit of *zhongyong*. Having understood *zhong* as being conceptually tied to *he*, we can understand this sentence as admonishing the individual to “maintain constant inquiry and study” in order to work towards harmony. Learning for oneself *is* learning for others and the cosmos at large as well, thus demonstrating again the cosmological communitarian feature of Confucianism which we had considered in the previous section.

Finally, I want to draw attention to the importance of practice in the Confucian tradition. The moral and intellectual cultivation of an individual must be situated in practice, as shown by Cua when he argues that theoretical inquiry in Confucianism “focuses on its relevance to the requirements of practice, particularly those that promote the unity and harmony among people in the community” (1998, 268). Becoming a sage, in the Confucian tradition, is a task of “practical understanding,” not just intellectual understanding (1998, 123). This focus on practice brings us
back to the idea of *shizhong*, with its emphasis on responding and acting appropriately according to the time and situation. Again, since “only in seeking *shizhong* can an action be considered moral” (Cheng 2002, 731), the moral cultivation of an individual must be seen as being situated in practice and the pursuit of *shizhong*.

2.3. Conclusion

In Part 2, I drew on the resources of Confucianism – a specific form of communitarianism that emphasizes the relational or social self – to develop a communitarian theory of multiculturalism that is distinct from and more sensitive to and respectful of other cultures than liberal accommodations of cultural diversity. Specifically, I considered contemporary Confucian approaches to the accommodation of conflict and difference in order to work out a theory of Confucian multiculturalism. I then showed that we can derive two features of Confucian multiculturalism from the central Confucian concepts of 和 *he* (harmony) and 中 *zhong* (centrality): the first is a theoretical foundation of cosmological communitarianism, and the second is a theoretical demand for moral and intellectual cultivation and practice.

The first demonstrates that Confucian multiculturalism is able to have a broader, cosmological perspective that goes beyond the boundaries of a liberal nation-state or society in its approach to harmonizing difference and cultural diversity. In addition, it recognizes the particularity of each tradition and the need to understand cultures on their own terms. The second demonstrates that Confucian multiculturalism is properly sensitive to and respectful of other cultural traditions because it seeks to study and understand the self, others and the wider cosmos in its practice of harmony. In Part 3, I consider how we ought to realize these features of Confucian multiculturalism in the context of our world today.
3. Realizing Confucian Multiculturalism

In *Political Liberalism*, Rawls proposes a scheme of basic liberties which will allow political liberalism to be sustained (1993, 331). The basic liberties are protected by the adoption of a constitution which is founded on “conceptions of the person and of social cooperation most likely to be congenial to the public culture of a modern democratic society” (Rawls 1993, 339). In the case of Kymlicka’s multiculturalism, he proposes the institution of minority rights to allow cultures to sustain and further themselves within a liberal state.27 This language of liberties and rights used by Rawls and Kymlicka fits well within the institutional framework of a liberal democracy, and allows their theories to be realized through laws, statutes and the courts at the institutional level if so desired. If Confucian multiculturalism is to be a viable alternative to liberal approaches to accommodating cultural diversity, then a practical realization is also needed. Resorting immediately to the language and establishment of rights and liberties, as Kymlicka and Rawls have done, is to mistakenly privilege liberalism in state policies even when the foundations of liberalism are not present in that society. Instead of *rights*, I argue that Confucian multiculturalism can be realized through the *good* of an *intercultural dialogue*.28

In what is to follow, I first consider the idea of an intercultural dialogue, drawing particular inspiration from Professor Vincent Shen’s (沈清松) method of dialogue as mutual strangification. Inasmuch as Shen’s mutual strangification is a direct approach to accommodating

27 Specifically, these minority rights are: “self-government rights (the delegation of powers to national minorities, often through some form of federalism); polyethnic rights (financial support and legal protection for certain practices associated with particular ethnic or religious groups); and special representation rights (guaranteed seats for ethnic or national groups within the central institution of the larger state)” (1995, 6-7).

28 We saw intimations of this idea in section 1.3 when we considered Taylor’s call for a “fusion of horizons” which entails the presumption of equal worth for all cultures and the study of other cultures.
the fact of cultural diversity that aims at “mutual enrichment by cultural differences and an unceasing search for universalizable elements embodied in various cultural traditions” (Shen 2011, 3), I compare and contrast Shen’s theoretical basis for mutual strangification with Confucian multiculturalism. I conclude that even though there are differences in the appeal to foundational Confucian concepts, Shen’s method of dialogue is applicable to Confucian multiculturalism and should be adopted in a modified form. Furthermore, moral and intellectual cultivation and practice are indispensable to the endeavor.

Having thus answered what an intercultural dialogue is and why it is of importance in the context of Confucian multiculturalism in section 3.1., I turn to the questions of how, where and who in section 3.2. I propose that the practice of an intercultural dialogue in our modern context should take place in universities where an intercultural education can be provided to students and academics for the purpose of building and sustaining intercultural dialogue. To that end, I draw inspiration from some theories of higher education to consider what an intercultural education that promotes intercultural dialogue among individuals should look like in our universities today. Ultimately, I argue that universities play a pivotal role in providing an intercultural education and promoting intercultural dialogues that help us to transcend national boundaries and harmonize cultures.

3.1. Intercultural Dialogue in Theory

In “Comparative Studies in Philosophy/Religion and Dialogue as Mutual “Strangification” (Waitui 外推),” Shen argues that the rate and scope of globalization today are

29 Or Why Intercultural Dialogue and What is it?
forcing us, as individuals and societies, to interact and confront each other more and more. The outcome of such interaction can be a dialogue that aims for mutual enrichment in spite of differences, or persistent conflict and strife as a result of what is perceived as irreconcilable differences (2011, 1-2). Against such a backdrop, Shen argues that we need to study philosophy, religion and culture outside of one’s own tradition and engage in dialogue so that “different ways of doing philosophy and religion in different cultural traditions could enrich our vision of the multi-layered and multi-faceted reality” (2011, 3).

In order to show the importance of dialogue as mutual strangification, Shen first explains a number of underlying ideas that lead up to it. Shen clarifies that an intercultural philosophy is about putting different traditions into “contrast, rather than engaging in a sheer comparison” (2011, 3-4). Contrast is understood as

“the rhythmic and dialectical interplay between difference and complementarity, continuity and discontinuity, which leads eventually to real mutual enrichment of different agents, individual or collective, such as different traditions of religion or philosophy” (Shen 2011, 4)

This philosophy of contrast finds its source in philosophical texts such as the Yijing, and it “reminds us always to see the other side of the story and the tension between complementary elements essential to creativity in time” (Shen 2011, 4-5).

From this understanding of a philosophy of contrast, Shen places Chinese and Western philosophy in contrast to consider their different origins. He claims that Western philosophy originated in leisure and recreation and out of an attitude of wonder to the surroundings. As a result, it led to the Greek notion of theoria, which is the “disinterested pursuit of truth and sheer intellectual curiosity” (Shen 2011, 6). On the other hand, Chinese philosophy originated in a
period of strife and anxiety and out of concern for the chaotic state of human life. As a result, it led to the development of a practical wisdom that could alleviate strife and guide a “universalizable praxis” (Shen 2011, 8). Even though the different emphases of *theoria* and *praxis* are contrasted here, they are still complementary inasmuch as they aim at the ideal of universality (Shen 2011, 9).

Yet another contrast is seen on the level of epistemic principle. Western philosophy is closely linked to mathematics and uses “logical-mathematically structured language” in constructing theory and formulating knowledge. On the other hand, Chinese philosophy and “its proto-scientific theories were mainly presented through intuition and speculative imagination” which was well-suited to its purpose of theorizing the totality and meaning of life and the cosmos (Shen 2011, 9). Furthermore, in their use of empirical data, Western modern science (as an offspring of Western philosophy) tends to create empirical data through controlled environments and experiments. Chinese philosophy, however, tends to observe empirical data as they occur in nature, in the way that Fu Xi had done so in the construction of the *Zhou Yi* (Shen 2011, 10).

All these insights lead us to a final important contrast between Chinese and Western philosophy on the function of reason. In Chinese philosophy, reason is characterized by reasonableness, not rationality. Rationality is how reason functions within the Western preoccupation with *theoria*, logic, and modern science. Reasonableness, on the other hand, “refers always to the totality of existence and to its meaningful interpretation by human life as a whole, which in principle would encourage the act of going to the other side of reality to see holistically and therefore encourage strangification.” (Shen 2011, 11)
In the case of Confucianism, reasonableness as the totality of one’s self and relationship with the world focuses on human beings. Even so, nature is not seen as static and purely subject to human actions; on the contrary, human beings are seen as co-creators in “the creative transformation of Heaven and Earth, [engaging in] a kind of participative construction instead of dominative construction” (Shen 2011, 13).

The above exposition on a philosophy of contrast and reasonableness in Chinese philosophy leads Shen to conclude that strangification as a strategy for intercultural philosophy can be rooted in Chinese philosophy. We see this when he extends the Confucian concepts of 仁 ren (benevolence), 忍 shu (reciprocity) and 良知 liangzhi (innate knowledge) to argue for a politics of generosity which reaches out to “Many Others” (2011, 19; Address 2014, 8). In particular, the concept of shu is elevated from “the level of empathetic understanding to the higher level of altruistic extension” which refers to reaching out to others in hope of communicating and embracing all of man, nature and Heaven (Shen 2011, 20; Address 2014; 16). Such a spirit of generosity is crucial for true recognition and respect of other cultures and necessarily leads to mutual strangification and “mutual enrichment, which constitutes a dynamic concept of harmony” (Shen 2014 Address, 8).

Mutual strangification is seen as a “process of dialogue among different cultural communities” that involves the three levels of linguistic, pragmatic and ontological

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30 Shen also discusses reasonableness in Daoism and how it differs from Confucianism in not limiting itself to human subjectivity and meaningfulness (Shen 2011, 12-13). I will not go into his explication of Daoism since this paper, in its analysis of Chinese philosophy, deals with Confucianism only.
strangification (Shen 2014 Address, 14-15).\(^{31}\) *Linguistic strangification* involves the translation of core ideas for other cultures to understand. *Pragmatic strangification* involves drawing out the core ideas from one’s culture to be put in practice in the social context of other cultures. *Ontological strangification* involves entering the cultural world of others “through a detour of [one’s] own experience of Reality itself.” If there is strong opposition or disjunction at the earlier levels of linguistic or pragmatic strangification, then there needs to be self-reflection on one’s own cultural values and assumptions. Furthermore, linguistic strangification presupposes the appropriation of other languages, without which would mean “self-contentment with, or self-enclosure in one’s own micro-world, cultural world, or religious world” (Shen 2011, 15-16; 2014 Address, 14-15).

How does Shen’s account of an intercultural philosophy compare and contrast with our account of Confucian multiculturalism above? Is the strategy of dialogue as mutual strangification suitable for Confucian multiculturalism too? To begin with, I think there are some important similarities that can be found in Shen’s philosophy of contrast and the contemporary Confucian approaches to conflict and difference, both of which are the underlying ideas that lead to an intercultural philosophy and Confucian multiculturalism respectively. While Shen does not explicitly analyze the concepts in the *Yijing* and *Zhongyong* as the other scholars have done, he does make mention of the two books (2011, 4, 8 for *Yijing* and 10 for *Zhongyong*) in building his account of an intercultural philosophy. Furthermore, he cites the *Yijing* as one of the origins of

\(^{31}\) In section 1.3, I had argued that Taylor’s politics of recognition aimed at the idea of an intercultural dialogue as a communitarian approach to accommodating cultural diversity. Here, Shen’s politics of generosity has extended the scope of Taylor’s politics of recognition beyond mere recognition between subjects to reach the idea of an intercultural dialogue that makes our own cultural worlds understandable to others (through the three levels of strangification) in an active act of generosity (Shen 2014 Address, 8, 15).
the philosophy of contrast (2011, 4). Hence, it is not surprising that his philosophy of contrast bears important resemblances to the broader philosophy of change that we had outlined earlier in our analysis of the *Yijing* and a dialectics of harmonization.

In this regard, we can understand Shen’s philosophy of contrast as also aiming to produce the ideal of *he* that sees “the different sides of conflict and antagonism as ontologically equitable and dialectically identifiable in the infinite hold of the *Dao*” (Cheng 2006, 35). Even though Cheng only recognizes “two opposite and yet complementary forces or momenta in the process of change” in his dialectics of harmonization (2006, 28), it is possible to extend it to encompass many (i.e. more than two) forces that are to be studied, understood and harmonized. Doing so allows us to apply it to the fact of cultural diversity in which many cultural forces are contrasted against each other. In this way, the similarity between a philosophy of contrast in the intercultural context and a dialectics of harmonization in a culturally-diverse context becomes apparent.

This, however, is where the similarities between Shen’s philosophy of contrast and the contemporary Confucian approaches to conflict and difference end. While I have demonstrated that Shen’s philosophy of contrast shares similar theoretical roots with Cheng’s dialectics of harmonization and could be interpreted as aiming at *he*, it lacks any explicit reference to *zhong*, its extension, *shizhong*, and *cheng*. In “The Concept of Centrality in Chinese Diaspora,” Shen does explicitly analyze the concepts of *zhong* and *shizhong* while also referring to the importance of *cheng, ren, shu* and *he* in serving as “guiding principles, or normative principles, for interacting with many others” (Shen 2012, 34). However, he chooses from “among these [to] enhance the idea of *shu* from the level of emphatic understanding to the higher level of altruistic extension” (Shen 2012, 34). Therefore, even though there is an implicit acknowledgement of the
importance of *shizhong* and *cheng*, Shen chooses not to explicitly draw on them in formulating his method of mutual strangification. However, we have seen that these additional concepts are of great importance to *he* and have been heavily discussed in other contemporary Confucian approaches to conflict and difference. In addition, together with *he*, they form an important theoretical foundation for Confucian multiculturalism.

Does this mean that the strategy of dialogue as mutual strangification is not suitable for Confucian multiculturalism? I think not. As our discussion on the philosophy of contrast and dialectics of harmonization has shown, the philosophy of contrast can be seen as an extension of the dialectics of harmonization to the situation in which there is multiple others. This means the two ideas are foundationally similar. Thus, if the philosophy of contrast invites mutual strangification, then the dialectics of harmonization should too. Since the dialectics of harmonization is a building block for Confucian multiculturalism, then Confucian multiculturalism should also invite mutual strangification.

But how is the strategy of dialogue as mutual strangification to make up for the lack of attention to *shizhong* and *cheng* that, together with *he*, make up the features of cosmological communitarianism and moral and intellectual cultivation and practice? I think a modification of mutual strangification is needed to feature more explicitly the ideas of *shizhong* and *cheng* so that the strategy of dialogue will suitably fulfill the features of Confucian multiculturalism. As I see it, cosmological communitarianism is clearly part of the make-up of mutual strangification, but the place of moral and intellectual cultivation and practice can be further enhanced.

Returning back to the idea of cosmological communitarianism, we see that what is crucial is the idea of the individual being situated within ever-widening communities that finally
culminate in the entire cosmos. The individual is supposed to cultivate herself in a spirit of *cheng* in order to realize harmony in herself which extends to the communities she is embedded in. With respect to our culturally-diverse and increasingly globalized world today, she will presume the equal worth of other cultures, seeing them not as sources of potential conflict, but as sources of potential complementation and enrichment. Given the important role that they have played in their societies for extended periods of time, cultures are seen as contributing to the inherent creativity of the world and the cosmos at large. In this way, cultures are recognized as being *harmonizable*.

Given the emphasis on reaching out to other cultures in mutual strangification, we see an implicit presumption of the equal worth of other cultures. Without this presumption, individual and communities would remain self-enclosed. Furthermore, the important underlying idea of a philosophy of contrast aims at “the rhythmic and dialectical interplay between difference and complementarity, continuity and discontinuity” which also recognizes the potential for complementation, enrichment and harmony among the cultures (Shen 2011, 4). I think that the impulse to reach out to others in a spirit of generosity that aims at harmony makes it clear that mutual strangification contains the idea of cosmological communitarianism.

What about moral and intellectual cultivation and practice? At first glance, it seems that mutual strangification does require a large measure of moral and intellectual cultivation and practice. Intellectual cultivation is necessary for any attempt at language appropriation and translation in the first level of linguistic strangification. In addition, pragmatic strangification requires moral and intellectual effort in drawing out the core ideas from one’s culture and practice within the context of other cultures. Finally, ontological strangification surely requires
moral and intellectual cultivation and practice in entering the cultural world of others to understand and be enriched.

Even so, I think that not enough attention is paid to the idea of actively seeking to learn and appreciate other cultural worlds on their own terms in order to actively work towards harmony. At the first level, it seems to me that language appropriation is only instrumentally necessary for the act of translation. Furthermore, translation is for the purpose of taking one’s core ideas to the other culture so that others can understand, not for bringing the core ideas of other cultures into our own language. What is lacking is an active effort to appropriate not just the language, but the core ideas into our own cultural world for those who share our cultural world to contemplate.

Of course, one might retort that the onus lies on other cultures to do the work of translating their core ideas into other languages in order to make their core ideas accessible to others. If everyone reaches out to each other in the spirit of shu and original generosity embodied in mutual strangification, then there is no need to actively seek them out on our own. However, I think it is too idealistic to expect all cultures to engage in this activity for the sake of others. First, we cannot expect all cultures to have the same concept of shu in their cultures that brings them to reach out to other cultures. Second, not all cultures might have the resources to engage in the kind of moral and intellectual cultivation that will allow them to translate their core ideas for the sake of others. Given such a situation, I think that dialogue as mutual strangification should encourage cultures to not only actively seek to reach out, but where possible, seek to take in.

At the second level, we see again that the emphasis is on our own core ideas and how they function in the cultural context of others. However, I think that it is important also to seek to
understand the core ideas of others so that one can understand why and how certain practices might stand apart from each other when we are in different cultural contexts. This requires not just reaching out, but taking in as well.

Finally, at the third level, we do see that ontological strangification emphasizes understanding other cultures on their own terms and through their own experience of Ultimate Reality. However, it seems to already presume a universal ideal of Ultimate Reality that different philosophies and cultures can fit into when manifested and experienced. I find this problematic because it is not only the case that there might be different experiences of Ultimate Reality; it is also possible to have different conceptions of it which we might learn from. While it is important to understand other cultures on the terms of their experience of Ultimate Reality, I think that we should go further to seek to uncover different conceptions of Ultimate Reality where these exist. But understanding and knowledge is not enough. We should further aim at learning from other particular understandings and experiences of Ultimate Reality to realize a more complete picture of reality and achieve harmony.

Given that mutual strangification is founded primarily on shu, there seems to be an overemphasis on reaching out in a spirit of generosity. I do think that shu and original generosity are of utmost importance to the idea of dialogue, but they should be balanced by an active seeking of other cultural worlds which I see as being grounded in cheng. In Zhongyong, Section 20, it is said that

“He who attains to cheng is he who chooses what is good, and firmly holds it fast. To this attainment there are requisite the extensive study of what is good, accurate inquiry about it, careful reflection on it, the clear discrimination of it, and the earnest practice of it. The superior man, while there is anything he has not studied, or while in what he
has studied there is anything he cannot understand, will not intermit his labor. While there is anything he has not inquired about, or anything in what he has inquired about which he does not know, he will not intermit his labor. While there is anything which he has not reflected on, or anything in what he has reflected on which he does not apprehend, he will not intermit his labor. While there is anything which he has not discriminated or his discrimination is not clear, he will not intermit his labor. If there be anything which he has not practiced, or his practice fails in earnestness, he will not intermit his labor.” (Emphases are mine).  

Moral and intellectual cultivation and practice as motivated by cheng in the above passage demands study, inquiry, reflection, discrimination, and practice of what is good. As I see it, what is good is not limited to ideas within one’s tradition. If we start by presuming the equal worth of other cultures, then we should also seek to work ceaselessly towards understanding the good that is embodied in them in an effort to take in that good and enrich ourselves. In this regard, moral and intellectual cultivation and practice is indispensable to the practice of an intercultural dialogue and should be pursued in a spirit of both shu and cheng.

One might mistake such an effort to take in as being too self-centered. Surely it must be better to reach out in generosity, rather than to take in for one’s enrichment! But implicit in the idea of mutual enrichment is that one must take in as well as reach or give out. In addition, we have already established that seeking to take in, learn and understand in a spirit of cheng is about completing the individual so that he can then complete nature and cosmos in an act of co-creation. Hence, we see in Zhongyong, Section 25 that “the possessor of sincerity does not

32 See Appendix 1f for Chinese text.
merely accomplish the self-completion of himself. With this quality he completes other men and things also.”

Finally, one might argue that seeking to take in and understand the sheer number of cultures today is too impractical. It is more practical for a culture to focus on taking its own core ideas to other cultures rather than bringing in the core ideas of many other cultures. I do agree that taking in and understanding the full myriad of cultures in our world today is a task that can seem impossible in terms of the amount of time and effort needed. In this regard, I think that *shizhong* is of utmost importance. Once again, we can understand *shizhong* as referring to timely action guided by *zhong* that matches a specific time and situation. In the context of a culturally diverse world, I think *shizhong* would bring us to select and understand certain cultures ahead of others with reference to current events in our world today. For example, we might expect that seeking to understand and take in Islamic culture is of high priority today given the conflict and tension that has been attributed to it. Therefore, moral and intellectual cultivation and practice in the context of an intercultural dialogue and needs to be pursued in a spirit of *shu, cheng*, and *shizhong*.

3.2. *Intercultural Dialogue in Practice*[^34]

So far, I have argued that the underlying idea of a philosophy of contrast in Shen’s approach to intercultural philosophy bears important resemblances to some of the ideas discussed by contemporary Confucian approaches to conflict and difference. In this regard, it can be

[^33]: See Appendix 1g for Chinese text.

[^34]: Or *How, Where and among Whom should Intercultural Dialogue be carried out?*
interpreted as aiming at he. Furthermore, from the strategy of dialogue as mutual strangification which is motivated by this philosophy of contrast and primarily founded on shu, we can derive a cosmological communitarian position that matches with Confucian multiculturalism. However, there seems to be no explicit reference to the ideas of shizhong and cheng in the method of strangification itself. Since the Confucian cosmological feature of moral and intellectual cultivation and practice is primarily founded in shizhong and cheng, I suggest that a modified form of dialogue as mutual strangification which explicitly features the ideas of shizhong and cheng is a more suitable strategy for Confucian multiculturalism. This modified form of intercultural dialogue aims at reaching out in a spirit of original generosity, while taking in a spirit of active seeking and learning in order to achieve harmony among differences in culture.

We have also seen that moral and intellectual cultivation and practice is indispensable to the (modified) strategy of intercultural dialogue; so how, where and among whom should this feature be realized in the context of modern society today? I argue that moral and intellectual cultivation and practice should be realized in the context of higher education and in the form of an intercultural education that aims at intercultural dialogues. To that end, I will consider two broad theories of liberal education in higher education today. The first is a liberal or humanistic education as advocated by Wm. Theodore de Bary, and the second is a liberal or cosmopolitan education as advocated by Martha Nussbaum.

In order to prevent confusion, it is important to note the distinction between our understandings of “liberal” in liberal education and theories of liberalism which we had looked at in Part 1. Here, “liberal” in liberal education points to the liberating role of education in broadening one’s mind and developing one’s capabilities in order to function more adequately in one’s social context. In such a situation, liberal education should not be understood as education
solely for a liberal society (as we understand it in the political sense); it is capable of being molded to further the ends of both a liberal society and a Confucian society. Ultimately, while I draw upon features of such “liberal” or “cosmopolitan” or “humanistic” forms of education for a theory of intercultural education, what distinguishes intercultural education from such theories of education is its emphasis on developing knowledge, capabilities and a sense of humanity for the purpose of continuing intercultural dialogues which aim at harmony in our world today.

In *The Great Civilized Conversation*, de Bary argues for an “education for the world community” that “includes (at least in part) sharing in the *traditional curricula* developed on both sides, based on *classics* now recognized as not only enduring but world class” (de Bary 2013, ix; emphases are mine). In the context of our culturally-diverse and increasingly integrated world, a “true core [curriculum]” needs to move beyond a singular focus on just one tradition or culture. It must expose students to the classics and wisdom of more than one culture and allow them to read and discuss them in order to “establish the terms of equivalence or difference that are not themselves culture bound” (de Bary 2013, xi).

To that end, de Bary analyzes the motivations and developments behind liberal core curriculum programs in the West (paying particular attention to the case of Columbia University) and the East (paying particular attention to the case of Neo-Confucianism in the Song Dynasty). He argues that liberal learning is not unique to a particular time or place; it has always taken place in our changing world amidst revolutionary situations. In the midst of changes, liberal learning has always sought to “preserve what was least mutable and most universal in learning as

35 This is apparent in de Bary’s analysis of the role of liberal learning in the context of classical Confucianism and Neo-Confucianism (2013, Chapters 8-12).
a core around which new experience and new insights could be ordered and passed on” (de Bary 2013, 4).

While the West has been heavily chastised for its lack of scope in its core curriculum, de Bary points out how other cultures have not always done as well too; there is a tendency for cultures to focus on themselves and their own interests (2013, 5). Against this tendency, he argues that we need to now focus on an education for a wider world community that emphasizes “[the bonds] men have most deeply in common as a basis for coming together” (de Bary 2013, 10). This vision is constantly in the making – our understanding of the goal of a world community and the means to reach it keep taking clearer shape as we grow along with it. In this regard, imagination has an important role to play in “helping us do justice to one another, in respecting similarities and differences among men” (de Bary 2013, 10-11).

In the specific context of the West, such liberal education should “consist of any study that liberates man for a better life” (2013, 12). While specialized language study is important for a deeper understanding of specific cultures, this needs to be balanced against the broad, general curriculum that is crucial to a liberal education. When should language study and regional specialization begin so that it does not compromise the broad introduction to major civilizations? de Bary proposes a sequence of liberal education as follows (2013, 21):

36 We revisit the idea of imagination in Nussbaum’s theory later.

37 de Bary identifies four Asian civilizations that should be represented in the core because “we realize, if only imperfectly, that their achievements and experiences are no less significant than those of Western civilization” (18). There are the Islamic, Indian, Chinese and Japanese civilizations. See de Bary 2013, 18 for a more detailed justification of his choice of major civilizations.
1. A core curriculum in the lower college, with an introduction to the major Asian civilizations and humanities for all students – following the basic Western courses in the second year (or where necessary the third).

2. A major in the upper college emphasizing:
   a. Language study begun as early as the student’s preparation for college allows, without sacrificing some Western language competence, and using summers for intensive study;
   b. Initiation into the basic methodology of a discipline or profession;
   c. Application of language and discipline to seminar research in the senior year.

3. An interdisciplinary area study program at the M.A. level or travel, study, and practical experience in the area. Both will be necessary for most students who look forward to careers as area specialists.

4. Ph.D. work in a given discipline, with all the skills and experience gained thus far brought to focus on a specific topic of research.

He notes how this sequence is limited to the experience of American colleges, and how he lacks the time to consider how other teaching traditions in the world could come to bear on a specific sequence of liberal education (de Bary 2013, 22). Even so, he thinks that such an outline of a liberal education can help to generate more conversations with other cultures to enrich the West and more importantly, calm the “deeply troubled spirit [of our times…] in the context of a world community that respects the dignity and destiny of each civilization” (de Bary 2013, 23).

In *Cultivating Humanity*, Nussbaum similarly emphasizes the importance of establishing bonds of humanity across differences in our context of cultural and moral diversity amidst increasing integration and globalization. However, she also makes a stronger political claim that “the new emphasis on “diversity” in college and university curricula is above all a way of grappling with the *altered requirements of citizenship*, an attempt to produce adults who can
function as citizens not just of some local region or group but also, and more importantly, as *citizens of a complex inter-locking world*" (Nussbaum 6; emphases are mine). Therefore, if liberal education is about cultivating the “whole human being for the functions of citizenship and life generally” (Nussbaum 9), then liberal education in the context of world citizenship should be about “liberating the mind from the bondage of habit and custom, producing people who can function with sensitivity and alertness as citizens of the whole world” (Nussbaum 8).

Nussbaum notes that the classical ideal of the world citizen comes in two forms: the first demands primary loyalty to human beings all over the world, placing that above any demands to more particular group loyalties; the second is more relaxed and allows for differences of priorities, demanding only that, no matter our priorities, we should always “recognize the worth of human life wherever it occurs and see ourselves as bound by common human abilities and problems to people who lie at a great distance from us” (Nussbaum 9). She sympathizes with the second form and argues that three capacities are needed for the cultivation of humanity (Nussbaum 9-11; rearranged in a numbered list below; emphases are mine):

1. *The capacity of critical examination of oneself and one’s traditions* [...] This means a life that accepts no belief as authoritative simply because it has been handed down by tradition or become familiar through habit, a life that questions all beliefs and accepts only those that survive reason’s demand for consistency and for justification.

2. *The capacity to see themselves not simply as citizens of some local region or group, but above all, as human beings bound to all other human beings by ties of recognition and concern* [...] Cultivating our humanity in a complex, interlocking world involves understanding the ways in which common needs and aims are differently realized in different circumstances.

3. *The capacity of narrative imagination* [which means] the ability to think what it might be like to be in the shoes of a person different from oneself, to be an intelligent reader of that person’s story, and to understand the emotions and wishes
and desires that someone so placed might have. The narrative imagination is not uncritical, for we always being ourselves and our own judgments to the encounter with another […] but the first step of understanding the world from the point of view of the other is essential to any responsible act of judgment, since we do not know what we are judging until we see the meaning of an action as the person intends it, the meaning of a speech as it expresses something of importance in the context of that person’s history and social world.

While she concedes that intelligent citizenship will require more than these three capacities and include an understanding of science and economics among other subjects, she chooses to focus on these capacities since they are more associated with the humanities which she is better placed to write about (Nussbaum 11).

Nussbaum’s methodology in arguing for a liberal education is different from de Bary’s in that she then goes on to draw on classical Greek and Roman arguments as well as the details and format of contemporary programs in American colleges to make her case for these three capacities and the broader aim of cultivating humanity across various disciplines in the context of higher education. de Bary, on the other hand, goes on to draw primarily on his wealth of experience in building up the core curriculum program in Columbia to argue for the importance of a liberal education and to defend his version of it. He also uses his knowledge of the Neo-Confucian tradition to show how liberal learning was an important part of the Chinese tradition, and gives examples of contemporary Chinese and Japanese scholars who have contributed to a “great civilized conversation” in the modern context.

While much more can be said about the details of their proposals and the validity of some of their claims, I will not attempt such an analysis here. Instead, I wish to consider how their insights can contribute to a vision of an intercultural education that aims at intercultural dialogue
as we have come to understand it. In other words, how can their insights, experience and vision for higher education in America today inspire an intercultural education that fits the terms of Confucian multiculturalism? As I see it, an intercultural education will require the development of three areas: *knowledge, capabilities, and a sense of humanity*.

*Knowledge* refers to hard facts and figures and is most closely linked to the idea of intellectual cultivation. It is about knowledge of the dates of key events in history, of other moral systems, of basic facts and figures pertinent to particular times, places and cultures and of the use of other languages, all for the purpose of setting up a context within which one can exercise further analysis and examination. The scope of such knowledge must be global and intercultural, in the sense that de Bary argues for in his emphasis on being exposed to the classics of various traditions. With regard to the strategy of an intercultural dialogue, this is important for the appropriation of language and for building up ground upon which we can start a process of reaching out and taking in.

*Capabilities* are about the development and practice of skills such as critical analysis and self-examination and the exercise of narrative imagination. In the first case, critical analysis and self-examination can be developed in courses in argumentation and essay-writing. In the second case, the exercise of narrative imagination can be developed through courses in literature and creative writing. The intellectual practice and application of these skills to the knowledge we have of other times, places and cultures becomes critical for the strategy of intercultural dialogue when we consider the translation of core ideas into other languages and social contexts.

*A sense of humanity* relates most to the ideas of moral cultivation and practice, but also requires intellect since we need a measure of imagination to develop this. It encompasses de
Bary’s idea of establishing bonds among all human beings in a world community and Nussbaum’s idea of a common humanity that unites us in our abilities and problems. Furthermore, a sense of humanity is linked to the virtues of ren, shu, and cheng in that we feel a sincere need to interact with and understand a wider community. It is crucial for the strategy of intercultural dialogue because it serves as a primary motivation for it. Even so, it is also an important product of intercultural dialogue that continues to take shape and evolve as part of a virtuous cycle.

Even though the feature of moral and intellectual cultivation and practice might have seemed too abstract in our initial formulation of it, I have attempted to translate it into the context of higher education today to make it more accessible and conceivable. I have also shown how it is of direct importance to the different levels of the strategy of intercultural dialogue. Based on this understanding, intercultural education that emphasizes the development of knowledge, capabilities and a sense of humanity helps us to build and sustain intercultural dialogue that realizes Confucian multiculturalism.

Ultimately, universities are most capable of providing an intercultural education that promotes intercultural dialogue given their traditional emphasis on promoting higher-order thinking and developing the future of our societies. In addition, the similar structure of higher education in the world today suggests that the North American experience analyzed by de Bary and Nussbaum can be extended and modified to suit the particular needs of universities situated in other cultures and places. The strong international ties among universities also allow them to conduct intercultural education and dialogue beyond the walls of their universities in local and global settings that encourage openness and learning among students and academics. This can be contrasted with the kind of intercultural dialogue that takes place at the level of international
diplomacy or business, which is often tainted, to a greater degree, by particular political and business interests that shift the focus away from realizing a more sensitive and respectful approach to other cultures.

3.3. Conclusion

In Part 3, I argued that Confucian multiculturalism should be realized in the form of an intercultural dialogue. To show this, I first analyzed the theoretical foundations of Shen’s method of dialogue as mutual strangification, showing that his notion of intercultural philosophy bears important similarities to other Confucian approaches to conflict and difference. I then considered how a modified strategy of intercultural dialogue based on Shen’s method of dialogue as mutual strangification satisfies the features of Confucian multiculturalism. Therefore, while Kymlicka appeals to the idea of rights to realize his version of liberal multiculturalism, Confucian multiculturalism appeals to the idea of dialogue in its realization.

While rights are encoded in laws and statutes and fought for within the political system, I further argued that intercultural dialogue should take place within the higher education system where moral and intellectual cultivation and practice, in the form of an intercultural education, can be achieved for the realization of Confucian multiculturalism. Besides being able to provide an intercultural education, universities also have strong international ties and share a similar structure across the world, further enabling intercultural dialogue and its prerequisite, intercultural education.
Words of Conclusion

Do individuals need to be Confucian to accept Confucian multiculturalism? I do not think so. It is enough to learn and appreciate a different perspective on multiculturalism (and the self and society in general) – that step in itself brings one closer to further dialogue with Confucianism and other traditions. As long as one empathizes with the motivation and practical demands of Confucian multiculturalism, that is enough to move one towards a more culturally-sensitive and respectful worldview and to work towards an intercultural dialogue. In this regard, one does not need to be morally committed to Confucianism to draw on its rich intellectual resources. I have chosen to use Confucianism to develop an alternative theory of multiculturalism to demonstrate the richness of other cultures, in the hope that it will bring readers to contemplate the particularity of traditions and the need for further intercultural dialogue and education.

While I have chosen to ground the idea of an intercultural dialogue in Confucianism, I think that there is a liberal case for it to be found in the central liberal principle of justice. If egalitarian justice and the moral dignity of individuals are so important to liberals, then why should they not respect the cultures that are morally important to individuals and accord equality among these cultures? According equality to these cultures is not merely a case of recognizing the moral importance of these cultures to their peoples (though this is an important first step). In the ideal case, the individual is inspired to learn more about the content of those other cultures because she is driven by an interest in the variety of human solutions and adaptations to issues that have confronted our common humanity throughout time. Acknowledging the universal moral equality of individuals requires according equality to the cultures that make up a part of them and making an effort to study, understand, and learn from them. Ultimately, an intercultural dialogue, from the liberal perspective, promotes fairness among individuals and cultures, and encourages us to question and understand more deeply the common humanity that binds us all.

Three things should be noted about the above argument. The first is that it requires the liberal to already acknowledge the particularity of the liberal tradition. As my analysis of liberalism in Part 1 has shown, that has not always been the case. The second is that arriving at the idea of an intercultural dialogue from liberal principles is not obvious. Inasmuch as that is true, recourse to the intellectual resources of Confucianism seems necessary. The third is that the idea of an intercultural dialogue that is arrived at from liberal principles will likely focus on fairness as the main outcome, not harmony. Inasmuch as that is true, liberalism alone cannot serve as the only theoretical basis of intercultural dialogue and recourse to intellectual resources of Confucianism seems necessary again.
This paper has tried to display the worth of an intercultural dialogue in practice, even as it argues for it in theory. The opposition between the liberal and Confucian communitarian accounts of accommodating cultural diversity in this paper actually returns us to the liberal-communitarian debate in a specific form. When we consider how other traditions may debate with liberalism (and each other) in the same way on other matters of moral and political importance, the notion of the liberal-communitarian debate is expanded and gradually takes the form of an intercultural dialogue. In this way, the particular contrast between liberal and Confucian approaches to accommodating cultural diversity in this paper has shown, in its process and conclusion, the worth of an intercultural dialogue.

Finally, I hope to have shown that there are important insights in the liberal-communitarian debate that should not be forgotten in the supposed accommodation of communitarian concerns by liberals. By developing an explicitly communitarian theory of multiculturalism to contrast with liberal approaches to accommodating the fact of cultural diversity, I wish to show the continued relevance of the liberal-communitarian debate – liberalism has not absorbed communitarian concerns and we should further develop communitarian arguments by explicitly analyzing specific forms of communitarianism. This will not only further enrich liberalism within the context of the debate, in its best realization, it will allow the debate to expand and take the form of an intercultural dialogue that enriches all cultures and probes our common humanity.
Appendix 1

a. 左傳 Zuozhuan (Commentary of Zuo), 昭公二十年 20th year of Duke Zhao; translated by Cheng 1988, 227

和與同異乎，對曰異，和如羹焉，水火醯醢鹽梅，以烹魚肉，煬之以薪，宰夫和之，齊之以味，濟其不及，以洩其過，君子食之，以平其心

“Harmony is like making soup: [one has to use] water/fire, sauce/vinegar, salt/plum in order to cook the fish and the meat; one has to burn them with firewood. The cook will mix (harmonize, he) them, and reach for a balanced taste. [He does this] by compensating what is deficient and releasing/dispensing what is excessive. When the master eats [food], his heart/mind will be purified.”

聲亦如味，一氣，二體，三類，四物，五聲，六律，七音，八風，九歌，以相成也，清濁大小，長短疾徐，哀樂剛柔，遲速高下，出入周疏，以相濟也，君子聽之，以平其心，心平德和

“Sound is like taste. It is founded on one qi (vital force), two styles, three types, four instruments, five sounds, six measures, seven notes, eight winds, nine themes. These things mutually complete one another [to produce music]; [it is also founded upon] purity/impurity; smallness/bigness; shortness/longness; speediness/slowness; sorrow/joy; firmness/softness; lateness/forwardness; highness/lowness; inness/outness; inclusiveness/non-inclusiveness. These matters complement one another [to produce music]; when the superior man hears this, he will calm his heart/mind. When his heart/mind is calmed, his virtue (de) will remain harmonious.”

b. Zhongyong, Section 1

天命之謂性，率性之謂道，修道之謂教。道也者，不可須臾離也，可離非道也。[…] 喜怒哀樂之未發，謂之中；發而皆中節，謂之和；中也者，天下之大本也；和也者，天下之達道也。致中和，天地位焉，萬物育焉。
c. Zhongyong, Section 2

君子中庸，小人反中庸。君子之中庸也，君子而時中；小人之中庸也，小人而無忌憚也。

d. Zhongyong, Section 20

誠者，天之道也；誠之者，人之道也。誠者不勉而中，不思而得，從容中道，聖人也。

e. Daxue, Section 2

意誠而後心正，心正而後身修，身修而後家齊，家齊而後國治，國治而後天下平。

f. Zhongyong, Section 20

誠之者，擇善而固執之者也。博學之，審問之，慎思之，明辨之，篤行之。有弗學，學之弗能，弗措也；有弗問，問之弗知，弗措也；有弗思，思之弗得，弗措也；有弗辨，辨之弗明，弗措也，有弗行，行之弗篤，弗措也。

g. Zhongyong, Section 25

是故君子誠之為貴。誠者非自成己而已也，所以成物也。
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