Editorial

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Though the physical communication across different parts of the world is now continually challenged by the coronavirus pandemic, the communication between human spirit through meaning is ongoing. In this unprecedented time, studying the ways through which meaning and communication work becomes especially crucial for human life; this is the effort of this present issue of *Signs and Media*.

Meaning is the cornerstone of all civilizations. Chinese civilization, which has been lasting for several thousand years, certainly holds her own structure of expressing and relaying meaning. This issue of *Signs and Media*, a journal founded in China, features a special issue that is focused on the theories of meaning grown from this elder tradition. The first article in this special issue, Ting Liang's 'Towards the Semiotics of Chinese Characters', is not only a solid work from the perspective of Chinese philology, but also attempts to bring this Chinese discipline into a dialogue with semiotics, which is also a mixture of multiple disciplines and traditions from different parts of the world.

All dialogues are conversations between subjects, who have grown through influence from others but at the same time feel the 'anxiety of influence'. Duan Lian's article, 'Meta-Art History: Introduction to a Narratological Study of Art History', whose subject matter is the art history of modern China, is also a study on how Chinese artists respond to the influence from the Western modernity. As a semiotic study, Duan's work not only addresses the contents of Chinese art history but also attempts to illuminate the very structure within which these contents unfold.

For civilizations like China, modernity is both a challenge and a collection of new possibilities. Wuxia, a form of modern culture that is still alive and strong today, is certainly one of such possibilities. Sun Jinyan and Han Dawei's article, 'Whose Wuxia and What Kind of Myth: A Wuxia Accompanying Text Perspective', shows our reader that Wuxia is not simply a literary phenomenon but a window into the dynamic sphere of contemporary Chinese popular culture.

Beyond the three articles listed that are all focused on Chinese culture itself, the other two research articles in this issue are also examples of academic dialogue that semiotics can support. As a discipline of humanity, semiotics can be also considered a philosophy of meaning. Zhao Yiheng's article, 'Truth and Semiotic Phenomenology', as a study of the philosophy of Charles Sanders Peirce and Edmund Husserl, offers a new interpretation of the notion of truth, which is surely crucial for all who are interested in philosophy. Zhao reveals that semiotics, or the philosophy of meaning, can serve as a sphere of peace between continental and Anglo-Saxon philosophies, which again is a form of communication.

Similar to Zhao's work, Wang Weiyan's 'The Mode of Textual Existence in Communicative Narratology' also unpacks the crucial philosophical notion of existence. This article does not illuminate this notion in an abstract way, but instead does so by studying a special form of it – namely, that of narrative texts. In his work, Wang also points out that literature, as one of the most important forms of texts consisting of signs, is always inter-subjective from the perspective of semiotics, even though Roland Barthes's claim regarding the 'death of the author' is also semiotically true.

Finally, this issue also contains two book reviews by Wan Yao and Li Li. Beginning from this issue, book reviews will be a regular part of *Signs and Media*. *The Bloomsbury Companion to Contemporary Peircean Semiotics*, the book reviewed by Li, demonstrates the fruitful studies on the semiotics of Charles Sanders Peirce by scholars all over the world. Petrilli's book '*Signs, Language and Listening: Semioethics Perspectives*', reviewed by Wan, itself is an effort to semiotically manifest the power of communication, which is also a task of *Signs and Media*.