

The history of the reception of Chinese thought in Western philosophy is deeply conditioned by all sort of Eurocentric prejudices. Leibniz was one of the rare thinkers to show signs of what we call today a “transcultural approach” . Particularly important is his interest in Chinese writing, that he intermittently took as a candidate model for his *characteristica universalis*. Despite Derrida’ s critique of Leibniz’ s “domestication” of what he considered to be an “ideographic” script, it is possible to reevaluate his approach from the perspective of contemporary philosophical interpretations of the Chinese script. I refer namely to Rita Widmaier’ s metaphorological reconstruction of Leibniz’ s “Chinese model” , and how it echoes the recent research of Hong Kong scholar Kwan Tze-wan. Today, the Chinese script is no longer the model of any “universal script” nor the organ of scientific knowledge, but Leibniz and Kwan allow us to consider the relative *expressive* autonomy of this script system, in form of symbolic thinking and rules of combination that eventually reflect patterns of basic human experience.