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*The Princeton Sourcebook in Comparative Literature: From the European Enlightenment
to the Global Present*

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DAVID DAMROSCH

NATALIE MELAS

MBONGISENI BUTHELEZI

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19. Ulf Hannerz, "Cosmopolitans and Locals in World Culture," Mike Featherstone, ed., *Global Culture, Theory, Culture and Society* 7 (London: Sage, 1990), 237–51.
20. Repr. in *The Predicament of Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1988), 255–76.
21. Paul Rabinow, "Representations are Social Facts," *Writing Culture*, ed. James Clifford and George E. Marcus (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986), 258.
22. James Clifford, "Travelling Cultures," in Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, Paula Treichler, eds., *Cultural Studies* (New York: Routledge, 1992).
23. Cynthia Ozick, "A Critic At Large: T. S. Eliot at 101," *The New Yorker*, Nov. 20, 1989, 125. I discuss this passage at greater length in "Othering the Academy: Professionalism and Multiculturalism," *Social Research* (June 1991).
24. Hugh Harris, "The Greek Origins of the Idea of Cosmopolitanism," *The International Journal of Ethics* 38:1 (1927), 1.
25. Elisabeth Burgos-Debray, ed., *I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala*, tr. Ann Wright. (London: Verso, 1984), 247.
26. This term would probably be a matter of dispute.
27. Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 191.
28. Jean Franco, "The Nation as Imagined Community," H. Aram Veveser, ed., *The New Historicism* (New York: Routledge, 1989), 204–12.
29. For a forceful exposition of "critical multiculturalism," see the article of this title by the Chicago Cultural Studies Group, *Critical Inquiry* 18:3 (1992), 530–55.
30. Sylvia Wynter, quoted in Robert Reinhold, "Class Struggle," *The New York Times Magazine*, Sept 29, 1991, 47.

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Literature, Nation, and Politics¹ (1999)

Pascale Casanova

Pascale Casanova's *La République mondiale des lettres* (*The World Republic of Letters*, 1999) has attracted attention around the world for its innovative discussion of world literature. Her book is the fruit of some two decades' work on twentieth-century literature, following a prize-winning book on the transnational author Samuel Beckett (*Beckett the Abstractor*, 1977). In a career as a literary critic and journalist and a researcher at the Center for Research in Arts and Language in Paris, Casanova developed an encyclopedic knowledge of contemporary literature and a keen interest in the politics of literary culture. Drawing on the work of historian Fernand Braudel and sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, Casanova undertakes a systematic historical and sociological analysis of the production and circulation of literature in the world. She argues that, starting in the sixteenth century and with Paris as its center, a world republic of letters—a semiautonomous field of literature—began to emerge in which literature gained and produced a distinct kind of value or cultural capital. While fundamentally bound up in the development of the modern nation-state, the field of literature is not uniquely determined by political history, but establishes its own distinct system of power relations.

The World Republic of Letters is particularly valuable for the powerful analysis it provides of the basic inequality of the literary field of world literature, an inequality which comes into particularly sharp focus when writers from the periphery (Kafka, Ramuz, Yacine, Chamoiseau among others) seek to gain admittance to a world centered on metropolitan

spaces such as Paris. At the same time, however, canonical French literature has increasingly drawn its energy from writers and works coming into Parisian literary space. In the following selection of her book, Casanova describes the historical emergence of the world republic of letters and reflects on the implications of adopting a hard-edged sociological perspective on the global dimensions of literature.

The particular case of Paris, denationalized and universal capital of the literary world, must not make us forget that literary capital is inherently national. Through its essential link with language—itself always national, since invariably appropriated by national authorities as a symbol of identity—literary heritage is a matter of foremost national interest.² Because language is at once an affair of state and the material out of which literature is made, literary resources are inevitably concentrated, at least initially, within the boundaries of the nation itself. Thus it is that language and literature jointly provide political foundations for a nation and, in the process, enable each other.

The National Foundations of Literature

The link between the state and literature depends on the fact that, through language, the one serves to establish and reinforce the other. Historians have demonstrated a direct connection between the emergence of the first European states and the formation of “common languages” (which then later became “national languages”).³ Benedict Anderson, for example, sees the expansion of vernaculars, which supplied administrative, diplomatic, and intellectual support for the emerging European states of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, as the central phenomenon underlying the appearance of these states.⁴ From the existence of an organic bond, or interdependence, between the appearance of national states, the expansion of vernaculars into common languages, and the corresponding development of new literatures written in these vernaculars, it follows that the accumulation of literary resources is necessarily rooted in the political history of states.

More precisely, both the formation of states and the emergence of literatures in new languages derive from a single principle of differentiation. For it was in distinguishing themselves from each other, which is to say in asserting their differences through successive rivalries and struggles, that states in Europe gradually took shape from the sixteenth century onward, thereby giving rise to the international political field in its earliest form. In this embryonic system, which may be described as a system of differences (in the same sense in which phoneticists speak of language as a system of differences), language evidently played a central role as a “marker” of difference. But it also represented what was at stake in the contests that took place at the intersection of this nascent political space and the literary space that was coming into existence at the same time,⁵ with the paradoxical result that the birth of literature grew out of the early political history of nation-states.

The specifically literary defense of vernaculars by the great figures of the world of letters during the Renaissance, which very quickly assumed the form of a rivalry among these “new” languages (new in the literary market), was to be advanced equally by literary and political means.⁶ In this sense the various intellectual rivalries that grew up during the Renaissance in Europe may be said to have been founded and legitimized through political struggles. Similarly, with the spread of nationalist ideas in the nineteenth century and the creation of new nations, political authority served as a foundation for emerging literary spaces. Owing to the structural dependence of these new spaces, the construction of world literary space proceeded once more through national rivalries that were inseparably literary and political.

From the earliest stages of the unification of this space, national literary wealth, far from being the private possession of nations whose natural “genius” it was supposed to express, became the weapon and the prize that both permitted and encouraged new claimants to enter international literary competition. In order to compete more effectively, countries in the center sought to define literature in relation to “national character” in ways that in large measure were themselves the result of structural opposition and differentiation. Their dominant traits can quite often be understood—as in the cases of Germany and England, rising powers seeking to challenge French hegemony—in deliberate contrast with the recognized characteristics of the predominant nation. Literatures are therefore not a pure emanation of national identity; they are constructed through literary rivalries, which are always denied, and struggles, which are always international.

Given, then, that literary capital is national, and that there exists a relation of dependence with regard first to the state, then to the nation, it becomes possible to connect the idea of an economy peculiar to the literary world with the notion of a literary geopolitics. No national entity exists in and of itself. In a sense, nothing is more international than a national state: it is constructed solely in relation to other states, and often in opposition to them. In other words, no state—neither the ones that Charles Tilly calls “segmented” (or embryonic) nor, after 1750, “consolidated” (or national) states, which is to say the state in its modern sense—can be described as a separate and autonomous entity, the source of its own existence and coherence.⁷ To the contrary, each state is constituted by its relations with other states, by its rivalry and competition with them. Just as the state is a relational entity, so the nation is inter-national.

The construction (and reconstruction) of national identity and the political definition of the nation that developed later, notably during the course of the nineteenth century, were not the product of isolated experience, of private events unfolding behind the ramparts of an incomparable and incommensurate history. What nationalist mythologies attempt to reconstitute (after the fact, in the case of the oldest nations) as autarkic singularities arise in reality only from contact between neighboring peoples. Thus Michael Jeismann has been able to demonstrate that Franco-German antagonism—a veritable “dialogue des ennemis”—permitted nationalism to flourish in each country in reaction against a perceived “natural” enemy.⁸ Similarly, Linda Colley has shown that the English nation was constructed through and through in opposition to France.⁹

The analysis of the emergence of nationalism needs to go beyond the assumption of a binary and belligerent relation between nations to take into account a much more complex space of rivalries that proceed both for and through a variety of forms of capital, which may be literary, political, or economic. The totality of world political space is the product of a vast range of national competition, where the clash between two historical enemies—such as the one described by Danilo Kiš between Serbs and Croats—represents only the simplest and most archaic form.¹⁰

Depoliticization

Little by little, however, literature succeeded in freeing itself from the hold of the political and national authorities that originally it helped to establish

and legitimize. The accumulation of specifically literary resources, which involved the invention and development of a set of aesthetic possibilities, of forms, narrative techniques, and formal solutions (what the Russian formalists were to call “procedures”)—in short, the creation of a specific history (more or less distinct from national history, from which it could no longer be deduced)—allowed literary space gradually to achieve independence and determine its own laws of operation. Freed from its former condition of political dependency, literature found itself at last in a position to assert its own autonomy.

Writers, or at least some of them, could thus refuse both collectively and individually to submit to the national and political definition of literature. The paradigm of this refusal is undoubtedly Zola’s “J’accuse.”¹¹ At the same time, international literary competition, now also detached from strictly national and political rivalries, acquired a life of its own. The spread of freedom throughout world literary space occurred through the autonomization of its constituent spaces, with the result that literary struggles, freed from political constraints, were now bound to obey no other law than the law of literature.

Thus, to take an example that is apparently most unfavorable to the argument I am making, the German literary renaissance at the end of the eighteenth century was associated in part with national issues, being the literary counterpart to the founding of the German nation as a political entity. The rise of the idea of a national literature in Germany is explained first by political antagonism with France, then the culturally dominant power in Europe. Isaiah Berlin in particular has argued that German nationalism had its roots in a sense of humiliation:

The French dominated the western world, politically, culturally, militarily. The humiliated and defeated Germans . . . responded, like the bent twig of the poet Schiller’s theory, by lashing back and refusing to accept their alleged inferiority. They discovered in themselves qualities far superior to those of their tormentors. They contrasted their own deep, inner life of the spirit, their own profound humility, their selfless pursuit of true values—simple, noble, sublime—with the rich, worldly, successful, superficial, smooth, heartless, morally empty French. This mood rose to fever pitch during the national resistance to Napoleon, and was indeed the original exemplar of the reaction of many a backward, exploited, or at any rate patronized society, which, resentful of the apparent inferiority of its status, reacted by turning to real or imaginary

triumphs and glories in its past, or enviable attributes of its own national or cultural character.¹²

The prodigious development of German literary culture, beginning in the second half of the eighteenth century, was therefore initially connected with matters of immediate political import: to insist on cultural grandeur was also a way of affirming the unity of the German people beyond the fact of its political disunion. But the arguments that were employed, the principles that were at issue in the debates of the period and the very form that these debates assumed, the stature of the greatest German poets and intellectuals, their poetical and philosophical works, which were to have revolutionary consequences for all of Europe, and for French literature in particular—all these things gradually gave German romanticism an exceptional degree of independence and a power all its own. In the German case, romanticism was, and at the same time was not, national; or, rather, it was national to start with and then subsequently detached itself from national authority. As a consequence, the challenge to French dominance in literature in the nineteenth century needs to be analyzed on the basis of the literary, rather than the political, history of the two countries.

Similarly, notwithstanding differences of time and place, Latin American writers managed in the twentieth century to achieve an international existence and reputation that conferred on their national literary spaces (and, more generally, the Latin American space as a whole) a standing and an influence in the larger literary world that were incommensurate with those of their native countries in the international world of politics. Here, as in the German case, literature enjoys a relative autonomy when the accumulation of a literary heritage—which is to say the international recognition that attaches to writers who are designated by critics in the center as “great” writers—enabled national literary cultures to escape the hold of national politics. As Valéry Larbaud pointed out, the literary and intellectual map cannot be superimposed upon the political map, since neither literary history nor literary geography can be reduced to political history. Nonetheless, literature remains relatively dependent on politics, above all in countries that are relatively unendowed with literary resources.

World literary space has therefore developed and achieved unity in accordance with a parallel movement that, as we shall see, is ordered in relation to two antagonistic poles. On the one hand, there is a progressive enlargement of literary space that accompanies the spread of national independence in the various parts of the world. And, on the other, there is a

tendency toward autonomy, which is to say literary emancipation in the face of political (and national) claims to authority.

The original dependence of literature on the nation is at the heart of the inequality that structures the literary world. Rivalry among nations arises from the fact that their political, economic, military, diplomatic, and geographical histories are not only different but also unequal. Literary resources, which are always stamped with the seal of the nation, are therefore unequal as well, and unequally distributed among nations. Because the effects of this structure weigh on all national literatures and on all writers, the practices and traditions, the forms and aesthetics that have currency in a given national literary space can be properly understood only if they are related to the precise position of this space in the world system. It is the hierarchy of the literary world, then, that gives literature its very form. This curious edifice, which joins together writers from different spaces whose mutual rivalry is very often the only thing they have in common—a rivalry whose existence, as I say, is always denied—was constructed over time by a succession of national conflicts and challenges to formal and critical authority. Unification of the literary world therefore depends on the entry of new contestants intent upon adding to their stock of literary capital, which is both the instrument and the prize of their competition: each new player, in bringing to bear the weight of his national heritage—the only weapon considered legitimate in this type of struggle—helps to unify international literary space, which is to say to extend the domain of literary rivalry. In order to take part in the competition in the first place, it is necessary to believe in the value of what is at stake, to know and to recognize it. It is this belief that creates literary space and allows it to operate, despite (and also by virtue of) the hierarchies on which it tacitly rests.

The internationalization that I propose to describe here therefore signifies more or less the opposite of what is ordinarily understood by the neutralizing term “globalization,” which suggests that the world political and economic system can be conceived as the generalization of a single and universally applicable model. In the literary world, by contrast, it is the competition among its members that defines and unifies the system while at the same time marking its limits. Not every writer proceeds in the same way, but all writers attempt to enter the same race, and all of them struggle, albeit with unequal advantages, to attain the same goal: literary legitimacy.

It is not surprising, then, that Goethe elaborated the notion of *Weltliteratur* precisely at the moment of Germany's entry into the international literary space. As a member of a nation that was a newcomer to the

game, challenging French literary and intellectual hegemony, Goethe had a vital interest in understanding the reality of the situation in which his nation now found itself. Displaying the perceptiveness commonly found among newcomers from dominated communities, not only did he grasp the international character of literature, which is to say its deployment outside national limits; he also understood at once its competitive nature and the paradoxical unity that results from it.

A New Method of Interpretation

These resources—at once concrete and abstract, national and international, collective and subjective, political, linguistic, and literary—make up the specific heritage that is shared by all the writers of the world. Each writer enters into international competition armed (or unarmed) with his entire literary “past”: by virtue solely of his membership in a linguistic area and a national grouping, he embodies and reactivates a whole literary history, carrying this “literary time” with him without even being fully conscious of it. He is therefore heir to the entire national and international history that has “made” him what he is. The cardinal importance of this heritage, which amounts to a kind of “destiny” or “fate,” explains why even the most international authors, such as the Spaniard Juan Benet or the Serb Danilo Kiš, conceive of themselves, if only by way of reaction against it, in terms of the national space from which they have come. And the same thing must be said of Samuel Beckett, despite the fact that few writers seem further removed from the reach of history, for the course of his career, which led him from Dublin to Paris, can be understood only in terms of the history of Irish literary space.

None of this amounts to invoking the “influence” of national culture on the development of a literary work, or to reviving national literary history in its traditional form. Quite the contrary: understanding the way in which writers invent their own freedom—which is to say perpetuate, or alter, or reject, or add to, or deny, or forget, or betray their national literary (and linguistic) heritage—makes it possible to chart the course of their work and discover its very purpose. National literary and linguistic patrimony supplies a sort of a priori definition of the writer, one that he will transform (if need be, by rejecting it or, as in the case of Beckett, by conceiving himself in opposition to it) throughout his career. In other words, the writer stands in a particular relation to world literary space by virtue of the place

occupied in it by the national space into which he has been born. But his position also depends on the way in which he deals with this unavoidable inheritance; on the aesthetic, linguistic, and formal choices he is led to make, which determine his position in this larger space. He may reject his national heritage, forsaking his homeland for a country that is more richly endowed in literary resources than his own, as Beckett and Michaux did; he may acknowledge his patrimony while trying at the same time to transform it and, in this way, to give it greater autonomy, like Joyce (who, though he left his native land and rejected its literary practices and aesthetic norms, sought to found an Irish literature freed from nationalist constraints); or he may affirm the difference and importance of a national literature, like Kafka, as we shall see, but also like Yeats and Kateb Yacine. All these examples show that, in trying to characterize a writer's work, one must situate it with respect to two things: the place occupied by his native literary space within world literature and his own position within this space.

Determining the position of a writer in this way has nothing to do with the usual sort of national contextualization favored by literary critics. On the one hand, national (and linguistic) origin is now related to the hierarchical structure of world literature as a whole; and, on the other hand, it is recognized that no two writers inherit their literary past in exactly the same fashion. Most critics, however, are led by a belief in the singularity and originality of individual writers to privilege some aspect of their biography that hides this structural relation. Thus, for example, the feminist critic who studies the case of Gertrude Stein concentrates on one of its aspects—the fact that she was a woman and a lesbian—while forgetting, as though it were something obvious not needing to be examined, that she was American.¹³ Yet the United States in the 1920s was literarily a dominated country that looked to Paris in order to try to accumulate resources it lacked. Any analysis that fails to take into account the world literary structure of the period and of the place occupied in this structure by Paris and the United States, respectively, will be incapable of explaining Stein's permanent concern to develop a modern American national literature (through the creation of an avant-garde) and her interest in both American history and the literary representation of the American people (of which her gigantic enterprise *The Making of Americans* is no doubt the most outstanding proof).¹⁴ The fact that she was a woman in the community of American intellectuals in exile in Paris is, of course, of crucial importance for understanding her subversive impulses and the nature of her aesthetic ambitions. But the deeper structural relationship, obscured by critical tradition, remains paramount. Generally speaking, one can point to some feature of

every writer's career—important, to be sure, but nonetheless secondary—that conceals the structural pattern of literary domination.

The dual historicization proposed here makes it possible not only to find a way out from the inevitable impasse of literary history, which finds itself relegated to a subordinate role and accused of being powerless to grasp the essence of literature; it also allows us to describe the hierarchical structure of the literary world and the constraints that operate within it. The inequality of the transactions that take place in this world goes unperceived, or is otherwise denied or euphemistically referred to, because the ecumenical picture it presents of itself as a peaceful world, untroubled by rivalry or struggle, strengthens received beliefs and assures the continued existence of a quite different reality that is never admitted. The simple idea that dominates the literary world still today, of literature as something pure and harmonious, works to eliminate all traces of the invisible violence that reigns over it and denies the power relations that are specific to this world and the battles that are fought in it. According to the standard view, the world of letters is one of peaceful internationalism, a world of free and equal access in which literary recognition is available to all writers, an enchanted world that exists outside time and space and so escapes the mundane conflicts of human history. This fiction, of a literature emancipated from all historical and political attachments, was invented in the most autonomous countries of world literary space. It is in these countries, which for the most part have managed to free themselves from political constraints, that the belief in a pure definition of literature is strongest, of literature as something entirely cut off from history, from the world of nations, political and military competition, economic dependence, linguistic domination—the idea of a universal literature that is nonnational, nonpartisan, and unmarked by political or linguistic divisions. It is perhaps not surprising, then, that very few writers at the center of world literature have any idea of its actual structure. Though they are familiar with the constraints and norms of the center, they fail to recognize them as such since they have come to regard them as natural. They are blind almost by definition: their very point of view on the world hides it from them, for they believe that it coincides with the small part of it they know.

The irremediable and violent discontinuity between the metropolitan literary world and its suburban outskirts is perceptible only to writers on the periphery, who, having to struggle in very tangible ways in order simply to find “the gateway to the present” (as Octavio Paz put it), and then to gain admission to its central precincts, are more clear-sighted than others about the nature and the form of the literary balance of power.¹⁵ Despite

these obstacles, which are never acknowledged—so great is the power of denial that accompanies the extraordinary belief in literature—they nonetheless manage to invent their own freedom as artists. It is by no means a paradox, then, that authors living today on the edges of the literary world, who long ago learned to confront the laws and forces that sustain the unequal structure of this world and who are keenly aware that they must be recognized in their respective centers in order to have any chance of surviving as writers, should be the most sensitive to the newest aesthetic inventions of international literature, from the recent attempts of Anglo-Saxon writers to devise a worldwide cross-fertilization of styles to the latest narrative techniques of Latin American novelists, among others. This lucidity, and the impulse to rebel against the existing literary order, are at the very heart of their identity as writers.

For all these reasons, ever since French hegemony reached its height at the end of the eighteenth century, radical challenges to the existing literary order have appeared in the most impoverished territories of the international republic of letters, shaping and lastingly modifying its structure, which is to say the very forms of literature. Particularly with Herder, the challenge to the French monopoly on literary legitimacy succeeded so well in establishing itself that an alternative pole was able to be created. But it is nonetheless true that dominated men and women of letters have often been incapable of grasping the reasons for their special lucidity. Even if they are clear-sighted with regard to their particular position and to the specific forms of dependency in which they are caught up, their perception of the global structure of which they are a part remains incomplete.

Notes

1. From *The World Republic of Letters*, trans. M. B. DeBevoise (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 34–44. First published as *La République mondiale des lettres* (Paris: Seuil, 1999). Notes are the author's.
2. The terms “nation” and “national” are used here for the sake of convenience, while taking care to guard against the risk of anachronism.
3. See particularly Daniel Baggioni, *Langues et nations en Europe* (Paris: Payot, 1997), 74–77. Baggioni distinguishes between “common” and “national” languages in order to avoid confusion and anachronism.
4. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

5. Thus Jacques Revel has been able to show how languages were very gradually associated (through maps) with spaces delimited by "linguistic boundaries." See Daniel Nordman and Jacques Revel, "La formation de l'espace français," in *Histoire de la France*, ed. André Burguière and Jacques Revel, 4 vols. (Paris: Seuil, 1989–1993), I: 155–162.
6. The Italian poet Bembo, du Bellay and Ronsard in France, Thomas More in England, Sebastian Brant in Germany all took part in the humanist movement, advocating a return to ancient literatures while defending their own "illustrious vulgar tongue" (in Dante's phrase).
7. See Charles Tilly, *European Revolutions, 1492–1992* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), 29–36.
8. See Michael Jeismann, *Das Vaterland der Feinde: Studien zum nationalen Feindbegriff und Selbstverständnis in Deutschland und Frankreich, 1792–1918* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1992).
9. See Linda Folley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).
10. Danilo Kiš, *La Leçon d'anatomie*, trans. Pascale Delpech (Paris: Fayard, 1993), 29–31.
11. In the Dreyfus Affair, Zola abruptly broke with everything that until then had linked the writer with the nation, national honor, and nationalist discourse, and, by betraying the nationalist right, proclaimed his own autonomy. He thereby put himself in a position, in the very name of his own autonomy and freedom, to proclaim Dreyfus' innocence. This amounted to inventing a totally new relation to politics: a sort of denationalized politicization of literature.
12. Isaiah Berlin, "The Bent Twig: On the Rise of Nationalism," in *The Crooked Timber of Humanity: Chapters in the History of Ideas*, ed. Henry Hardy (New York: Knopf, 1991), 246.
13. This neglect is due also the primacy always accorded in literary criticism to the "psychology" of the writer.
14. Originally published in an edition of 500 copies, printed in Dijon in 1925 by Maurice Darantière for Contact Éditions of Paris.
15. Octavio Paz, *In Search of the Present: 1990 Nobel Lecture*, bilingual ed., trans. Anthony Stanton (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1990), 17.

28

Comparative Literature in China¹ (2000)

Zhou Xiaoyi and Q. S. Tong

The past several decades have seen a steady growth worldwide in the establishment of programs and national associations of comparative literature. Nowhere has this growth been more pronounced than in mainland China, where programs and courses have been established at some sixty institutions since the end of the Cultural Revolution. The following article is by two Chinese scholars closely engaged with new developments in comparative and East/West studies. Zhou Xiaoyi works in English literature at Beijing University. He received his Doctor of Philosophy degree from Lancaster University in 1993 and was Research Fellow at the University of Hong Kong between 1997 and 2000. Zhou has published widely on English and comparative literature, literary theory, and cultural studies, and is the author of *Beyond Aestheticism: Oscar Wilde and Consumer Society* (Beijing University Press, 1996). Q. S. Tong works in English literature at the University of Hong Kong. His publications include "Reinventing China: The Use of Orientalist Views on the Chinese Language" in *Interventions: International Journal of Post-Colonial Studies* 2.1 (2000). He has also co-edited *Critical Zone: A Forum of Chinese and Western Knowledge* (2004, 2006).

In their essay, Zhou and Tong outline the history of comparative literature in China, analyzing the uses of non-Western literature in the construction of Chinese modernity. They then undertake a searching critique of the current wave of comparative study as caught up in following