

Reflections of Chinese Modernity (Harvard University Asia Center, 2008) and *The Great Wall: A Cultural History* (Harvard University Press, 2010), and co-editor of *Rethinking Chinese Popular Culture: Cannibalizations of the Canon* (Routledge, 2009) and *Writing Taiwan: A New Literary History* (Duke University Press, 2007).

Shu-mei Shih is Professor of Comparative Literature at UCLA. She is the author of *The Lure of the Modern: Writing Modernism in Semicolonial China, 1917–1937* (2001), *Visuality and Identity: Sinophone Articulations across the Pacific* (2007), and the co-editor of *Minor Transnationalism* (2005) and *Creolization of Theory* (2010). She also edited special issues on “Comparative Racialization” (2008) for *PMLA* and on Taiwan for *Postcolonial Studies* (2003).

Kim Tong Tee, Ph.D. (National Taiwan University), is Associate Professor at National Sun Yat-sen University, Kaohsiung, Taiwan. He is author of *Nanyang lunshu: Mahua wenxue yu wenhua shuxing* (Taipei: Maitian, 2003) and *Guanyu Mahua wenxue* (Gaoxiong: CLA, NSYSU, 2009) and co-editor of *Chongxie Taiwan wenxue shi* (Taipei: Maitian, 2006) and *Huidao Malaixiya: HuaMa xiaoshuo qishi nian* (Selangor: Dajiang, 2008).

Jing Tsu, Ph.D. (Harvard University), is Associate Professor of Chinese Literature at Yale University. She is author of *Failure, Nationalism, and Literature: The Making of Modern Chinese Identity, 1895–1937* (Stanford University Press, 2005) and *Sound and Script in Chinese Diaspora* (Harvard University Press, 2010).

David Der-wei Wang is Edward C. Henderson Professor of Chinese Literature at Harvard University. He is author, editor, and co-editor of numerous publications in English and Chinese, including *The Monster That is History: Violence, History, and Fictional Writing in 20th Century China* (University of California Press, 2004); *Writing Taiwan: A New Literary History* (Duke University Press, 2007).

Sau-ling C. Wong is Professor of Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. She has published extensively on Asian American literature, including *Reading Asian American Literature: From Necessity to Extravagance* (1993) and (coedited) *AsianAmerica.net: Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Cyberspace* (2003).

INTRODUCTION: GLOBAL CHINESE LITERATURE

Jing Tsu and David Der-wei Wang

The idea of a “global Chinese literature” draws together three recognizably fraught terms. Each of them brings into view additional related issues that the current volume addresses. But why global? Why now? Indeed, the timing is anticipatory, as the geography of modern Chinese literature has seldom been jointly reexamined from outside its national boundaries. Yet, so-called “overseas Chinese,” to borrow another imperfect designation that separates mainland China from the rest of the Sinophone world according to bodies of water, have been writing since well before the nationalistic period. The historical fact of diaspora makes the present invocation of the global also somewhat belated. We choose the title “global Chinese literature” for this volume in full awareness of its various settings, temporalities, omissions, and contradictions. Our aim is to make explicit the conceptual, disciplinary, historical, linguistic, and geographical tensions that occasion the emergence of Sinophone literature (*huayu yuxi wenxue* 華語語系文學). In our view, the point of departure is best staged at the gathering of consensus as well as dissensus among multiple disciplinary perspectives, each born from a different academic context and its created audience. Those who expect to rely on a readily made reference to Anglophone, Francophone, or Lusophone studies will not find it here. Each of those domains too carries its own historical imperative, and they ought not be drawn together in the same way that postcolonialism had previously rallied different experiences of oppression to its platform. Similarly, for those accustomed to a nation-based historiography of modern Chinese literature, our challenge here is to present the disarticulation of its lineage and methodology. Instead of providing an overview that inserts each of the ten essays into a single grid of purpose, we thus begin with an outline of the larger trajectories that have framed their differences.

To discuss Chinese literature in a global context, one first has to recognize the pitfalls. Historian Wang Gungwu cautions against the conceptual trap of presupposing a single Chinese diaspora, an idea that easily slides into the same register as other historically and politically

laden terms: *huaqiao* 華僑, *huayi* 華裔, *haiwai huaren* 海外華人. Designations of “sojourners,” “Chinese descendents,” and “overseas Chinese,” respectively, were invented and privileged at different historical junctures to subsume the diverse phenomenon of diaspora under the dominant imaginary of the Chinese nation.¹ For a long time the idea of being Chinese furnished Chinese abroad with a clan-based solidarity that reinforced the significance of their home against host localities. They carefully deployed a strategy of identity, not without palpable sentiments of nostalgia and homelessness, to weather local racial hostilities in North America, Southeast Asia, and elsewhere.

From the perspective of the ancestral land, there was a pragmatic purpose in continuing to draw Chinese identities toward the center. At several points in the twentieth century, overseas resources were solicited to fund revolutions and civil war at home, as during the Revolution of 1911 and again during the War of Resistance against the Japanese, including the ensuing Communist-Nationalist split.² That diasporic Chinese communities were viewed as reservoirs of extranational capital reflected two realities. On one hand, their increasing material autonomy outside of China demonstrated a separation from the continental motherland. On the other hand, still invested in the idea of China as the proper ancestral origin of their cultural identity, they lent their patriotic support from afar. The tension between these two allegiances grew in the latter half of the twentieth century as Chinese abroad came to recognize the need to establish roots in their host countries, each undergoing its own nationalization and vertical integration in the wake of widespread postwar decolonization and independence movements across East and Southeast Asia. For example, debates over the distinctiveness of Malaysian Chinese literature in 1947–48 marked an important turning point that led to its current, distinct profile both inside and outside of Malaysia.³

¹ Wang Gungwu, “A Single Chinese Diaspora?” in *Diasporic Chinese Ventures: The Life and Work of Wang Gungwu*, ed. Gregor Benton and Hong Liu (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 157–58.

² See Yen, Ch'ing-huang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution, with Special Reference to Singapore and Malaya* (Kuala Lumpur and New York: Oxford University Press, 1976).

³ This debate was decisive in declaring an independent identity of Malaysian Chinese literature, even though momentum had been gathering in previous discussions from 1927 to 1930 (“Southern Ocean color”) and 1934 (“Local writers”).

Admittedly, associations with nationalism render diaspora a problematic concept. In addition to fixing the point of comparison on China, real or imagined, the invocation of nationalism tends to lose sight of the continual transformations of diaspora itself, now less a departure from an origin than simply different itinerant movements between places. Secondary and tertiary diasporas make it less meaningful to assume a fixed geographical place for overseas Chinese. Contemporary writers such as Hong Ying and Yang Lian move easily between London and mainland China, while Malaysian Chinese writers have negotiated a second homestay in Taiwan since the 1970s. Ge Liang, residing in Hong Kong, traverses multiple nations in his literary imaginary. Gao Xingjian, the most recognized writer according to the 2000 Nobel Prize committee, was naturalized as a French citizen in 1998. To be sure, nationality does not determine the geographical parameters of Sinophone writing. Geographical location, moreover, is no more fixed than the place of origin. To use what Edward Soja once said about the study of urban geography, the space of diaspora may be more instructively thought of as a malleable space created by new social relations rather than as a geometric, inert “container” that does not come under the influence of such relations.⁴ Thus looking differently at Sinophone writing as an interaction between the production of literatures and moving agents, one might subject the narrative of customary disciplinary divides and national literary histories to similar shifts. More important than the coinage of new terms is the creation of new dialogues among the fields of area studies, Asian American studies, and ethnic studies. Although each has largely focused on its own stakes in examining the notion of Chinese diaspora, they have long been implicated in one another’s histories. The study of modern Chinese literature, to begin with the most nationally dominant example, has habitually consecrated this disciplinary distinction.

For the most of the twentieth century, the study of modern Chinese literature as a national tradition carried on primarily two conversations: with modernity and with its own post-1949 factious internal landscape. The former began to take shape under the general rubric of Westernization in the nineteenth century. After the Opium War,

⁴ Edward Soja, “The Socio-Spatial Dialectic,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 70, no. 2 (1980): 209. See Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell, 1991).

the political and social elite attempted a series of military and institutional reforms in one of the most tumultuous periods in Chinese history. Plagued by internal ethnic and peasant uprisings, famine, and poverty, as well as external invasion and the imposition of unequal treaties by foreign powers such as the French and the British, China was a significantly diminished empire. Attempts at technological and military Self-Strengthening (beginning in 1861) and, later, a Hundred Days Reform (1898) had limited success. The watershed event of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95, which ended in China's total defeat, further alerted intellectuals and reformers to the country's dwindling status in the more immediate region of East Asia. This gave them the impetus to reinvent "China" as a national entity.

In response, revolution was the creed of the day. Its momentum achieved an extraordinary new vision for history, dismissing any less-than-radical stance as conservative cultural essentialism. The same felt purpose of national survival engendered the self-conscious formation of modern Chinese literature. The imprint left by the traumatic necessity of such a transformative evaluation was not to be easily erased. The ensuing decades witnessed arduous and impassioned endeavors to define literature in light of the political reality on the one hand, and aesthetic experimentation on the other. Realism was a dominant but not exclusive literary ideology, and it was this mode that came to preoccupy the creative focus of Sinophone writings such as Malaysian Chinese literature. The shared urgency of anti-Japanese colonization and occupation during the 1930s and 1940s produced certain solidarities that would once again split and follow different paths after the war.

Meanwhile, the call of the May Fourth movement was heard far and wide, stirring Chinese communities in Taiwan, Southeast Asia, and elsewhere to share in its collective purpose. This early national solidarity across wide distances, however, gradually receded into the background, as the economic and colonial reality of the various host environments imposed itself as the more permanent setting. Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore have had various colonial histories (Dutch, British, Japanese), while Taiwan has been similarly subjected to the Dutch, Japanese, French, and mainland Nationalists. Chinese communities outside of the mainland, often minority groups by definition, were compelled to mobilize themselves socially in the places where they were settled. The goals of the May Fourth cultural renewal, furthermore, did not always prove as useful elsewhere. Its central tenet of establishing the vernacular—as opposed to the long-venerated classical

or literary Chinese—as the language of modern literature, for instance, met with varying degrees of success. Overseas Chinese generally more strongly identified with their home regional idiolects, which marked a cultural and ethnic distinction. It was unclear what was meant by “vernacular” or “everyday speech” when Fukienese, Hakka, and Teochiu seemed more reasonable candidates than the Beijing-based written vernacular. For the Chinese writers in the “Southern Ocean”—current-day Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore—the language of the Beijing capital was a language of prestige. Their access to learning and writing in the Chinese language was not to be taken for granted. To complicate matters, the varying national language policies in the countries where they resided did not always guarantee continual learning of minor languages such as Mandarin. “National language,” moreover, has a completely different connotation in the Japanese colonial context of Taiwan, where Japanese, not Chinese, was the official language. Writers' commitment to writing in the Chinese language, therefore, was a pregnant gesture of great artistic and cultural significance, drawing from a cultural capital that fortified their sense of distinction in a foreign setting. This was already evident during the 1930s debates on developing a literary language based on the “language of the masses,” a discussion that was well under way on the mainland, led by intellectuals like Qu Qiubai. The writers in the Southern Ocean had an additional challenge: how to take into account local ethnic inflections in a “mass language” that was originally intended to address class rather than ethnic differences in the predominantly Han society of mainland China.⁵

Different versions of the same question about the social and cultural disjuncture between diasporic settlements and mainland China will be posed time and time again. Whether conceived in terms of citizenship, literary aesthetics, cultural identity, or language and dialects, evolving relations to China as a historical heritage as well as a departure point for new narratives of migration are still under discussion among historians, anthropologists, and literary critics. As China continues

⁵ See Fang Xiu 方修, ed., *Ma Hua xin wenxue daxi* 馬華新文學大系 [*Compendium of Malaysian Chinese New Literature*], 10 vols. Xingzhou: Xingzhou shijie shuju, 19720, 1:332–64. For a brief introduction to Malaysian Chinese literature in English, see his *Notes on the History of Malaysian Chinese New Literature, 1920–1942*, trans. Angus W. McDonald and ed. Kazuo Enoki (Tokyo: Center for East Asian Cultural Studies, 1977).

to reestablish itself as a world power in the twenty-first century, the centripetal pull of its economic presence creates a renewed cultural gravitation. That global Chinese literature can be under discussion at all bespeaks a renewed concern with the perpetuation of nation-based narrative as the only worthy narrative. Indeed, it is against that pull that many of the contributors in this volume stake their claims. "Sino-phone," depending on the definition, excludes or includes mainland China as a focus of analysis. In the case of exclusion, the priority of analysis lies with developing a critical network of minority discourses. Inclusion entails a reworking of the lineage of modern Chinese literature as a solely mainland phenomenon. Both approaches seek to dismantle the hegemonic focus of a "national" Chinese literature and perhaps of a "national literature" at all.

At the same time, even though the tale of nation founding has occupied a central place in the study of modern Chinese literature, its apparent homogeneity and hegemony is rather undeserved. Critics and enthusiasts alike often take this point for granted. The founding of modern Chinese literature was not exclusively legislated by nationalism. If anything, it absorbed the momentum of literary activities from the preceding decades of the late Qing period. Its prized language, the vernacular, drew from sources even further back. While modern Chinese literature was undergoing its early formation under the aegis of nationalism, the idea of the nation was already being extended and traversed. Leading intellectuals and reformers found their inspirations for modern China outside of China, studying mostly in places like Japan, France, Britain, Germany, and America. Each location provoked a sense of foreignness and discrimination, compounded by a lack of language access. Being a foreigner rather than a national citizen heightened the nationalistic sentiment. Displacement worked as a negative, against which nationalism acquired its positive value. Participating in forging a literary nexus that is now recognized as "student immigrant literature" (*liuxuesheng wenxue* 留學生文學) writers from Lu Xun to Guo Moruo, Lin Yutang to Nieh Hualing, left their important imprints on the literary histories of Japan and Asian America.

America was the meeting place between East Asia and Asian America. The former's displacement constituted the latter's founding condition. Interestingly, the field of area studies and the writing of Asian American literature emerged for related reasons. The former was a product of the Cold War, developed as a pocket of specialized

geographical knowledge of particular areas of strategic concern.⁶ The latter was made possible by the civil rights movement, along with the attempted social redress of racial inequalities in the United States. If John Okada's *No-No Boy* can be taken as a benchmark for Asian American literature (1957) and C. T. Hsia's *History of Modern Chinese Fiction* (1961) as the inaugural study of modern Chinese literature in the English language, their proximity is timely. The former was about the Japanese internment during World War II, and the latter introduced for the first time writers outside mainland China's literary canon. Both took a step outside the mainstream interpretation of national belonging and displacement. They shared in a recognized problem of cultural and racial differences within a migratory matrix, each accorded a place inside and outside the borders of China and America. Maxine Hong Kingston's seminal exploration of the specificity of gender and Chinese patriarchy in *The Woman Warrior* appeared in 1976, just five years before the publication of another hallmark in the history of feminist immigrant writing, Nieh Hualing's *Mulberry and Peach*.⁷

Understandably, for Asian American literature to engage in a dialogue with area studies or modern Chinese literature, caution is needed. Although they have overlapping critical interests, especially as shaped by the past three decades of literary criticism in the United States, their intersection does not imply shared critical goals. Each has developed its own set of concerns, putting different emphases on issues of ethnicity, immigration, race, nationalism, gender, and postcolonialism, so a correspondence in their present concerns does not necessarily lead to a common experience in the world. The very circumstances that make possible such analogies are a peculiar manifestation of the current historical moment. The parallel drawn between Asian American literature and modern Chinese literature is, therefore, also vulnerable to a conflation of critical differences: either a return to Sinocentrism or a leveling of specificities under the general theorization of diaspora, ethnicity, the Sino-phone, or even "global Chinese literature." Out of a similar concern, Stuart Hall underscores the contingency of discursive

⁶ See Masao Miyoshi and Harry D. Harootunian, *Learning Places: The Afterlives of Area Studies* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2002); Tani Barlow, *Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1997).

⁷ See Sau-ling Wong's "Afterward" in *Mulberry and Peach* (New York: The Feminist Press, 1998), 209–235.

alliances with regard to diasporic studies. The open-ended struggle in diasporic politics is in fact indeterminate and fragile: "How can we organize these huge, randomly varied, and diverse things we call human subjects into positions where they can recognize one another for *long enough to act together*, and thus to take up a position that one of these days they might live out and act through as an identity?" (emphasis added).⁸

Indeed, the contingency of a discourse on global Chinese literature is how to come together in a committed but not binding alliance, to mobilize the possibilities of a newly configured community. Such a vision, of course, also raises new points of contention, as can be seen in the dangerous conceit that Stuart Hall expresses only two sentences later: "It isn't that the subjects are there and we just can't get to them. It is that they don't know that they are subjects of a possible discourse."⁹ That pluralization might slip away, its constituents take up different and even oppositional roles to the favored political alliance, tempts even those with the most radical diasporic politics to reimpose their own definition of enlightened and unenlightened subject positions. This, incidentally, was the main critique against the May Fourth intellectuals who, in their desire to lead the masses out of despotism and feudalism, committed to a nationalistic monolith.

Rey Chow speaks to the core of the problem when she elsewhere criticizes the "management of ethnicity" as a deeply entrenched problem within China studies as well as within the implicit system of ethnic patronage inherent in the most liberal Western critical theory.¹⁰ Her critique rejoins the dialogue between Tu Wei-ming and Ien Ang, where Ang staged a compelling defiance against a benignly defined center proposed by Tu. "Cultural China," famously ascribed to Tu, posits three circles of Chineseness, expanding from the innermost core of mainland Chinese and Chinese-speaking countries to the outer reaches of cultural assimilation and accommodation, including foreign

⁸ Stuart Hall, "Subjects in History: Making Diasporic Identities," *The House That Race Built: Original Essays by Toni Morrison, Angela Y. David, Cornel West, and Others on Black Americans and Politics in America Today*, ed. Wahneema Lubiano (New York: Vintage, 1998), 291.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Rey Chow, "Introduction," *Modern Chinese Literary and Cultural Studies in the Age of Theory: Reimagining a Field* (Durham: Duke University Press), 15.

specialists and scholars.¹¹ Ang cites for support the example of the Peranakans, or Straits Chinese, whose long lineage in Southeast Asia as a mixed ethnic group of Chinese and local Malay has left little living traces of its customs or language, Baba Malay. The point is that, at the "outer edge of diaspora"—shared with Asian Australia—Peranakans demonstrate an unassimilable Chineseness that disrupts any attempt to generalize a concentric universe of voluntary Chineseness.¹²

Ang's argument, poignant and autobiographical, exemplifies Hall's call for strategic subjective positioning.¹³ Yet, to return to Tu Wei-ming's original remarks, the phrase "cultural China," by Tu's own admission, was originally suggested by a group of Malaysian Chinese writers in the audience. Interestingly, this credit was never given in the criticism of Tu's position. In other words, Southeast Asia was the hidden third reference that did not get to participate in the dialogue between China and the little-differentiated diasporic Chinese. How is it possible that this third space, the exemplar of, paradoxically, both the outer edge of diaspora and the inner core of Sinocentrism, could not speak for itself? There is, in fact, an entire range of articulated positions, as this volume demonstrates, that do not fall easily under polarizing categories or familiar rubrics of alliance.

One might envision, as in Shu-mei Shih's general call for minority discourses and transnational alliance, a different conversation. Ang's critique, which has been widely cited as a critique of cultural essentialism, is perhaps better framed against fiction writer cum critic Kim Chew Ng's exploration of the question of being Chinese in Southeast Asia from a different marginality. Ang's remarks on the 1998 anti-Chinese riots in Jakarta need not carry the weight of the autobiographical subject alone, but find meaningful interlocutors in the writings of many—like Ng's short story, "Supplement"—that testified to the event through a different lens of nativity and discontinuity. Such new possible relations for global Sinophone literature would facilitate a network of discourse beyond centrism and marginality. Each can serve

¹¹ Tu, "Cultural China: The Periphery as the Center," in *The Living Tree: The Changing Meaning of Being Chinese Today* (City: Publisher, 1994), 13–30.

¹² Ang, "Can One Say No to Chineseness?" in *On Not Speaking Chinese: Living Between Asia and the West* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 48.

¹³ See Ang's chapter, "Indonesia on My Mind: Diaspora, the Internet and the Struggle for Hybridity," in *On Not Speaking Chinese*, 52–74. Kim Chew Ng 黃錦樹, "Buyi 補遺" (Supplement), in *Dari Pulau ke Pulau/You dao zhi dao—Kebei 由島至島一刻背* (From Island to Island—Carved Back) (Taipei: Maitian, 2001), 267–290.

as a new reference point, not only connecting national and minor histories but also further differentiating other histories within the minor.

It is within this social and literary spatiality of the global Sinophone that we begin this discussion. The volume is organized according to the following progression: 1) critical issues and historical frameworks; 2) analyses and case questions that corroborate or challenge these views; and 3) an outside response. The first part begins with Kim Chew Ng's consideration of the uneven development of Sinophone literature and the contentions between literary aesthetics and nativist realism. Speaking as a Malaysian Chinese writer and literary scholar currently residing in Taiwan, Ng points out the conceptual limitations in existing discussions of minor literature, which tend to overinvest it too quickly with a theorized optimism. Using Deleuze and Guattari's discussion of Kafka as an example, Ng notes the contrasting reality of minor writers in the Chinese diaspora who lack access to a linguistic capital that is separately determined in the contexts within which they negotiate—Malaysia and Taiwan. Advocating for an “exterior vision,” Ng proposes to ground Sinophone literature simultaneously in three words: native land, colonial heritage, and a universal diasporic structure yet to come. In so doing, he proposes to dislodge Sinophone writing from the conflicting imperatives of homeland and exile.

In a similar way, Shu-mei Shih's piece is a programmatic call for a transnational approach to the study of Sinophone literature. Whereas Ng urges the emergence of an individual aesthetics, Shih's vision of Sinophone production seeks and requires the alliance of other minority formations. Drawing from the framework of ethnic studies and other postcolonial and diasporic studies, Shih argues against the reification of Sinophone as an atemporal category. Sinophone is possible, she underscores, only within a place-based politics of recognition where the most powerful articulations against China-centrism are voiced.

Writing from within the context of Chinese American studies, Sauling Wong cautions, in contrast, against tempting alliances under the rubric of the global. Through an analysis of Wang Ruiyun's short story, “The Visitor from Paris,” Wong analyzes how the very possibility of the Chinese migrant is undergoing new transformations with China's rise to global dominance. Wong identifies three key terms in theorizing the Chinese diaspora: genocentrism (rhetoric of origin), translocalism (portable nativism), and racinationism (creation of new roots). She demonstrates how the three are often intertwined in practice

and use this triangulation to question the implications of “being drawn into an orbit of a China-based critical point of view.”

Taking yet another perspective, Taiwan-based Malaysian Chinese critic Kim Tong Tee parses the genealogy of the discussion of overseas or Sinophone literature. Tracing it to debates in 1986, when the Sinophone was first viewed as a form of Commonwealth literature at conferences in Gunzburg and Singapore, Tee prefers, following Itamar Even-Zohar, the notion of overlapping polysystems. On this view, minor traditions are part, but not necessarily exclusively so, of an “international mega-polysystem.” Tee further distinguishes Sinophone from Anglophone and Francophone studies to the extent that the Chinese language is the mother tongue rather than an ex-colonizer's language.

Jing Tsu, in an examination of the historical formation of the modern Chinese language (*guoyu* 國語) urges taking the phonic in Sinophone literature seriously. Excavating a largely overlooked movement of script reforms in the late nineteenth century, Tsu returns the notion of national language to a larger attempt to conceptualize new relations between sound and script, standard language and dialects. By going inside the medium in which the Sinophone is written, Tsu proposes a different point of departure that revises the notion of national-language literature and engages with the possibility of a global Chinese literature at its linguistic roots.

Each of the first five essays outlines a theoretical and historical framework for the study of Sinophone literature. In contrast, the next five essays propose new reference points that do not necessarily abide by these five perspectives and further extend the horizon of global Chinese writing to alternative modes of language, speech, orality, and aurality. Carlos Rojas, turning to the inner constituents of Chinese-language literature, looks at internal diaspora through the work of Tibetan writer Alai. Analyzing his use of Tibetan phrases in juxtaposition to standard Mandarin, Rojas points out the “communicative failure” that serves as a larger analogy for the linguistic politics of diaspora.

Rey Chow, expressing the Sinophone through a different orality and locality, considers the works of Hong Kong writer Leung Pin Kwan (Ye Si) and critic John Ma Kwok Ming. Teasing out the experience and metaphor of food and ingestion on different scales of hunger, connoisseurship, and global corporatism, Chow traces a circuit of culinary

production that “suggests an ongoing ideological conflation between cognition and food consumption.” Writing about food, these writers exercise a power of knowledge through the gradual assimilation and omission of minor marginalia, metabolized as new additions to the dominant cultural capital.

Further displacing orality onto aurality and directing attention to yet another kind of phonics, David Der-wei Wang uncovers a different register of Sinophone allegiance and history writing in the lyricism of Taiwan-born composer Jiang Wenye. A diasporic figure who lived and practiced his art through multiple phases of colonialism and nationalism, Jiang was trained in Taisho Japan under its translated European influence. His subsequent friendship with Russian composer Alexander Tcherepnin led him to seek the ideal vernacular sound through a return to Confucian musicology, resulting in the 1939 appearance of his orchestral piece *The Music of the Confucian Temple*. Jiang’s prodigal return is articulated in the distancing mode of nostalgia, mirroring a later construction of Taiwan through a similar musical lyricism.

Focusing on Malaysian Chinese writer Zhang Guixing’s reworking of the Chinese script, or sinograph, Andrea Bachner analyzes the mediality of Chinese writing as a space for reinvention and difference. Arguing that writing itself bears out a resistance to cultural essentialism, she demonstrates how Zhang subjects the Chinese language to the specific interethnic and interlingual inflections of Southeast Asia. In contrast, Bachner notes how different Western theorists—from a Eurocentric point of view—have staged bodily inscriptions as the “other” of writing.

If Sinophone literature is being written, interpreted, and contested largely in the Sinophone world, it nonetheless requires a global audience as it mediates and continues to reshape its parameters. In the final piece, Julia Lovell takes a close look at the international mechanisms for literary recognition and China’s nationalistic desire to achieve it. Examining the case of Gao Xingjian, the 2000 Nobel Laureate in Literature, Lovell analyzes the intersecting anxieties between national literature, its relation to national reality, and its writing in anticipation of a projected world readership.

While the first set of five essays engages with the primary debate of what it means to speak of modern Chinese literature globally, the second set suggests important ways of bridging this new orientation and the existing approaches and topics that have developed from the field itself. From the kind of critical and poststructuralist theory that

has been familiar in literary criticism in the past thirty years to the new areas of inquiry in the more specialized domain of modern Chinese literary studies, all the essays in this volume demonstrate how an emphasis on the Sinophone can neither be subsumed under nor fully extricate itself from the history of modern Chinese writing. This collection also shows the extraordinary diversity of the subject, such that no single approach is possible or desirable. In all its various guises as script, phonics, mediality, aurality, or orality, global Chinese writing is none other than the scalar reorientation of literary studies as a new global, regional, and local practice.