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Worlding the Social Sciences and Humanities

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Under the impact of globalization, the study and teaching of the social sciences and humanities is rapidly changing. In many ways, what we see is a growing transfer of research, knowledge, and method from the West to other parts of the world, and in the first instance China. This development is steered by far-reaching changes in the organization of higher education in both the West and in this case China, changes that in themselves have to do with changing economic conditions, and the political decisions following from them, as the result of globalization. In the final part of this article I focus upon how this works out in one particular field or discipline in the humanities: world literature.[1]

Globalization has been upon us for some time. For some it started when the term 'globalization' was invented, or at least became a household word, sometime in the early 1990s, as the result of the time-space compression. David Harvey[2] saw it as determinative of what he – after Jean-François Lyotard – called *The Condition of Postmodernity*.[3] For others it started with the spread of industrialization and what Marx and Engels called 'bourgeois society' in the wake of European imperialism in approximately the middle of the 18th century. Yet others, such as the economic historian Immanuel Wallerstein,[4] the cultural historian Tzvetan Todorov[5] and the philosopher Jürgen Habermass,[6] reach back as far as the Voyages of Discovery and the beginnings of European colonialism. Perhaps it is wisest to look upon all these dates as simply marking stages in an ongoing 'process of globalization.'

The role of the sciences as both driving and being driven by such developments is beyond dispute: new ways of shipbuilding (and why not call the Viking Age, also driven by advances in shipbuilding, a prelude to globalization proper, the only difference from later ages being that this particular one did not lead to anything of lasting 'global' impact, although even that, of course, is debatable), of navigating, of conceiving weaponry and waging war, of land surveying and inventorying, of communicating, of commerce and banking, all of them rooted in advances in mathematics, physics, and engineering, and of taming disease, drawing upon

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advances in biology, chemistry and medicine, intimately relate to Europe's projecting itself across the world. With the sciences, this was mostly a process from what, for a long time, we used to call 'centre' to 'periphery', metropolis to colony, advances in science furnishing the former with the means to 'master' the latter, and the 'world'.

The role of the social sciences and humanities in the process just sketched is less clear-cut but largely follows the same pattern, as perhaps most convincingly illustrated in the work of the late Edward Said on *Orientalism*,[7] comprising the fields of anthropology, ethnography, philology and literary studies. Whereas originally the West's relationship to the 'rest' of the world differed sharply according to the perceived antiquity and complexity of the cultures and civilizations European explorers and conquerors met with in their exploits, as of roughly the end of the 18th century the social sciences and humanities functioned mostly as a grid through which to 'apprehend' (in all senses of the verb) the world. Suffice it to mention the example of James Mill who in his *History of British India* (1817–1836), undertaken at the behest of the East India Company, claimed that India has only legends, as 'this people, indeed, are perfectly destitute of historical records.'[8] With a single stroke of the pen the Indian version of the sub-continent's history is dismissed, and replaced by the British version, in which – surprise! – British rule is the best thing that ever could have happened to India. Throughout the 19th century, Mill's work remained standard fare for British civil servants in India. In a similar way, the study of the various native languages of India, and of its religions, were pressed into the service of the British Empire.[9] And in his 'Minute on Indian Education' (1835) Thomas Babington Macauley, from 1834 to 1838 member of the High Council for India, boldly declared that 'a single shelf of a good European library [is] worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia.'[10] It is English literature that has to be taught in India, Macauley stipulates, not Indian literature, and this is precisely what happened until Indian independence in 1947, and in some places until much later.[11]

In the humanities, upon which I will henceforth concentrate, such practices have led to an increasing streamlining of theories and practices along Western lines. Now, whereas arguably there may be an 'objective' reason for preferring Western science because of Popperian criteria of falsification and confirmation, or simply put because they 'work', it is much harder to plead such a rationale for the humanities. Stronger, in a world that is increasingly also 'global' in issues of power – economic, political, military – there is every reason to de-globalize our approaches and to 'world' them, in the sense meant by Edward Said, in accordance with changing realities, and to do so both syn- and diachronically.[12] This 'worlding' takes different forms in different geographical and cultural contexts, although with each, in fact, amounting to a 'glocalization' of what are in essence global phenomena. I will work this out with specific reference to the study and teaching of modern foreign languages, as this is my area of specialization and thus the only one I can pronounce upon with any, even if fittingly modest, authority.

As Edward L. Ayers argues in a 2009 issue of *Daedalus*, the journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, there is a long history of claiming that the humanities, a term that in Anglo-American parlance roughly covers history, the arts

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proper, and languages and literatures – in other words what is customarily offered in a Faculty of Arts – are in crisis, and therefore recent lamentations with regard to the sector's demise should be nuanced accordingly.[13] There is no denying though that at present the crisis is real, at least in the traditional core regions of humanities studies, that is to say Europe and the United States, and with respect to what have equally traditionally been defined as the core disciplines of the humanities. This is particularly true of language and literature studies in the classical sense of the terms.

To begin with, over the last 25 years or so, student numbers in language and literature departments have kept falling, at least in certain countries. I am thinking of the US,[14] where even though absolute numbers have stayed roughly equal, the relative part of language and literature studies in the overall number of students has dropped sharply, but also of Western Europe, where for instance the Netherlands have seen a dramatic drop in student enrolment in language and literature departments,[15] especially so since the continent-wide (or almost) introduction of the BA-MA model following the implementation of the so-called Bologna-agreement of the late 1990s. Obviously, there is a correlation here with developments in the job market, both the academic and the more general job market. The Modern Language Association has been tracking job openings in modern languages in the US since the mid-1970s, and finds a clear correlation between fluctuations in the relevant job market and the cycles affecting the US, and the world, economy. Not surprisingly, the most recent economic crisis has had a most depressing effect,[16] leading to staff reductions and shifts between numbers of tenured and non-tenured faculty, with the former decreasing in proportion to the latter.[17] In other words, the prospect of a tenured position increasingly vanishes for a younger generation of PhD holders. In the non-academic market, employment statistics, for instance in Belgium, show that humanities, and more particularly arts, graduates, on average stay unemployed longer, and earn less, than their counterparts from most other disciplines. Obviously, this has a discouraging effect upon enrolment in such disciplines, especially if supported by government campaigns, such as that in Holland in the 1990s for (even high school) students to 'choose exact', i.e. for the exact sciences, and their corollaries or derivatives, rather than humanities subjects. Even if not everyone agrees with this reading of the numbers, with for instance Peter Mandler, in *Aeon*, arguing that instead of a decline or even demise, there has rather occurred a 'Rise of the Humanities', at least in the US, the UK and Australia, the three countries for which he collected data, it seems undeniable that there has been a real as well as a relative decline in language and literature enrolments in most of what we used to call the Western world.[18]

Even if student numbers should not be falling in the humanities overall, most of us would probably agree that public financing for teaching and research in language and literature disciplines is continuously dwindling, at least when compared with other fields of science and scholarship. Harriet Zuckerman and Ronald Ehrenberg, in their contribution to the *Daedalus* issue already mentioned, compare how much the government,[19] foundations, and private donors provide for the humanities, with the estimates John D'Arms made in his contribution to the 1995 volume

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What's Happened to the Humanities?,[20] and with what universities and colleges themselves invest in the humanities. They also pay attention to the difference between public and private universities in this regard. Their conclusions are that, at least in the United States, the cost of research in the humanities over the last decades has shifted from government and foundation funding to universities and colleges themselves, that within these universities and colleges, but particularly in universities, the share of funds spent on the humanities, in terms of salaries to teaching staff, research funding, and library investment, is decreasing, and that in general private universities continue to do better on all fronts than do public institutions.

In Europe, of course, university teaching and research are almost exclusively the province of government funding. As the needs, and the returns, of other disciplines, especially in medicine, applied sciences, and engineering, are deemed far greater than those of the humanities, and of language and literature research in particular, the net result can easily be imagined. The same goes for supra-national funding agencies, such as those run by, dependent upon, or in some way linked to the European Union. The FP7 and Horizon 2020 Framework Programmes, the most ambitious and generously funded research programmes of the European Union, for instance, in the various programme categories and priorities they list, hold out precious few possibilities for the humanities, in fact even then usually joining the latter with the socio-economic sciences, and the terms ruling these programmes making it very difficult for humanities scholars, particularly in language and literature, to qualify.

If what I have said until now goes for what I earlier referred to as the traditional 'core' language and literature disciplines, other and newer sections of these same disciplines are doing much better, and especially those that qualify for an 'applied' label. As far as funding is concerned this holds for computational linguistics, which can benefit from contract research, and corpus linguistics, which together with computational linguistics holds out possibilities for machine translation, and hence for practical application. Of late, something similar seems to have started happening for what has come to be known as digital humanities. At the opposite end, the perception that language acquisition or training as an end in itself is considered more 'useful' than the acquisition of a language as part of a classical academic language and literature curriculum in many places leads to divorcing the language training component from traditional language and literature departments. This, in turn, leads to the creation of language-service centres supporting research and teaching of faculties, especially engineering and medicine, which are deemed more useful to society. Often, however, (perhaps even preferably so because it is more profitable) such centres aim to generate revenue from outside customers, or even from tendering their services within the university itself to those language and literature departments whence they originated.

In many countries we can also witness the creation of privately-funded institutions that offer languages – mainly English – only, or primarily, as ancillaries to courses in, for instance, business, human relations, or some other more profitable curriculum. Koç University, in Istanbul, a private non-profit institution founded in 1933 with the support of a wealthy Turkish businessman, and devoted to excellence in research and

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teaching, offers mainly Business, Science, and engineering courses, but in the College of Social Sciences and Humanities also offers a BA in English and Comparative Literature with four options: World Literature and Humanities; Literatures in English; Turkish and Ottoman Literature; and Film and Visual Culture. The English Language and Comparative Literature major is said to provide 'excellent preparation for students who wish to pursue literary study in a postgraduate setting,' but also 'excellent training for Koç students who seek success in the private sectors of an information economy, where critical language skills grow increasingly valuable.'[21] All across the Southern tier of Europe private universities are springing up that see language teaching as providing its graduates in all kinds of really useful disciplines with a necessary skill, devoid of any scientific or scholarly interest. In public institutions we see a proliferation of translation training programmes, presumably again being more practically oriented, and hence more open to market demand. In the Netherlands, for instance, where until some 15 years ago there were hardly any such translation training programmes, every major university now has a translation track, often drawing the largest number of students.

It stands to reason that much of the changes wrought upon European academe, including those affecting language and literature studies, are intimately tied to issues of globalization, and particularly to the ever-increasing need for countries, and continents, to hold their own in the worldwide race toward efficiency and competitiveness leading to an ever-more selective investment of means, both economic and intellectual. The task for the humanities, then, and – from my present interest in particular – for language and literature studies, is to ask themselves for what good are they for now, what purpose do they serve? What is their 'competitive edge' or advantage? What should they teach? In which kind of research should they engage? One answer, proffered by Geoffrey Galt Harpham, in a 2005 *NLH* article reflecting on 'Beneath and Beyond the "Crisis in the Humanities",' is to insist that the humanities, and the literature among them, are in a unique position to reflect, from a perspective informed by the entire history of mankind's feelings, emotions and interests on the position of man with regard to issues studied by all other sciences. As Harpham put it:

> One of the most promising features of the present moment is the new urgency gathering at the interface of the humanistic and nonhumanistic disciplines as they confront not only such new subjects as genetic engineering, environmental trauma, and the cognitive capacities of animals or machines, but also, and most intriguingly, such traditional subjects as the nature of language and the distinctive features of a specifically human being. None of the subjects can be satisfactorily addressed by a single discipline, but all of them concern fundamental issues relating to humanity; and the humanities, whose special province is questions of meaning, history, and value, must now reconceive themselves as the natural sponsor of the debates and controversies that swirl around such issues. The confrontations that result from these debates will, in a sense, threaten the disciplines that engage in them, for the sovereignty or adequacy of each will be called into question by the others. But the prospect of genuine advances in knowledge and of the rejuvenation of the disciplines that accompanies these advances more than compensates for this threat.[22]

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And along similar lines, Don Michael Randel, president of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, formerly president of the University of Chicago (2000–2006), and before that Dean and Provost at Cornell University, in the *Daedalus* issue mentioned before, argued:

> By all means let us strengthen the teaching of, and research in, science and mathematics at all levels. But the study of what makes these undertakings truly worthwhile; the study of the values that support the production of knowledge and its proper application in society; the study of, contemplation of, and exploration of what it means to be a human being and why and how we should want to organize our lives in relation to one another around the globe: these are the domains of the humanities and the arts. ... Above all we need to talk and act as if we truly believe that the humanities and the arts matter and underlie the deepest foundations of a democratic society. Thinking about such things does not really cost much money; it requires making the space for them in our national life and then trying to live by what we find there, no matter the method or the size of our contribution to the gross domestic product.[23]

Another answer, however, and one which perhaps preserves more of the 'core business' of the humanities, is to turn what now looks like the sector's weakness into strength, and to retool some of its oldest achievements for more modern uses. To start with the first issue: the dwindling numbers of students, reductions in staff, and lack of research funding for language and literature studies have obviously taken their toll. In a number of countries, for instance the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, but also in the US, a number of language and literature departments have simply been closed down. In only the past few years, Romanian, Icelandic, Danish, Finnish, Norwegian, Hungarian and Portuguese have disappeared as separate disciplines in the Netherlands. Russian, Italian, German, and French, and to a lesser extent Spanish, are not doing well. Even the country's native Dutch is not holding up all that well. Only English is flourishing. Given the need, then, to reach a minimum critical mass for courses in literatures other than English, it is getting increasingly common to combine students of various literatures in one joint course, which then is taught in either the national language of the country in question, or, increasingly, in English. Most of the material in such courses is read in translation, again in either the native language or English, with the latter often being the only language shared by all students in the course, as in many countries the student population is becoming increasingly diverse, partially also as a result of the EU-sponsored Erasmus exchange programme promoting student (and staff) mobility in European higher education. The logical result of all this is the creation of programmes in European Literature, or of offering corresponding courses in even broader and more-encompassing departments of European Studies. From a purely traditionally professional perspective such developments may be deplored, as leading to a loss of breadth, depth, and scope in the teaching of specific European literatures at the academic level. From a different perspective, however, we could equally well argue that such courses or curricula, almost *faute de mieux*, equip students with a broader 'European' or, if reflection on the 'globalized' conditions leading to their own emergence and arrangement forms an integral part of such courses or curricula, even a 'world'

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perspective. In a period in which there is talk of the dissolution of nation states and the creation of a united Europe, whichever form the latter will eventually assume, and in a global context, such developments in literary studies begin to make eminent sense.

It is also from such a changed perspective that it makes sense to interpret a parallel development in the United States, that is to say the turn there, observable since the beginning of the present millennium, to the study of 'world literature', or more precisely to a new or renewed form of what goes by that name. Just as the combination of 'English and World Literature' offered at Koç University answers to a specific rationale of ancillarity to the business curriculum promoted there, so too with the boost world literature has received of late. In fact, of course, the very concept of world literature itself from its very emergence has inscribed itself with issues of globalization. It is generally agreed that for Goethe – to whom we owe the popularization of *Weltliteratur* as of 1827 through his famous conversations with Johan Peter Eckermann as reported in the latter's *Gespräche mit Goethe* (1836) – the term covered the rapidly increasing exchange of literary goods and ideas among Europe's intellectuals at the close of the Napoleonic era and the onset of what in various parts of Europe and in different languages would come to be known as the Victorian era or the *Biedermeierzeit*.[24] Even if Goethe himself in his scattered remarks on the subject repeatedly equated European literature with world literature, Fritz Strich, one of the most astute readers of Goethe on the topic, is of the opinion that for the Weimar sage 'European literature, that is a literature of exchange and intercourse between the literatures of Europe and between the peoples of Europe, is the first stage of a world literature which from these beginnings will spread in ever-widening circles to a system which in the end will embrace the world.'[25] If proof is needed, suffice it to mention that Goethe first thought of the very concept of *Weltliteratur* as an immediate result of his reading of one or a number of Chinese novels in translation, and that with his *West-Eastern Divan* of 1819 'Goethe himself began the task of incorporating in it the Asiatic world' (Ref. 24, p. 16).

There is no denying, however, that for the longest time 'world literature' did in fact mean European literature. This was true for the numerous histories of world literature, perhaps better referred to as world histories of literature that started appearing in the middle of the 19th century, particularly in Europe. It was also true for the handbooks and anthologies of world literature used in courses on world literature that, in the early part of the 20th century, became institutionalized as part of the undergraduate curricula in the United States. Richard Green Moulton, an English academic working at the University of Chicago, in his 1911 *World Literature and its Place in General Culture*, the first book-length publication on the subject in English, divided the world's literatures into a number of categories dependent upon their relevance to the literatures of the 'English-speaking peoples'.[26] From the two 'civilizations' that – building upon the theories of the 19th-century English poet, critic and educator Matthew Arnold – he saw as directly feeding into the culture of the English-speaking peoples, that is to say the 'Semitic' and 'Aryan' ones, he included the *Quran*, the *Arabian Nights*, and poems by Omar Khayyam. In contrast, he

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excluded a number of civilizations, such as the Chinese and Japanese, which he deemed not to have had any influence upon English literary culture. In 1934, Philo Buck, a professor of comparative literature at the University of Wisconsin, published an Anthology of World Literature, 'the first single-volume academic anthology to attempt global scope'.[27] Like Moulton, Buck focused on the European tradition, while including some Indian, Persian, and Arab materials but excluding works from China and Japan on the grounds that their 'vital influence upon the European tradition has been negligible or very recent'.[28] In later editions he did add some Chinese works.

As early as 1940 Albert Guérard lamented that in what commonly passed as the canon of world literature 'the East is woefully under-represented.'[29] After the Second World War, and particularly so after the end of the age of colonialism and empire, roughly speaking as of the 1960s, this exclusive, or almost exclusive attention to European literature under the terms of what passed for world literature came under attack. In 1959, Werner Friederich proclaimed that 'sometimes, in flippant moments, I think we should call our programmes NATO Literatures – yet even that would be extravagant, for we do not usually deal with more than one fourth of the [the] 15 NATO-nations,' that is to say French, English, German literature and, for good measure, also some Spanish and Italian literature.[30] Next to this traditional European domain Friederich called for attention to the cultures of Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Oceania. That this was done very much in the spirit of the Cold War then raging may become clear when we stop to consider that Friederich argued that the United States, with its mixture of races and cultures, its history of migration, its geographical location, and its world leadership in matters military, economic and political, was uniquely well placed to take the lead in matters cultural, and part of such leadership would be a greater opening to the world beyond Europe and the US itself.

A more hard-hitting critique of what would eventually come to be called 'Eurocentrism' was unleashed by the French comparatist René Étiemble in his 'Faut-il réviser la notion de *Weltliteratur*?' at the Fourth World Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association held in Fribourg, Switzerland, in 1964. Discussing an inquiry that the French writer Raymond Queneau had then recently conducted on the 'ideal library', and for which he had asked several dozen writers, overwhelmingly French, to pick from a list of approximately 3500 works 100 titles, Étiemble noted that 60 of the works selected were French. Yet, he argued, 'another literature has enjoyed, and continues to enjoy, and this since millennia, a situation that is as privileged as ours has been for eight centuries: the Chinese, which is not represented, not even with one title, in the *Bibliothèque idéale*.'[31] Across a distance of more than two generations Guérard's, Friederich's and Etiemble's laments are echoed by Shu-mei Shih, who in a 2004 PMLA article on 'Global Literature and the Technologies of Recognition' concluded that a Western-centred world literature in the worst case simply non-recognizes what is distant to itself, neglecting, ignoring or silencing it, and at best mis-recognizes the non-West.[32]

In fact, Shu-mei Shih's rage is directed not against the 'old' Euro- or Western-centred world literature, which since the 1960s and the onset of the

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'age of theory', with its subsequent waves of structuralism, post-structuralism, deconstruction, New Historicism, multiculturalism and postcolonialism, had in fact been lying largely dormant, in Europe and also in the United States, but against the re-born world literature emerging around the turn of the millennium. Shih specifically focuses upon a 2000 article by one of the initiators of the renewed attention given to world literature, Franco Moretti,[33] but her critique holds true also of the other major theoreticians of the 'new' world literature studies, Pascale Casanova[34] and David Damrosch.[35] Apart from the understandable and legitimate claim, from a theoretical angle, for fairer representation at least across major regions and literatures of the world in order to truly warrant the label 'world literature', one can also ask the legitimate question of why there is this sudden renewed interest in the topic. One explanation is that the recent American interest in world literature is at least partially motivated by a desire to make the world more comprehensible to 21st-century generations of college students, through giving them greater exposure to the varied cultures of the world than was the case for earlier generations, because of the events of 9/11. These events painfully brought home to the United States that it is not, as it had been accustomed to think, distinct from the rest of the world and therefore invulnerable behind its two oceans. On the contrary, it is very much a part of that world and that therefore to better understand this world is vital also to US concerns. To a certain extent, this is the thrust of both Edward Said's last book, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, [36] and Emily Apter's *The Translation Zone*,[37] both of which explicitly refer to 9/11 as having influenced their arguments, with Apter particularly insisting on the need for knowing foreign languages, and for increased efforts of translation, as keys to a more equal relationship between the US and the rest of the world.

Still, next to the issue of selection raised by Shu-mei Shih's, it is precisely the issue of the inevitability of translation, and specifically translation into English, for the purpose of the anthologies of the 'new' world literature, that has drawn critical fire, most notably from the well-known Indian (but, again, working in the US) theoretician of postcolonialism Gayatri Spivak. In her 2003 *Death of a Discipline* she implies that such anthologies project the world as 'American' to Americans and 'America' as the world to non-Americans. They do so linguistically, presenting and hence reducing all the world's literatures to 'in English' literature. They do so culturally, by 'US-style world literature becoming the staple of Comparative Literature in the global South'.[38]

Perhaps not surprisingly, then, what Jonathan Arac has called the 'anglo-globalization' of literature has led to what we may usefully regard as 'glocalized' reactions.[39] Specifically, a number of literatures historically, or more recently minoritized, within the dominant 'anglo' world literature paradigm have countered the tide by appealing to alternative convergences based on historical and linguistic contiguities. This is the case, for instance, with francophone, lusophone, and hispanophone literatures. Interestingly, Shih brings the same concept into play when she talks about sinophone literature as the literature comprising work written in the Chinese diaspora around the world, thus implicitly claiming for Chinese

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literature a 'world' status in this sense too, thereby doubling in the cultural-literary sphere what is Chinese policy in matters economic and other. Wang Ning, in a number of recent articles, has pleaded a similar cause, and perhaps not surprisingly he sees a major role reserved for translation, particularly from Chinese, into English. In a 2010 article, Wang posits 'that the globalization of material, cultural, and intellectual production, accompanied by the dissolution of Eurocentrism and "West-centrism" and by the rise of Eastern culture and literature, has assisted at world literature's birth from the ashes of comparative literature.'[40] World literature, he argues, implies translation, and although translation in Chinese literary history has mostly served foreign literatures to colonize Chinese literature and culture, 'the recent trend of cultural globalization in the Chinese context by no means augurs the further colonization of Chinese culture; instead, it will help promote Chinese culture and literature worldwide' (Ref. 39, p. 13). As an instructive footnote we could add that, although there has been a long history, going back some 2000 years, of teaching translation in China, it is only since 2005 that there has been a massive governmentally-backed push in this direction, with the creation of hundreds of BA and MA translation training programmes focusing on English. Apart from the instrumental role such programmes will play (although from what I understand they are presently under review and may be reduced in number and size), they also illustrate a recent trend in China, and in fact all across East Asia, to increase the study of the broader humanities and even what in the US is usually called the liberal arts. In fact, a number of Western universities, primarily but not exclusively British and American, are avidly participating in this process, with the University of Nottingham establishing a campus in Ningbo, New York University in Shanghai, Michigan University setting up a joint programme with Jiao Tong in Shanghai, and other universities following suit, not only in China but also in other parts of East Asia, with for instance Yale in Singapore, and increasingly also in the Middle East; such as New York University at Abu Dhabi. Of course, this deployment of Western academic institutions in China has been preceded over the last 20 years or so by the immense number of Chinese students going abroad to pursue studies, often advanced degrees, in the West, and particularly the US and the UK, but also beyond. In the early 2000s I served a stint as Director of an advanced MA programme in European Studies at Leuven, and each year at least a quarter of our 80 or so students were Chinese, but if we would have accepted all Chinese applicants the numbers could easily have been doubled or tripled.

That China is increasing profiling itself as a major, perhaps in future *the* major, world power, leads Wang, in another article, to also re-think world literature in line with China's commercial and political ambitions. Reflecting on the size of the Chinese population, its wide and increasing spread to all corners of the earth, China's rising economic might, and comparing the hundreds of Confucius Institutes the Chinese government has been setting up worldwide over the last decade or so to the British Council institutes that, until a short while ago, spread Britain's language, culture, and influence abroad, Wang wonders how with the 'rise of "Chinese fever" in the world, what shall [Chinese] literary scholars ... do to remap world literature?'[41]

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Just as English literature has been transformed from 'a national literature to a sort of world literature since English literature is more and more "postnational",' so too 'Chinese literature: also from a national literature to a sort of transnational and postnational literature' (Ref. 40, p. 172). International Chinese literature studies will become, Wang says, 'like its counterpart of international English literature, a sub-discipline in the broader context of comparative literature and world literature ... [which] … will undoubtedly have a bright prospect along with the popularization of Chinese worldwide' (Ref. 40, pp. 173–174). Literature in Chinese, then, as a world literature, is similar to literatures in English, French, Spanish or Portuguese. Only bigger.

Perhaps this most recent Chinese vision of world literature entails the realization of what Rey Chow in 2004 envisaged as a 'new' form of East/West comparison, in which Asian literatures would be freed from what she calls the 'post-European and ...' complex in which the implicit awareness of 'the European' (and by extension the American) as the original term of comparison always haunts the term after the 'and', thus allowing in its stead for 'other possibilities of supplementarity, other semiotic conjunctions mediated by different temporal dynamics, ... as yet unrealized comparative perspectives, the potential range and contents of which we have only just begun to imagine.'[42] What does seem certain is that the entry of China into the global educational market has had significant consequences, not just in the sciences, and not just for China, but around the world. In fact, In May 2014, while attending a conference in London, I heard the former Liberal-Democrat Minister Shirley Williams say, in answer to Nigel Farage, the UKIP's leader, advocating a so-called 'Brexit', i.e. Britain's leaving the European Union, and a halt to all or at least most foreign migration to Britain, that if it were not for the sizeable number of international students paying Britain's (or at least England's) hefty tuition fees a lot of English university programmes, also and perhaps particularly so in the social sciences and humanities, simply would be unsustainable, as the British government itself is paying ever less toward precisely such programmes. A lot of those international students, in fact those paying the heftiest fees, come from beyond the European Union, and not a few come from China. The consequences of China's rising, however, go beyond sheer numbers. As I hope to have shown they also impact upon the contents of the humanities, literally re-orienting them (as some 15 years ago the economic historian André Gunder Frank already pleaded for the study of his subject with his *Re-Orient*)[43] and at the same time invigorating them perhaps even giving them a new lease of life, an-Other life. As such, China's emergence, or rather re-emergence, as a major power, also culturally and academically, will truly have brought about a 'worlding' of at least one branch of the humanities, in both senses one can give to that term: to fully embrace the world, and to ground that embrace in a concrete space and time.

References and Notes

1. I am grateful to the editors of the publications in question for permission to re-use a number of ideas and passages, most often in revised form, earlier articulated in my 'The Humanities Under Siege?' in *Diogenes* 229–230 (58, 1-2), 2012, pp. 136–146,

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and, to a lesser extent, 'Minor Literatures and Major Histories,' in *A World History of Literature*, Theo D'haen, ed. (Brussels: Koninklijke Vlaamse Akademie van België voor Wetenschappen en Kunsten/Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium, 2012), pp. 101–108.

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14. The number of students registered in the 12 leading modern languages is rising for each language, but seen over time, the numbers relate a different story: although there is growth in absolute numbers of enrolments in modern languages, because of the phenomenal expansion of students attending institutions of higher learning, in 2006 enrolments in the most taught languages have not reached the proportion they reached in 1960–1965. Since the high of 1960–1965, enrolments in languages have fallen substantially in proportion to the expanding number of students attending institutions of higher education. Thus, describing trends only in terms of increasing enrolments does not convey the magnitude of some of these changes. (*Enrollments in Languages Other Than English in United States Institutions of Higher Education, Fall 2006,* N. Furman, D. Goldberg, and N. Lusin, Web publication, 13 November 2007, pp. 3–4, http://www.mla.org/pdf/06enrollmentsurvey_final.pdf)
15. *Forum*, the electronic newsletter (2: 3 June 2002; http://www.hum2.leidenuniv.nl/forum/02_3/discussie/1.htm) of the Faculty of Arts of Leiden University, in an article entitled 'Falen de curricula modern talen?' ('Are modern language studies falling short?'), lists the reduction of incoming first-year students as follows for the period 1992 to 2001: Spanish 70%, French 68%, Slavics 68%, German 61%, Romance 49%, Italian 47%, Dutch 41%, English 39%; all Dutch Faculties of Arts lost 34.6% in student numbers. The figures for the major Dutch universities look as follows: Utrecht 51%, UvA 50%, Leiden 37.5%, Groningen 28%, Nijmegen 20.5%.
16. The financial crisis of 2008 made its consequences painfully evident in the 2008–2009 MLA *Job Information List* (*JIL*). After trending upward between 2003–2004 and

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2007–2008, the number of jobs advertised in the *JIL* in 2008–2009 declined since 2007–2008 by 446 (24.4%) in English and 453 (27.0%) in foreign languages. In the English edition 1202 ads announced 1380 jobs; in the foreign language edition 1106 ads announced 1227 jobs (ads that departments later marked 'search cancelled' have been excluded from these counts). In both numerical and percentage terms, this year's declines mark the largest single-year decreases in the 34-year history of the *JIL* counts. (Report on the MLA *Job Information List*, 2008–2009, MLA Office of Research, Web publication, 25 September 2009, p. 1, http://www.mla.org/pdf/jil_report200809.pdf)

17. The MLA/ADE report *Demography of the Faculty: A Statistical Portrait of English and Foreign Languages*, D. Laurence, Web publication, 10 December 2008, p. 1, states that 'The percentage figures show a dramatic ten-percentage-point decline in the share of the faculty represented by tenured and tenure-track appointments. The numbers tell us that, across higher education considered as a whole, the percentage drop in tenured and tenure-track appointments occurred because of increases in the non-tenure-track categories rather than cuts in the absolute number of tenured or tenure-track positions. (The IPEDS data, of course, tell us nothing about transfers of lines between disciplines, and an aggregate summary masks the varying circumstances of specific institutions or sectors.) The ADE report on the academic workforce also calls attention to the continuing increases in student enrolments since 1975 and particularly from 1995 to 2005. As student enrolments grow, the part of the faculty teaching off the tenure track grows a lot, while the tenured and tenure-track faculty ranks stay roughly the same size. The tenured faculty becomes diminished in the institution by being overwhelmed rather than by being cut.'
18. https://aeon.co/essays/the-humanities-are-booming-only-the-professors-can-t-see-it.
19. H. Zuckerman and R. G. Ehrenberg (2009) Recent trends in funding for the academic humanities & their implications. *Daedalus* (Winter), pp. 124–146. With the 'academic humanities' Zuckermand and Ehrenberg mean '"all fields of study normally grouped together ... that are identified as departments and programs in humanities, and in which the Ph.D. is the highest earned degree." They also include history (sometimes classified with the social sciences) and aspects of anthropology, ethnology, and archaeology' (p. 124). In another article in the same *Daedalus* issue E.L. Ayers defines the humanities as 'generally considered to include English language and literature; foreign languages and literatures; history; philosophy; religion; ethnic, gender, and cultural studies; area and interdisciplinary studies; archaeology; art history; the history of music; and the study of drama and cinema. Some parts of political science, government, geography, anthropology, and sociology – the "humanistic social sciences" – are more closely identified with the humanities than with other more quantitative aspects of the disciplines.'
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