

Preface

China

The two terms of significance in the title of this work “China” and “Humanities” are fraught with both meaning and misunderstanding. While this book was three years in the making, its subject matter represented by these two terms has a continuous written history of at the least three millennia. The land that we now call the People’s Republic of China, with its culture and languages is now referred to in common parlance as China. Professor 张西平 [ZHĀNG xī ping] of Beijing Foreign Studies University¹ writes that “If we see China as the final destination of seafaring routes in the south of the Asian subcontinent, then China was first known as *Sina*, *Chin*, *Sinae*, and China; if we define China as the final stop on the trade routes that traverse the northern portion of Asia, [then the region that now we call China] was first called *Seres*.” He writes that “the earliest use of *Seres* as a name for China was in Pliny the Elder’s *The Natural History*.” The professor and director quotes from a Chinese translation of Pliny the Elder saying,

The first people that are known of here are the Seres, so famous for the wool that is found in their forests. After steeping it in water, they comb off a white down that adheres to the leaves;² and then to the females of our part of the world they give the twofold task of unravelling their textures, and of weaving the threads afresh. So manifold is the labour, and so distant are the regions which are thus ransacked to supply a dress through which our ladies may in public display their charms. The Seres are of inoffensive manners, but, bearing a strong resemblance therein to all savage nations, they shun all intercourse with the rest of mankind, and await the approach of those who wish to traffic with them.³

1. Professor 张西平 [ZHĀNG xī ping] is a member of the Chinese Communist Party. He holds a bachelor’s degree from the 中国解放军政治学院 [zhōng guó jiě fàng jūn zhèng zhì xué yuàn or People’s Liberation Army Political Science College] and a master’s degree in philosophy from the 中国社会科学院 [zhōng guó shè huì kē xué yuàn or Chinese Academy of Social Sciences]. He began his career as a librarian and now holds among many titles the position of 海外汉学研究中心副主任 [hǎi wài hàn xué yán jiū zhōng xīn fù zhǔ rèn or Associate Director of the Center for Overseas Chinese Studies Research] at Beijing Foreign Studies University.

2. The Greeks believed that silk grew on trees.—Ed.

3. Pliny the Elder, *The Natural History*, trans. John Bostock and H. T. Riley (London: H. G. Bohn, 1855–57), 6.20; This second English translation is available on-line at the Perseus Digital Library, edited by Gregory R. Crane (<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Plin.+Nat.+toc&redirect=true>).

In a sagacious tone, the professor and director 张西平 [ZHĀNG xī ping] concludes that “almost all Western researchers agree that it was Ctesias who first used *Seres* to describe 中国 [zhōng guó or literally the central country].⁴

This long quote that Professor 张西平 [ZHĀNG xī ping] uses to open his book is a classic example of a phenomenon that Edward Said revealed as moments of Orientalism⁵ and Jacques Derrida, addressing specifically the Chinese writing system, called moments of occultation resulting from hyperbolic admiration.⁶ In both cases they point to moments when a person or a culture imagines and creates attributes for another person or culture based on some superficial details. In Derrida’s description, the Western love of the imaginary superficial characteristics of the Chinese writing system and China in general obscures a real understanding of China. Just as the Earth interferes with our view of the Moon during a lunar eclipse, our own love for the imaginary China obscures our view of it even when we travel to the country in question. Despite the wisdom of the ancient Greek intellectuals mentioned by Professor 张西平 [ZHĀNG xī ping], they could not resist pursuing the imaginary. One of the few intellectuals who did resist such “hyperbolic admiration” was the British writer, lexicographer, and talker Samuel Johnson. While he was fascinated by China, he simply thought that China was too distant and foreign for him to understand it. He chose not to expound on the topic of China and instead just happily indulged in copious amounts of one of its finer inventions—tea. Johnson must have been fully aware of the extreme *Chinoiserie* that was occurring in France throughout the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries. Perhaps with such thoughts in mind, Johnson chose to give the English word China the following definition in his dictionary, “CHINA. n.s. [from China, the country where it is made.] China ware; porcelain; a species of vessels made in China, dimly

4. 张西平 [ZHĀNG xī ping], 《欧洲早期汉学史—中西文化交流与西方汉学的兴起》[ōu zhōu zǎo qī hàn xué shǐ zhōng xī wén huà jiāo liú yǔ xī fāng hàn xué de xīng qǐ or A History of Early European Han Chinese Studies—the Rise of the Exchange of Culture between China and the West and of Western Chinese Studies], (北京：中华书局，2009), 1-2; Translations from this Chinese text are my own.

5. Said, Edward, *Orientalism*, (New York: Vintage / Random House, 1979), 1-4.

6. Derrida, Jacques, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, (1967 Baltimore, MD: Johnson Hopkins University Press, 1997), 80.

transparent, partaking of the qualities of earth and glass...⁷ Be it a type of wool (that we know as silk) manufactured in the region that we now call China or a type of Chinese porcelain ware used for tea, China and its culture has always been understood best when one is able to come into physical contact with it (even if it is just with a small morsel contained in a material object). If we are able to resist our tendency to imagine the Other as everything that we are not, then coming into physical contact with China is the surest way to gain an understanding of the complexity that is signified by “China”.

中国 [zhōng guó or China]

When studying China, and especially when relying on Chinese scholarship we face a set of issues that may not be a trap in the study of other cultures. For brevity's sake, I will call it Chinese Occidentalism. Endymion Wilkinson, the distinguished student of Chinese history, expresses this very dilemma in the following manner,

When we look back from today, it is easy to forget that the Chinese, their language, and their culture were “ever in the process of becoming.” The main reason that it is easy to overlook this is that the modern Western image of China was not formed at different stages of the process but at the end of the imperial era. Moreover, the last phases of the tradition were taken mistakenly as being accurate reflections of all previous stages. Encouragement for this view came from Chinese culture itself, which constantly invoked the models of the classical age...Starting with the Zhōu [dynasty] and repeated in a systematic way in the Hàn [dynasty], the past was rewritten in light of contemporary cosmological beliefs and political agendas. The practice continued with the Táng [dynasty], with the establishment of a new historical office with official historians whose principal duty was to enforce the legitimacy of the dynasty by showing that past precedent was respected and continuity maintained. Thereafter, because the literary style of the scholars remained essentially unaltered, and officials deliberately used old terms for new institutions, this, too, gave rise to the erroneous impression that Chinese civilization was not only ancient but also unchanging. It was an impression that influenced the first scholarly interpreters of China to the West, the Jesuits, who stressed literary and philosophical continuity with the classical age. The impression was

7. Johnson, Samuel. *A Dictionary of the English language in which the Words are Deduced from their Originals, and Illustrated in their Different Significations by Examples from the Best Writers : to which are Prefixed, a History of the Language, and an English Grammar*, by Samuel Johnson, s.v. “China” Vol. 1, 4th ed. (London : Printed by W. Strahan, for W. Strahan, J. & F. Rivington, 1773); The Boston Athenæum copy includes a note on front fly leaf: “Read aloud to Samuel H. Scudder (every single word from title page to finis), began January 12, 1905, ended October 24 [1905]. M.E. Blatchford, Cambridge”; with the bookplate of Dudley Coutts Marjoribank, and M. E. Blatchford, and Samuel Hubbard Scudder listed as possible past owners; This information was kindly provided by Mary Warnement, the William D. Hacker Head of Reader Services at the Boston Athenæum, who in a moment of spontaneity looked up the entry for “China” in Johnson’s *Dictionary*. Her action immediately reminded me of my experience of looking up the same term in a facsimile of the *Dictionary*, when Greg Clingham, Professor of English and Director of the University Press at Bucknell University, guided me to Dr. Johnson’s house during the Tercentenary festivities. To both, I give my thanks for this thought.

powerfully re-enforced in the nineteenth century, because China by comparison with the changes in the newly industrializing centers of the West, seemed like a country caught in an unchanging time warp. Seen from a distance, the landscape appeared flat and, it was assumed, unchanging over time. In the twentieth century, Chinese intellectuals and politicians indirectly reinforced these views. They were impatient with their own past and completely rejected the old notion that it was a mirror for the present. Nevertheless, they continued to foreshorten the past and to use it—selectively, anachronistically and teleologically—to legitimize the present, a practice that nationalism reinforces today...for all those reasons, it is easy to fall into ahistorical interpretations of Chinese history.⁸

Chinese Occidentalism then is China's hyperbolic admiration of the imaginary China that is created by both those outside of China and those who are inside China's own history. China's love of the use of the motto 中国有上下五千年历史 [zhōng guó yǒu shàng xià wǔ qiān nián lì shǐ or "a civilization with five thousand years of continuous history"] is the most prevalent example of this type of Chinese Occidentalism. The people, government of China, and most unfortunately its scholars are in a habit of falling into the trap of making "ahistorical interpretations of" not only Chinese history (as lamented by Wilkinson) but also Chinese culture and identity. The slipperiness of the slope toward Chinese Occidentalism is demonstrated by Professor 张西平 [ZHĀNG xī píng]'s use of a single term in his book on the history of early European sinology—中国 [zhōng guó China]. When the ancient Greek philosophers were writing about *Seres*, China was certainly not the People's Republic of China, nor was it a 国 [guó or country]. While this term 中国 [zhōng guó] does exist in the literature of the Zhōu dynasty (1766 BCE-1027 BCE), it represented a region that is geographically, culturally, and politically very different from the 中国 [zhōng guó] of today and certainly it would not have been written in simplified Chinese characters but definitely in an archaic form of Chinese that looks more like the traditional form 中國 done in superb calligraphy as demonstrated by 方先生 [FĀNG xiān sheng] on the front cover of this volume. If a distinguished and renowned scholar such as Professor 张西平 [ZHĀNG xī píng] was unable to avoid the trap of Chinese Occidentalism, how then do average scholars of China and the Humanities hope to stay on the narrow path between European and Anglo-American Orientalism and Chinese Occidentalism?

Humanities

Prior to World War I, the term Humanities represented in the English language the Latin word *humanitas* "in its sense of mental cultivation befitting a man, liberal education as used by Aulus Gellius, Cicero, and others; hence,

8. Wilkinson, Endymion Porter, *Chinese History: A Manual*, Harvard Yen-ching Institute Monograph Series 52, (Cambridge, MASS: Harvard University Asia Center, Harvard Yen-ching Institute, distributed by Harvard University Press, 2000), xv-xvi.

taken as being equal to 'literary culture, polite literature, *litteræ humaniores*'.⁹ The subjects covered under this term included all subjects that were not science and theology. The trauma of the two world wars, global industrialization, and the dominance of the sciences has led the twentieth century to be a century of atomistic thinking. Influenced by the arrival of the atomic age, all fields of intellectual inquiry followed the procedures that led to an understanding of atomic structure, the division of the subject of study into ever smaller components for detailed examination.

This general propensity for atomistic thinking dominated the American academy and also influenced foreign scholars in the Humanities. With the passing of each decade and the retirement of each generation of scholars in the Humanities, humanity was left with an ever decreasing number of scholars whose competence extended beyond their immediate specialty.

With the disappearance of these holistic thinkers also came the end of the age of the gentleman and gentlewoman scholar who conducted research from their drawing rooms. The vibrant communities of expert amateurs faded into the academic past and they were replaced by modern professional scholars who knew their specialty but very little else. Yet unlike the structure of an atom, the core of the Humanities that is nourished by its roots in literature, philosophy, and language contained as much significance as a whole as it did in its parts. The desire to be more like the sciences and the improper application of pseudo-scientific methods to Humanistic studies led to the general decline of the field. Professional scholars of the Humanities became better qualified with an ever growing number of degrees and titles, but they also became more and more specialized and lost sight of both the holistic nature of their discipline and the interest of their most loyal supporters—their audience of amateurs.

While the sciences continued to explore the unknown and from their discoveries produced tangible objects of their genius in the form of new technologies for humanity, scholars in the Humanities entrenched themselves in their ivory towers and shunned any amateur who sought an understanding of *litteræ humaniores*. This general decline began in the late nineteenth century and continues today. Today, the Humanities no longer hold the same sway as it once did in society and *litteræ humaniores* is no longer seen as a source of moral and ethical guidance for humanity.

Since World War II, the decline in the relevance of scholarship on the Humanities increased because of the impact of a specific phenomenon that severely affected the American academic community and to a lesser extent the British and European academies. From the middle of the 1960s to the middle of the 1990s, Humanistic studies came under the influence of the emergence, dominance, backlash and gradual decline of what might be called the age of literary and critical theory.

9. Oxford English Dictionary, Compact Edition, s.v. "Humanity."

Beginning in the 1960s, American universities led by Yale brought distinguished philosophers and intellectuals from Europe and Britain to develop a theoretical field of study that would match the prestige of disciplines such as theoretical physics. Literary theory then became a very exciting field where students of literature hung on every signified signification in every signifier that was once a word that has now been deconstructed by the writings of Jacques Derrida, Paul de Man, and others. Philosophy became the domain of these Deconstructionists and students of the Humanities battered their brains against the work of these literary theoreticians as great works of literature gathered dust on forgotten library shelves. As the study of literature became the reading of secondary and tertiary sources explaining poorly translated texts, the languages fared no better. For the teaching and study of languages became the realm of Semioticians (who believed that all languages were just mental images drawn in the sand of our imagination) and the linguists (who are the scientists of language and who are able to systematically explain every language on earth but remained monolingual during their entire lives).

The prestige of literary theory as a school of criticism and the popularity of the study of Semiotics became so dominant in the Humanities that as an English Ph.D. candidate in the mid to late 1980s, you were unlikely to find a job unless you expressed a serious interest in literary theory and included a chapter on the Semiotic reading of the subject of your research in your dissertation. For almost four decades, Semiotics, Literary Deconstruction reigned supreme in the study of the Humanities. The domination of this practice of literary analysis held sway because it placated the ego of Humanistic scholars by creating a whole body of written texts that were little read, difficult to understand, and for the most part did not help humanity to understand philosophy, literature, or learn any languages. The age of literary and critical theory has now waned because this field that promoted the theoretical study of literature had one single major flaw—the lack of objectivity.

When scientists speak of theory, it means a highly likely set of guesses that have progressed through the scientific method. Starting out from a simple conjecture, the scientist gathers more data to make an informed hypothesis. Through repeated trials and tests the scientific community may agree to raise the generally accepted hypothesis to the status of a theory. Only very rarely do these theories later become a formal law. This type of objective testing of conjecture, hypothesis, and theory is not possible in literary theory. How can you make an objective test of literary theory when the very object of its inquiry, literature, is not objective but depends on subjective interpretation?

The lack of evidence for what is claimed by literary theorists and the opaque language that they employ no longer performed the ultimate duty of a humanistic scholar—to serve literature by helping readers to understand it. When literary criticism no longer fulfilled this role and the average reader could hardly understand the dense and opaque language of literary theory, the Humanities lost the key to its survival—its readers.

These concerns came to the foreground in 2007 when Wall Street traders, who were not taught any ethics, caused the near total collapse of the global financial market by violating financial regulations and abusing the trust of their customers through irresponsible financial dealings. Seeking wisdom and advice, a very wealthy investment banker made a significant donation to the Modern Language Association (the leading American professional organization for scholars of the Humanities). To honor this business man who sought moral guidance from scholars of the Humanities, he was given an honorary award and the opportunity to give a speech on a topic of his own choosing during the Presidential Forum at the 2007 Modern Language Association (MLA) convention held in Chicago. The title of the talk given by this elderly banker was “A Crisis in the Humanities”. In no uncertain terms, he declared to his audience that we who studied and taught the Humanities have failed in our responsibilities. We are no longer teaching ethics and morals through the study of literature. If memory serves, he ended his speech with a personal plea for us to teach once more literature that will instill sound values and ethics into our students and help them to find the moral compass that will provide guidance for a lifetime. Sitting in that audience as a very junior member of the profession, I was touched by the sincerity in both the banker’s voice and his plea for help. His cry of desperation fell on deaf ears and there was a total lack of response from his audience. The only acknowledgement of his message was the haughty and thinly disguised expression of disgust on the faces of the conference organizing committee (that included some leading literary theorists). Witnessing this, I realized that very few individuals in the MLA were actually concerned about the Humanistic scholar’s role in serving both literature and its readers. The 2007 MLA annual convention allowed me to understand viscerally that there really was a crisis in the Humanities. How can I respond to that banker’s plea and teach once more a culture of humaneness through the Humanities?

人文 [rén wén or Humanities]

No equivalent term of similar age and meaning exists in Chinese for the Anglo-American term the Humanities. In a conversation during a lunch at Suffolk University in Boston, Dr. Ronald Suleski, the Director of the Rosenberg Institute for East Asian Studies, not only generously provided a sumptuous meal but in his kind and professorial manner reminded me that the lack of an equivalent term does not mean that China did not have the equivalent of the study of *littera humaniores*. Dr. Suleski concluded wisely that there was no such term for the Humanities in Chinese because all intellectual pursuits in ancient China were considered the Humanities and therefore it was just 学问 [xué wèn or knowledge] which also included what the West referred to as science and technology.¹⁰ Prior to 1911 CE, as in

10. Ronald Suleski, conversation over lunch, December 15, 2009.

Europe and Anglo-America before World War I, traditional literary scholarship also provided a moral and intellectual compass for Chinese literati. That changed when the Empire of China was replaced by the Republic and thereafter by a People's Republic. Both of these new states cared only for strong ships and accurate guns. In the march toward scientific, technological, and economic superiority (be it through Marxist-Leninist Communism or Capitalism with Chinese characteristics) almost everyone in China forgot, repressed, and literally burned into ashes their desire to understand China's humanistic past that was always based on the Four books and Five classics.¹¹

This trend took a gradual turn at the beginning of this century. As China regained its economic and technological prowess by looking only toward the future and profit, the people in China realized that one of the side effects of carrying out 邓小平 [DÈNG xiǎo píng]'s dictum of “look only toward the future when to get rich is glorious” was that their children and those living around them lost their moral compass. Faced with this crisis, they began to feel a desire to rediscover the Chinese literary and humanistic tradition that they or their parents once burned with vigor as members of the Red Guard serving the will of their great helmsman 毛泽东 [MÁO zé dōng] in his Cultural Revolution. The term that is now commonly used in China for this renewed interest in both the study of China's literary, philosophical, and linguistic tradition and the study of European and Anglo-American Humanities 人文科学 [rén wén kē xué or human literary sciences]. I confirmed these trends when I visited China in the summer of 2006. In many conversations with Chinese scholars and students of 人文科学 [rén wén kē xué or Chinese Humanities] I realized that what they desired most was intellectual collaboration with academics from outside of China. How can I help beyond going to China myself?

How can I help the Humanities avoid a crisis in the profession? How can I help Chinese scholars engage with the world? How can I help those outside of China move beyond Anglo-American and European Orientalism and those inside China to see past their own Chinese Occidentalism? Burdened with these weighty thoughts, I arrived at the Campus of the American University of Paris in the summer of 2007 to attend the Fifth International Conference on New Directions in the Humanities. After the first day of conferencing, I realized that I had found an audience and conference that was the antithesis of the MLA convention. While the numbers were comparatively smaller, the delegates at the Humanities Conference were from a multitude of countries and each person showed a sincere interest in the in-

11. The “four books” refers to the 大学 [dà xué or Great Learning], the 中庸 [zhōng yōng or Doctrine of the Mean], the 论语 [lún yǔ or Analects of Confucius], and the 孟子 [mèng zǐ or Mencius] selected by the Song dynasty (960 CE–1279 CE) scholar 朱熹 [ZHŪ xī] as a set of introductory texts to the philosophy of Confucius. The Five Classics consists of texts compiled or edited by Confucius. These are the 易经 [yì jīng or Book of Changes], 诗经 [shī jīng or Book of Poetry], 礼记 [lǐ jì or Book of Rites], 书经 [shū jīng or Book of History], and the 春秋 [chūn qiū or Spring and Autumn Annals]. Together they form the core of the Chinese literary canon.

tellectual content of the presentations by their fellow conference delegates. Despite some linguistic and cultural barriers we were all there to learn from each other and most importantly to find common ground.

After the conference and through the publication process of my very first refereed article, I realized that the annual conferences are only a part of Mary Kalantzis and Bill Cope's new theory on learning and education.¹² Unlike proponents of literary theory, they are using proper scientific methods in testing their theories on education by bringing the classroom into the conference room and testing their hypotheses through Common Ground, their publishing and conference organizing community that "is committed to building new kinds of knowledge communities, innovative in their media and their messages."¹³

My *simpatico esprit de corps* with the conference and my enthusiasm for "building new kinds of knowledge" in the Humanities must have shown through during the first three days of the Fifth International Conference on New Directions in the Humanities.¹⁴ As I walked back to the conference venue after a stroll in a sunlit *Champ de Mars*, a young Greek with an Aussie accent (who I later learned was Phillip Kalantzis-Cope and now Director of Common Ground) took a pause in organizing our boxed lunches and winked at me and said "Don't be late for your talk now, the managing director is coming and that doesn't always happen!"

Bill Cope, then Managing Director and now President of Common Ground was one of the first people to arrive for my talk. He also used his full authority to end the presentation of the distinguished, endowed Professor of Humanities who preceded me in the room where I was to speak. That gentleman, who probably had never been told to stop talking in his academic life, relinquished the room and to my surprise, his audience stayed and within the cozy confines of a small classroom I presented my talk¹⁵ to an audience of almost twenty full-fledged academicians. After my presentation, Bill Cope told me that he thought I raised some interesting questions. I then asked him "What do you think my talk was about?" When he answered "moving beyond Semiotics..." I knew that I had found the community that would support my search for the answers to those tough questions of mine. That was the beginning of my association with Common Ground. Finding this community of like-minded scholars interested in the Humanities was the second step in finding the answer to my troubling questions.

12. Kalantzis, Mary and Bill Cope. *New: Learning: Elements of a Science of Education*. (Cambridge University Press, 2008).

13. Common Ground Publishing, "About," Common Ground, <http://commongroundpublishing.com/> (accessed October 1, 2010).

14. Common Ground, "Seventh International Conference on New Directions in the Humanities," Past Conferences, <http://h07.cgpublisher.com/welcome.html> (accessed on September 25, 2010).

15. Tchou, Kang, "Trust, Aggression, Incorporation, and Restitution: A New Direction for the 21st Century," *The International Journal of the Humanities* 5, no. 10 (2008): 159-68.

The beginning of my answer had come more than a year before I even knew of Common Ground's existence. On a cold but crisp day in February Julia Kristeva, Professor of Linguistics at the Université de Paris VII, came to speak at Bucknell University on the topic of "Feminine Genius". She was also to receive the University's highest distinction, the Award of Merit. After her lecture the conveners of the event¹⁶, Professors Michael Payne, Susan Fischer, and Katherine Faull, all encouraged me to go to a local pub so that I could meet Julia Kristeva in an intimate setting.

Among these distinguished scholars and in the presence of a feminine genius whose work I greatly respected, I felt quite out of place. Overwhelmed and trapped in a rare moment of timidity, I sat all evening listening to the exchange of polite but intense conversation starting with translation but quickly covering the entire range of the Humanities. For the entire evening I sat and observed in polite silence.

After the pouring of libations, a more relaxed but visibly tired Julia Kristeva turned to me and put her theory of the feminine *sémiotique* into practice. She first asked "what do you teach?" When I told her that I was a former student at the University and that I was now teaching introductory Chinese as a temporary lecturer, she immediately switched the language of our conversation from accented English to perfectly standard Mandarin Chinese.

In our tête-à-tête in a Chinese dialect that we both had to learn, I began to realize that Julia Kristeva who had never before been West of New York City in the United States felt just as out of place as I did in the small but quaint Victorian town of Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. I now had a personal and immediate link to a world-renowned intellectual who helped to set the course for the study of the Humanities and for humanity in general. Toward the end of the evening, Julia Kristeva asked me about my surname, "Why does it sound French and not Chinese?" I explained to her that I was born in the old French concession of Shanghai, and that my great-grandfather T. T. Tchou was among the two graduates in the first graduating class from the medical school of the Université l'Aurore, a French Catholic university in Shanghai. Julia Kristeva was delighted by my explanation and she smiled and said "Then, we have something in common."

In May 1974, Julia Kristeva with "comrades" from the *Tel Quel* group that included Philippe Sollers, Roland Barthes, François Wahl and Marcelin Pleyne visited China. Perhaps on that trip, she was also searching for something in common with the Chinese. To her surprise what she found was that she did not have anything in common with the women or men of China. She wrote of her initial experience, "I don't feel like a foreigner, the way I do in Baghdad or New York. I feel like an ape, a Martian, an *other*."¹⁷

16. Faull, Katherine M. and Susan Fischer, "Translations: The Movement of Meanings," 2006 Charles H. Watts II Humanities Institute, <http://www.bucknell.edu/x31102.xml> (accessed 29 September 2010).

17. Kristeva, Julia, *About Chinese Women*, trans. A. Barrows (London: Marion Boyars Publishers), 2000, 12.

Since revisiting China in 2009, Julia Kristeva has changed her opinion of the country and its people.¹⁸ I realized from my conversation with her that it was going to China that finally allowed her to see past her own Orientalism but that she also saw in the eyes of her Chinese observers their Chinese Occidentalism.

At the conclusion of the Paris Humanities conference, the co-ordinators asked conference delegates if they had suggestions for future conferences. After returning to Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, I wrote to Bill Cope with the suggestion that the Seventh International Conference in 2009 should take place in China. Having the conference in China would allow me and Common Ground to bring scholars not just from one country to another but what ended up being representatives of 16 different countries to interact with Chinese scholars in the Humanities. From June 2 to June 5, 2009, the second part of the answer to my questions became a reality at the 友谊宾馆 [yǒu yì bīn guǎn or Friendship Hotel] in Beijing, China. The selection of the conference venue (which traditionally has been at universities) was influenced by logistics (not many Chinese universities can support a major international conference with over 450 presentations). However, since the dates that I set for the conference coincided with the anniversary of the 天安门 [Tiān ān mén or Gate of Heavenly Peace] student protests, I also wanted the freedom that the largest and most historic hotel in all of China might offer. This decision turned out to be right since even though the title of our conference had no mention of human rights, our conference secretariat received a call from the Chinese government a day before the conference to make sure that “Humanities” did not mean human rights.¹⁹ Beyond intellectual freedom, the conference venue also was a statement that this conference was more than just for scholars and academics; it was also an extension of friendship from the academic community from 16 different countries to the Chinese academy. This all took place in a hotel that was named for the friendship between the peoples of Communist China and the Soviet Union in a building that was the Hall of Sciences.

In the past three years, from the Olympics in Beijing to the Shanghai World Exposition, the Chinese dragon that Napoleon Bonaparte hoped would sleep forever has awakened from its slumber. If 2008 was for China a year of international athletics, and 2010 a year of business and economics,

18. Kristeva, Julia, “Beauvoir in China,” translated by Susan Nicholls, [http:// www.kristeva.fr/ beauvoir-in-china.html](http://www.kristeva.fr/beauvoir-in-china.html) (accessed September 29, 2010).

19. Chen, Jacqueline, personal conversation, June 2, 2009.

then the Seventh International Conference on New Directions in the Humanities, by bringing scholars from around the world to China, made 2009 a year of finding common ground through the Humanities in China.

Kang Tchou | 朱卫康
Sherlock Library
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Cantabrigiensis

1 October 2010²⁰

20. This preface was completed on the 61st anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.