

BOOK REVIEWS

Pi-chiao wen-hsüeh tzu-hsüeh shou-ts'e 比較文學自學手冊 [A Handbook to Comparative Literature]. Ed. Liu Xianbiao (Liu Hsien-piao) 劉獻彪. Ch'ang-sha 長沙: Hu-nan Wen-i 湖南文藝, 1986. 431p.

This is a do-it-yourself handbook which provides an informative introduction for anyone interested in the field of comparative literature. Prior to reading this book, the reader is not required to have any knowledge of the field. This elementary introduction is presented in plain and simple language, inviting every reader to enter the world of comparative literature.

The *Handbook* approaches the subject in a systematic way and is divided into seven sections:

- I. What is Comparative Literature 甚麼是比較文學 (pages 1-57)
- II. Approaches to Comparative Literature 比較文學的方法 (pages 59-103)
- III. Comparative Literature Abroad 比較文學在海外 (pages 105-162)
- IV. Comparative Literature in China 比較文學在中國 (pages 163-228)
- V. Explanations of Terms 名詞解釋 (pages 229-277)
- VI. List of Important Events in Comparative Literature 比較文學大事年表 (pages 279-348)
- VII. Introduction to Comparative Literature Books and Journals 比較文學論著期刊簡介 (pages 349-388)

These seven sections are followed by three appendices:

- Appendix I. An Introduction to Famous Overseas Scholars of Comparative Literature 部份國外著名比較文學工作者簡介 (pages 389-402)
- Appendix II. A Bibliography of Major Works on Comparative Literature in China between 1907-1983 1907-1983年間我國主要比較文學論著目錄 (pages 403-419)
- Appendix III. An Index-list of Materials Concerning the Study of Comparative Literature in Taiwan, Hong Kong and China 台、港中西比較文學研究資料索引 (pages 420-427)

The *Handbook* begins with a preface written by Yang Zhouhan (Yang

Chou-han)楊周翰, and ends with an editorial note by Liu Xianbiao. In the Preface, Yang touches on "parallel" study in comparative literature and recounts briefly the advantages of comparative literature and how the study declined in China after the May Fourth Movement. But in recent years there has been a "rebirth" of comparative literature in China. Thus Yang concludes that this is the appropriate time to have this *Handbook* published. Liu himself acknowledges comparative literature's late start in China and has taken up the task of editing handbooks to comparative literature because he feels that it is very necessary and helpful for the many interested readers in China. In his note at the end of the book, the editor mentions nineteen books and journals, both Chinese and English, from which he has gathered useful information. These books and journals are all discussed in Part VII, but they strike this reviewer as being a bit arbitrary in their selection. Perhaps this is due to the practical problem of simple access to a large and comprehensive library of comparative literature.

Under Section I there are seven sub-titles, pointing out some basic information about comparative literature. After a brief introduction, Liu traces the origin of the term "comparative literature." Then he discusses comparative literature as an independent subject. He is assured of the importance of comparative literature and its essential status in the world of literatures and substantiates this by explaining briefly how comparative literature has built its structure on the foundation of world literature. Next, Liu talks about the object and content of studying comparative literature. Perhaps too much attention is given to introducing "parallel" and "influence" studies, especially in light of the fact that the same issues are again discussed in Section II. When indicating the function and meaning of comparative literature, Liu elaborates the importance of the historical function of comparative literature by relying on the idea of Marxism. But when defining the term "comparative literature," he presents both Chinese and Western scholars' points of view. Liu also suggests some questions for readers to pay attention to; for example, how to go about establishing an appropriate definition of comparative literature among so many schools and ideas. Then Liu examines how comparative literature is related to and distinguished from six other literary fields: Literary Theory, Literary Criticism, Literary History, National Literature, World Literature and General Literature. In addition, Liu traces the development and importance of Chinese-Western comparative literature.

Section II is intended to introduce readers to the study of comparative

literature through the three main approaches: influence study, parallel study, and inter-disciplinary study. Liu establishes certain principles and points out the limitations of each approach, providing an aid to a better understanding of the study's procedures. Liu's discussion is followed appropriately by Yang Zhouhan's essay, "The Cany Wagons with Sails in Milton's *Paradise Lost*." The essay describes how the Europeans of the seventeenth century admired the scientific and technical discoveries of China and how Milton adopted the Chinese product, the cany wagon with sails, in his immortal poem. Including this essay here is intended to exemplify the application of influence study and parallel study. The essay, though competently written, seems strangely out of place here because it is concerned mostly with social and geographical aspects of this epic rather than its literary dimension. It would have been much more suitable to have chosen an essay that dealt with Chinese-Western comparative literature and highlighted the different literary backgrounds.

The third section reveals the general situation of comparative literature in different countries, such as France, the United States, Russia, Germany, England and Italy. The order is based on the importance of comparative literature in each part of the world. A briefer treatment is also given to countries in the East, such as India, Arabia, Egypt, China, Japan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, etc.

Section IV is about comparative literature in China. Firstly, Liu traces the origins of comparative literature in China back to the end of Han dynasty in the second century although he acknowledges the early twentieth century as the approximate time when it became a formal academic discipline in China. The twentieth century is described as a flourishing period of comparative literature in China. Some influential scholars of this time, such as Wen I-to 聞一多 and Lu Hsüan 魯迅 are introduced in great detail. Secondly, the tradition of comparative literature in China is discussed. This is the best-handled part of this section in which Liu speaks of the contribution of translations in exploring the influence of foreign literature on Chinese literature, and vice versa. Meanwhile, he chooses to discuss four major essays of comparative literature studies written or translated respectively by four Chinese scholars: Lu Hsün 魯迅, Cheng Chen-feng 鄭振鋒, Hsü Ti-shan 許地山, and Wen Chin-chuan 溫晉轉. Then the process, various reasons, and the characteristics of the rise of comparative literature in China are carefully examined. Liu's analysis is vivid and clear. He is optimistic about the future development of comparative literature in China, and believes that a Chinese School of comparative literature will be established some day.

In the fifth section, "Explanation of Terms," the editor attempts to include comparatively brief explanations of certain words and phrases which are peculiar to the study of comparative literature, and which a reader or a student may wish to have defined or explained. Although the terms are not comprehensive and the explanations not detailed, we can see that the compilation has involved a considerable effort. This section covers 49 pages (pp. 229-277) explaining 156 terms. Some of the terms are accompanied by English translations, or listed in the term's original written form, such as in French or in German. In addition to the explanation given, this is helpful to the understanding of a term in its original meaning. But not all the Chinese translations of particular Western terms indicate the foreign original forms. For a beginner in comparative literature, she/he will be confronted with many specific terms while reading foreign literary works. Perhaps the student of comparative literature should not be expected to know that *Ch'ao-hsieh-shih chu-i* 超現實主義 is the Chinese translation of "Surrealism" (the original Western spelling is never mentioned in Liu's book).

Section VI lists the important events of "comparative literature" from 200 B.C. until the end of 1985. Except for those important events which occurred in recent decades, I think the "ancient" ones are only important as vague precursors to the study of comparative literature as an academic discipline. The list is a rather comprehensive one, nonetheless, even giving a parallel column of historical events which occurred in the world for our reference. Unfortunately, there are some major oversights, namely, the omission of comparative literature conferences, etc., held in Taiwan.

The last section introduces the books and abstracts of comparative literature which the editor has found particularly helpful to himself and also to most readers. Altogether only nineteen works are cited. I would have preferred a listing that suggests some other important works rather than take up space with long descriptions of just a few works. Some books which contain bibliographies in comparative literature might also have been included too. It is disappointing that such important journals as Taiwan's *Tamkang Review* and *Chung-Wai Literary Monthly* 中外文學 are not included in this section, especially since several complete sets of these journals are available in the PRC.

The style of presentation is traditional, and not very stimulating or innovative. The *Handbook* manifests a weakness common to most general handbooks; it is of little interest except to those already enthusiastic about the field. It is not enticing enough of an invitation to readers who are just

mildly curious. On the other hand, this book does give a useful overview of comparative literature and, for interested beginners, it is a rather good place to start.

BERNICE YEE MEI-YUEN

Pi-chiao wen-hsüeh chi ch'i tsai Chung-kuo te hsing-ch'i 比較文學及其在中國的興起 [Comparative Literature and Its Rise in China]. By Liu Xianbiao (Liu Hsien-piao) 劉獻彪. Nan-ning 南寧: Kuang-hsi Jen-min 廣西人民, 1986. 346 p.

In the Preface to this book (hereafter, *Rise*), the author states: "The study of comparative literature has existed abroad for some time, and is no longer something fresh and new. In China, on the contrary, it is merely a new program in university curricula. It is just like a virgin forest waiting to be explored." On the one hand, Liu is very pleased to note the recent flourishing comparative literature studies in China; on the other, he feels a bit upset because beginners do not have basic reference materials on comparative literature in China. Therefore, he has written this book in order to give an overview of comparative literature as an academic discipline in the Chinese literary world.

Liu is a hardworking publishing scholar and he has set himself the task of editing or writing books concerning comparative literature studies. This very important service has contributed significantly to those needing some initiation and guidance in this field. Among his earlier publications on comparative literature is *Lu Hsün yü Chung-jih wen-hua chiao-liu* 魯迅與中日文化交流 [Lu Hsün and the Cultural Inter-flow between China and Japan], published in Ch'ang-sha 長沙 by the Hu-nan Jen-min Publishing Company 湖南人民出版社 in 1981.

According to Liu's Preface, his *Rise* can be classified into three parts: A. An Introduction to the Theories and Understanding of Comparative Literature (Chapters I to IV); B. An Introduction to the Present Status of Comparative Literature in China and Chinese Comparative Literature Scholars (Chapters V and VI); and C. Expectations about the Development of Comparative Literature (Chapter VII). I will follow this sequence in the review which follows.

Actually many chapters of this book have already been included in

another book by Liu which was published just two months before this work appeared. The earlier publication was entitled *Pi-chiao wen-hsüeh tzu-hsüeh shou-ts'e* 比較文學自學手冊 [A Handbook to Comparative Literature], brought out by the Hu-nan Wen-i Publishing Company 湖南文藝出版社 in 1986, which I have treated separately (see previous review above). It is instructive to outline the general content of these two texts. The chapters and subtitles which more or less correspond are (the Roman numerals below stand for chapters, the Arabic ones stand for sub-titles, and the English letters for sub-sub-titles):

<i>Rise</i>	<i>Handbook</i>
I. 1. The Term Comparative Literature (pp. 2-5)	I. 2. Origin of the Term "Comparative Literature" (pp. 1-4)
2. Characteristics of Comparative Literature (pp. 5-9)	3. Comparative Literature as an Independent Subject (pp. 4-8)
3. Object, Range and Content of Comparative Literature (pp. 9-15)	4. Object and Content of Comparative Literature Studies (pp. 8-17)
4. Approaches of Comparative Literature (pp. 15-19)	II. 1. General Comparative Approaches are Different from Comparative Literature Approaches (pp. 59-61)
I. 5. Function and Meaning of Comparative Literature (pp. 19-27)	I. 5. Function and Meaning of Comparative Literature (pp. 17-24)
6. Definition of Comparative Literature (pp. 27-45)	6. Definition of Comparative Literature (pp. 24-41)
7. Relationship between Comparative Literature and Other Subjects (pp. 45-47)	7. Comparative Literature as Related to and Distinguished from Other Subjects (pp. 47-57)
III. History and Present Status	III. Comparative Literature Abroad

- of Comparative Literature (pp. 63-91) (pp. 105-162)
- IV. 3. a. Translation Activities in China (pp. 113-152) IV. 2. Tradition of Comparative Literature in China, including translation activities and four major essays (pp. 189-212)
- b. Five Major Essays of Comparative Literature, including one translated from German (pp. 152-174)
- c. A Bibliography of Major Works on Comparative Literature (pp. 174-185) Appendix II. A Bibliography of Major Works on Comparative Literature in China between 1907-83 (pp. 403-420)
- V. Establishment of Comparative Literature as a Program in China's Universities (pp. 186-217) IV. 3. a. Revival of Comparative Literature in China (pp. 212-224, the first portion)
- VII. Prospects of Comparative Literature Studies in China (pp. 288-297) b. Revival of Comparative Literature in China (pp. 224-228, the second portion)
- Appendix IV. An Index-list of Materials Concerning Chinese-Western Comparative Literature Studies in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and China (pp. 338-346) Appendix III. An Index-list of Materials Concerning Chinese-Western Comparative Literature Studies in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and China (pp. 420-427)

In the first part of *Rise*, the chapters are entitled: I. What is Comparative Literature 甚麼是比較文學; II. Schools of Comparative Literature 比較文學學派; III. History and Present Status of Comparative Literature 比較文學的歷史和現狀; and IV. Comparative Literature: Heritage and Major Works 比較文學的遺產和論著. More specifically, Chapter II introduces three schools of comparative literature: the French School, the American School and the Russian School. Liu urges beginners of Comparative literature to learn about the distinctive features of these non-Chinese schools, so as to establish a historical and developmental viewpoint in understanding what comparative literature is. The discussion about each school is brief but clear. Chapter IV also gives a brief history of comparative literature in France and the United States. Some representative works are described. But the supplementary bibliography about comparative literature publications in France and the United States include only a small number: ten books in the former; ten books and two journals in the latter. In any case, Chapters II to IV mention many influential Western scholars and their works. For purposes of easier identification, it would have been helpful to have their names in their original Western spelling included immediately after the Chinese characters.

The second part of the book contains two chapters: V. Establishment of Comparative Literature as a Program in China 比較文學作為一門學科在中國的建立; and VI. Introduction to some Prominent Chinese Scholars of Comparative Literature 中國比較文學簡介. Liu makes much of the contribution some influential scholars have made to comparative literature before and after the May Fourth Movement, such as Lu Hsün 魯迅, Liang Ch'i-ch'ao 梁啟超, Mao Tün 矛盾, etc. They were not *ex professo* comparativists, for they either disliked glorifying themselves in this way or simply were not conscious that their literary efforts were part of the specialized discipline of comparative literature. In fact, these writers and critics were real scholars of comparative literature before it became a formal academic discipline in institutions of higher learning. Their names should be included in Liu's list, at least, as precursors. Within the list, other contemporary Chinese scholars of comparative literature are also included. Altogether, there are the names of thirty-two scholars listed. At the end of the description of each scholar, there is a list of representative works written by that scholar. This is very helpful to readers in tracing relevant readings.

The third section of Liu's book contains only one chapter (VII) which is entitled "Prospects of Comparative Literature Studies in China" 中國比較文學研究的展望. Liu nourishes the hope that comparative literature studies

will be an important program in Chinese literary circles. He expects present scholars to pave the way for future generations. He suggests a constantly up-dated accumulation of information from abroad on comparative literature. Exchanging comparative literature ideas among countries from all over the world must not be neglected and, on the domestic scene, much effort should be taken to educate potential comparativists-to-be. Liu even expects that a "Chinese School" of comparative literature will be set up in order to explore a new dimension in comparative literature studies.

Liu's *Rise* concludes with four appendices. The first two include translations of rather out-dated essays: Appendix I. "Introduction to Theories of Comparative Literature" 比較文學理論導言, translated from the French author, P. Van Tieghem; Appendix II. "Crisis of Comparative Literature" 比較文學的危機, by the American scholar, René Wellek. The first essay introduces a basic knowledge of comparative literature theories, and the second one warns comparative literature neophytes about some wrong-headed approaches to comparative literature studies which are too subjective and incomplete. Appendix III is "A Bibliography of Comparative Literature" 比較文學參考書目, in which all the books included are in foreign languages. Yet there works are listed rather haphazardly instead of in alphabetical order. Appendix IV is "An Index-list of Materials Concerning Chinese-Western Comparative Literature Studies in Hong Kong, Taiwan, China and Overseas Countries" 港台和國外中西比較文學研究資料索引. As for Liu's own bibliographical sources for this book, there is a rather selective list of nine books, placed after the Preface.

If one had to choose between the *Rise* and Liu's *Handbook*, my preference would be for the former, largely because of the more useful materials in Chapter II and Chapter VI. Neither of these two books cover the field adequately, and there is too much overlapping. The situation could be improved considerably by combining them into one volume, thus remedying the inadequacies of each.

BERNICE YEE MEI-YUEN

Pi-chao-wên-hsüeh chien-p'ien 比較文學簡編 [A Sketch of Comparative Literature]. By Zhen Ting (Chen T'ing) 陳挺
Shanghai: East China Normal University Press, 1986. 176 p.

One swallow in the sky does not necessarily start the spring. Recently, we might be amazed to see, not one, but a swarm of swallows in the PRC sky announcing the spring of comparative literature studies in China. Zhen Ting is modest enough to see his *Pi-chao-wên-hsüeh chien-p'ien* as just one small bird among many others. Even the words "*chien p'ien*" 簡編 [sketch] reflect his unambitious intention to provide literature students and the general public with one more introductory reader. But for a reviewer not entirely ignorant of Western critical theories, Zhen's book certainly has much room for improvement. The delicate operation of reviewing this work borders on a case of "murdering to dissect," not, of course, for the cold-blooded purpose of killing a humble fledgling at the beginning of its life, but in the hope that this or other birds will soon soar higher and longer.

Zhen's book is divided into two parts. The first three chapters introduce the history and main contents of comparative literature as an academic discipline. The subsequent seven chapters, on the other hand, are seven examples of independent practical comparative studies. At the back of every chapter, there are a few review questions, which clearly show that one aim of the book is to serve as a short textbook for real beginners. In what follows, I shall deal with the entire book chapter by chapter.

Chapter 1 deals with the object, meaning and schools of comparative literature. Zhen views comparative literature as the on-going investigation of common poetics and aptly stresses the importance of going beyond literature to uncover the extrinsic as well as intrinsic causes for the surface resemblances and differences among different literatures. One of the four purposes of comparative literature given by Zhen, however, is to "promote pride in our own nation." This would no doubt be qualified or opposed by many comparatists as something of the old sinocentrism. But the third part of the chapter does offer a brief yet accurate and objective account of the French, American, and Russian schools of comparative literature studies.

Chapter 2 outlines the main contents of comparative literature studies. It consists of two sections. The first exemplifies the major components of influence studies, while the second focuses on parallel studies. It is a pity that Zhen does not give much attention to translation studies and only mentions in passing that interdisciplinary studies are "also very important."

Chapter 3 traces the history of comparative literature and pays much attention to its present stage of development. The factual information about works and institutions related to comparative literature is useful, but the questionable heart of the matter is how Zhen explains the rise of comparative literature as an international movement. Quoting from Marx and Engels, he attributes the reason for the "inevitable" formation of world literature to the economic infrastructure in the world market. One may dismiss this explanation as too far-fetched or simplistic and wonder why facile socio-economic explanations should be summoned at all.

Chapter 4 discusses the notion of idealism in Chinese and Western Romantic literature. This chapter is undoubtedly the least satisfying part of Zhen's book. Referring to Schiller, Zhen asserts that "Romanticism is idealism." Most Western scholars of Romanticism from Lovejoy to Wellek to Hartman would squarely reject this definition as over-simplified or misleading. Even if Romanticism is simply idealism, one must realize that "ideals" can be religious, secular and even epistemological. Influenced by Marxism, Zhen qualifies "ideals" in Romanticism as "social ideals," that is, hopes for social reforms, anti-feudal "life ideals," such as the struggle for free marriage. We may be surprised to learn that Chü Yüan 屈原, Chuang Tzu 莊子, Shakespeare, other "progressive" European realists, and even Tao Yüan-ming 陶淵明 are Romantics. Indeed, Zhen also uses "Romantic" in another sense, referring to a technique or tendency of writing which values exaggeration and imagination. Perhaps this second usage is much less controversial. But to use "Romantic" or "Romanticism" as an ahistorical, general critical term rather than, in Wellek's words, a "period term," inevitably leads Zhen into an abyss of semantic conflicts. Zhen's "Romantic-talk" reminds one of Lovejoy's famous saying that the word "Romantic," having too many meanings, has come to mean nothing by itself.

The art of the Chinese and Western classical novel is the concern of the fifth chapter. By "classical Western novel" Zhen refers to novels written in Europe from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth century; by its Chinese counterpart, however, he has in mind prose fiction from T'ang (618-907) to Ch'ing (1644-1911). An exacting reader may well question whether the genre label, "novel," is used appropriately to describe the various forms of traditional Chinese prose fiction. The standard Chinese term of the Western genre, "novel," is *hsiao-shuo* 小說: it simply means "small talk" or "trivial saying" in prose form. Putting this difficult question aside, however,

Zhen can be praised for correctly pointing out two general differences between Western and Chinese prose fiction. One is that more elaborated plots are found in the West, and the other is that usually Western writers pay more attention to the depiction of setting and creation of atmosphere.

The sixth chapter compares the characteristics of myths and folktales in the East and the West. Again, Zhen quotes from Marx and Engels to account for the genesis of myths. At the end of the chapter, Zhen raises three interesting points. First, after the oral myths and folktales were rendered into "literary" form, they were transformed by virtue of the intellectuals' rationalization and philosophizing. Second, howsoever grotesque myths might be, they usually had some factual or historical basis. Third, many ancient myths still have a fascinating attraction for modern readers.

Chapter 7 takes up the very interesting topic, Shakespearean drama and Yuan-Ming drama. Zhen outlines several similar social features for the popularity of drama in England and China in the periods specified and convincingly explains some common features of theatrical performance. But it would be far more stimulating if Zhen had gone a step further to investigate the effects of theatrical features on the audience's response. We may, for instance, speculate that the informal free social interaction between members of the audience during pauses between scenes or intermissions might affect their moods so that they are more receptive to comic rather than tragic elements.

Chapter 8 is a comparison between Tu Shih-niang 杜十娘 in *San-yan* 三言 and the protagonist in Dumas' *La dame aux Camelias*. Apart from discussing some similarities and differences in their personalities, Zhen also touches on the art of their characterization. He is right in saying that Dumas tends towards a more meticulous psychological portrait while Fung reveals Shih-niang's character mainly through her actions. However, Zhen's study might have been more rigorous if he had had an opportunity to read more widely in modern narratology.

Chapter 9 offers a lucid account of Byron's influence on the young Lu Hsün. Here, I would only add that an author like Byron is often "misread" in another country; nevertheless, the influence of "misreading" may have tremendous repercussions and many of those could be quite positive.

Chapter 10 compares Gogol's *Diary of a Madman* with Lu Hsün's work of the same title (K'uang-jên jih-chi 狂人日記). Zhen explains the differences between the two madmen: Gogol's is the victim of the rigid and oppressive hierarchy of the Tsarist bureaucracy; Lu Hsün's is the product of

corrupted feudal Chinese society. Zhen also points out some subtle cultural and literary differences between both works.

In Chapter 11, we have a comparison between Kuo Mo-jo's Nü-shen 女神 [Goddess] and Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*. Zhen distinguishes between the different objects of the two poets' criticism: Whitman objects to slavery in America and Kuo hopes for new China's independence. Zhen is also right in seeing a "romantic trait" in Kuo's poetry, namely, the "I" which looms large, the expanding ego. But I suspect that, unlike Whitman, Kuo is not so much a nature poet as Zhen believes.

The last chapter compares the fiction of Hemingway and Wang Meng. Zhen's undertaking here might be considered by some critics as a case of arbitrary comparison. First of all, Zhen says that both writers genuinely reflect the reality of their own age and social context. This is indeed a very big claim. Having in mind the great variety and complexity of twentieth-century "reality," one wonders how "representative" Hemingway is of "the lost generation" and how "typical" Wang's stories are with regard to post-Cultural-Revolution China. Concerning writing skills, Zhen asserts that both writers mainly use "realist" techniques but also borrow some "modernist" methods. But certainly most critics would rather say that Wang is much more "modernist" than Hemingway. Sooner or later, Zhen must come to terms with rival critical views. For instance, one thinks of the prominent Marxist critic Fredric Jameson's reasons for his sophisticated claim that Wang is a typical "modernist."

All in all, Zhen has fulfilled his aim of offering the Chinese beginners of comparative literature a brief introductory book which, regardless of some marked faults, contains some useful information and stimulating ideas. But swallows come and go, and comparatists abroad are still scanning the PRC sky for some high-flying eagles.

ERIC KWAN-WAI YU

Yearbook of Chinese Comparative Literature 1986 (中國比較文學年鑒). Ed. Yang Zhouhan (Yang Chou-han) 楊周翰, Yue Daiyun (Yüeh Tai-yün) 樂黛雲, and Zhang Wending (Chang Wên-ting) 張文定. Peking: Peking University Press, 1987. 648 p.

The monumental *Yearbook of Chinese Comparative Literature 1986*, compiled by the Institute of Comparative Literature at Peking University, marks the rapid diffusion and institutionalization of comparative literature in Mainland China. As the editor puts it, the *Yearbook* seeks to provide, within its limited scope, a massive amount of information and valuable source materials for comparative literature studies. Indeed the ambitious book goes beyond the mere function of imparting factual information: it not only shows us the fruit of comparative literature studies in Mainland China from 1978 to 1985 but also traces, with its record of publications, conferences and new courses related to comparative literature, the phenomenal growth of this fledgling discipline in Mainland China. For critics eager to assess the achievement of Mainland China comparatists, the *Yearbook* is undoubtedly an indispensable guide. One may add further that whatever one's evaluation will be, overseas comparatists could not but envy the present healthy state of comparative literature studies in Mainland China, which is relatively free from economic pressures and seems to be unconcerned about the deep methodological crises elsewhere. The above praise and admiration notwithstanding, I shall examine the book critically to judge its general resourcefulness and also highlight some features of recent comparative literature studies in Mainland China. I shall proceed section by section according to the way the book is organized.

Preface, Foreword and Messages

The very first part of the *Yearbook* is a useful "Editor's Preface," which lucidly explains the aims and the main content in the twelve major sections of the book. The titles of the sections are listed as follows: I. Feature Articles 專文; II. Inaugural Meeting of the Chinese Comparative Literature Association (CCLA) and Its First Academic Conference 中國比較文學學會成立大會暨首屆學術討論會; III. Theory and Methodology of Comparative Literature 比較文學的理論和方法; IV. Abstracts of Comparative

Literature Essays 比較文學論文選摘; V. The Teaching of Comparative in Chinese Universities 中國比較文學學科建設和教學; VI. Publications, Teaching and Research Institutions, and Academic Organizations of Chinese Comparative Literature 中國比較文學團體、刊物、科研機構; VII. Academic Activities 學術活動; VIII. Brief Introduction to 22 Chinese Literature Scholars 中國比較文學學者簡介; IX. Chronicle 紀事; X. Comparative Literature in Taiwan and Hong Kong 台港比較文學; XI. Comparative Literature Abroad 國外比較文學; XII. Bibliography 資料.

After a foreword which urges the formation of the "Chinese School," we have the brief messages from three eminent Chinese scholars. Qian Zhongshu's (Ch'ien Chung-shu) 錢鐘書 words are particularly worth quoting: "In one sense, all things can be integrated and compared; in another sense, all things are individual and unique." This is an apt warning against arbitrary parallel studies found in some of the less competent comparatists' works.

I. Feature Articles

By putting the articles, "Trends in Comparative Literature Abroad" and "Present Situation and Future Prospect of Chinese Comparative Literature" in this first section, the editor gives the reader a useful historical perspective. The first article is actually a report on the Eleventh ICLA Conference (1985). The writer, Yang Zhouhan, who was a delegate at the Conference and has since been elected as one of the ICLA's vice-presidents, refers to the famous comparatist René Etiemble's report on the revival of comparative literature in China (subsequently published as "Sur le renouveau du comparatisme en Chine populaire" in *Comparative Literature Studies* 24.1 [1987]: 1-13). He tactfully quotes from Etiemble that, with a population of one billion and a long cultural tradition, comparative literature in China has a great potential and bright future. The second article, written by Yue Daiyun, outlines the history of comparative literature studies in the West and China, in which the writer rightly emphasizes the importance of interdisciplinary studies.

II. Inaugural Meeting of CCLA and Its First Conference [1985]

With all the fulsome praise, high hopes and formal speeches, this section is not particularly interesting. But with the speeches and constitution in black and white, including the congratulatory address by D.W. Fokkemma, president of ICLA, it does effectively commemorate the official founding

and proper recognition of comparative literature studies in Mainland China.

III. Theory and Methodology of Comparative Literature

This section is quite confusing because the viewpoints in some of the articles overlap or they conflict with one another, and a few of the articles, such as "Past, Present and Future of Chinese Comparative Literature Study" and "Prospect of Chinese Comparative Literature," offer us more historical data than theoretical discussion. The most comprehensive, though rather sketchy, essay is entitled "High Time to Set Up the Discipline of Comparative Literature." The writer, Zhao Yiheng (Chao Yi-hêng) 趙毅衡 systematically introduces the various branches of influence studies and gives some examples of parallel studies. Reading all these essays it is not hard to detect the uneasiness of Chinese comparatists with new Western critical theories. On two occasions, at least, I have found the authoritative Qian Zhongshu cited when he criticizes Western theorists such as Julia Kristeva. One wonders exactly how many Chinese scholars have actually labored through the works of "narratology, intertextuality, semiotics, deconstruction and other new theories" themselves and grasped the principles and rules of these so-called "intellectual games."

IV. Abstracts of Comparative Literature Essays

This section consists of two parts, the first includes abstracts of essays which deal with parallel studies and the second includes those which belong to influence studies. The 100 essays are selected out of over 1500 items published in recent years, from 1978 to 1985. They represent the achievements of present-day Mainland China comparative literature studies. I shall list a sampling of some of the more representative parallel studies for the reader's reference: "Nature in Chinese and Japanese Poetry" by Lin Lin 林林, "Tu Fu and Goethe" by Feng Zhi (Fêng Chih) 馮至, "Comparative Study of Creative Inspirations in Chinese and Western Literary Theories" by Shang Wei 商偉, "Comparison of the Sublime in Li Po's Poetry and in Western Art and Literature" by Yang Tiejuan (Yang T'ieh-yüan) 楊鐵原, and "Comparative Study of Calabash Mythology and Japanese Stories about Dog Son-in-Law" by Lang Ying 郎櫻. The following influence studies I found particularly thought-provoking: "Indian Literature in China" by Ji Xianlin (Chi Hsien-lin) 季羨林, "Possible Links

Between the Sonnet, the *Rubaiyat* and Chinese T'ang Poetry" by Yang Xianyi (Yang Hsien-yi) 楊憲益, "Vietnamese Literature and Chinese Culture" by Yan Bao (Yan Pao) 顏保, and "Soviet and Chinese Military Literatures: Mutual Influence and Interrelationship" by Wang Angang (Wang An-kang) 王安剛.

The broad range of the world's literatures covered by Mainland China comparatists is truly amazing. They have traversed not only Chinese literature and literatures in major Western countries, but also other Oriental nations' as well. Indeed, lately there has been an upsurge of comparative studies related to the literature of minority groups in China. It is a pity that no such essays were included in this collection of abstracts. If we have reason to lament that Mainland China comparatists know too little about the latest critical theories, we should, at the same time, particularly admire their competence in other Eastern languages and recognize their solid contributions to intra-Asian comparative literature studies.

V. The Teaching of Comparative Literature in Chinese Universities

The essence of this whole section is found in the first essay, "Courses of Comparative Literature in Chinese Colleges and Universities." The section lists all the comparative literature courses now offered in Mainland China and the names of the instructors in charge. For details, however, we have to look closely at the fifteen essays which follow. A few short-term courses of very high standards have been taught by guest professors. Fredric Jameson's "Post-Modernism and Cultural Theory," given in 1985 at Peking University, is a prime example. And although there are a few courses on special topics available in some major universities, most other universities and colleges only offer an introductory course in comparative literature on both undergraduate and graduate levels. Furthermore, since many of the comparative literature courses are taught in Chinese departments, foreign literary works are usually studied by reading their Chinese translations. The situation will only be improved after the general foreign languages proficiency has been raised among would-be comparatists.

VI. Publication, Teaching and Research Institutions, and Academic Organizations of Chinese Comparative Literature

According to the *Yearbook*, there are seven associations and eleven research institutions of comparative literature as of 1985. It is noted that all these associations and institutions were established in the early- and mid-eighties. Perhaps the most significant journal of comparative literature in Mainland China is *Comparative Literature in China* 中國比較文學, published by CCLA since 1984 and actually produced by the Foreign Languages Institute of Shanghai International Studies University 上海外語學院 and, later, by East China Normal University. *COWRIE* 文具, now being edited by the Chinese Department of Suzhou University, is the only English journal devoted exclusively to comparative literature studies. *Comparative Literature and Foreign Literature* 比較文學與外國文學, also published by Shanghai International Studies University, and *Peking University Comparative Literature Association Bulletin* 北京大學比較文學研究會通訊 are two important regular publications. In the past two years, Mainland China has witnessed the birth of a number of other magazines related to comparative literature. *Comparative Literature Studies and Materials* 比較文學研究與資料, published by the Literature Division of Academy of Social Sciences in Shenyang, Liaoning, and *Comparative Literature Studies Quarterly* 比較文學研究季刊, edited by the Chinese Department of Jinan University 暨南大學 in Canton, are two of these new comers. I should also add that there are so many Western publications on comparative literature translated into Chinese that names like Wellek, Weisstein, Jost, and Clements are no longer foreign to Chinese comparatists' ears.

VII. Academic Activities

This section reports about twelve conferences on or closely related to comparative literature, which have been held at various places in China and abroad. Indeed over the past two years, more and more formal meetings and informal visits and exchanges have paved the way towards an ever fuller mutual understanding between comparatists in Mainland China and other countries. It is not inconceivable that the "Chinese School" might one day become a marked presence in the world comparative literature scene.

VIII. Brief Introduction to 22 Chinese Comparative Literature Scholars

Comparatists in Mainland China have their reasons for making a claim that China has had a long history of comparative literature. Little wonder that the intellectuals of the late Ch'ing, like Lin Shu (Lin Shū) 林紓, Liang Qichao (Liang Ch'i-ch'ao) 梁啟超, and Wang Guowei (Wang Kuo-wei) 王國維, are labelled "comparative literature scholars." Actually, some comparatists have even claimed a certain kinship with ancient Chinese scholars. After all, if Confucius can also be called a comparatist, as some have actually claimed, current comparative literature scholarship can point to its distinguished historical origins and need not bother about challenges from other quarters which say that it is something new to China, at least as an institutionalized discipline. Furthermore, to talk of the "renaissance" of Chinese comparative literature also has the effect of reminding people that China has something comparable to match the splendour of the European Renaissance. At any rate, the twenty-two late Ch'ing and May Fourth intellectuals introduced in this section have indeed accomplished something in practice which can be said to belong to the vast field of comparative literature in the broadest sense. Generally speaking, the portraits of these scholars here are well handled.

IX. Chronicle

This section is a chronicle of Chinese comparative literature from 1978 to 1985, which historians of comparative literature will find especially interesting. It is claimed in the chronicle that 1985 is the year when Chinese comparative literature entered a new phase of development; the reason is that the publications of comparative literature studies in that year far outnumbered the annual production in any of the previous years.

X. Comparative Literature in Taiwan and Hong Kong

This section consists of two essays. The first one, entitled "comparative Literature Studies in Taiwan and Hong Kong," offers a clear and objective account of the topic. All the major institutions, comparatists, conferences and publications have been fairly covered. The only inaccurate bit of information concerns the titles of the comparative literature series published

by *Tung-ta* 東大出版社. The title of K. Y. Wong's book has been changed, and three books listed there as published have not yet been, and may never be, published. "Conferences on Literature in Hong Kong" is a speech by M.A. Abtas of the University of Hong Kong given on the occasion of the founding of the CCLA. He clearly explains the spirit behind the regular conferences on literary theory held in Hong Kong. It may be of interest for the reader to know that the fifth conference on "Modernism and Contemporary Chinese Literature: Writers and Critics" is to be held in December of 1987, co-sponsored by Hong Kong University, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, The Hong Kong Comparative Literature Association, and the Hong Kong Institute for Promotion of Chinese Culture.

XI. Comparative Literature Abroad

Apart from an introduction describing the International Comparative Literature Association, this section also discusses the present state of the French, American and Russian Schools. Besides, comparative literature studies in Germany, Japan, and, surprisingly, Egypt are also dealt with in three consecutive essays. We are informed that some Egypt comparatists are also interested in traditional Chinese poetry.

XII. Bibliography

Indexing 2500 books or articles concerned with comparative literature and published in China from 1919 to 1985, this section is of tremendous importance to students of Chinese comparative literature studies. The bibliography is divided into three parts. Part A collects 155 original or translated books of, or closely related to, comparative literature published in Mainland China. Section B includes 1900 articles on comparative literature published in Mainland China. For books and articles published in Taiwan and Hong Kong, Section C cites 460 entries.

All in all, regardless of the frequent typographical errors in English and the few short-comings discussed above, this *Yearbook* is generally quite well organized and definitely very resourceful. It clearly maps out the development and institutionalization of comparative literature studies in Mainland China and reflects the present achievement of Chinese comparatists. Of course, no one, including PRC comparatists, are satisfied by the results of this preliminary stage in comparative literature studies, but one cannot

help but recognize the great potential of what might well become a "Chinese School." The substantial contribution of this book would succeed in convincing most objective readers that China is well on the way in becoming a vital force in world comparative literature.

ERIC KWAN-WAI YU

Pi-chiao wen-hsüeh yu Chung-kuo hsien-tai wen-hsüeh 比較文學與中國現代文學 (Comparative Literature and Modern Chinese Literature). By Yue Daiyun (Yüeh Tai-yün) 樂黛雲. Beijing: Peking University Press, 1987. 321 p.

Comparative Literature and Modern Chinese Literature is the latest newcomer to the field and the first book that dwells on the relation between comparative literature and modern Chinese literature. Since the author has become something of an academic celebrity and one of the prime movers of Comparative Literature in PRC, a few words are given here in order to introduce her many achievements.

Yue Daiyun is a professor in the Chinese Department of Peking University, president of Peking University Comparative Literature Research Unit, vice president and executive secretary of the Chinese Comparative Literature Association. She was born in 1931 and graduated from Peking University in 1952, where she majored in modern Chinese literature. As an undergraduate, she felt a sense of inadequacy because she was not well-informed about the Western literary world which had greatly influenced modern Chinese literature. Her research in Western literature was halted, unfortunately, by political movements from 1957 to 1976, about which she writes graphically in her autobiographical account: *To the Storm* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

In 1980, collaborating with a number of colleagues, she took up the pioneering task of reviving comparative literature in China. In 1981, she was given an opportunity to go abroad to do research. She studied at Harvard University in the first year and for the following two years, at the University of California (Berkeley). During her summer vacation, she went to Europe to visit schools in Britain, Germany, France and Italy. Her experiences not only broadened her horizons, but also gave her access to

a great deal of first-hand material such as current critical theories which she has incorporated into this work. The book is written to inform PRC readers about the works of modern writers like Mao Dun (Mao Tun) 矛盾 and Lu Xun (Lu Hsun) 魯迅 as approached from a variety of new angles. The main body of the book can be divided into four sections: 1. *What is Comparative Literature?* (pp. 1-66); 2. *The Relationship between Comparative Literature and Modern Chinese Literature* (pp. 67-116); 3. *Works of Modern Writers* (pp. 117-256); 4. *Critical Theory* (pp. 257-317).

I. What is Comparative Literature?

This section consists of four articles. Article 1 "Present Trends and Prospects of Comparative Literature in China" 比較文學的現狀與前景, begins with the 1985 International Comparative Literature Congress held in North Carolina. It goes on to inform the reader about trends in comparative literature studies from the fifties to nowadays. Then the history of comparative literature in Mainland China is surveyed, starting with its rise in the twenties, through the era of the Sino-Japanese War and the Civil War to its second blooming in the eighties. The author distinguishes between individual efforts in the early periods as opposed to the current efforts of scholars who study comparative literature as an academic discipline.

The rest of the article is about the 1985 Chinese Comparative Literature Association Meeting 中國比較文學學會深圳大學研討會 held in Shenzhen (Shen Chen) 深圳. The achievements of the Conference are pointed out, most important of which was the agreement reached by various scholars on the definition, scope and methodology of comparative literature. Papers presented during the congress also receive critical comment.

Article 2 "The Name and Substance of Comparative Literature" 比較文學的名與實, complements Article 1 inasmuch as it presents a very detailed picture about the international trend of comparative literature in the eighties.

Articles 3 is on the "Development of Comparative Literature: Potential and Reality" 比較文學發展的現實性和可能性. This section records the history of comparative literature since its birth in the 19th century to the present. The two major methodologies in this field, namely, influence studies and parallel studies receive a thorough treatment. Furthermore, academic debates threatening its existence are described, such as the question whether there is, in fact, an entity called comparative literature or not.

And if so, should it develop as an independent discipline?

The last article in this section is simply entitled, "Several Aspects of Comparative Literature" 比較文學研究的幾方面 . It has two parts. Part 1 defines comparative literature as the "inter-communication" and "interdependence" among various nations and Part 2 centres on three approaches in this field: influence studies, thematology and interdisciplinary studies.

This first section certainly provides a great deal of useful background information about comparative literature in general and Chinese comparative literature studies in particular. One disappointing feature is that the material is a bit too repetitive. For instance, the explanation of "influence" studies appearing in Article 3 occurs again in Article 4 and the repeated references to the same events in comparative literature history in almost every article also makes for tedious reading.

II. The Relationship between Comparative Literature and Modern Chinese Literature

Four articles are incorporated into this next section. Article 1 is "Chinese Literary History and the Principle of Comparative Literature" 中國文學史與比較文學原則. This short article forges a link between Chinese literature and comparative literature by pointing out the necessity of placing Chinese literature in the field of comparative literature and treating the former as a part of the latter.

Article 2 "Comparative Literature and Modern Chinese Literature" 比較文學與中國現代文學, elucidates the great impact various aspects of comparative literature has been having on modern Chinese literature. First, a better understanding of one's own national literature is achieved by comparing it with that of other nations. National literature also receives a certain number of useful nutrients from its foreign counterparts. Besides, comparative studies help introduce Chinese literature to foreigners. It is better, for instance, when talking about the Recent-Style Poems 近體詩 to mention the sonnet to foreign readers so that their interest will be aroused. Yue Daiyun also points out there is an "inter-influence" between literatures. Chinese writers in the May Fourth Movement adapted some of Ibsen's themes in their novels but gave them 'their own interpretations.' These Chinese interpretations found their way back to Western scholars and influenced "Ibsen studies" abroad. Hence, it would be too one-sided to say that only

the West influenced the East. In fact, the influence has been mutual although unevenly balanced in favour of the West.

Article 3 on "Studies of Modern Chinese Literature Abroad" 中國現代文學研究在國外 is made up of two parts. Part 1 talks of how Western literature has made its way into China. Generally speaking, foreign literature entered China during three periods: Buddhist Literature during the Six Dynasties (A.D. 3rd-6th C.), Western Literature during and immediately after the May Fourth Movement (1919) and Marxist Literature during the period of the 30s and thereafter. On each occasion, many aspects of foreign literature were absorbed by traditional Chinese Literature which, in return, underwent a certain amount of rejuvenation. Part 2 focuses on how people abroad study Chinese literature with new critical theories such as narratology and hermeneutics.

The last article is "Nietzsche and Modern Chinese Literature" 尼采與中國現代文學 in which the influence of the philosopher on writers of the May Fourth Movement such as Lu Xun and Mao Dun is analyzed in depth.

III. Works of Modern Writers

The first author discussed is Lun Xun. The ideology of Lun Xun is introduced at the beginning, namely his views about foreign military invasions into China, literature in general and contemporary society. Then follows an appraisal of the central ideas and techniques in Lu's famous work Xiang Shi (Hsiang-shih) 傷逝 (Regret for the Past). Yue Daiyun does not forget to point out the impact of Ibsen on this work since this has provided ample material for influence studies in comparative literature. The section on Lu Xun ends with an account of "Lu Xun studies" abroad.

Mao Dun's views of literature, especially on realism, receive much attention. This is followed by a discussion of his artistic innovations, namely the use of complex structures, dramatic scenes and a thorough analysis of fictional characters' psyches. His three novels Shi (Shih) 蝕 (Erosion), Hong (Hung) 虹 (Rainbow) and Shi Ye (Shih Yeh) 子夜 (Midnight) are used as examples to demonstrate his techniques.

Cao Yu (Tsao Yu) 曹禺 and his famous drama Lei Yu (Lei Yu) 雷雨 (Thunderstorm) are considered next. The analysis of Lei Yu might be too "Marxist" for most non-PRC comparativists. The author's dismissal of "fate" as an unimportant element and her insistence that the final tragic

ending results from the "evils of capitalism and feudalism" are too superficial. Besides, the character of Fan Yi (Fan Yi) 樊漪 is over-glorified and the importance of her role exaggerated. All along, the focal point of the drama is on the love affair between Zhou Ping (Chou P'ing) 周萍 and Si Feng (Su Feng) 四鳳. Although some new light has been shed on Fan Yi, she is not the protagonist as Yue has claimed. The image of Fan Yi is also too positive. In Yue's opinion, she is a rebel against the decaying forces of capitalism and feudalism, a woman fighting for freedom and a rich emotional life, almost a female Karl Marx. It is true that she finds her environment unbearable, but to say she is a freedom-fighter is rather far-fetched.

IV. Critical Theory

This section is particularly useful for PRC readers, many of whom have been denied adequate access to Western critical developments during China's politically turbulent 20th century. Some schools of critical theory are introduced here. The fact that they have to be introduced at all and the way they are introduced is instructive.

1. Traditional Approach 傳統分析 : This approach is described by Yue as emphasizing relations between the writers and their works. The writer's biography and events which occurred during his or her life are often regarded as bearing some relation to the works. As the author points out, the main weakness of this approach is that not all literary works are necessarily autobiographic.

2. New Criticism 新批評派 : As described by Yue, this school of thought arose in the late twenties. It advocates the study of the "text" alone and rejects research on all non-literary elements. The rationale behind this approach is that once a poem or novel is completed, it has nothing more to do with the author. Hence, it is vain to attempt tracing the relations between authors and their works, or interpreting a work from the author's viewpoint. Instead they probe into the "meaning" of words, the inter-relations between them and their implications. The New Critical Approach works best when applied to lyrics but is less successful with extended works of fiction or drama.

3. Structuralism 結構主義 : This is described as a French movement in contemporary thought. Like New Criticism, Yue depicts this school as stressing the ontology of literature and rejecting all non-literary elements. Their basic assumption is that words are symbols which have no causal

relation with things they symbolize. The fact that "cat" is represented by the phoneme *moa* (貓) is just a matter of convention. Nothing will happen to the cat even if we call it by some other names. Hence, the meaning of an individual symbol is established only in its relation with other symbols because through their relations, a basic structure 深層結構 can be observed. The goal of the structuralist is to find out this basic structure.

4. Psychoanalytical Criticism 精神分析 : Yue describes this school of thought as employing the doctrines of Sigmund Freud according to his division of the mind into three areas of activity: the id, the ego and the superego. The approach is often applied to the examination of the motives and actions of characters in a work of fiction or drama. Sometimes, it is used to analyze how the subconsciousness of the author is reflected in his or her work.

5. Reception Aesthetics 接受美學 : This school, as Yue describes it, emphasizes the participation of readers in the process of creation. The advocates of the approach define literature as something that arouses the readers' imagination by leaving some "gaps" in the poems or novels for the readers to fill.

6. Narratology 敘述學 : This theory, in Yue's words, emphasizes the sophisticated analysis of the relation between a story and all the other elements involved in its telling. The gap between the real author, the implied author, the narrator and the readers are the central interest of this school. Yue Daiyun also speaks of several narrative points of view and how they shift from one to another.

7. Hermeneutics 詮釋學 : The basic assumption of this school is that literature is composed of "meaning" and "significance." "Meaning" is fixed. "Significance" is infinite, created by the readers, and varies from one person to another. Yue Daiyun also introduces what has come to be called the "hermeneutic circle." It is claimed that to understand a novel requires knowledge of all the works of its author so that we can get a glimpse of the main trend of thought, for this facilitates more adequate comprehension of the individual work. In return, studying the individual work constitutes the understanding of the author's work. The movement is circular.

On the whole, of all the four divisions that constitute Yue's book, this last section is the best, for it provides an informative reading for those interested in the relationships between critical theory and comparative literature. On the other hand, if the author wishes somehow to reach a

more international readership, the addition of an English abstract may have facilitated access to this section's general content for readers whose mother tongue is not Chinese. Whenever non-Chinese names are used, the inclusion of the original words in Latin letters placed adjacent to the Chinese characters would have helped. Those who study Western literature in the original languages would then be able to recognize old friends immediately instead of guessing their identities through phonetically ambiguous character disguises. One other disappointing feature of this book is the lack of a bibliography and index.

All in all, despite these minor misgivings, *Comparative Literature and Modern Chinese Literature* is a substantial and exciting documentation of some of the relations between comparative literature, literary theory and Chinese literature. It performs a real service by helping Chinese scholars to view China's national literature in the wider field of comparative literature.

LEE KA-PIK

