



Occidentalism: A Theory of Counter-Discourse in Post-Mao China (2nd Edition)

Xiaomei Chen

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This revised and expanded edition of the first comprehensive study of Occidentalism in post-Mao China includes a new preface, foreword, and chapter on Chinese diaspora writings in the Chinese language. Xiaomei Chen offers an insightful account of the unremittingly favorable depiction of Western culture and its negative characterization of Chinese culture in post-Mao China since 1978. She examines the cultural and political interrelationship between the East and West from a vantage point more complex than that accommodated by most current theories of Western imperialism and colonialism.

Going beyond Edward Said's construction in *Orientalism* of cross-cultural appropriations as a defining facet of Western imperialism, Chen argues that the appropriation of Western discourse?what she calls "Occidentalism"?can actually have a politically and ideologically liberating effect on contemporary non-Western culture. She maintains that simplistic allegations of Orientalism frequently found in current critical discourses seriously underestimate the complexities of intercultural and multicultural relationships.

Using China as the focus of her analysis, Chen examines a variety of cultural media, from Shakespearean drama, to modernist poetry, to contemporary Chinese television and popular fiction. She thus places sinology in the general context of Western theoretical discourses, such as Eurocentrism, postcolonialism, nationalism, modernism, feminism, and literary hermeneutics, showing that it has a vital role to play in the study of Orient and Occident and their now unavoidable symbiotic relationship.

Occidentalism presents a new model of comparative literary and cultural studies that reenvisions cross-cultural appropriation. It will be indispensable to future discussions of Orientalism, Occidentalism, and postcolonialism, as well as subaltern studies, Asian studies, comparative literature, cultural studies, and non-Western drama.

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