

incipient scholars without wing-collars and cravats, whose destiny is to be ruled). Forster, on the other hand, must surely have been influenced inordinately by his own schooldays. Forster, the homosexual who sees himself as different and who has already met the Other within his circle of schoolfriends (let alone within the divisions of his own soul) seems to be confronted by a very different reality from Kipling's upon meeting that great Other of the Indian subcontinent. And permit me to state, at this point, that the Other is, to my way of thinking, a plural not a singular concept, for there are as many forms of the Other as there are groups from which to distinguish that Other when it is met. Thus, for the club members in *A Passage to India*, Fielding, although white, rapidly becomes another form of the Other and is soon expelled from that cheery circle of ex-public schoolboys around which the club, like a sixth-form prefects' group, is formed. To my mind, then, the differences in sexual orientation between Kipling and Forster account, in many ways, for the very different visions of India and the Other presented by these two great novelists.

On another level, to explore Said's visions of Space (78), Authority (87), Liminality (141), Identity, Disguise (158), and Conflict (148), is to walk past flowers in a well-decorated, landscaped garden. To read Said is to see the world again, differently, through different eyes. For there are, as Said remorselessly points out in his chapter subdivisions, Two Visions (19-30), Discrepant Experiences (31-42), Two Sides (191-208); further, there is a Resistance Culture (209-19), and an Emergence of Opposition (239-61), not to forget the Challenge to Orthodoxy and Authority (303-26). All this is tied up with some of the greatest population Movements and Migrations (326-36) that the world has ever seen. "The world" as the Spaniards say, "is a pocket-handkerchief." And, in the microcosm of this pocket-handkerchief world as represented by *Kim*, it is "a loyalist soldier who reviews his countrymen's revolt [the Great Mutiny or Rebellion of 1857] as an act of madness" (Said 147). Further, as Said points out, to reduce Indian resentment and resistance to British insensitivity as an act of madness, and to put this sentiment into the mouth of an Indian soldier, who would have been considered a traitor by his own people, is to leave the world of history and enter the world of imperialistic polemic (Said 147-48). To read Said, then, more than to glimpse a fair number of the many issues which confront us, is to take a stand. After *Culture and Empire*, unless we are blind to its vision and deaf to its voice, the act of reading will never be the same. For, as Said would have us believe, it is not what we read that matters, but how we read it (328).

David Der-wei Wang and Jeanne Tai, eds.

Running Wild: New Chinese Writers

New York: Columbia University Press, 1994. Pp. 320. US \$49.50; \$15.95

Reviewed by Robert E. Hegel

It is no longer difficult to find anthologies of recent Chinese fiction in English translation. In addition to those produced in China (*Seven Contemporary Chinese Women Writers*, 1982; *Contemporary Chinese Short Stories*, 1983; *Prize-winning Stories From China*, several collections, etc.) there have been numerous North American publications as well (*Roses and Thorns*, ed. Perry Link, 1984; *Mao's*

Harvest, ed. Helen Siu and Zelda Stern, 1983; *The Chinese Western*, ed. Zhu Hong, 1988; *Science Fiction From China*, ed. Wu Dingbo and Patrick D. Murphy, 1989, to name a few). Useful as they may be, none is so broad in scope and so impressive as an introduction to the best contemporary Chinese fiction as this. In his "Afterword: Chinese Fiction For the Nineties," David Wang explains the unique scope of this collection. These fourteen stories and novellas are intended to present a "new image of China . . . defined not by geopolitical boundaries and ideological discourses but by overlapping cultures and shared imaginative resources" (238). *Running Wild* includes stories by writers from Taiwan as well as the mainland provinces, from the United States and New Zealand as well as Hong Kong. Chinese literature has become more cosmopolitan in recent years; it has also become international. Thus, as Wang points out, a mainland writer might have his work published in Hong Kong with the sponsorship of someone in Taiwan; a bestselling author in Taiwan may be a permanent resident of another country. Like the contemporary Chinese art film, contemporary fiction's sources of inspiration and support—to say nothing of audiences—can be found far from China, wherever Chinese people live. And like the films of Zhang Yimou, Hou Hsiao-hsien, and even Ang Lee and John Woo, these stories are by and for sophisticated intellectuals, not necessarily for broad audiences anywhere. Freed from the immediate political and social relevance that has characterized much of modern Chinese letters, the stories in this anthology will catch the attention of English reading audiences as have the best of contemporary Chinese films.

To say that these stories are different from their predecessors is a considerable understatement. They are the products of a postmodern age, the consequences of exposure to ideas and techniques of writing from beyond the Chinese cultural sphere. But they are hardly un-Chinese—as Professor Wang explains in his "Afterword," these works share more than the language in which all were written. They also self-consciously reject the overt ideological presuppositions of any political group; they all avoid the "realism" by which earlier fiction was shackled to ideology; they all experiment with form, voice, perspective, imagery. Implicitly or explicitly, these stories subvert received versions of history as accurate, as meaningful to the present, as reflective of real life rather than some political agenda. While many address the past as well as the present, all deal primarily and significantly with the lives of individuals and with the random contingencies that shape events. Many are shocking; most narrate physical or emotional violence. "[R]eality is already too bizarre and grotesque," Wang observes (244); these works of fiction regularly invoke the incomprehensibility that has characterized life in recent years, despite the efforts of China's political leaders to impose their own particular interpretations. Thus in "The Amateur Cameraman" by S.K. Chang, best known as a science fiction writer, a man is accused of murdering his wife because he has fantasized doing so for years; whether she is actually dead is left open to question. In Gu Zhaosen's "Plain Moon" a pieceworker in an American sweatshop takes pity on and marries a self-styled revolutionary, a political exile from the demonstrations of 1989, only to find that they come from two different cultures that have little in common. Nor is either of their worlds privileged by the text; both are presented for scrutiny, for consideration. Incomprehension characterizes the children in well-known exile writer A. Cheng's "Festival": during the Cultural Revolution the offspring of members from warring political camps celebrate Children's Day together—only to be caught in a crossfire as hostilities between their

parents break out. Even Ye Si's amusing "Transcendence and the Fax Machine" a Chinese academic falls in love with the device that keeps him in touch with European intellectuals, never appreciating his own situation. Likewise, in Su Tong's "Running Wild" his young protagonist has unexplained headaches and witnesses death and seduction without understanding what he sees. In fact, the reader, too, is puzzled by this moody and suspenseful piece.

In many of these stories the reader may understand more than the characters, but ironic distance is seldom employed—there are no simple villains or heroes here. In fact, the reader is never allowed simply to read these works without reflection. Novelist Mo Yan's hero in "Divine Debauchery" is eccentric, but apparently harmless, in his extravagant sexual behavior; Zhu Tianwen's old folk healer in "Master Chai" is not castigated, even when he conflates erotic fantasies for a girl patient with nostalgia for his lost home on the mainland. But while these authors do not provide any simplistic explanations of human behavior, the true horror of the recent Chinese experience is readily present in their stories. A case in point is Yü Hua's coldly dispassionate narration of a family feud that leaves so many dead ("One Kind of Reality"). Another is the profoundly disturbing narrative of an abortion in Tang Min's "I Am Not a Cat." The ennui of exile appears in several. Gone from these stories is the ostensibly autobiographical basis of so much of the fiction from previous decades; in its place is unleashed imagination, free to explore the dark recesses of the human mind as it has confronted the social realities of modern China. This fiction is challenging to the reader. These stories express the serious engagement of their authors with life, art, and meaning in new and exciting ways. While not every piece here is necessarily great literature, some are amusing, many are disturbing, and all will cause the reader to ponder their meanings, to read them again. Like the films of the outstanding Chinese directors—whether residents of the PRC, Hong Kong, Taiwan, or other countries—the works of these new Chinese writers reveal a level of creativity hitherto not generally perceived by the rest of the world. Surely Chinese fiction is passing into a new, more cosmopolitan stage, and this anthology has captured the transition period masterfully.

Stéphane Vachon

Les Travaux et les Jours d'Honoré de Balzac

Paris: Presses Universitaires de Vincennes, 1993. Pp. 336

Roger Pierrot

Honoré de Balzac

Paris: Fayard, 1994. Pp. x + 552

Reviewed by Anthony R. Pugh

It is not every day that one can hail a book as exhaustive, definitive, the answer to a dream, wholly admirable in conception and irreproachable in execution, but Stéphane Vachon's bibliography of all Balzac's publications (including the posthumous ones, as far as *Les Petits Bourgeois* in 1857) is all of those things. Lovenjoul's classic *Histoire des Oeuvres*, remarkable though it was, has been com-