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Several sections of my part of this book have already appeared in early forms in journals or books, or were given as lectures, and have recently been collected in *An Innocent Abroad: Lectures in China*. All these segments have been elaborately revised and reoriented for this book to become part of my international dialogue with Ranjan Ghosh about various aspects of reading, writing about, and teaching literature today. I have also revised them to fit my current convictions about literature.

An earlier version of some parts of chapter 2 has appeared in chapter 15 in *An Innocent Abroad: Lectures in China*. The first version of the essay was a lecture titled “National Literatures in the Context of World Literature Today,” presented first at Tsinghua University and again at Peking University during a visit to Beijing, September 10–12, 2012. In a different and longer form, the lecture was published as “Literature Matters Today,” in *Does Literature Matter?*, a special issue of *SubStance*, edited by Ranjan Ghosh, *SubStance* 42, no. 2 (2013), 12–32. I am grateful to Professor Ghosh for agreeing to a translation of my essay into Chinese, and to the essay’s adaptation and revision for this book. A translation into Chinese, by Xialin Ding, of the first half of “Literature Matters Today” appeared in Beijing University’s *Guo wai wen xue* (Foreign literature) 2 (2013): 3–8.

An earlier version of some parts of chapter 6 has appeared in chapter 12 of *An Innocent Abroad: Lectures in China*. The earliest version of those

parts of this chapter was a lecture presented at the Fifth Sino-American Symposium on Comparative Literature, held August 11–15, 2010, at Shanghai Jiao Tong University, where Wang Ning, Chen Jing, and Sheng Anfeng extended many courtesies to me during my visit. At the time of this symposium, I had already expressed my concerns about so-called world literature, not only in a lecture presented in 2003 at Tsinghua University, Beijing, and again at Suzhou University (see chapter 7 of *An Innocent Abroad*) but also in a second lecture, presented first at Tsinghua University in 2003 and again in 2004 at Zhengzhou University (see chapter 8 of *An Innocent Abroad*). For chapter 12 of *An Innocent Abroad*, I used an augmented version of my Shanghai Jiao Tong symposium lecture. The additions are my responses to an admirable paper given at the symposium by Thomas Beebee. The augmented version appeared as “Challenges to World Literature” in the bilingual Chinese-English journal published by Shanghai International Studies University, *Comparative Literature in China* 4 (2010): 1–9. The following year, a revision of the augmented text was published as “Globalization and World Literature” in *Comparative Literature: Toward a (Re)construction of World Literature*, a special issue of *Neohelicon* edited by Ning Wang, *Neohelicon* 38, no. 2 (2011): 251–65. This special issue of *Neohelicon* gathered papers from the 2010 symposium held in Shanghai. I am grateful to Shanghai International Studies University, *Comparative Literature in China*, to Wang Ning, to Peter Hajdu, editor of *Neohelicon*, and to Akadémiai Kiadó Zrt. for permission to use in revised and altered form material from this essay in *Thinking across Continents*.

An earlier version of some parts of chapter 8 has appeared in chapter 13 of *An Innocent Abroad*. The lecture that became chapter 13 of that book was presented in September 2010 at the International Conference on Literature, Reading, and Research, held in Guangzhou (once called Canton) at the Guangdong University of Foreign Studies. Guangdong is the name of the province. I chose in my lecture to take Yeats’s poem “The Cold Heaven” as a paradigmatic example of the difficulties involved in deciding whether we should read or teach literature now. The poem also exemplifies the difficulties of explaining such a text to students, at home and globally. It comes from Yeats’s volume of 1916, *Responsibilities*. The text of the lecture was published in revised form in a wonderful book of essays edited by Paul Socken, *The Edge of the Precipice: Why Read Literature in the Digital Age?*, and in another first-rate book edited by Jakob Lothe and Jeremy Hawthorn, *Narrative Ethics*.

I am grateful to Northwestern University Press for allowing me to reuse this material in revised and changed form. I am also grateful to Ranjan

Ghosh, Wang Ning, Paul Socken, Jakob Lothe, and Jeremy Hawthorn for instigating me to write the first versions of this material and for overseeing the publication of these preliminary versions.

The section of chapter 10 on Anthony Trollope's *Framley Parsonage* was originally instigated by an invitation several years ago from Ortwin de Graef and Frederik Van Dam, of the University of Leuven, Belgium, to present a plenary paper at a conference there in September 2015, to honor the two hundredth anniversary of Trollope's birth. Since I was unable to come in person, I offered to present a paper by video. The video was made at my home in Deer Isle, Maine, in the summer of 2015, with part of it my oral presentation of sections of my paper on *Framley Parsonage*. That presentation is a segment of a documentary of my current life on Deer Isle. The video was presented September 19, 2015, at the University of Leuven's Trollope Bicentennial Conference. The section on Trollope's *Framley Parsonage* in chapter 10 of this book is a fuller version of my remarks on that novel in the video. What I said has been much revised and reoriented to fit the topic of the ethics of literature and my dialogue with Ghosh. I am grateful to Ortwin de Graef and Frederik Van Dam for turning my attention back to Trollope.