

# Remapping the Landscape of World Literature: Discourse Innovation and Critical Practice of “Chinese African Literaturology: the New Quality Idea” : Focused on *African Literature Studies* (Ten-Volume Series)

**Quan Wei**

College of Humanities, Shanghai Normal University

Shanghai 200234, China

Email: quanwei0404@126.com

**Abstract** *African Literature Studies* (Ten-Volume Series) represents a significant achievement in the discourse innovation and critical practices of Chinese African Literaturology. With an expansive scope, large scale, and novel perspectives, it stands as a pioneering work in China’s comprehensive exploration of African literature. Rooted in the theoretical foundation of Chinese African Literaturology and viewed through the lens of Chinese scholars, this series redefines African writers and their literary creations and significantly broadens and deepens the horizons of African literary studies, filling a substantial gap in global research. By doing so, it contributes Chinese wisdom and strength to the construction of a more open, inclusive, and diverse world literary landscape.

**Keywords** Chinese African Literaturology: The New Quality Idea; *African Literature Studies* (Ten-Volume Series); discourse innovation; critical practice

**Author** **Quan Wei** is a Ph.D. Student at the College of Humanities, Shanghai Normal University (Shanghai 200234, China). Her main research interest is African literature and culture.

## **Introduction**

In an era of profound integration of globalization, the multi-faceted exchange and mutual learning among civilizations and cultures have become the main theme of the times. For decades, the literary research paradigm dominated by Western-centrism has impeded a comprehensive understanding of the rich and diverse depths

of world literature. A great variety of distinctive and valuable literary treasures, including Asian and African literatures, have been marginalized, overshadowed, and relegated to the “non-mainstream” literatures.<sup>1</sup> Recognizing the pressing need to reconstruct the world literary order, Chinese scholars have undertaken the responsibility of breaking free from outdated academic structures and reshaping the framework for world literary studies. As the leading expert of China’s first major national program on African literature — “History of African Literature Written in English”, supported by National Social Science Fund of China—Prof. Zhu Zhenwu [朱振武] has pioneered Chinese African Literatology: the New Quality Idea [中国非洲文学学] with acute academic insight, solid scholarly foundation, and spirit of bold innovation. This theory has created a distinctive theoretical pathway for African literary studies in China and made a significant contribution to the evolution of global literary discourse. Shaped by years of meticulous research and rigorous refinement, the *African Literary Studies* (Ten-Volume Series) edited by Prof. Zhu represents a significant contribution to the discourse innovation and critical practices of Chinese African Literatology, filling a crucial gap in the field of African literary studies. Grounded in Chinese literary and cultural perspectives while engaging with world literature as its framework, this series breaks through the constraints of Western discourse and remaps the intellectual terrain of African literature, and indeed, global literature, thereby providing robust scholarly support for the academic dialogue between Chinese African Literatology and global African literary studies.

### **Innovative Discourse: A New Summit in Chinese African Literatology**

Amidst the waves of globalization, the pluralism and complexity of literary studies have become increasingly prominent, and the landscape of world literature is undergoing profound transformations. In June 2024, Prof. Zhu and his research team published *African Literature Studies* (Ten-Volume Series) as a milestone achievement of the major national program on the study of African literature in China titled “History of African Literature Written in English” supported by National Social Science Fund of China. With its monumental scale of 3.7 million Chinese characters and groundbreaking perspectives, this “Ten-Volume Series” has infused this ongoing transformation of literary studies with distinctive Chinese scholarly voices.

For decades, Western scholars dominated the discourse of global literary studies,

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<sup>1</sup> See the book by Zhu, Zhenwu *Root and Flower of African English Literature*, Shanghai, Academia Press, 2019.

while Chinese academics largely participated as “annotators” or “transmitters” of Western theoretical frameworks.<sup>1</sup> Yet in recent years, the limitations of this Western-centric paradigm have become apparent—particularly when engaging with African, Asian, and other “non-mainstream” or “Third World” literatures, where singular Western perspective fails to fully illuminate their unique cultural values and textual richness. It is against this backdrop that Chinese scholars, represented by Prof. Zhu, have pioneered innovative approaches to African literary studies, actively constructing a distinctive theory of African literature with Chinese characteristics. Thus, “Chinese African Literaturology: A New Quality Idea” has emerged as a new and dynamic force within global literary studies.

Chinese African Literaturology is a theoretical framework for the study of African literature from a Chinese perspective. With its unique theoretical lens and critical practices, this theory redefines the essence and scope of African literature, subverting Western-centric paradigms and offering new approaches to the mutual learning within world literature. As a highly distinctive theoretical system of African literary discourse with Chinese characteristics, Chinese African Literaturology has forged a unique path in the field of African literary studies, marking a significant breakthrough for Chinese scholarship in global literary research.

The theoretical emergence of Chinese African Literaturology stems fundamentally from Chinese scholars’ cultural consciousness and sense of responsibility, while also benefiting from the global momentum of African literature’s ascendance to the center stage of world literature. As early as 2011, Prof. Zhu proposed the theory of “Balanced Absorption” ( “均衡吸纳说” ),<sup>2</sup> foresightedly asserting that Chinese scholars should not equate the perspectives of Anglophone researchers with their own, but instead root their work in the soil of native literary and cultural traditions, and develop authentically Chinese theories. As Prof. Zhu stated, “In the midst of unprecedented global changes, we must be even more aware of the responsibility of foreign literature scholars. Recognizing the situation and clarifying the direction are crucial” (“Mutual Appreciation” 53). Today, foreign literary scholars face unprecedented opportunities and challenges. The once uncritical, expansive research model is no longer adequate for the demands of the times. Chinese scholars must, therefore, adopt a perspective rooted in China, offering their own theoretical discourse to reconstruct the global order of world

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1 See in the article by Zhu, Zhenwu, “Revealing World Literature’s Diversity and Constructing Chinese African Literaturology.” *Chinese Social Sciences Today*, October 22, 2021.

2 See in the article by Zhu, Zhenwu, and Chuting Jiang, “Zhu Zhenwu: Balancing and Absorbing the Spirit of Global Literary Cultures.” *Wenhui Reading Weekly*, 30 Dec. 2011.

literature.

The year 2021 witnessed a watershed moment for African literature when Abdulrazak Gurnah, the Tanzanian-born writer from East Africa, was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature. This breakthrough was swiftly followed by African authors claiming other prestigious international literary honors including the Booker Prize, Prix Goncourt, Camões Prize, and Neustadt International Prize. This remarkable series of achievements propelled African literature to unprecedented global prominence, with the phenomenon being widely celebrated as “The Year of African Literature.” This literary renaissance not only signifies the vigorous development of African literature and reflects emerging trends in world literature, but also presents a golden opportunity for advancing African literary studies in China. The global recognition has created particularly favorable conditions for Chinese scholars to deepen their engagement with this flourishing field. It was also in 2021 that Prof. Zhu formally proposed the theoretical framework of “Chinese African Literaturology: the New Quality Idea” in his seminal article “Revealing the Diversity of World Literature and Constructing Chinese African Literaturology” published in *Social Sciences in China*. The article systematically outlined the academic approach and four foundational principles for this new theory: (1) developing independent aesthetic judgment, (2) achieving genuine mutual learning of civilizations, (3) clarifying the relationships among three types of literature, and (4) respecting the diversity of world literature.<sup>1</sup>

Building upon this theoretical foundation, Prof. Zhu subsequently published a series of interconnected articles including: “The Current State and Trends of ‘Non-Mainstream’ English Literature Research in China,” “The Contemporary Representation of Diaspora Literature and Its World Significance,” “African Literature and the Diversity of Civilizations,” “Communication Mistakes and Development Visions between China and Africa in Literature: On the Domestication and Adaptation of *Thunderstorm* in Nigeria,” “Mutual Appreciation in Dissemination and Domestication-Foreignization Balance in Chinese and Foreign Literatures: Centered on the Construction Logic of ‘Chinese African Literaturology’.” These works collectively established the intrinsic academic framework of Chinese African Literaturology with the theories of Four Major Diasporas [ “四大流散理论” ] and Africanness [ “非洲性理论” ] serving as its conceptual pillars. These foundational frameworks dynamically interact with other original concepts such as “Non-mainstream English Literature” [ “非主流

<sup>1</sup> For more details, see the article by Zhu Zhenwu, “Revealing the Diversity of World Literature and Constructing Chinese African Literaturology.” *Chinese Social Sciences Today*, 22 Oct., 2021.

英语文学说”], “Three-worlds Literature” [ “三个世界文学说” ], “Literary and Cultural Community” [ “文学文化共同体” ], “Balanced Absorption” [ “均衡吸纳说” ], “Coexistence and Symbiosis of Cultures” [ “文化共栖共生说” ] and “Recognition by Way of Others” [ “辗转体认说” ], together constituting the comprehensive theoretical architecture of Chinese African Literaturology. This systematic theoretical construction marked a paradigm shift in China’s African literary research—transforming from a “non-mainstream” pursuit to an established academic mainstream, and evolving from a state of “being-in-itself” to one of “being-for-itself” in terms of disciplinary consciousness and methodological sophistication.

The discourse innovation of Chinese African Literaturology has generated significant scholarly attention, with particular focus on how to ground critical practice in Chinese perspectives and theoretical frameworks. Addressing this central concern, Prof. Zhu advocates an immersive research methodology: “Chinese scholars of African literature must conduct fieldwork, examine primary sources, engage directly with African communities, collaborate with local scholars and writers, and deeply internalize African cultural paradigms. Only by rooting our scholarship in authentic African literary texts can we establish new research paradigms and aesthetic criteria, construct a proper coordinate system for African literature, illuminate its world literary value, and ultimately demonstrate Chinese scholarship’s unique critical insights and discoveries” (“Revealing World Literature’s Diversity” 4). Guided by these principles, Prof. Zhu and the team of the major national program “History of African Literature Written in English” conducted extensive fieldwork across Africa, immersing themselves in local cultures while translating and systematically analyzing numerous literary texts. After rigorous evaluation and selection, they successfully published *African Literature Studies* (Ten-Volume Series).

*African Literary Studies* meticulously constructs a panoramic view of African literature. The expansive scope, ambitious scale, and innovative perspectives position it as a pioneering endeavor that significantly broadens the landscape of African English literary studies. Prof. Zhu and his team, with remarkable insight into the complexities of the African continent, have divided the continent’s literary output into four zones: Southern, Western, Central, and Eastern and Northern Africa based on geographical distribution, colonial history, cultural origins, and linguistic traditions.

The series focuses primarily on African English literature, yet it also incorporates literary works in French, Portuguese, Arabic, and other widely spoken

African languages, covering the main linguistic systems involved in African literary creation. It brings together over 130 works by more than 90 African authors, spanning genres such as novels, poetry, drama, biography, literary theory, essays, memoirs, and documentary literature. Grounded in theoretical frameworks like “Africanness” and “Four Major Diasporas,” the series redefines the parameters of African literature through a distinct Chinese scholarly lens. This monumental work not only fills critical gaps in China’s African literary studies but also pioneers new methodological pathways for future studies in the field.

### **Pioneering Critique: Multidimensional Approaches to African Literature Studies**

As the first comprehensive and multidimensional study of African literature in China, *African Literature Studies* distinctly showcases the Chinese stance, perspective, and approach to African literature studies. It presents an academic landscape that stands in stark contrast to traditional Western African literary studies. The series highlights the dual commitment of Chinese scholars to cultural self-consciousness and cultural confidence, balancing macro considerations with micro research, while integrating theoretical innovation with critical discourse. Through this framework, it advances African literature research from case studies to broader literary phenomena and theoretical systematization, and from literary analysis to cultural and civilizational exploration, achieving a profound progression in African literary scholarship .

In terms of research stance, *African Literature Studies* clearly embodies the dual awareness of cultural self-consciousness and cultural confidence, reflecting a distinctively Chinese perspective in African literature studies. For a long time, Western academia, leveraging its dominant position in the international scholarly realm, has defined African literature through a Eurocentric lens that inevitably fails to capture its full richness and authenticity. As Prof. Zhu asserts: “Our studies on African literature should not be mere replicas of Cambridge, Oxford, Harvard or Columbia studies, nor should it parrot colonial discourses, summarize existing Western achievements, or serve as annotations or commentaries on Western scholarship” (“Revealing World Literature’s Diversity” 4). Chinese research on African literature should root its methodology in Chinese literary and cultural traditions, engage world literature as dialogic reference, and conduct trans-cultural, trans-disciplinary, trans-spatial and trans-perspectival analysis, actively fostering global academic dialogue.

*African Literature Studies* transcends Western discourse’s entrenched perceptions of African literary canons, redefining African writers and literary

production to present a multidimensional, dynamic new vision. Its innovative structure—particularly in the first seven volumes (*Studies in Select Southern Africa Literature*, *Studies in Classic South African Literature*, *Studies in Select Western African Literature*, *Studies in Classic Western African Literature*, *Studies in Select Eastern and Northern African Literature*, *Studies in Classic Eastern African Literature*, and *Studies in Select Central African Literature*)—breaks from Western academic conventions by employing Chinese scholarly criteria and aesthetic judgments to curate and analyze outstanding works through dual interpretive lenses: “Classic” and “Select.”

The “Classic” section features works recognized by Western literary establishment (Nobel, Booker, Goncourt prize-winners etc.) to demonstrate how African literature operates within international mainstream discourse. The “Select” section represents original Chinese scholarly discernment developed through extensive fieldwork across Africa, systematic translation of overlooked text and deep cultural contextualization. It reflects the independent judgments and interpretations of Chinese scholars, uncovering the neglected literary value by applying indigenous African aesthetic criteria, emphasizing local cultural specificities, and recovering authentic African narrative traditions. The dialectic between these two sections creates a stereoscopic view of African literature’s pluralistic nature, critical tension between global and local valuation systems, and space for cross-civilizational literary dialogue. This innovative structure achieves what Western-centric scholarship has consistently failed to do—it simultaneously acknowledges the transnational circulation of African letters while recentering the continent’s own literary epistemologies, ultimately restoring African literature’s full complexity and agency.

In terms of research vision, *African Literature Studies* demonstrates exceptional foresight and methodological rigor, illuminating the dialectical unity of universality and particularity in African literature through its dual focus on macro-level consideration and micro-level analysis. In one respect, it upholds a macro-cosmopolitan perspective, placing African literature on the grand stage of world literature, examining its position and development within the global literary landscape, and exploring the connections and interactions between African literature and world literature. In another respect, its micro analysis is highly adaptable and precise, delving into the unique characteristics of the literature of different African regions and countries. It uncovers the nuanced layers of African literature, providing a comprehensive and in-depth model for African literary studies.

*African Literature Studies* also adopts an exceptionally inclusive approach

that encompasses both the broader literary landscapes across various regions of Africa and the often-overlooked literary histories of individual nations. Its scope extends from established iconic African authors to emerging literary talents, incorporating authors from world-renowned masters to debut writers, from Nobel laureates to “non-mainstream” authors who have remained invisible in Western discourses. While the celebrated literary giants represent African literature’s most visible achievements on the global stage—embodying profound cultural heritage and mainstream aesthetic values—the rising literary stars demonstrate remarkable potential through their distinctive creative styles and insightful perspectives, taking root and flourishing in Africa’s fertile literary soil. Particularly significant are those “non-mainstream” writers who have long been marginalized by Western canons. Though their works may deviate from established Western literary standards, they are deeply rooted in Africa’s unique and authentic cultural traditions, offering genuine reflections of the continent’s social diversity and providing alternative dimensions for African literary studies.

In terms of research paradigm, *African Literature Studies* exemplifies the academic awareness of both theoretical independence and discourse innovation among Chinese scholars. Utilizing the foundational framework of Chinese African Literatology, the series adopts a multidimensional approach: tracing historical continuities, connecting broader contexts through specific case studies, and conducting dialectical analysis between theoretical frameworks and textual evidence. This provides an alternative research paradigm and intellectual path, distinct from traditional African literature studies.

By grounding its approach in Chinese literary and cultural perspectives, the series transcends Western discursive models and research paradigms, innovating Chinese scholarly discourse on African literature, and establishes robust theoretical support for multilateral dialogue in Chinese African Literatology. The final three volumes of the series pioneer three unprecedented contributions to African literary studies in China:

*A Study of the Progress of Botswana Literature in English* is the first specialized literary history of Botswana in China. Focusing on the development and evolution of Botswana literature following colonial rule in 1885, it adopts a text-centered approach with “modernization” as the analytical framework. The volume selects over ten authors who have had a significant impact on the history of Botswana English literature, and interweaves individual author studies with historical contextualization. By following a chronological framework, it clarifies the internal development of Botswana’s literary history, offering a holistic view of the

modernization process of Botswana literature. In doing so, it outlines the trajectory of a century of English literature in Botswana, simultaneously reflecting the editor's awareness of the interrelationship between literary history writing and literary criticism.

*A Study of Abdulrazak Gurnah's Diasporic Writing* stands as the first scholarly monograph in China dedicated to Abdulrazak Gurnah, employing the "Four Major Diasporas" theoretical framework from Chinese African Literaturology to comprehensively examine the Nobel laureate's literary oeuvre through his identity as a diasporic writer. This volume conducts systematic, multidimensional analyses of ten of Gurnah's major novels through four specialized lenses: Diasporic Themes, Diasporic Narratives, Diasporic Visions, and Diasporic Communities, meticulously investigating their creative genesis, artistic development, narrative techniques, thematic depth, and cultural significance—ultimately revealing their unique value in the evolving landscape of African and world literature. Gurnah's novels works engage with diasporic refugee communities, exploring multifaceted issues of identity construction, psychological trauma, and cultural consciousness. They vividly capture the interplay and tension between traditional African roots and modern influences, while reflecting crucial social phenomena and national imaginaries of the African experience. Representing contemporary African literature, Gurnah's works demonstrate a remarkable understanding of the colonial history and its enduring psychological scars. Simultaneously, through their richly layered Africanness, these works articulates profound hope for a shared future—envisioning interconnected literary, cultural, and ecological communities that speak to humanity's highest aspirations.

*A Study of African Writers' Creation* is the first collective critical biography of prominent African authors in China. Grounded in the "Africanness" theory of Chinese African Literaturology, this volume redefines both African writers and their literary productions through its examination of 31 representative authors, including Nobel laureates, Booker Prize winners, and Goncourt Prize winners, alongside writers honored with regional African literary awards, and emerging contemporary voices. Employing Chinese biographical tradition, the book adopts a writer-centered approach that meticulously explores each author's life, creative output, social interactions, and literary influence through the analysis of cultural conflicts, thematic concerns, aesthetic values, artistic innovations, and literary impact. This multidimensional analysis reveals the spiritual essence, collective identity, and stylistic characteristics that define African literature as a whole. Notably, the inclusion of Western literary figures like Doris Lessing and Albert Camus within

the African literary canon represents an innovative Third World perspective that facilitates genuine literary dialogue between China and Africa.

### **Remapping the Landscape of World Literature: Pluralistic Value of Mutual Learning of Literatures and Cultures**

*African Literature Studies* serves as a panoramic window into the diverse landscape of African literary traditions and its unique significance within world literature. By reassessing Africa's literary influence in the global literary landscape, this work carries transformative historical weight in reshaping the landscape of world literature. Grounded in the theory of civilizational diversity, the series facilitates mutual learning, symbiosis, and coexistence between Chinese, African, and global civilizations. Moreover, by anchoring its perspective in Chinese literary and cultural traditions, the "Ten-Volume Series" disrupts long-standing Western discourse paradigms, critical conventions, and epistemological boundaries. Employing indigenous Chinese critical frameworks and theoretical systems, it offers the aesthetic expressions and spiritual depth of African literary works. In doing so, it not only contributes to establishing a new world literary order but also advances genuine civilizational dialogue and the construction of a transcultural literary community—one that embraces pluralism and fosters equitable global literary exchange.

First and foremost, the publication of *African Literature Studies* marks a pivotal moment for academia to re-examine the position and significance of African literature within global literary landscape, offering a more comprehensive and profound perspective on the global understanding of literary studies. By closely engaging with contemporary literary theory while skillfully integrating both globalized and localized perspectives, the series presents scholars with a meticulously detailed panorama of African literary development. Furthermore, through objective analysis of African literature's intrinsic literary qualities, it introduces diverse cultural elements into the realm of world literature, establishing a compelling new paradigm that enriches and expands our conception of global literary diversity.

Prof. Zhu keenly observes that contemporary world literature lacks the diversity it ought to possess. Since Goethe's seminal articulation of the concept of Weltliteratur, the understanding of world literature—still largely shaped by Western dominance—has failed to capture its full scope with precision and completeness. As Jerome McGann remarks, "in such a world, this myth [of literature as an aesthetically autonomous system] resembles less a map than a

kind of equilibrium device, a cultural gyroscope for maintaining cultural status quo” (651–52). Literature, by its very nature, should encompass the multifaceted political, economic, and cultural elements that reflect the social realities and cultural particularities of diverse nations, regions, and historical periods. However, the current configuration of “world literature” struggles to fully manifest this rich plurality. Non-Western literatures, despite their distinctive artistic merit and cultural significance, continue to navigate a precarious existence in the shadow of Western dominance. Many outstanding literary traditions from non-Western societies remain overlooked, marginalized, and excluded from the global literary discourse. In *Death of a Discipline* (2003), Gayatri Spivak critiques the homogenizing effects of translating contemporary world literature uniformly into English, challenging the monolingual perspective as the exclusive gateway to understanding world literature.<sup>1</sup> D’hean Theo also puts forward that the literary anthologies written only in English serve as a hegemonic map of world literature. “They do so linguistically, presenting, and hence reducing all the world’s literatures to, in essence, ‘in English’”(414).<sup>2</sup>

African literature exemplifies such predicament through its complex manifestations: indigenous African writing remains deeply rooted in the continent’s soil, directly mirroring the spiritual world of African people; Western-constructed African literature bears the imprint of colonial history, presenting a rewritten and reshaped narrative; while African literary studies in other regions, including China, due to historical discourse limitations and constrained understandings of world literature, have failed to develop comprehensive definitions and interpretations of African literature, making genuine cross-cultural, transnational, and transregional civilizational dialogue extraordinarily difficult to achieve. Against this backdrop, *African Literature Studies* delves deeply into the unique cultural representations embedded in African literatures, offering a profound analysis of their aesthetic value and unveiling their significant position and far-reaching implications in world literature. By challenging the existing limitations of world literary frameworks, this series serves as a powerful force in advancing world literature toward a more diverse and inclusive paradigm.

From a global literary perspective, African literature, with its distinctive cultural connotations and aesthetic expressions, has injected a continuous stream of

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1 See the book by Spivak, G. *Death of a Discipline*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.

2 For more details, see D’hean, T’s “Mapping World Literature,” in *The Routledge Companion to World Literature*, ed. by D’Haen, Theo, Damrosch David, and Kadir Djelal, London: Routledge, 2012, pp.413-22.

vitality into global literary traditions. The vast and enigmatic African continent—with its diverse terrains ranging from the boundless expanse of the Sahara Desert to the majestic depths of the Great Rift Valley, from the lush coastlines of the Gulf of Guinea to the rugged grandeur of the South African plateau—has nurtured an extraordinarily complex and multifaceted literary ecosystem shaped by these varied geographical environments. Equally significant is Africa's colonial history: "Since the 15th century, European colonizers set foot on the African continent, initiating centuries of brutal colonial history"(Nie 54). Centuries of domination under different colonial powers, durations, and systems across regions have profoundly influenced literature. Culturally, Africa possesses a brilliant and unique heritage—tribal beliefs, traditional customs, art forms, and oral narratives form the deep roots of its literature. The evolution of African literature reflects both the struggles of colonial oppression and the vibrant resistance post-independence, embodying distinct historical and regional characteristics. Traditional tribal cultures, religious rituals, and rich folk customs all come alive in literary works. Aesthetically, African literature inherits its strong oral traditions, often marked by rhythmic and lyrical language that seamlessly extends into written forms. Narratively, it frequently breaks conventions through nonlinear storytelling and multiperspectival techniques, offering readers an unprecedented literary experience. *African Literature Studies* meticulously uncovers the deeper cultural connotations, historical contexts, and aesthetic innovations behind these elements, serving as a key to unlocking African literature's unique charm. In doing so, it illuminates Africa's irreplaceable contributions to world literature and global aesthetics—not merely as an alternative voice but as a transformative force redefining literary and artistic paradigms.

In addition, *African Literary Studies* engages deeply with the theory of diversity of civilizations in its critical examination of African literature, exploring how the "Africanness" of African literature demonstrates remarkable vitality through its poetic positive-sum game with Western cultural forces. This approach has injected dynamic energy into the mutual learning and coexistence of global civilizations. "The symbiosis and coexistence, mutual learning, and collaborative development of diverse cultures represent the guiding philosophy for the development of world literature and culture today" (Zhu, "Revealing the Diversity" 4). The theory of diversity of civilizations encapsulates China's century-long modernization journey, particularly crystallizing the new patterns in human civilization forged through reform and opening-up. As fellow literatures of Third World literatures, both African and Chinese literatures face similar opportunities and challenges in their dialogue with world literature. In this context, the series plays a pivotal role by identifying

cultural resonances between African and Chinese civilizations, and uncovering profound affinities between African and Chinese civilizations. This African experience also offers invaluable insights for China in the dialogue with the West, guiding the construction of literary, cultural, and ecological communities, as well as a shared human destiny. It contributes to the promotion of peaceful development, cooperative progress, and the emergence of a new form of civilization. In this sense, the “Ten-Volume Series” provides a unique perspective for China within the global cultural exchange, fostering a more confident and inclusive stance in its cultural interactions with the world. It encourages the harmonious coexistence and joint development of different civilizations and strengthens the deep cultural exchange between Chinese and African literatures, further advancing the mutual appreciation of civilizations.

Furthermore, *African Literary Studies* holds particular significance for re-examining contemporary Chinese literary culture and promoting its flourishing development. It prompts Chinese literary community to reconsider its own developmental trajectory, drawing inspiration from African literature’s perseverance and innovation amidst adversity, thereby injecting new vitality into the advancement of Chinese literary and cultural prosperity. Simultaneously, the series has profoundly enriched Chinese readers’ aesthetic experiences and broadened their literary horizons, enabling a wide audience to appreciate the distinctive artistic styles and aesthetic values of African literature.

As the largest developing country in the world, China bears both the responsibility and the obligation to promote fairness and justice within the global literary order. “The meteoric rise of China is bound to ‘re-orient’ the world, and hence also world maps, including the map of world literature, within the already foreseeable future” (D’hean 420). *African Literary Studies* embodies the proactive attempts of Chinese scholars to participate in reconstructing a new world literary order—one grounded in enriching cultural diversity and advancing civilizational mutual learning. This critical practice of Chinese African Literaturology establishes a distinctly Chinese scholarly worldview of literature and culture, and provides both robust theoretical foundations and practical exemplars for achieving genuine civilizational exchange, while contributing Chinese wisdom and solutions to global African literary studies. From the perspective of Third World literatures, Chinese scholars are re-examining the complexity and plurality of world literature, thereby injecting renewed vitality into global literary research.

## Conclusion

The emergence of Chinese African Literaturology and the publication of the *African Literature Studies* (Ten-Volume Series) undoubtedly represent a significant breakthrough for Chinese academia in African literary studies and the global literary landscape. Through pioneering theoretical construction, multidimensional critical practice, and active promotion of a new world literary order, Chinese scholars have—with unwavering determination and innovative thinking—injected vital energy into literary diversity and cross-cultural exchange. Looking ahead, Chinese African Literaturology will undoubtedly play an increasingly vital role in global literary research, develop inclusive frameworks beyond Western paradigms, and contribute Chinese wisdom and strength to the construction of a global literary and cultural community with a shared future. In this way, it heralds a new era for world literature—one defined by unprecedented vibrancy, pluralism, and inclusivity, where all civilizations can thrive in harmonious exchange.

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