

Weltliteratur. Modelle transnationaler Literaturwahrnehmung im 19. Jahrhundert.

Von Peter Goßens. Stuttgart: Metzler, 2011. xiii + 457 Seiten. €49,95.

The first decade of the twenty-first century has witnessed a revitalization of discussions on world literature. Economic globalization, willful or forced mass-migration, and a post-Cold War and post-9/11 world requiring a new understanding of power structures have led to the reestablishment of world literature as a major field of study in academia. This is evident in the publication of several important works in the last decade: Franco Moretti's essay "Conjectures on World Literature" (2000); monographs such as *What is World Literature?* (David Damrosch, 2003), *World Republic of Letters* (Pascale Casanova, 2003), *Death of a Discipline* (Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 2003), *The Idea of World Literature* (John Pizer, 2006), *Mapping World Literature* (Mads Rosendhal Thomsen, 2008), *Against World Literature* (Emily Apter, 2013); new anthologies and companions such as *The Norton Anthology of World Literature* (Third Edition, 2012), *The Routledge Companion to World Literature* (2012), *The Routledge Concise History of World Literature* (2012), and *The Routledge World Literature Reader* (2013); and special issues of journals such as *Das Argument's* "Kosmopolitismus in der Literatur" (Gerhard Bauer, Julia Schöll, Peter Jehle, 298 [54.4, 2012]) and *Modern Language Quarterly's* "What Counts as World Literature?" (Caroline Levine and B. Venkat Mani, 74.2 [2013]).

These studies have opened up the term "world literature" to scrutiny through its academic institutionalization. Extant scholarship conceptualizes world literature through the processes of production, circulation, and distribution of texts in translation (Damrosch, Thomsen), through a world system of center-peripheral relations (Moretti, Casanova), through pedagogical practices in the US classroom (Spivak, Pizer), or through challenging the practice of readings in translation (Spivak, Apter). The scale and scope of these works is also global—instead of focusing on a particular national or a cultural space, these studies examine world literature across several linguistic and literary traditions, focusing mainly on the 20th and 21st centuries.

Peter Goßens' *Weltliteratur* neither intervenes in these debates, nor does it benefit from the critical synergy of English-language discussions. Yet, a sharp focus on Germany and a detailed engagement with the literary history of the 19th century make Goßens' book a noteworthy contribution to the field of world literary studies. Goßens follows the conceptual career of the term "Weltliteratur" from the moment of Goethe's pronouncement of the term in Johann Peter Eckermann's *Gespräche mit Goethe* (1828, published 1836) all the way to the Danish intellectual Georg Brandes' revisiting of the term in his essay *Verdensliteratur* (1899). Between these two most well-known names, Goßens recounts a fascinating story of how numerous authors, critics, literary historians, and to an extent political thinkers contributed to the development and proliferation of *Weltliteratur*. With sources ranging from literary magazines, autobiographical writings, letters, (anonymously published) book reviews and essays, and introductions to anthologies, Goßens sets up a rich archive of world literary studies, which includes, but does not restrict itself to the most famous names that populate extant scholarship. These varied sources as well as hitherto under-discussed authors and works (at least in English-language scholarship on German

literature) assist Goßens in presenting world literature as a conglomerate of models of transnational literary reception, as promised by the subtitle of his monograph.

Recently published scholarship on world literature acknowledges or accords special significance to two statements from the 19th century. The first is by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1828); the second by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in the *Communist Manifesto* (1848). Not much attention has been paid to the literary historical trends in Germany and Europe during this period, or to what extent these trends could assist us in reevaluating—or even contesting—the significance of the term *Weltliteratur* for our contemporary moment. Goßens’ contextualization of world literature in the 19th century with a special attention to and detailed engagement with political and historical trends fills this gap in extant scholarship. He starts his book with a systematic examination of the origins of a terminological field (Section I: “Die Entstehung eines Begriffsfelds,” 14–123); moves to the epoch of world literature and transformation in the meaning of the term (Section II: “Epoche der Weltliteratur—Wandlungen eines Begriffes,” 124–314) and ends with models of transnational literary reception (Section III: “Modelle transnationaler Literaturwahrnehmung, 1848–1888,” 315–398). Each section consists of 3–4 chapters.

In Section I, Goßens credits the development of the term *Weltliteratur* to the Enlightenment ideas of cosmopolitan humanism and universal formation (*Bildung*) that marked the early 19th century. Commenting on the proliferation of translations and the development of a literary as well as historical curiosity beyond immediate geo-cultural locations, Goßens sketches a literary landscape that is slowly developing an agenda of a general or common (*allgemeine*) literary history. The development of the encyclopedia in the 18th century, the growth of knowledge about the world, the interest in synthesizing and organizing this knowledge, all of these, argues Goßens, create an intellectual movement (*Denkbewegung*, 33) that prepares the ground for the term *Weltliteratur*. The idea of a general *Historia literaria* (33–36), Goßens asserts, would be transformed into specific models of literary histories—either with an investment in contemporary German national literature (Herder’s *Über die neuere deutsche Literatur*, 51–55), or with an eye towards a cosmopolitan conceptualization of literature in Europe (A.W. Schlegel’s lectures in Berlin and Vienna, 64–70). These transformations become the immediate precursors to Wieland and then Goethe’s use of the term. Goethe’s own statements—from *Kunst und Altherthum* (11–16), or his writings on the magazine *Le Globe* (97–104)—are presented along with his exchanges with Thomas Carlyle and Giuseppe Mazzini (108–120). These sections add to Goßens’ consideration of world literature and the development of the literary canon (105–108), illustrating a transnational, but also “translational” dialogue through which the term *Weltliteratur* acquires traction.

Section II follows the transformation and further developments of the term after Goethe’s death in 1832. On the one hand, through an inclusion of reflections on Goethe in memoirs by critics such as Karl Wilhelm Müller (139–140), or occasions of Goethe-worship (“Goetheverehrung”) by Karl August Varnhagen von Ense (145–175), Goßens highlights the presence of Goethe in discussions of world literature in years immediately following his demise. On the other hand, through a focus on voices from the Young Germany movement—such as Friedrich Gustav Kühne (187–190), Gustav Schleiser (190–194), and Karl Gutzkow (201–205)—Goßens also demon-

strates how the reconceptualization of a national culture and literature as well as voices of dissidence created conditions where *Weltliteratur* in the Goethean sense was either subject to critique, or vehemently shunned. While Gutzkow states clearly that world literature does not insinuate the repression (*Verdrängung*) of literature's national origins (202), critics of the term such as Wolfgang Menzel (194–197) and Ernst Moritz Arndt (255–263) see a clash between national interests and a cosmopolitan orientation of the author and the reader. Menzel rejects world literature as a specifically Jewish and French enterprise; Arndt extends this thought, to the extent of warning the German reader against a purported “seduction” by Goethe's term (261). By juxtaposing these ideas with the writings of Karl Rosenkranz, Alexander Jung, and Karl Grün (278–295) and their imagination of the possibility of a “true socialism” in world literature, Goßens accentuates the politicization of the term in a dominantly patriotic literary climate. This section ends with a discussion of Marx and Engels' statement on world literature, with which Goßens declares the end of a political appropriation of the “term,” and the beginning of a purely literary historical and canonical engagement with the “object” world literature: “Die lange Zeit dominante politische Inanspruchnahme des *Begriffs* Weltliteratur wird nach 1848 endgültig von einer rein literaturhistorischen und kanonisierten Auseinandersetzung mit dem *Gegenstand* Weltliteratur abgelöst” (307, original emphasis).

Section III follows this thought and the transformation of the term—as Goßens claims—through the framework of literary histories and anthologies. Notable among these is his discussion of the Leipzig-based scholar and professor Theodor Danzel's ideas on world literary history (328–333); of Johann Jakob Honegger's division of world literature into four parts (350–357); and of Johannes Scherr's anthology *Bildersaal der Weltliteratur* (published 1848, 359–367). This section ends with a history of world literary histories published during the second half of the 19th century, which Goßens uses also to indicate the beginnings of comparative histories of world literature.

Through meticulous research, inclusion of hitherto neglected voices and sources, and simultaneous consideration of aesthetic and political aspects of world literature, Goßens' *Weltliteratur* sheds new light on the historical development of world literature in the German 19th century. The accomplishments of this volume can be evaluated against two recent (and much slimmer) volumes, John Pizer's *The Idea of World Literature: History and Pedagogical Practice* (2006), and Dieter Lamping's *Die Idee der Weltliteratur: Ein Konzept Goethes und seine Karriere* (2010). While both Pizer and Lamping trace the historical development of the term *Weltliteratur*, their books also refract the term through developments in postcolonial literatures in the second half of the 20th century. On the one hand, Goßens' detailed discussion of the 19th century distinguishes itself from these books. On the other hand, a rather brief engagement with contemporary scholarship (primarily in German)—limited to the Introduction (1–13) and the Conclusion (399–406)—comes across as a major disconnect with the proliferation of the term and its new afterlives in a transnational context. This disconnect is particularly noticeable in a monograph that centralizes models of transnational literary (and literary theoretical) reception. In addition, Goßens' model of transnational origins of world literature remains woefully Eurocentric. He hardly emphasizes the role of British and French colonialism in initiating and facilitating

translations of non-European literary works—Kalidasa’s *Sakuntala*, *1001 Nights*, the unnamed Chinese novel mentioned by Goethe in Eckermann’s *Gespräche mit Goethe*—whose arrival in Europe triggers a special interest in and a curiosity about aesthetic affinities between available literatures from non-European spaces. These translations, and many others, were often discussed and reviewed in *Literarisches Conversationsblatt* (later *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung*), a literary magazine that is one of the major sources of Goßens’ ideas. World literature, and the imagination of a translational cultural community (“Vorstellung einer transnationalen Kulturgemeinschaft,” 26–30) consequently appear as largely intra-European phenomena. Furthermore, Goßens hints at connections among print culture, libraries, and world literature in his discussion of an expansion of a “Bücherreich” (89–92), but then abandons this thought, especially in the section on the proliferation of world literary anthologies and histories. Finally, Goßens does not adequately explain how he arrives at the clear demarcation of *Weltliteratur* as a “political” concept until 1848 and a “purely literary and aesthetic” object of study after 1848. While it is beyond the scope of this review to engage with this periodization in detail, suffice it to say that from Goethe’s evaluation of the unnamed Chinese novel, his inclusion of a “Vorspiel” in *Faust* inspired by the opening act of *Sakuntala*, through Johannes Scherr’s claim for a particular German propensity for world literature in the Introduction to *Bildersaal der Weltliteratur*, all the way to Georg Brandes’ first reflections on uneven trajectories of circulation of translated literature, there is ample evidence that an instrument of aesthetic consumption also becomes instrumental to a political vision. Heine recognizes it through his idea of *Welthülfliteratur* (1831); Marx and Engels finally nail it in their statement in the *Communist Manifesto* (1848). Goßens’ determined attempt to include all voices from the 19th century, rather than a focused study of select positions, renders the discussion of certain crucial positions uneven, and compromises the quality of engagement with the sources.

My critique notwithstanding, Goßens has made an excellent contribution to the expansion of our knowledge on world literature. My comments are intended to testify to the significance of Goßens’ contribution to the field of German literary studies of the 19th century, and world literary studies.

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Heinrich Heine und die Diaspora. Der Zeitschriftsteller im kulturellen Raum der jüdischen Minderheit.

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Many efforts have been made to find a formula that would explain and perhaps unify Heine’s elusive and shifting relationship to his Jewishness. Lydia Fritzlar makes an ambitious attempt to find a constant in Heine’s awareness of his location in the Diaspora, now no longer a punishment ordained by God to be endured in isolation and ritualized introversion until the Messiah comes and the Jews are returned to Zion, but a secular, socio-politically explicable condition of the oppression of a minority by a majority society. The Diaspora comes to be seen historically, not religiously. Heine is a participant in and a particularly acute observer of the epochal turn from a religious