

Goll during the preliminary considerations on the general historical conditions of the period, that is, before he reaches the actual examination of the period's literary history.

The curricula of the French and German literature departments almost never include Goll's works. But if there is one author whose work has all the intrinsic characteristics to qualify as world literature, then it is his. This holds true whether one opts for the model of Goethe (infrastructure, network), of Brandes (the most national = the most world), of Moretti (waves of disseminating forms), or of Damrosch (ellipse, communication). Goll has remained a peripheral figure in the national literary histories of France and Germany, though. Their historiographical practices have focused more on geographical and linguistic determinants than on entanglements and foreign trade.

There also exist debatable solutions to the challenge that migrant writers pose to the traditional framework governing literary historiography (author's place of birth and mother tongue). Realizing that English literature had undergone massive changes after World War Two, the editors of the Oxford English Literary History produced two parallel volumes covering that period, one volume about English writers, one volume about foreign writers now considered to be important names in English literature (e.g., Rushdie). While this volume, entitled *The Internationalization of English Literature* (King), represents a welcome acknowledgment of writers previously left out of national literary histories, the parallelization is problematic, not least because it separates what is interdependent.

There are numerous examples of post-1945, post-1989, and post-2001 writers now living in France, Germany, England, Italy, etc., but whose backgrounds outside of Europe mean that we need to pay attention to more worldly vectors and entanglements than in Goll's case. In Germany, Iraqi-born Abbas Khider writes novels in German, but through their themes (e.g., refuge) and fictional worlds (e.g., Baghdad) his works expand what German and Germany is. In Denmark, the late Yahya Hassan was both born in Denmark and wrote his poems in Danish, but their form and content were infused with the cultures, lingos, and rhythms of Palestine and the ghetto. In France, Leïla Slimani's *Le Pays des autres* (2020) connects with her own biography comprising roots in Alsace, Algeria, and Morocco. Slimani is a bestselling author in France, according to herself 100 % French and 100 % Moroccan, and her new novel is an example of how literature is neither a tree or a wave, but instead an entanglement of forces pulling literary works into and out of the nation.

The works of Khider, Hassan, and Slimani display cross-border entanglements through translations, author biography, fictional settings, linguistic style, and thematic content. Once we start paying attention to these entanglements with other literary traditions, languages, and nations, histories of national literatures may reflect the worldliness of each nation.

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### World Literature and Literary Afterlife\*

Literary works and their authors seldom belong solely to the historical age and part of the world in which they were written. But how do some begin life anew in other languages, other cultural contexts, and in other literary marketplaces, while many do not? Does a dis-

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tinctive narrative, combined with authorial flair, render certain works susceptible to creative adaptation, imaginative retranslation, or extensive allusion by other writers? And when original literary works do undergo such metamorphoses, who is capable of recognizing them in their new guise? Does engaging with literary works in new linguistic incarnations or other socio-political contexts enrich our reading experience and aesthetic sensibilities – and, if so, then in what way?

In order to undertake meaningful examination and comparison of these dynamics, it is necessary to account for the equally expansive and disruptive forces at work in literary study in a globalized age (Damrosch, *Comparing the Literatures*). One convenient shorthand for the legacy and ongoing relevance of literary works and their authors in their original time and place, as well as in others, is their “afterlife.” This term proves useful not only for its conceptual capaciousness but also for its suggestion of temporal and physical—and, indeed, metaphysical—distance. Yet it is not always clear how “literary afterlife” or “afterlives” should be understood in discrete cases. It is thus imperative to think through the term “literary afterlife” itself as it pertains particularly to the translation of works and their journeys beyond their place of linguistic origin into other global contexts.

Consideration must be given, for example, to different potential subcategories of “afterlife,” what these might entail, and whether or not “literary afterlives” are exclusively concerned with direct references to an author or their works, or whether they merely comprise traces of the spirit of earlier literature. Another catch-all term, “intertextuality,” often employed to describe any kind of verbal echo in literature (contrary to Julia Kristeva’s original definition of the specific transposition of one form’s characteristics into another, thereby creating a new form altogether), has become as inadequate as it is pliable. The “literary afterlife” of texts has, however, a deep conceptual resonance that may help trace texts’ journeys and transformations across space and time.

Concepts, just as much as literary works, have their own afterlives, and if any area of literary studies can be said to have had an invigorated afterlife in recent decades, then it is that of world literature or *Weltliteratur*. Having been resuscitated in its German form by Goethe’s fleshing out of written remarks made by Christoph Martin Wieland in the early 1800s, and having constituted a defining *topos* of much of European comparative literary study throughout the nineteenth century, the globalized planet that is the term “world literature” has swum ever greater into our ken since the turn of the millennium. Much, then, is at stake if we fold together “world literature” and “literary afterlife” to see what such thinking may reveal or conceal.

Literary representations of the afterlife itself also prove illuminating here. In Antiquity, the afterlife was an imagined arena of coexisting inconsistencies created to facilitate connection: as Emma Gee argues, classical texts pertaining to the afterlife “contain, as a rule, not one but two kinds of space. The first is linear space—a journey through afterlife terrain, the horizontal progression of the narrative. The second is circular or bounded space, a vision of the universe placed inside such a journey” (3). Less the sole province of religious thought, as we might imagine today, classical literary conceptions of afterlife have long been dually associated with both travelling through and envisioning a structure of the cosmos—that is, for argument’s sake, of the world.

Tracing lines of travel; sketching the structure of space: these elements are also what animate the otherwise hollow concept of world literature. Animate, derived from the Latin *anima* meaning “breath” or “soul,” suggests the act of being instilled with life; literary afterlife and world literature are endowed with kindred spirits. This resonates profoundly with the aims of world literary scholarship. Elisabeth Herrmann argues that instead of standing for a single kind of literature or encompassing a fixed number of literary texts, the term world literature “becomes meaningful”—that is to say, attains its living significance and practical

resonance as a *Begriff*—when it is employed both to describe the dynamism of literary works travelling in the world and to pinpoint new or already extant literary communities that come into being precisely through this circulation of literary works (60).

If, as in the case of literary afterlife, lines of travel and circulation along with structures of community and space provide the animating impetus of world literature, then it is worth thinking through the afterlife of texts in world literary terms. For Aby Warburg, the afterlife of visual art was its *Nachleben*, the capacity of an image to survive from the past into the future in fragmentary form, moving from one cultural context to another. Walter Benjamin's preferred term for the endurance of literary works in their reception and in their translation into other tongues was the more unusual *Fortleben*. The use of the prefix *fort-* rather than *nach-* is worth dwelling upon: it suggests not so much the sequential notion of moving forward through space as a sense of distance and spatial separation that nonetheless retains connotations of temporal extension and connection.

This understanding of afterlife is highly relevant to contemporary questions around national literatures in a global context. The movement and transmission of texts—in translation from one language into another and in more material bibliomigratory terms (Mani, *Recoding World Literature*)—expresses a sense of simultaneous continuity as well as progression. If we linger with Benjamin a little longer, we recall that an original work is anchored in a specific geographical location and historical moment. The age of mechanical reproduction strips away the aura of singularity, casting any copy or later rendition of a work as virtual, non-historical, geographically unmoored, and thus inauthentic. However, the age of global literary transmission surely begs the question of whether a later incarnation of an earlier text may, if re-territorialized and re-temporalized, in fact become an original in its own right. Be it in archival remnants, in translation, in homage or allusion, examining the “literary afterlife” of texts offers an alternative to the pedantic arrogance of ethnonationalist literary imagination, allowing for multiplicity and complexity.

In considering not only “literary afterlife” in world literary terms but also perhaps the afterlives of “world literature” itself, we are reminded that literature is both relational and unstable. Yet if the privilege of originality is lost, an afterlife within the unfolding continuum of a world literary cosmos and its manifold trajectories of travel is gained. Bibliomigrants in new times and climes do not emerge as inauthentic, exhausted husks. If anything, less focus on the diachronic progression of bibliomigrancy and more attention given to the synchronic transmission and co-existence of world literary texts suggest a form of afterlife closer to something we might think of as *Nebenleben*: both contiguous to and apart from; beside, in both senses.

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### Other Libraries: On German Studies and African Literature in the World

This essay considers the many ways that African writing and German intellectual cultures have been intertwined to invite a re-examination of affiliations that illuminate co-creating literary clusters to enrich both fields.

While the value of the category *world literature* is certainly debatable, Zimbabwe's Tsitsi Dangarembga undoubtedly meets its criteria. Her 1988 novel *Nervous Conditions* appears