



The global process of thinking global literature: from Marx's *Weltliteratur* to Sarkozy's *littérature-monde*

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Abstract

This article outlines the history of research in global literature as a history that is itself global. This kind of global history of the theorization of global literature demands a departure from the existing accounts and their nascent gap between heated theoreticist debates and pacifying historicist anthologies. A global approach to the problematic can bridge this gap because it considers not only what the most influential studies on global literature say, but also where and when they say it. Whether these be Romantic assertions of world literature, post-war pleas for cosmopolitan literature, Cold War polemics about 'Third World' literature, or millennial theories of transnational, post-national, planetary, and, indeed, global literature, the article considers not only the object of these studies but also the studies themselves as an object; not only the text but also the context. Hence, a historicization of literary theories of globalization in effect bleeds into a historicization of globalization itself.

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