

um conjunto amplo de nomes e avançando a hipótese principal, expressa no título e bem presente na discussão contemporânea, da deslocação da “função intelectual” da esfera do discursivo para a do performativo. Alguns aspetos de um diagnóstico na generalidade certo mereceriam ampla discussão, para que aqui não há lugar. A análise bem informada e arguta de Barrento, ao enfrentar, e não é este o menor dos seus méritos, um problema que muita da discussão corrente tende a invisibilizar, não escapa – como poderia ser de outro modo? – às muitas dificuldades do seu objeto. Isto é particularmente palpável nalgum carácter inconclusivo e, sobretudo, nalguma oscilação da argumentação entre uma polémica de fundo contra o universo informacional e a crise de valores contemporânea remanescente dos *topoi* da crítica da cultura das primeiras décadas do século XX na sugestão de uma recusa em bloco e, por outro lado, a procura convicta de núcleos de racionalidade e de práticas de resistência (que são também fatores de esperança no sentido blochiano expressamente invocado pelo autor). Um fator de incomodidade, pelo menos para este leitor, está no carácter, talvez não eurocêntrico, mas, sem dúvida, eurocentrado de uma argumentação aparentemente indiferente ao contributo da reflexão pós-colonial (o que talvez explique a ausência de um nome como o de Boaventura de Sousa Santos – ou dever-se-á esta ausência a uma certa desconfiança em relação à socio-

logia que vai aflorando aqui e ali nos textos de Barrento?).

Na definição do autor, as figuras do intelectual e do ensaísta estão muito próximas, o que faz com que, em aspetos importantes, *O mundo está cheio de deuses* esteja na nítida continuidade de *O género intranquilo*, manifestando a unidade de preocupações que atrás fui sublinhando. Pese embora o desencanto que vai aflorando na sua “crítica do contemporâneo”, a escrita de Barrento constitui uma refutação do pressuposto, repetidamente formulado por Eduardo Lourenço em várias modulações, de que “nenhum ensaísmo é feliz”. O ensaísmo do autor de *O género intranquilo*, como ele próprio sublinha, não se desenvolve, de facto, no modo trágico; antes, diria eu, se articula muito mais no modo utópico. No fim de contas, a esperança como princípio acaba por emergir como motivo principal de toda a rica reflexão sobre o ensaio presente, de várias maneiras, em ambos os volumes – o ensaio como utopia de um modo de escrever, de pensar, e de estar no mundo.

António Sousa Ribeiro

**THE ROUTLEDGE CONCISE HISTORY OF
WORLD LITERATURE**

THEO D'HAEN

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Theo D'Haen's *The Routledge Concise History of World Literature* boldly

attempts to enact the mission statement embedded within its title – to succinctly document the origin of world literature from its Goethian beginnings, through its humanist and comparative literature past into its American pedagogical and anthological recent (and still existent) history to the postcolonial and peripheral present. The articulate awareness of D’Haen’s text regarding the futility of definitiveness and conclusion when concerning world literature empowers the work with an objective clarity. This awareness of world literature’s problematic history further engenders the text with a self-consciousness which probes each movement within the field both tersely and effectively, and whilst the ties between various movements and the linkage between theories often have rushed endings or lack the necessary depth, this represents a relatively minor grievance, but still a present complication, in its reading.

The general structure of the book constitutes several chapters which move chronologically through the various key stages and areas associated with the development of world literature. The chapters aim for associativity in both their naming and content, some examples being Goethe’s original interpretation of *Weltliteratur* intermingling with the resultant Humanism which rapidly usurped it, the distinction between world literature and Comparative Literature, and the relationship between translation studies and world literature. Clear breakdowns

within each chapter highlight specific struggles and their contributors. Besides, each chapter closes with a list of concluding/summarising points.

The book’s structure is a great boon for academics and students alike in terms of enabling the work to operate as a quick reference text. There are few blurred lines within the chapters, each keeping, in general, chronologically to its purpose – thus easing retrieval of information. D’Haen consistently refers the reader to other chapters of the book for further information if the discourse veers too far from the bounds of the current chapter. A doubt one may encounter while reading the text is about the inclusion of individual sections and large swathes of text on arguably non-world literature areas: comparative literature and postmodernism for example. This variety however only strengthens the objective view of the text regarding its topic – world literature has been predominantly defined and theorised using, and sometimes through, areas outside itself. Through this inclusion of disparate topics D’Haen appears to champion David Damrosch’s definition of world literature as “all literary works that circulate beyond their culture of origin, either in translation, or in their original language” (*What is World Literature?* Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2003, p. 4) by both noticing and enacting the necessity of including various literary fields laying outside world literature and how they

operate with and aid in its development. By realising world literature's indefinite nature this works to arguably smooth out and render obsolete many of the previous problems regarding definition. One minor complaint regarding this structured approach is that occasionally the references and significance to world literature within the aforementioned sections tend to be lost, most especially within the comparative literature chapter.

A core strength, and the primary one for scholars seeking orientation, regarding the book is its objective historical documentation. It never overtly sides with any interpretation of world literature, past or present, it merely relays each movement's concern and struggle with definition and often segregation from other fields. The work removes itself as a cause of further debate on the issue of defining world literature and instead becomes unbiased. Indeed, throughout there appears to be constant, though unspoken, sympathy regarding early theorists' disfigured interpretation of Goethe's original writings on the topic. This sympathy should not be misinterpreted as bias, merely it acknowledges Goethe's nebulosity regarding the formation of his theory, clearly visible in the following extract of his musings on the topic. "European literature, that is a literature of exchange and intercourse between the literatures of Europe and between the peoples of Europe, is the first stage of a world literature which

from these beginnings will spread in ever-widening circles to a system which in the end will embrace the world" (Fritz Strich, *Goethe and World Literature*. Transl.. C.A.M Sym. New York: Hafner Publishing Company, 1949, p. 16). This vagueness regarding world literature's inception is, rightfully, recognised by D'Haen as the precursor to its humanist and Eurocentric development, stating how Goethe's "Weltliteratur was rooted in his humanist universalism" (p. 33). This understanding found within all pages of the book gives the work an unbiased backbone on which an objective history of world literature is presented.

D'Haen's *Concise History of World Literature* includes a remarkably insightful account of world literature's presence and operation within Europe's so-called 'Semi-Periphery', and the focus on this during the final chapter provides the work a strong concluding note. Both the Scandinavian and Iberian peninsulas within Europe are dealt with in detail and imbibe Anna Klobucha's discourse on how: "The almost uniform characterization of the biased perspective of traditional comparative literary studies as 'Eurocentric' generally fails to take into account the fact that literatures and cultures of the European periphery have only on token occasions been considered as rightful contributors to the common 'European' cultural identity" ("Theorizing the European Periphery". *Symplike* 5/1(1997): 28). D'Haen notes that

the literary produce of Spain and Portugal is largely ignored and how “Pride of place would go to literatures in Spanish and Portuguese produced in former colonies” (p. 160). This European omission of Spanish and Portuguese works, created in the very countries of their respective linguistic origin, validates the significance to the introduction of postcolonial theory explored in the previous chapter. This Iberian analysis thus becomes a case study in Djelal Kadir’s concept of “worlding” – the realisation of one’s own cultural hegemonic viewpoint, thus enabling oneself to work towards avoiding or subverting it. Here the struggle against the contemporary tide of postcolonial literature as literature not on an equal-footing to the colonialists’, but rather above it, is elucidated. D’Haen thus vividly demonstrates the current tendency to over-recognise postcolonial literature and how it represents a movement threatening world awareness of Spain and Portugal’s own literature, pushing them into a background once occupied by the countries that have usurped them. Indeed worlding was summed up concisely in an American pedagogical context earlier in the book with D’Haen commenting on how “American proponents of world literature always risk turning the practice of what they are doing against their avowed aims, thus perhaps unconsciously and almost against the grain upholding a cultural hegemony they consciously profess to be combatting” (p. 94), and

he seems to transplant this viewpoint onto current European academia. The book thus ties together its historical basis, recognising present-day Europe’s mimicry of earlier American tendencies.

D’Haen’s exploration of Scandinavia as another of Europe’s semi-peripheral regions is equally insightful and contemporarily relevant. The inclusion of these two European territories results in an astute awareness of what one may term a second-world literary landscape found on the cultural fringes of Europe. Indeed, what proves remarkable is that while these countries are largely ignored in their literary output they are equally largely unnoticed in their progressive contribution to the very study of world literature with D’Haen pointing out how in “Sweden a mixed committee of academics and high school teachers is drawing up a list, a canon one could say, of world literature for use in high schools” (p. 157), a fact largely unknown to the wider world. The discussion of this semi-peripheral landscape forces the reader to realise the positive discrimination the academia has adopted towards postcolonial concerns, harking back to earlier commentary on how “Postcolonial postmodern writers (...) can be seen as ‘subalterns’ that cannot truly speak either but only ‘ventriloquate’ in the language of ‘the master’” (p. 145). D’Haen argues that the current recognition of postcolonial literature merely satiates continued Eurocentric hege-

mony by glorifying literature from past colonies which ‘writes back’ to Europe as texts exemplary of world literature. The center of Europe thus remains the means by which world literature is defined, shunning aside fringe areas within Europe. The highlighting of this peripheral landscape presents an exciting jumping board for further research and publication in these areas and will likely motivate future contributions to both.

D’Haen’s text works wonderfully well in critically expounding the slight progression of world literature during its long downtime shortly after Goethe’s original enunciation of the concept up until the globalism of the 1990’s which planted the seeds that germinated in the post 9/11 climate. The movement of world literature’s study within America out of comparative literature departments and into English schools post WWI is explained well in addition to how the remnants of these courses are still very much existent in the form of general humanities or literature humanities modules. Richard Green Moulton’s 1921 writing on world literature considers it to be “nothing less than the autobiography of a civilisation” (p. 56) but more interestingly how the works deemed worthy to be included as part of this autobiography are those which represent “the literary pedigree of the English-speaking peoples” (*World Literature and Its Place in General Culture*, New York, The Macmillan Company, p. 9). Thus, whilst there is a vague recognition of a world

landscape for world literature, America itself remains trapped in a viewpoint positioned totally towards the English-speaking nations of Europe. This recognition of the variance between each nation’s canon of world literature within 1920’s America, whilst seemingly minor, does represent a key development in bringing us forward to present day ruminations on the subject. Indeed, it is for the numerous occasions like these that realise the relevance of minor steps forward within a topic as academically young as world literature for which D’Haen’s text operates so well as a true concise history.

Another core strength of D’Haen’s text is its distinction between the various and rather nebulous key elements that operate together to render a vision of world literature. Very early on the key differentiation between universal, world, comparative and general literature is made. This early contrast makes the remainder of the text far more readable and generally easier to navigate. Indeed one realises that the need to discriminate between the four literary zones results in a discrimination in its own with Albert Guérard designating world literature as a classification “limited to those works which are enjoyed in the common, ideally by all mankind, practically by our own group of culture, the European or Western” (*Preface to World Literature*, New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1940, p. 15). In this need for contrast between the fields D’Haen illuminates

a core source of modern Eurocentric behaviour in the field. Indeed in later chapters these segregations continue to be vividly portrayed to readers, the very style of D'Haen's portrayal itself being noteworthy. There exists a continuous effort to present a simultaneous geographic and theoretical evolution within each individual chapter, moving continuously from region to region presenting each new instance of theory and its associated criticism before, usually, illustrating in detail the most influential critic and how they rebuked and moved forward world literature away from their predecessor. The distinction between forms of translation represents another keystone of the text, recognising Walter Benjamin's need for translation within world literature to be fuzzy, essentially paraphrasing him when noting that good translation "does not strive to naturalize the original in the target language but instead aims to preserve the former's strangeness, its foreignness" (p. 122). While some direct expansion on the necessity of translation in regards to world literature would have been helpful it is a minor complaint given the dedication of an entire chapter to the topic. However, to reiterate an earlier concern one may find during some discourse deep within the chapter that the relevance assigned to world literature is slightly lost.

A final significant strength of the text is D'Haen's willingness to pose, throughout the whole work, contem-

porary concerns and the beginnings of theory into those areas. This approach applies freshness to each individual chapter resulting in an easy accessibility for modern readers or those unfamiliar with world literature as a concept. D'Haen consistently and eloquently paraphrases current postulation on the topic throughout, noting how concerning the systemic study of world literature "the question is not which work is to be more highly rated but which work has been more highly rated, or more widely disseminated, at which moment in time and where and why" (p. 101). Such questions regarding future work into the field are interspersed throughout the text within almost every chapter, with only a vague authorial pointing towards some present and underdeveloped answers to those questions, for example when D'Haen asks "How can one know enough about all the different literatures and cultures, or periods, works of world literature circulate in?" (p. 69), he notes Damrosch's suggestion as international collaboration. There is no current framework for implementing effectively such collaboration but that is not the concern of the text and as such it does not, indeed cannot, develop it and so moves on leaving behind the chance for solutions to be suggested.

Theo D'Haen's *The Routledge Concise History of World Literature* has developed itself as a key text, arguably a necessary text, for reference on world literature by forging its titular mission

statement in a bold and adventurous manner. The text is an invaluable aid for both specific referencing and an overall modern view of the topography of current and past world literature. Future editions should work to maintain the fresh attitude of the text and keep pace with current trends, especially with regards to the final chapter of the work and thus continue to work in actualising Goethe's 1827 message, quoted within the opening pages, regarding how "national literature has not much meaning nowadays: the epoch of world literature is at hand, and each must work to hasten its coming" (Strich, *Goethe and World Literatur*, p. 349).

Erik Van Achter & Luke Connolly

CARTOGRAFIAS DA VOZ: POESIA ORAL E SONORA. TRADIÇÃO E VANGUARDA
FELIPE GRÜNE EWALD, FREDERICO FERNANDES, JULIANA FRANCO ALVES, MARCELO RODRIGUES JARDIM, SOFIA APARECIDA VIDO PASCOLATI (orgs.)
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Os volumes acadêmicos de autoria coletiva materializam o modo de produção e publicação da investigação científica atual. Resultado de uma compilação (integral ou seletiva) de textos originalmente apresentados em encontro científico que precedeu a publicação, ou, menos frequentemente, de uma

encomenda feita por um organizador ou grupo de organizadores, acabam por constituir amostras de projetos em curso que usam metodologias diversas aplicadas a objetos também diversos. Este modo de produção de publicações, eficaz para fazer circular a informação e o resultado da investigação em curso, torna-se problemático enquanto forma de gerar a unidade discursiva e conceitual a que chamamos livro. Por um lado, nem sempre é possível organizar todos os textos de modo a conseguir a desejável coerência temática e metodológica. Por outro lado, a qualidade científica e comunicativa dos textos tende a ser muito variável entre si. Daqui resulta, por vezes, a dificuldade em encontrar um foco de atenção e uma intervenção crítica sustentada ao longo de todo o volume.

A intervenção dos organizadores consiste fundamentalmente em estruturar da melhor forma possível a diversidade temática e metodológica, por um lado, e em minorar a eventual variação na qualidade dos artigos. Na medida em que os textos se mantêm geralmente estanques entre si, o volume tem de ser lido mais como uma coleção ou compilação avulsa de textos que reflete as contingências do seu modo de produção do que como uma intervenção crítica plenamente articulada. Mesmo quando a contingência original se circunscreve a um único projeto de investigação ou a um colóquio com um tema bastante delimitado, o grau de variação é suficientemente grande para tornar difícil