Flair Donglaishi and Gareth Guangming Tan, eds.,
*World Literature in Motion: Institution, Recognition,
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REFERENCES

Flair Donglaishi and Gareth Guangming Tan, eds. *World Literature in Motion: Institution, Recognition, Location*. Stuttgart: Ibidem-Verlag, 2020. 532 p. ISBN (pb): 9 7838 3821 1633. \$40

- 1 *World Literature in Motion: Institution, Recognition, Location* is a significant addition to the field of World Literature. It is a collection of essays envisioning World Literature as a dynamic process that the editors, Flair Donglai Shi and Gareth Guangming Tan, describe as a two-fold “motion” (27) in terms of movement, mediation and mobility, and of proposal and discussion. Furthermore, it proposes a distinct approach amid a number of existing methods and opinions within the discipline.
- 2 The book brings together fifteen essays, written on a variety of themes and regions, all concerning the formation of World Literature. These essays are distributed into four sections. In the first section, “Postcolonial Studies,” we are presented with essays by Rivkah Brown, Katelyn Edwards, Meleesha Bardolia, and editor Gareth Guangming Tan, representing the role of the Zimbabwe International Book Fair and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in the production and consumption of books in Africa, discussing the preference given to the Oxford University Press by South African playwright Athol Fugard, the making of *The Penguin Book of South African Verse*, and of the Penguin’s *People*, respectively. This section is centred on the London-based publishing houses, Penguin and Oxford University Press,

and their role in the literary development of the book market in the African continent. Four articles of this section confirm Francesco Moretti's model, highlighting the influence of colonial powers (centre) and the pressure exerted by the centre on the periphery in the shaping of (regional) literatures. In the second section, entitled "Recognition through Prizes," we find articles by Carmen Thong on Naipaul's Booker Prize, by Lubabah Chowdhury on Arundhati Roy's Booker Prize, by editor Flair Donglai Shi himself on the Man Asian Literary Prize, and by Sana Goyal on the Claine Prize. Drawing upon James English's "economy of prestige," the four articles in this section examine the role of prizes and institutional recognition in the shaping of the creative industry. However, the narrow focus of this section on the Booker Prize and the Claine Prize restricts its horizon. Articles on more international prizes, such as the Nobel Prize in Literature and the Neustadt International Prize for Literature, would have enhanced the scope of this section. In the third section, on "Minor Locations," the editor presents essays by Rashi Rohatgi on minor literature and prizes from Mauritius, by Daniele Nunziata on Cypriot literature and nationalism, and by Lucy Steeds on Caribbean Radio and oral literary aesthetics. The articles explore three different geographical locations, including Africa, the Middle East, and the Caribbean, and issues related to local literary prizes, international translation, and the role of radio in the making of literature. The final section, "Translation beyond the Anglophone," includes essays by Yan Jia on the literary relation between India and China, Galina Rousseva-Sokolova on exotic translation in the Balkans, Wen-chin Ouyang on the translation of *The Arabian Nights*, and Yeogeun Kim on the translation of the Korean novel *Kuunmong*. This section is primarily focused on translation activities involving texts produced in one Asian language, such as Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Arabic, Sanskrit, Hindi, Mongolian, Uzbek, Vietnamese, etc., and translated into other languages, such as Russian, Bulgarian, Chinese, etc., considered peripheral or minor in Western academia. Thus, through these chapters, the editors successfully situate the production and circulation of texts, without endorsing/subscribing to the habitual relation with established European centres. This creates an organic and non-colonial view on the formation and flow of world literatures, which are more inclusive, multilingual, multi-directional than the binary structure of centre and periphery might suggest.

- 3 Extending the idea of Stefan Helgesson and Pieter Vermeulen that the reading of world literature should be "investigated in its actuality" (14), these essays collected by Shi and Tan offer a new sociological method to look into the field of World Literature as an object in "motion," disseminated by different forms of agency – institutions, recognition through prizes, and translation. Shi points out in his introduction that the aim of the book is to investigate what "world literature" entails as a subject of study. The chapters in the book, described by Elleke Boehmer and Matthew Reynolds in the afterword as a "configuration of world literature" (524), are based on various case studies that utilize investigations of primary archival documents, literary texts, and translated texts. The method used in bringing these texts together is primarily sociological. In this book, all forms of expressive media, from gestural and oral, to scribal, print, and digital come under purview. Looking at the scope of the book, as a volume asserting to rethink World Literature, this collection should be recommended to those who wonder what is meant by that term. One missing element in the book, though, is the role played by academic institutions in shaping the field with, for instance, the University of Oklahoma's role in publishing *World Literature Today* and supporting the Neustadt International Prize, the Newman Prize for Chinese Literature,

and the literary magazine, *Chinese Literature Today*, or the Institute of World Literature newly established at Harvard University.

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