

Translationscapes:

On the Legibility of Transnational Ideologies in World Literary Systems

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The coming era begs for new frameworks for evaluating transnational meaning production. Questions of truth and fact are clearly yielding ground to mythological cipherings of the other. World literary systems contribute to these views in substantial ways, but also reproduce vast inequalities by privileging or silencing certain literary texts, authors and national literatures for global readerships. Translation therefore crucially provides readers with access to texts that otherwise remain functionally invisible. Frequently, it is argued that large ideological currents (Orientalism, Islamophobia, heteronormativity, Western norms applied as universals, etc.) substantially skew world literature systems, yielding partial “views” of others across linguistic borders. Analysis of such ideologies proves challenging, but the concept of *translationscapes*—the totality of texts of a given linguistic tradition visible in another, e.g., the set of Japanese literature available in English as opposed to in Spanish, Russian, or Korean—helps assess patterns of divergence between them, rendering visible transcultural ideologies of world literature. This talk outlines a translationscapes-based approach to world literature through case studies on Ōe Kenzaburo, Octavio Paz, and others.

Jordan A. Y. Smith (Ph.D., Comparative Literature, UCLA) is an Associate Professor of International Humanities at Josai International University. His current research ranges from contemporary Japanese poetry to global comedy studies, brought together in a manuscript in progress, *Translationscapes: Language, Ideology, World Literature*. He is currently completing a comparative literature volume, *Global Comedy and Humor Theory* (Routledge 2018), exploring humor theory through a series of readings in comedic texts from classical Greek drama and Chinese philosophy to contemporary Japanese manga and postcolonial Caribbean fiction. He teaches courses in literary translation, modern/contemporary Japanese literature, and world literary studies, and translates a variety of authors from Japanese and Spanish.

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