Joachim Harst

Universität zu Köln

Germany

World Literature and Digitization

My paper deals with the relationship between the term "world literature" and the current phase of digitization. While "world literature" in the 19th century assumed that literary texts emerge in the exchange between localizable cultures and their languages, the origin of literary objects today is no longer so easy to locate – especially when they emerge in and from the "Net". How can language contact be conceived when Internet texts are principally written in a globalized English or translated by algorithms? And can we speak of different cultures of the digital between which a transfer takes place? With these questions, my paper will also work towards an updating of the term "world literature" and underline its importance for today's comparative literature.