

Panel OSL research day

LITERARY PRIZES AND CULTURAL TRANSFER

Convenors: Petra Broomans, Mathijs Sanders, Jeanette den Toonder (Theme group Beyond Borders in Cultural Transfer Studies)

The central themes of this panel are literary prizes and literary translation prizes. Literary prizes are, for example, important in the consecration of an author and imperative instruments in the process of cultural transfer of literature. The Nobel prize is the most notorious example of a literary award that can open new markets for known as well as relatively unknown authors. In his study *The Economy of Prestige* (2008), James English states that literary prizes are neglected agents in cultural history. Especially in the 20th and 21st centuries, literary prizes have become important instruments in the literary field. According to English, “in the specific workings of prizes—their elaborate machineries of nomination and election, presentation and acceptance, sponsorship, publicity, and scandal—it finds evidence of the new arrangements and relationships that have come to characterize that field.” (p. 4) English regards literary and cultural awards as the “best instrument for negotiating transactions between cultural and economic, cultural and social, or social, or cultural and political capital—which is to say that they are our most effective institutional agents of *capital intraconversion*” (p. 10). The exact impact of a particular prize on an awarded literary (translated) work however is not easy to predict. In *Prizing Debate* (2017), Anna Auguscik observes that the effect “only seems ‘guaranteed’ when all the participants in the process cooperate – authors, agents, publishers, booksellers, critics, and readers alike” (p. 10).

Apart from the impact of literary prizes, there are other dimensions for promising research. Just to name a few, literary prizes can be taken as a point of departure for the description and analysis of the dynamics of cultural transfer at specific historical moments in specific national and transnational constellations (cf. Grüttemeier 2016). Furthermore, we hardly know in how far it is possible to explain the awarding of prizes to a certain author, and not to concurring ones (cf. Verdaasdonk 2008, pp. 125-168).

Given the complexity of the phenomenon, the literary (translation) prize can be studied in different and often overlapping fields: institutional research, literary history, comparative literature, cultural transfer, gender studies and postcolonial studies for example.

Research groups from Radboud University Nijmegen, the Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg and the University of Groningen have recently begun to study literary prizes from an institutional perspective. This panel aims to bring together scholars who are interested in this phenomenon and who would contribute to this emerging research topic.

For this session we welcome proposals that discuss one or more of the topics following from the above:

- concepts
- methods
- (digital) tools
- cultural transfer and literary awards
- cultural transmitters and literary prizes
- translation prizes
- history of literary awards and prizes
- minority/migrant writers and literary prizes
- national and regional literary prizes

Please send proposals before September 1th 2019 to:

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References

Anna Auguscik, *Prizing Debate. The Fourth Decade of the Booker Prize and the Contemporary Novel in the UK*. Bielefeld: Transcript, 2017.

James F. English, *The Economy of Prestige: Prizes, Awards, and the Circulation of Cultural Value*. Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2008.

Ralf Grüttemeier, 'Nederland en de Nobelprijs voor literatuur 1901-1965'. In: *Nederlandse Letterkunde* 21 (2016), 159-184.

Anna Gunder, 'In the Wake of a Nobel Prize: On Modern Icelandic Literature in Swedish 1940-1969'. In: *The Invasion of Books in Peripheral Literary Fields: Transmitting Preferences and Images in Media, Networks and Translation* / [ed] Petra Broomans and Ester Jiresch, Groningen: Barkhuis, 2011, p. 105-116.

Hugo Verdaasdonk, *Snijvlakken van de literatuurwetenschap* / [ed] Jos Joosten, Wouter de Nooy en Dorothee Verdaasdonk, Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2008.