

Abstract: Glocating the Flemish Literature Fund at the 2016 Frankfurt and London book fairs

In the era of globalisation, international book fairs have emerged as important sites for facilitating cross-border literary transfer. Here, geographically, linguistically, and nationally discrete book producers and intermediaries from around the world (publishers, acquiring editors, government agencies, scouts, translators, etc.) converge to share information about industrywide trends, pitch titles, buy and sell translation rights, and socialise. This paper proposes to explore the activities one small government intermediary, the Flemish Literature Fund (FLF), in this very big transnational literary field. What does the FLF do to promote Flemish literature at international book fairs? How does it tackle the challenge of distinguishing itself from its peers, many of which come to the transnational literary field from larger national literary fields and languages? What promotional strategies does it use to pitch books by Flemish authors and illustrators to foreign publishers, many of whom have never heard of Flanders and have little idea of its cultural, linguistic and literary particularities? Where do small, nation-specific state agents like the FLF fit in today's transnational literary field, which has come to be dominated by publishers embedded in transnational media conglomerates? In short, how can we 'glocate' the FLF in today's global market for book translations as it is configured in finite time and space at international book fairs?