

# Entanglement, World Literature and World-Making

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Entanglement has no beginning and no end: it is always in medias res. It can, however, be theorised in terms of vectors. In this lecture, I will argue that there is an outward and an inward movement in entanglement that together give shape to literatures and literary works. If much world literature scholarship has focused on outward circulation and international canonisation, an equally significant dimension of world literature concerns the harnessing of external literary resources for local ends. The adjustment that the inward movement requires of world literature theory is – perhaps – enabled by the term “world-making”, which can be developed by way of Hannah Arendt and Pheng Cheah, among others. A possible advantage of a world-making focus is that it keeps entanglement in view and avoids the identity closure of nationalism. A possible disadvantage is that it deflects attention from the structural and political preconditions of literary production. By considering some literary examples from Africa and Latin America, my lecture will put both of these claims to the test.