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The Form of Ideology and the Ideology of Form

Cold War, Decolonization and Third
World Print Cultures



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Introduction

Francesca Orsini, Neelam Srivastava,
and Laetitia Zecchini

Duncan White opens his book, *Cold Warriors: Writers Who Waged the Literary Cold War*, with the following anecdote: in 1955, the CIA orchestrated the launching of hundreds of ten-foot balloons into Communist territory. In them, instead of explosives: books. 'At the height of the Cold War, the CIA made copies of George Orwell's *Animal Farm* rain down from the Communist sky'.¹

What the Cold War and the decolonization period show so crucially (and excitingly, for literary scholars) is how seriously literature was taken at the time, and how instrumental print cultures were considered to be in order to wage and advance certain struggles and ideas. Literature was everything *but* innocuous. The Cold War was famously also about the weaponization of literature, and it was predicated on its power, or its agency. Hence the vast amount of money (and thought, time, etc.) put into devising programs for disseminating, translating, and promoting certain kinds and forms of print and literature, and the impressive range of resources channeled to *press the fight*—Barnhisel and Turner's expression rehearsed in Monica Popescu's recent monograph, *At Penpoint: African Literature, Postcolonial Studies, and the Cold War*.² Cold War, decolonial, and postcolonial struggles were indeed also fought *at penpoint*.

1 Duncan White, *Cold Warriors: Writers Who Waged the Literary Cold War* (London: Little, Brown Group, 2019), p. 1.

2 Greg Barnhisel and Katherine Turner, eds, *Pressing the Fight: Print, Propaganda and the Cold War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2010); Monica Popescu, *At Penpoint: African Literature, Postcolonial Studies, and the Cold War* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020).

Much has been written on Cold War literature, though until recently mainly from within the national literary frameworks of primarily the USA, Soviet Russia, and China.³ But was the 'rest' of the literary world of Asia, Africa, and Latin America merely a battlefield for rival ideologies, falling under either American or Soviet influence? As this book shows, such a perspective is not only acutely Eurocentric, it also does not do justice to the vitality of literary activism in the decolonizing world, and to the multiple ways by which Third World print cultures broke free from Cold War antagonisms, and from imperial superpowers.⁴

Popescu convincingly argues for restoring the Cold War as the background and shaping element of decolonizing struggles, and it is the necessity of such an intersecting approach that we also emphasize here. This book thus contributes to the increasing scholarly interest in the cultural politics of the so-called Bandung era, and in the determining role that Third World print cultures played throughout the Cold War.⁵

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- 3 See for example: Julia Mickenberg, *Learning from the Left: Children's Literature, the Cold War, and Radical Politics in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Adam Piette, *The Literary Cold War, 1945 to Vietnam* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009); Derek C. Maus, *Unvarnishing Reality: Subversive Russian and American Cold War Satire* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2011); Roland Vegso, *The Naked Communist: Cold War Modernism and the Politics of Popular Culture* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013); Greg Barnhisel, *Cold War Modernists: Art, Literature and American Cultural Diplomacy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015); Eric Bennett, *Workshops of Empire: Stegner, Engle, and American Creative Writing During the Cold War* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2015); Justin Quinn, *Between Two Fires: Transnationalism and Cold War Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); Duncan White, *Cold Warriors*.
- 4 See Tony Day and Maya H. T. Liem, eds, *Cultures at War: the Cold War and Cultural Expression in Southeast Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 2010); Monica Popescu, *South African Literature Beyond the Cold War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010) and *At Penpoint*; Patrick Iber, *Neither Peace nor Freedom: the Cultural Cold War in Latin America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015); and Peter Kalliney, 'Modernism, African literature, and the Cold War', *Modern Language Quarterly*, 76.3 (2015), 333–36.
- 5 These were nurtured by meetings such as the Bandung Conference of 1955, the Asian Writers' Conference in Delhi in 1956, the First Afro-Asian Writers' Conference in Tashkent, 1958, and the Congresses of Black Writers and Artists (1956 and 1958). See especially Popescu, *At Penpoint*; Rossen Djagalov, *From Internationalism to Postcolonialism: Literature and Cinema Between the Second and Third Worlds* (Montreal: McGill Queen's University Press, 2020); and Steven Belletto and Joseph Keith, eds, *Neocolonial Fictions of the Global Cold War* (Iowa City: Iowa University Press, 2019). See also: Duncan Yoon, 'Our Forces Have Redoubled: World Literature, Postcolonialism, and the Afro-Asian Writers' Bureau', *The Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Enquiry*, 2.2 (2015), 233–52; Hala Halim, 'Lotus, the Afro-Asian Nexus, and Global South Comparatism', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa*

Restoring this conflict as one of the important genealogies of decolonizing and post-colonial struggles is not only a means to highlight the truly *global* scope of the Cultural Cold War, however.⁶ It is critical to understand the emergence of new literary aesthetics and internationalisms at the time, to make sense of the complexity and vitality of Third World print cultures and of the debates and tensions (between or across ideologies and forms) that shaped them. It also makes us appreciate the challenges faced by many Third World, postcolonial writers, and the significance of the aesthetic, editorial, and political choices they made.

The intersecting approach of this volume is also manifest in its comparative and multilingual focus. The essays in it cover different geographical contexts in the Global South (China, India, Morocco, Tunisia), but also Italy and Catalonia (in the post-Franco transition to democracy), because the book is as much about the Third World as about Third-Worldism. It tells a story about non-aligned nations coming together as well as European solidarity for Third World struggles, and highlights the combination of local and internationalist networks that found expression in magazines, manifestos, translations, and other kinds of literary production in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Hindi, English, Italian, and Spanish.

Finally, while much scholarly literature on Third World print cultures in the period of decolonization and the Cold War seems to follow the Cold War divide,⁷ we have tried to bring together print cultures and literatures that seem to belong to different and even antithetical genealogies or 'fronts', but often cross them. In doing so, we aim to recover alternative legacies of the Third World (not systematically associated with Bandung), for instance highlighting the importance of the largely overlooked lineage of liberalism for anticolonial and postcolonial struggles, and for ideas and forms of self-determination.⁸

and the Middle East, 32.3 (2012), 563–83; and Vijay Prashad, ed., *The East Was Read: Socialist Culture in the Third World* (New Delhi: Left Word Books, 2019).

- 6 Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
- 7 For instance, Prashad's *The East was Read* on the one hand, and on the other hand Giles Scott-Smith and Charlotte Lerg's *Campaigning Culture and the Global Cold War: The Journals of the Congress for Cultural Freedom* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2017).
- 8 See also Kalliney, 'Modernism, African literature, and the Cold War'; Roland Burke, "'Real Problems to Discuss': The Congress for Cultural Freedom's Asian and African Expeditions 1951–59', *Journal of World History*, 27.1 (2016), 53–85;

We also aim at revising some of the canonical temporal boundaries of decolonizing and postcolonial struggles waged through Third World print cultures, both *before* and *beyond* what is usually considered the apex of the Cold War (1950s–1960s). We therefore provide a pre-history of these struggles in the 1930s and 1940s (Chaudhuri, Zecchini), while also gesturing towards the future, as with Paulo Horta’s essay on Catalan print culture in the 1970s and 1980s, and Peter Kalliney’s Afterword.

Our book’s original focus on various print culture formats (magazines, newspapers, manifestos, conference proceedings, ephemera, etc.) and modes of cultural mediation and transnational exchange (including translation) helps to showcase the unprecedented range of literary texts, particularly from the Global South, that became available for differently accented Cold War era liberationist projects. These texts acted as fertile territory for the dissemination of radical, non-aligned, dissenting ideas in the era of decolonization. As scholars such as Patrick Iber have acknowledged, the ‘language of fronts’ is hardly relevant to make sense of the complex, often labile aesthetic and ideological texture of these print cultures in which Third World internationalisms and struggles found expression. Anticolonial commitment, Afro-Asian solidarity, and anti-totalitarianism declined the different meanings of ‘freedom’ and ‘resistance’.

The variety of the print-culture formats we consider here, from the perspective of specific locations and publishing spaces and of the many individual writers and editors whose positions often crossed ideological fault-lines, helps complicate and deepen our understanding of the life of literature and of postcolonial cultures. As suggested above, all these actors also took literature *seriously*. And as each of the essays in this volume demonstrates, the literary platforms on which they were engaged bristled with questions and debates about the aims and agency of literature; about the function of a writer; about how one should write and for whom; and about the significance of genres, literary movements and modes: what is a short story? What is criticism? What is realism? What is modernism? The meanings and implications of certain words that recur across meetings, essays, and statements (such as freedom, peace, engagement, independence, (anti)imperialism, (anti)

Scott-Smith and Lerg, *Campaigning Culture*; and Laetitia Zecchini, ‘What Filters Through the Curtain: Reconsidering Indian Modernisms, Travelling Literatures, and Little Magazines in a Cold War Context’, *Interventions*, 22.2 (2020), 172–94.

totalitarianism, progressivism, literary value, autonomy, neutrality, and Non-Alignment) were also hotly debated, and this volume helps to make sense of their specific, *located* meanings, embedded in particular histories, debates, and aesthetics—in specific forms.

We thus posit (and focus on) the entanglement of form and ideology. The quest for alternative modes of political connection and representation was indistinguishable from a quest for alternative modes of aesthetic connection and expression.⁹ This was a period when, despite claims to the contrary, literary texts were almost necessarily interpreted through ideological and political grids, and forms were ‘weaponized’ to present an explicit message. Certain forms and styles, certain types of art (realism, abstraction, experimentalism, etc.) were identified with certain ideologies, modes of government, struggles, and even with certain parts of the world. Yet, if forms were weaponized, they also escaped the intentions of ideology: and as many of the essays in this volume demonstrate, literary works produced in this era cannot be easily pigeonholed or straightjacketed within broad aesthetic-political-ideological categories.

Let us now unpack, one by one, the keywords of our title, namely Cold War Print Cultures, Forms, the Third World, World Literature and the Cold War, in order to provide a framework and a guide to the essays in this volume.

Cold War Print Cultures *in situ*?

Decolonizing movements and Cold War propagandists invested heavily in print media (as well as radio and, when possible, film). The result was mountains of printed materials—from illustrated news bulletins to cultural and literary magazines with limited and wide distribution, from book series to a wealth of translations. If magazines, meetings, festivals and translations were the pillars of Cold War culture, they all happened through print, or found their way into it: even meetings and festivals produced reports, dispatches, travelogues, and memoirs (see Yan in this volume). Political solidarities encouraged other print forms as well: the manifesto and declaration, the testimony (Srivastava in this volume),

⁹ See also Christopher J. Lee, ed., *Making a World after Empire: The Bandung Moment and Its Political Afterlives* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010).

the ‘letter from’, the poem, or the book review (Zecchini)—often short, ‘portable’ forms that suited periodicals, rather than long forms like the novel.

Attention has understandably tended to focus on large-scale and high-profile propaganda programmes, such as the United States Information Services (USIS) and the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) activities in Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia, the USSR’s Progress Publishers, *International Literature* and its other TASS publications, and China’s Foreign Languages Press, International Bookstore, and *Chinese Literature*.¹⁰ But while Frances Saunders’s pioneering *The Cultural Cold War* (1999) and other more recent books such as Joel Whitney’s, *How the CIA Tricked the World’s Best Writers* (2016) revel in spy-story shenanigans, shady characters, and conspiracies, work on individual CCF magazines in Bombay, Ibadan, or Kampala has shown that their editors often used US/CIA funding instrumentally to pursue their own projects.¹¹ Although revelations about the origins of their funding sometimes damaged these magazines irreversibly (as with *Transition* or *Al-Hiwār*), they are better viewed in terms of their editors’ and contributors’ own ‘literary activism’, to use Amit Chaudhuri’s term, an activism on behalf of literature that held literature, its value, aesthetics, and function, to account.¹²

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- 10 For the CCF and USIS see: Peter Coleman, *The Liberal Conspiracy, The Congress for Cultural Freedom and the Struggle for the Mind of Postwar Europe* (New York: The Free Press, 1989); Frances Stonor Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters* (New York: New Press, 2013); Iber, *Neither Peace nor Freedom*; Sarah Brouillette, ‘US–Soviet Antagonism and the “Indirect Propaganda” of Book Schemes in India in the 1950s’, *University of Toronto Quarterly*, 84.4 (Fall 2015), 170–88; Scott-Smith and Lerg, *Campaigning Culture*. For USSR propaganda publications, see Rossen Djagalov, ‘The People’s Republic of Letters: Towards a Media History of Twentieth-Century Socialist Internationalism’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, Yale University, 2011). For Chinese programmes, see: Nicolai Volland, ‘Clandestine Cosmopolitanism: Foreign Literature in the People’s Republic of China, 1957–1977’, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 76.1 (2017), 185–210, and *Socialist Cosmopolitanism: The Chinese Literary Universe, 1945–1965* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017); also Yan Jia, ‘Beyond the “Bhai-Bhai” Rhetoric: China-India Literary Relations, 1950–1990’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, SOAS, University of London, 2019) and in this volume.
- 11 Popescu *At Penpoint*; Caroline Davis, *African Literature and the CIA: Networks of Authorship and Publishing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020); Zecchini, ‘What Filters Through’; Kalliney, ‘Modernism, African Literature, and the Cold War’.
- 12 Amit Chaudhuri, ed., *Literary Activism: Perspectives* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2017).

The essays in this volume are firmly *located*—in Tunis, Rabat, Delhi, Bombay, Beijing, Barcelona, etc. This emphasis on location allows us to focus on what local editors, writers, and readers *did* with such a mass of material, and how they selected, inflected, or understood key ideologemes like ‘freedom’, ‘peace’, or ‘modernity’, as well as individual texts and authors. This localized entry is also a study in reception and *consumption*, and we claim a certain kinship with Carol Breckenridge and Arjun Appadurai’s approach to ‘public culture’ as an arena of cultural contestation and debate in which modernity is a ‘diversely appropriated experience’.¹³ Consumers of these mass-mediated forms—here the writers and readers of Cold War print cultures and of these travelling texts and literatures—were agents or actors, not passive recipients or purveyors of ideologies, forms, and terms dictated by the two superpowers.

Brazilian João Guimarães Rosa’s philosophical story ‘The Third Bank of the River’ (1962) could for instance be read in Bombay as a yearning by Third World writers and readers for a path away from the ‘two banks’ of the Cold War fronts (see Orsini in this volume). Location requires us to have a double vision: clued into specific debates and inflections while being aware of international geopolitics and activities. Local political and literary actors used Cold War propaganda to bend it to their own struggles, like those between the Leftist Progressives, Nehru, and the critics of both in 1950s India (see Zecchini ‘What Filters Through’ and in this volume); between pro- and anti-Castro intellectuals in Latin America (Iber); and between Moroccan leftist intellectuals looking towards Egypt and beyond and the US-leaning Moroccan state (see Laachir in this volume). Both *Lotus* and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations’s Arabic journal *Thaqāfatul Hind* (Chaudhuri in this volume) bear witness to Nasser’s role in the Non-Aligned Movement, while Laachir’s essay shows Nasser’s pan-Arabist appeal in the region.¹⁴

13 Arjun Appadurai and Carol A. Breckenridge, ‘Public Modernity in India’ in *Consuming Modernity: Public Culture in a South Asian World*, ed. by Carol A. Breckenridge (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), pp. 1–20 (p. 5).

14 As such, our volume complements Popescu’s *At Penpoint* and the special issue she co-edited with Bhakti Shringarpure on ‘African Literary History and the Cold War’, *Research in African Literatures*, 50.3 (Fall 2019), which emphasizes local literary activism while stressing the benefits of the ‘Cold War lens’.

Our volume shows a wider range of actors at play in this booming print culture than is usually acknowledged in much of Anglo-American scholarship: from *state publishers* like China's Foreign Languages Press or the USSR's People's Publishing House that invested heavily into translations from and into Chinese and Russian; to *foundations* and *associations* like the Fairfield, Asia and Ford Foundations, the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) or the Association of Afro-Asian Writers; *large private publishers* like Longmans, Oxford University Press (OUP) and Heinemann in London, Nigeria and Kenya or *media groups* such as the Times of India Group in Bombay; and finally the many *small* and *medium private publishers* of books and magazines with regional or national reach.

Smaller ventures were neither necessarily avantgarde nor countercultural. Bourdieu's opposition between large-scale commercial or 'heterogenous' (i.e. political) production and restricted 'artistic' production in *The Rules of Art* is heuristically useful, but it was historically theorized on the basis of the French literary scene. Blown up to international proportions, it sets up simplistic and unhelpful universal systems of value that are hardly fitting (or universal) in such an ideologically charged time.¹⁵ Moreover, it is an opposition that needs to be tested against actual circumstances in each context, given that local print histories and experiences of colonialism produced different ecologies of print. Caroline Davis speaks of the 'persistence of the colonial model' in African publishing during decolonization, with the Fairfield Foundation and the ICCF joining hands with educational giants Longmans and OUP to invest in, and give visibility to, new (Anglophone) African literature in the 1950s and early 1960s.¹⁶ In Egypt, *Lotus* ambitiously punched above its weight and was supported by multiple agendas: partly funded by an East German foundation, it also enjoyed strong state support from President Nasser, who saw it as part of his own expansive internationalism.

Complementing the emphasis on book publishing and small magazines with magazines that enjoyed medium-to-large circulation, like Rajat Neogy's *Transition* in Kampala (12,000 copies) or the

15 Pierre Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art*, trans. Susan Emanuel (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996).

16 Davis, *African Literature and the CIA*, p. 11.

Hindi *Kahānī* (Short Story) in Allahabad and Kamleshwar's *Sārikā* (Starling) in Bombay, is also important because of the emphasis on the democratization of reading in decolonizing countries. While some Indian little magazines were consciously marginal and anti-commercial, medium magazines like *Kahānī* and *Sārikā* prided themselves on their large circulation, on providing plentiful reading matter cheaply, and on publishing works that would accompany middle- to lower-middle-class readers in their life struggle (Orsini).

Scholarship on the CCF, UNESCO, and Leftist internationalism emphasizes *networks*—with conferences, congresses, and bilateral exchanges bringing writers and intellectuals together to an unprecedented degree (see Chaudhuri and Yan in this volume). But once we broaden our view, other configurations also emerge, such as the *local ecology* of magazines in intense conversation with each other, sometimes across language and regional boundaries and the 'communities of the medium' they formed, to use Raymond Williams's term. Literary magazines reveal a cut-and-paste *relay* of news and texts (often short forms like stories, poems, reviews): looser than a network, this relay nonetheless took advantage of the abundant material made available by the propaganda programmes. At the same time, jarring combinations reveal the editors' own idiosyncratic choices, preferences, and cartographies. Sources are often unacknowledged, translations often second- or third-hand.

Finally, as always with periodicals, questions arise about their visibility, their permanence, and perishability. Many essays in this volume recuperate previously inaccessible archival material, or present us with a counter-canonical archive (e.g. Orsini and Goikolea), thus offering an important contribution to literary-historical scholarship about Cold War decolonization.

Form

Throughout the period of decolonization and the Cold War, it is often impossible to disengage discussion of political and social debates from debates about form. In the contributions to this volume we posit the malleability of 'form' and stretch it as widely as possible, to encompass forms as 'genre', form as format (the visible or material shape of how

texts, anthologies or magazines are presented and structured), and form as personal style. Forms offer a way into refracting and multiplying rigid or received notions of the 'Third World', with a focus on how pluralistic understandings and expressions of liberation and freedom develop in the wake of decolonization. In other words, if Third World solidarity and Global South exchanges inhabit diverse (and sometimes overlapping) ideological spaces, such as socialism, Non-Alignment, or liberalism, the forms in which these ideologies are articulated (the so-called 'vehicles' or carriers of ideology) are equally diverse and artistically innovative.

Caroline Levine argues that 'there is no politics without form'; in this sense, literary forms can be read as exercising a political power, rather than merely acting as inert 'containers' for politics.¹⁷ Form can be both political and aesthetic; and as Levine says, '*Forms do political work in particular historical contexts*'.¹⁸ This is the case for these essays' heterogeneous archive, produced in the wake of anticolonial revolutions and emerging nation-states that fought to achieve freedom from Soviet and Western hegemony. Form thus shaped the way in which important political and ideological messages were conveyed to national and international audiences. A helpful insight Levine offers in her analysis of forms is the idea of their portability and iterability across time and space. This does not imply a universalizing history of genres; it rather acknowledges, as she puts it, the 'affordances' of form, namely their 'potential uses and actions latent in materials and designs'.¹⁹ The forms analyzed in these essays share affordances with existing forms such as the novel, the short story, the travelogue, the critical essay, the magazine, and the testimony, but evolve and differ from these previous iterations in crucial ways, thanks to the revolutionary postcolonial contexts in which they appeared and by which they were shaped.

Forms do not always take on defined characteristics in the way established genres do; much like the alliances and networks that developed across different liberation movements, they are not fixed but rather in flux, and subject to shifts in perspective. For example, the *travelogue*, inherently inter-subjective and porous, emerges in the Indian

17 Caroline Levine, *Forms: Whole, Rhythm, Hierarchy, Network* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), p. 3.

18 *Ibid.*, p. 5, italics in the original.

19 *Ibid.*, p. 6.

and Chinese Cold War contexts as a form that can eloquently express solidarity and inter-connection across different cultures. Supriya Chaudhuri, in her analysis of the Bengali writer and traveller Syed Mujtaba Ali, examines the travelogue as a fluid medium through which Ali navigates his many intellectual trajectories across borders, continents and languages, and as a conversational space where he recounts his varied encounters with intellectuals, artists and activists in Afghanistan and Berlin, places that fostered anticolonial activism. The role of travel is particularly important for establishing these Global South routes of exchange in the Cold War period. Chaudhuri discusses the 'anecdotal realism' that animates Ali's travel writing as well as his short stories, in which the sharing of experience with audiences and listeners plays a crucial role (p. 61).

In a related manner, Yan Jia explores the 'fraternal travelogue' produced by Chinese and Indian writers who visited each other's respective countries in the 1950s and 1960s, 'as significant textual outcomes of 1950s China-India diplomacy' (p. 69). The travelogue often fuses literary and political elements, a characteristic of Cold War forms that we witness throughout the texts examined in this volume. Jia argues that the travelogue is a 'complex form of ideology that fulfils propagandist functions while offering scope for self-reflections, silences, tensions, and interrogations' (p. 70). The travelogue also acts as a form of witnessing, of having seen things with one's own eyes, and offers a deliberate counter-narrative to the colonialist and Orientalist representations of Asia that have tended to dominate western travel writing.

What we notice in these travelogues, and in other forms discussed in this book, is that the locations of these Global South exchanges shift from the interwar to the post-war period, as exemplified by Mujtaba Ali's reminiscences before and after the war. The momentous political and cultural encounters among Third World intellectuals no longer take place exclusively in the imperial metropolises of Paris or London, as they did in the 1930s, but rather in the capitals or decolonized territories of the new nations, such as Beijing, Delhi, Bombay, Kabul, and revolutionary Havana. Forms take on a specifically dialogic quality in the era of decolonization. Alongside the conversational and anecdotal form of the travelogue, we also identify the role of the *critical essay*,

which flourished as a Cold War form in journals and periodicals, as a key platform that enabled discussion and dialogues on political and literary issues with other readers and writers (see Chaudhuri, Zecchini, Orsini, and Srivastava in this volume).

Forms should be distinguished from *formats*, namely the material shape taken by texts within the constraints of their physical production. Forms are moulded, serialized and shortened, i.e. *formatted*, to fit the layout of the journal or magazine in which they appear. Periodical culture is crucial to the textual construction of resistance and liberation discourses in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, and in general it is a central vehicle for political debates, thanks to the fertile cross-pollination of ideas between writers, editors, and readers. The reason why the critical essay flourishes as a Cold War form is because it capaciously accommodates literary with political sensibilities: debates around ideas of 'freedom' in Indian magazines, for instance, can articulate freedom both from western literary influences and from Cold War political polarities (Zecchini).

Modernism is a form that many Cold War era writers debate and wrestle with as one of the two main 'ideological carriers', alongside socialist realism, of opposing political positions: that of the 'free world' versus the Soviet bloc. The redefinition of 'realism' and 'modernism' during the Cold War is a glowing illustration of the ideologization or weaponization of literary forms and movements. Both superpowers tried to construct and enforce a partition of the world and world literatures between modernism on the one hand (redefined as being focused exclusively on form, and supposedly free from ideology), versus socialist realism on the other (which the anti-communist West strove to present as being *only* ideology). Zecchini comments on how modernism's 'so-called autonomy and abstraction', its presumed emphasis on style, craft, or the 'medium' itself, rather than content or ideology, was seen as a bulwark against totalitarianism, and a symbol of the freedom of Western writers and artists (p. 203). However, she argues that many Indian writers fought to craft their own forms, meanings, or idioms of modernism. Freedom thus takes on the meaning of liberation from Cold War alignments and cooptation. The notion and the exercise of 'freedom' itself, as it were, had to be freed from ideological and nationalist recuperation, and modernism liberated from exclusive definition and ownership by the 'West'.

In fact, debates taking place among writers and artists in the era of decolonization raise questions about how modernist and realist forms could be re-imagined in Global South locations, and re-defined by their Asian or African contexts and audiences. Moving beyond critical paradigms that pit modernism and literary autonomy against socialist realism and *engagement* as the polarizing modes of Cold War writing, this book thus examines the ways in which the varied and ephemeral archive of print culture from the non-aligned Third World complicates and indeed upends these crystallized polarities. Srivastava's essay, for example, discusses how an Italian editor's misreading of African realism in the 1960s as an 'outdated' literary style reveals gaps in the understanding of how social realism was taking on a renewed life in nation-building projects that centred on the novel, and was gaining a new meaning among its postcolonial audiences (see also Laachir's and Goikolea-Amiano's essays on the Cold War Arabic novel).

The permeability and malleability of form in these years is most evident in the shape-shifting undergone by the short story. Francesca Orsini examines the genre across a broad range of Indian literary magazines in the 1950s and 1960s in Hindi to uncover the ways in which the presence of the short story reveals lively debates around world literature, the introduction of foreign literatures to Indian readers, and the translations of classic and contemporary stories from across the globe, all of which took place in the pages of these periodicals. Orsini formulates a new term for this kind of Hindi short story: the 'magazine story', namely the story that was easily accessible to readers in a cheap format, a 'democratic genre', especially important in a developing nation like India where readers had shallow pockets. The 'magazine story' implies the idea of the short story as format, not just as form; its affordances are determined, in part, by the serial and ephemeral features of the outlet in which it is published. As Orsini remarks, working with magazines as one's archive requires the scholar 'to look at each issue *and* each magazine as a self-contained text, but also at each magazine as a platform for different voices and agendas, and as part of a wider ecology of print publications' (p. 107). The magazine issue, and the contents of the magazine itself, need to be considered within a broader network of print cultures that were actively producing both writers and readers in the Third World.

Radical magazines—as sites of political dialogue, propaganda, and literary debates—take on a variety of forms in the postcolonial Cold War, and usher in a revolutionary aesthetics in their format and layouts. Srivastava examines the multilingual periodical *Tricontinental*, published out of Havana in four languages (Spanish, English, French, and Italian), which featured trendy visuals such as iconic photographs of Che Guevara and Fidel Castro and other Third-Worldist icons, and ironic send-ups of advertisements for airlines or consumer products, sure to appeal to young militants from Europe to Latin America. In his essay, Horta argues that the xeroxed counter-cultural zines of post-Francoist Spain, such as the short-lived periodical *Berthe Trépat*, were crucial to Roberto Bolaño's early militancy within the anti-fascist movement and his engagement with radical and experimental aesthetics.

Internationalist solidarity and engagement with anti-imperialist struggle were relayed through *testimony* and documentary. These are key narrative forms that cut across the different genres of the travelogue, the political testimonial, the essay, and even the short story. Witnessing the decolonization struggle and conveying it to international audiences in order to gain support and engender empathy were central aims of the anticolonial text. Srivastava examines the testimonies of Algerians during the war of independence, collected by the Italian editor Giovanni Pirelli with the aim of producing subalternist accounts of liberation struggles. Horta reads Bolaño's participation in collective volumes and counter-cultural magazines as a form of denunciatory testimony of the Pinochet regime and other counter-revolutionary regimes in Latin America.

The novel in the era of decolonization engages in nation-building, but also in nation-critiquing, as Laachir discusses in her essay about the Moroccan thinker and novelist Abdallah Laroui. The '*two-friends novel*' he created emphasizes the importance of dialogue and debate, this time around a narrative form in which the protagonists embody the divergent, and equally incomplete, trajectories of the postcolonial intellectual. Laachir argues that Laroui used the novel as a form to mediate his political thought, which was typical of the Arabic novel of the time, within the political constraints and censorship in Morocco. As Goikolea-Amiano discusses in her essay, the historical novel in the Tunisian context references travel and the political solidarities it

engendered, as in the picaresque Pan-African and Pan-Arabist alliances represented in Khreyif's novel *Barg-el Lil* (1961), featuring a black slave protagonist's adventures in sixteenth-century Tunisia.

Language and translation become spaces of political commitment and literary decolonization. Many of the essays in the volume testify to the desire of Third World writers and publishers to liberate both colonial and metropolitan languages from their European legacy and infuse them with revolutionary potential, while rejecting any form of neo-imperialist linguistic hegemony by espousing multilingual projects. Khreyif's resolute turn to the Tunisian vernacular in his novel, moving away from classical Arabic as the language of literary tradition; the translation of short stories by world authors into Hindi; the publication of *Tricontinental* in four languages; or the poet and critic Nissim Ezekiel's push to transform English into a contemporary, 'live, changing' Indian language (Zecchini, p. 207), a language 'of one's own', are all powerful examples of this. Form shapes and is in turn shaped by the linguistic innovations introduced by postcolonial writers.

The dialogism inherent in these forms of ideology gives especial prominence to the figure of the editor and writer-as-editor, the cultural and ideological mediator between the print format and the author, between local and international networks, and perhaps in a broader sense, between 'ideology' and 'aesthetics'. The editor is also the one who decides on the form, format, and layout of these texts (which books to review; which parts to excerpt or abridge; how to present them; which blurbs or editorials to introduce these texts and authors, etc.). Zecchini analyzes the literary activism of the Indian editors of *The Indian PEN*, *Quest*, and other little magazines, who played a decisive role in formal debates around the future shape of postcolonial Indian literature and criticism. Orsini considers how Hindi magazine editors experimented with different formats for world literature—regular translation slots, broad surveys, dedicated columns and articles, or impressive special issues—producing 'thick' or 'thin familiarity' (p. 106). Pirelli, the Italian editor and activist who effectively brought Fanon's work to Italian audiences, strove to give international visibility to little-known Algerian perspectives on the war of liberation. Pirelli nurtured the development of testimony as a form that could best convey urgent political messages about torture, imprisonment and repression to the wider world. Similarly,

Bolaño's early editor, Sergio Macias, thus prefaced a collection of anti-fascist poetry he published in the 1970s: 'we will not concern us with the romantic, epic or descriptive, nor the anti-poem nor lyric or intimate verse [...] we include only texts born of critical circumstances, under pressure from reality'. The goal was 'unveiling the horror of the violence of the political oppression of Pinochet's military regime' (Horta, p. 290). The editor is both an experimenter, an innovator of forms and formats, hence a literary activist, *and* a political activist, often underlining the political stakes in the discussions of aesthetics within the pages of his or her journal or edited volume. The correspondence by publishers and editors contained in archives yields fascinating 'unpublished' forms of ideology (see Srivastava) that acts as a form of preliminary cultural gate-keeping and reveals the ideological impulses that animate supposedly 'aesthetic' choices and decisions.

The Third World

The Third World is both a relational term and a rather fuzzy one. It is fraught with connotations, rather than denotations; it simultaneously evokes the idealism of liberation struggles and is deeply grounded in real-life inequalities across global populations. It is a relational term in the sense that it came to define a group of nations, or regional areas of the globe, that offered an alternative bloc to Soviet socialism and US capitalism in the post-war period. As such, it is integral to Cold War rhetoric, occupying the vast, if ill-defined, conceptual and political spaces between the 'free world' and the 'Iron Curtain'. As suggested above, the idea of the Third World is grounded in *Third-Worldism*, namely the internationalist solidarities and shared political commitments engendered by connections across various liberation movements. These were experienced and practiced also by European militants who saw in the Third World an ideal continuation of the anti-fascist and anti-Nazi struggle that had dominated World War II.

Famously, the term 'Third World' gained wide currency in 1952 when it was used by the French economic historian Alfred Sauvy, who juxtaposed a 'Third World', comprising new or decolonizing African and Asian states, to the West, defining it as an area of under-development but also of radical militancy: 'the Third World has, like the Third Estate, been

ignored and despised for too long, and it too wants to be something'.²⁰ Though nowadays the term is often simply used as a shorthand for economically under-developed regions across the globe, in political terms the Third World could be identified with the twenty-nine non-aligned nations hailing from the Global South that came together with a common purpose at the Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung, Indonesia in 1955. As B. R. Tomlinson remarks, though the conference is seen as an inaugural moment in Third-Worldism, its participants—from countries like India, China, Indonesia, Egypt, and Vietnam that took on a leading role among developing nations—did not use the term 'Third World' to define their new alliance.²¹ Third World is effectively a term invented in the West, and it carried connotations of dependency and the residual legacy of colonization. However, in the era of the anticolonial liberation movements of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, it came to take on a positive and militant meaning, building on an existing political and cultural body of thought that sought to enfranchise itself from Eurocentric theories of self-determination and equality: Pan-Africanism, African socialism, Gandhism, Latin American revolutionary theory (such as that of Che Guevara), and even Maoism form part of this rich theoretical corpus of anticolonialism.

While Third-Worldism's distance from the ex-colonial powers is easy to comprehend, its relationship with the Communist bloc, and indeed with Marxism as an ideology, is a more complex one to parse. At first glance, Marxism could be seen as enduringly supportive of anticolonial movements, and critics such as Neil Lazarus and Timothy Brennan have been at pains to point out that postcolonial studies as a field cannot be considered to be autonomous or particularly original, since it owes its principal intellectual debts to international Communism.²² However, Third-Worldist political alliances during the Cold War directly critiqued

20 Alfred Sauvy (1952), quoted in B.R. Tomlinson, 'What was the Third World?', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 38.2 (April 2003), 307–21 (p. 309). In her essay for this volume, though, Supriya Chaudhuri mentions an earlier (and non-European) genealogy for the term, observing that "Third World" was first used at the Asian Relations Conference (ARC) held in Delhi, India, in March–April 1947.

21 Ibid.

22 See, for example, Neil Lazarus, *The Postcolonial Unconscious* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), especially the Introduction, pp. 1–20; and Timothy Brennan, 'Postcolonial Studies between the European wars: An Intellectual History', *Marxism, Modernity and Postcolonial Studies*, ed. by Crystal Bartolovich and Neil Lazarus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 185–203.

Euro-Communism via the development of tricontinentalism. Latin American revolutionaries, especially Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, were wary of Moscow and resolutely rejected being subsumed within the USSR's sphere of influence. In Congo, Angola, and Algeria, there were similar Third-Worldist/non-aligned positions.

Tricontinentalism, as a political, cultural and economic alliance comprising the three continents of the Global South, namely Africa, Asia, and Latin America, is a much more positive term than 'Third World' to describe the ex-colonial countries dominated by European and American powers. It was established at the First Conference of the Organization of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America at Havana in 1966, although its founding principles originated in the Bandung Conference of 1955.²³ Robert Young calls the Havana Conference 'the first global alliance of the peoples of the three continents against imperialism, and the founding moment of postcolonial theory, in its journal, *Tricontinental*'.²⁴ As Anouar Abdel-Malek remarks in his seminal text on Third World thought, *Social Dialectics* (1972), Guevara spoke of 'we, the exploited people of the world', and not 'we communists of the Third World'.²⁵ Third World peoples, oppressed by imperialism and western hegemonies, were now the global proletariat. The innovativeness of Guevara's resolute internationalism was to see the commonality of oppression across races and cultures.²⁶ In other words, imperialism and racism produce similar effects (exploitation, alienation, dispossession) across different regions.

In literary terms (perhaps a spurious distinction from the political definition) the Third World delineates a space of radical aesthetics and a rethinking of European literary traditions and styles. It is never so straightforward as a *rejection* of such legacies: it is rather a repurposing of modernism, social realism, and experimentation for the specific needs and interests of these new postcolonial audiences, radical networks of militants. The Third World is also a perspective on world literature,

23 As Anne Garland Mahler argues, 'The Bandung and Tricontinental moments might be taken as two major cornerstones of Cold War anticolonialisms, separated by an ocean and a decade', *From the Tricontinental to the Global South: Race, Radicalism, and Transnational Solidarity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018), p. 23.

24 Robert Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), p. 5.

25 Anouar Abdel-Malek, *La dialettica sociale* (Bari: Dedalo Libri, 1974), p. 131.

26 See Young, *Postcolonialism*, pp. 212-13.

and as Orsini notes, in Indian appraisals of foreign literature, 'Third World here stood for non-European stories rather than for stories that embraced a postcolonial vision'. Kamleshwar, the editor of the Indian literary periodical *Sārikā*, defined the Third World as 'ordinary people and writers as fellow travellers' (p. 103).

The increased prominence of aesthetics in Third World political debates was due to the fact that culture was seen as central to the revolutionary process. As Barbara Harlow argues in relationship to Palestinian resistance poetry of the 1960s and 1970s, culture became 'an arena of struggle'.²⁷ This insight, which is now foundational to the field of postcolonial studies, is actually the product of Third-Worldist and Global South forms of knowledge elaborated during the decolonization struggles. For example, the Guinean revolutionary Amílcar Cabral, writing in 1970, argued that 'it is generally within the culture that we find the seed of opposition, which leads to the structuring and development of the liberation movement'.²⁸ The autonomy of the aesthetic is for the first time profoundly challenged by revolutionary movements during decolonization; this then becomes a critical insight crucial to the contemporary field of postcolonial studies, though it was elaborated back in the 1960s.

Perhaps one of the main legacies of Third-Worldism in cultural terms is not so much the literature that was produced in those years, but the critical frameworks it has bequeathed us. Not only did it initiate a move away from 'western' categories, but it was often a move away from the idea of aesthetic autonomy, though of course this is more complex than it appears at the surface.²⁹ Texts and ideas originating from anticolonial and anti-imperialist struggles in the Global South, and circulating in multiple languages and in translation, sketch out a form of aesthetics that is neither derivative of western literary forms and 'Eurochronology' (as Appadurai calls it), nor is it harking back to 'traditional' aesthetic forms of the literary traditions belonging to the societies involved in the political struggle for

27 Barbara Harlow, *Resistance Literature* (London: Methuen, 1987), p. 55.

28 Amílcar Cabral, 'National Liberation and Culture', *Return to the Source: Selected Speeches of Amílcar Cabral*, ed. Africa Information Service (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1973), p. 43.

29 Postcolonial/Third World intellectuals also seized on the idea of aesthetic (and modernist) autonomy, repurposing it to declare their freedom from colonial tutelage, and sometimes assert their ideological neutrality; see Kalliney, 'Modernism, African Literature, and the Cold War'.

liberation.³⁰ These aesthetics came about through a shared sense of the way in which decolonization would change culture: not in terms of a re-colonization of indigenous arts, but an integrated development of a new culture coming out of anti-imperialism, anti-capitalism, social justice, and social progress for the people, which constantly oscillated between local and universal forms, as Cabral theorized. For example, Laachir and Goikolea-Amiano explore the diverse aesthetics of the Arabic novel in the era of decolonization in Morocco and Tunisia, at times through heteroglossia and the iconoclastic use of non-standard Arabic linguistic forms that strongly referenced the vernacular, spoken elements and thus emphasized the popular traditions within a supposedly 'high' literary form. As Ernesto Che Guevara's writing on art and literature demonstrates, there was a constant, very sophisticated analysis of aesthetics debates that were taking place among internationalist Third-Worldists, precisely because they were seen as central to political struggle.³¹

The Cold War and World Literature

When I was growing up [in Bombay in the early 1970s], I could easily name Soviet or European writers, dissident writers abroad. I knew of them and their work, Solzhenitsyn, Kundera, Holub, Havel, Brodsky, and all these names were familiar to me.

Salil Tripathi³²

To a certain—and still largely unacknowledged—extent, the Cold War contributed to *create* world literature, or at least created the conditions for its possibility in part by bringing literatures and writers into new or unprecedented contact and conversation with each other.³³ But ideology,

30 Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), p. 3.

31 In debating a new socialist aesthetics for Cuba, Guevara criticized the 'frozen forms of socialist realism', while also denigrating the 'anguish of alienated man' that characterizes late-twentieth century European art, decadent art; see Ernesto Che Guevara, *Che Guevara and the Cuban Revolution: Writings and Speeches of Che Guevara*, ed. by David Deutschmann (London: Pathfinder, 1987), p. 250.

32 Salil Tripathi 'From a Very Young Age in Fact, I Used to Collect Books that Were Banned', Interview with Laetitia Zecchini, <https://www.writersandfreexpression.files.wordpress.com/2017/02/interview-with-salil-tripathi3.pdf>

33 Andrew Rubin, *Archives of Authority: Empire, Culture and the Cold War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012); Quinn, *Between Two Fires*.

though often draped in claims of literary value, was the driving force here—rather than the market.³⁴

The Cold War underpinned world literature in terms of *visibility* and *availability*. Journalist and author Salil Tripathi may well wonder why he grew up familiar with Soviet and East European dissident authors (while young people now would hardly be as familiar with contemporary dissident writers like Asli Erdoğan or Liu Xiaobo), but we only need to look at the pages of the ICCF magazine *Quest* or to examine which books were available in cheap subsidized paperback editions on the footpaths of Bombay to see how that familiarity came about: all the writers he names were featured.³⁵ Familiarity was as much created through translations as through name-dropping, snippets of information, and relayed recognition. From our current Anglocentric world literary perspective, to which every literature not in English, French or Spanish is ‘minor’, going back to the Cold War decades comes as a shock. Whether we speak of countries or of individual authors, Cold War propaganda efforts and the intense internationalism of decolonization *visibilized* literatures from most parts of the world to an extraordinary degree. As we have seen, this great expansion of world literature was facilitated by criss-crossing and contrastive print internationalisms, each creating its own version of world literature while selecting different authors from the same countries. Without the Cold War, we would have a very different, and much smaller, world literature. The *Lotus* anthologies, for instance, made an impressively wide range of contemporary poems and authors from Africa, Asia and the Middle East appear together, visible *to each other* and accessible to Arabic readers as well as to Asian and African readers through English and French. Meanwhile the magazines receiving support from the CCF in Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America were encouraged to connect or ‘talk to’ each other, through shared features, syndicated articles, cross-advertisements, and editorials.³⁶

34 Many of the journals and publications sponsored by the CCF or by the Soviets were maintained against the logic of the market, and sold at very cheap prices, in spite of their being (at least at times) lavishly produced and illustrated.

35 See Zecchini, ‘What Filters Through’.

36 See Scott-Smith and Lerg, *Campaigning Culture*.

Of course, this ‘visibilization’ involved selective processes of canonization and consecration. The writers and literatures that were promoted or subsidized, that were translated and circulated transnationally, were often those that each bloc considered ideologically correct or ‘compatible’. Conversely, voices that were considered deviant or too critical were censored, silenced or invisibilized.³⁷ Different politics produced different mappings, as well as different temporalities, of world literature. As Greg Barnhisel and other scholars have shown, US world literature pivoted around (a very subdued version of) modernism and favoured books that promoted the American or ‘Western’ way of life as vehicles of its so-called liberal values. It also included dissident Soviet and East European authors and non-Communist Latin American, Asian and African authors, while Soviet and Chinese networks translated and publicized approved Western classics and ‘friendly’ authors (like Howard Fast).³⁸ In line with Mao Zedong’s ‘three-way division of the world’ posited in 1947, which interposed an ‘intermediate zone’ between the socialist and capitalist blocs that stretched from Europe to China and included numerous colonial and postcolonial countries in Africa and Asia, Mao Dun, the Chinese writer and editor of the state world literature magazine *Yiwen* (Translated Literature), mapped the literary world in three parts: the Soviet Union and people’s democracies (i.e. the socialist bloc); capitalist countries; and former or current colonies/semi-colonies.³⁹

The more elaborate map proposed by Nikolai Tikhonov at the Second Congress of Soviet writers in 1954 conceived of world literature as a ‘solar system’, with Soviet literature at the centre and progressive literatures from other parts of the world orbiting around it in five concentric circles. These included: (1) literatures of the people’s

37 See especially Rubin, *Archives of Authority*.

38 Rossen Djalalov, ‘“I Don’t Boast About It, but I’m the Most Widely Read Author of This Century”’: Howard Fast and International Leftist Literary Culture, ca. Mid-Twentieth Century’, *Anthropology of East Europe Review*, 27.2 (Fall 2009), 40–55.

39 See Mira Sinha Bhattacharjea, ‘Mao: China, the World and India’, *China Report*, 31.1 (1995), 15–35 (p. 24), quoted in Jia, ‘Making a World of Literary Relations: The Representation of Indian Literature in the Chinese Journal *Yiwen/Shijie wenxue*, 1953–1962’ in *World Literature in Motion: Institution, Recognition, Location*, ed. by Flair Donglai Shi and Gareth Guangming Tan (Stuttgart: Ibidem-Verlag, 2020), pp. 379–408 (pp. 385–86).

democracies of East Europe; (2) literatures of the people's democracies in Asia (China, Mongolia, Vietnam, etc.); (3) progressive literatures of non-socialist Asian countries (such as India, Turkey, Iran, etc.); (4) progressive literatures of capitalist countries (the United States, Italy, Denmark, etc.); and (5) Latin American literature.⁴⁰ Translations and prizes, international visits, and conferences enacted these visions—with the Stalin/Lenin Prize bestowed on writers like Anna Seghers and Bertolt Brecht, Guo Moruo, Thakin Kodaw Hmaing, Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Louis Aragon, Arnold Zweig, Artur Lundkvist, Paul Robeson, Jorge Amado, Pablo Neruda, and Nicolás Guillén, among others.⁴¹

In an oft-quoted passage from a 1952 text translated by Marie and Edward Said, Eric Auerbach warned that all human activity now seemed to be concentrated into European-American or Russian-Bolshevist forms and patterns: 'Should mankind succeed in withstanding the shock of so mighty and rapid a concentration [...] then man will have to accustom himself to existence in a standardized world, to a single literary culture [...] And herewith the notion of *Weltliteratur* would be at once realized and destroyed'.⁴² And yet, as we have suggested throughout this Introduction, it would be extremely reductive to read this period only as one of standardization and even synchronization of literary cultures across the globe, or of the uniformization of world literature, and ultimately its obsolescence.

What from a distant or 'macro' perspective appear like integrated world literary systems (whether one, two, or three), each with its centre, satellites, and peripheries along clearly delineated aesthetic and ideological lines—a polycentric world literature—takes a very different complexion once we move closer. The picture becomes much more variegated or nuanced, marked by overlaps, with local actors never mere 'orbits' around one sun or the other, and often less ideologically or aesthetically regimented than their declarations may suggest.

40 Jia, 'Making a World', p. 382.

41 Scholars like Adhira Mangalagiri have cautioned against rosy views of South-South solidarity in this period of Non-Alignment and decolonization as isolated from state diplomatic projects; Mangalagiri, 'Ellipses of Cultural Diplomacy: The 1957 Chinese Literary Sphere in Hindi', *Journal of World Literature*, 4.4 (2019), 508–29 (p. 508).

42 Erich Auerbach, 'Philology and "Weltliteratur"', translated by Edward and Marie Said, *Centennial Review*, 13.1 (1969), 1–17 (p. 3).

As we have seen, in newly-decolonized or decolonizing countries writers and enterprising editors (*literary activists*, as we have called them) curated the material made available to them by the rival cultural artilleries of both ‘fronts’, set their own ambitious agendas, encouraged new literary voices and forms, and laid out the terms of critical engagement and aesthetic value. True, in their literary curiosity and political engagement such literary activists drew on tropes and debates that circulated internationally but, as already argued above, they often reinterpreted and recast those terms for aesthetic, social, or political projects that could be at odds with the ideologies they were initially supposed to convey. A Cold War lens on world literature helps focus the relationship between literature and politics in terms that diverge from Pierre Bourdieu’s notion of the gradual accumulation of literary value translating into autonomous art—terms reprised by Pascale Casanova in her historical paradigm of world literature.⁴³ It does so in at least two ways: first, by showing how literature on all sides of the spectrum—whether overtly ‘political’ or force-read as apolitical and allegedly ‘autonomous’—was inevitably imbricated in real-world politics.⁴⁴ Second, it forces us to look closely at the relationship between party or front politics and the apparent or assigned ideology of a work on the one hand, *and its reading* on the other, without flattening the one onto the other.

These decades produced curious *world-readers* who regularly sought out literary (and non-literary) writings from other parts of the globe, particularly, though not exclusively, from the world’s hotspots or decolonizing nations. The Ghanaian writer Ellis Ayetey Komey noted in 1961 that the demand for African fiction outstripped supply.⁴⁵ Marathi-English poet Arun Kolatkar embodied the bulimic impulse of the postcolonial reader, non-deferential towards the English canon, and keen to explore the world through literature (he famously travelled very little). When asked to name his favourite writers in one of his rare

43 Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, trans. M.B. DeBevoise (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

44 That every work is political in its worldliness and its position in its field is not something that either Casanova or Bourdieu would question, of course. But at the level of the *values* of the literary field, autonomy becomes disassociated from and superior to politics.

45 Ellis Ayetey Komey, ‘Wanted: Creative Writers’, 63, quoted in Davis, *African Literature and the CIA*, p. 10.

interviews, Kolatkar gave a dizzying list of eclectic names that reveals both his extraordinarily inclusive or indiscriminate conception of literature, but also speaks volumes of the environment in which he and other writers of his generation produced their work, of the immense broadening of literary horizons, or ‘worldliness’, which the Cold War also made possible:

Want me to give you a list? Whitman, Mardhekar, Manmohan, Eliot, Pound, Auden, Hart Crane, Dylan Thomas, Kafka, Baudelaire, Heine, Catullus, Villon, Dnyaneshwar, Namdev, Janabai, Eknath, Tukaram, Wang Wei, Tu Fu, Han Shan, Ramjoshi, Honaji, Mandelstam, Dostoevsky, Gogol, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Babel, Apollinaire, Breton, Brecht, Neruda, Ginsberg, Barthes, Duras, Joseph Heller, Enzensberger, Gunter Grass, Norman Mailer, Henry Miller, Nabokov, Namdev Dhasal, Patte Bapurav, Rabelais, Apuleius, Rex Stout, Agatha Christie, Robert Sheckley, Harlan Ellison, Bhalchandra Nemade, Durrenmatt, Aarp, Cummings, Lewis Carroll, John Lennon, Bob Dylan, Sylvia Plath, Ted Hughes, Godse Bhatji, Morgenstern, Chakradhar, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Balwantbua, Kierkegaard, Lenny Bruce, Bahinabai Chaudhari, Kabir, Robert Johnson, Muddy Waters, Leadbelly, Howlin’ Wolf, John Lee Hooker, Leiber and Stoller, Eisenstein, Truffaut, Woody Guthrie, Laurel and Hardy.⁴⁶

And yet, despite the existence of transcontinental writerly networks and the belief in a new ‘global simultaneity of literary aesthetics’ (Holt), not only did this ambition clash with the reality of translational delay, with authors from the 1930s being hailed as ‘contemporary’ in the 1970s or nineteenth-century authors numbered among those ‘of the last twenty-five years’ in the 1950s (see Orsini in this volume). More interestingly, geopolitical affiliations ‘dragged’ older authors into the present and erased unpalatable contemporaries.

And if many works and writers were (often unwittingly) enlisted in the tug of war between liberalism and totalitarianism, ‘art for art’s’ sake vs ‘art for life’s’ sake, at the point of reception they were in fact read, and can be read, as *both* engagé *and* modernist (Camus, Kamleshwar), as engagé *or* modernist, entertaining *or* political (Jack London), modernist *and* political (Guimarães Rosa), politically progressive *but* aesthetically

46 Interview in Marathi translated by Philip Engblom in ‘Arun Kolatkar: Reading Jejuri, and Arun Kolatkarachya Kavita in Tandem’, *New Quest*, 146 (Oct.–Dec. 2001), 389–409. Also discussed in Laetitia Zecchini, *Arun Kolatkar and Modernism in India, Moving Lines* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), pp. 55–56.

conservative (see Srivastava in this volume), simply engagé or truly revolutionary (Lu Xun, Premchand), and so on, depending on the frame of reference. This of course pertains to the semantic richness and ambivalence of literary texts, but also to the fact that so many authors and texts were read according to different ideological and aesthetic frameworks in different parts of the world. Cold War reception studies can be a sub-field in itself.

Two final points. First, as already mentioned above and in several essays of this volume (Orsini in particular, but also Srivastava, Zecchini), Cold War literature was predicated on the accumulation and circulation of translations. Yet Cold War world literature would not have been possible without relay translations, i.e. translations of translations. Once again, sourcing, curating, and retranslating translations was as crucial for literary activism as translating 'from the original' in the first place. By implication, this 'literary poly-system' looks quite different from the one structured by 'open' and 'closed' relations theorized by Itamar Even-Zohar, or from the 'solar systems' theorized by Soviet and Chinese theorists.⁴⁷ Sometimes circulation went through roundabout and surprising circuits (e.g., the 'middlebrow' US magazine *Short Story International*, see Orsini in this volume). English and French translations appear crucial as *vehicles* of world literature into third languages rather than as points of arrival in the struggle for world recognition.

Finally, although of course many seminal novels were written—and some translated, excerpted and serialized in Cold War magazines and journals—Cold War print culture was at least as invested, if not more, in other forms such as the magazine, the short story, the travelogue, the testimonial, the book review, the poem, the editorial, the 'letter from', as well as forms of popular and public culture (radio broadcasting, cinema, music, etc.) which are outside the scope of this specific volume. Again and again in our respective work, and in this volume, we have asked, what happens if we consider world literature not through the novel, which encourages diffusionist models and Eurocentric histories, but through other genres?

47 Itamar Even-Zohar, 'Polysystem Theory', *Poetics Today*, 11.1 (1990), 9–26.

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