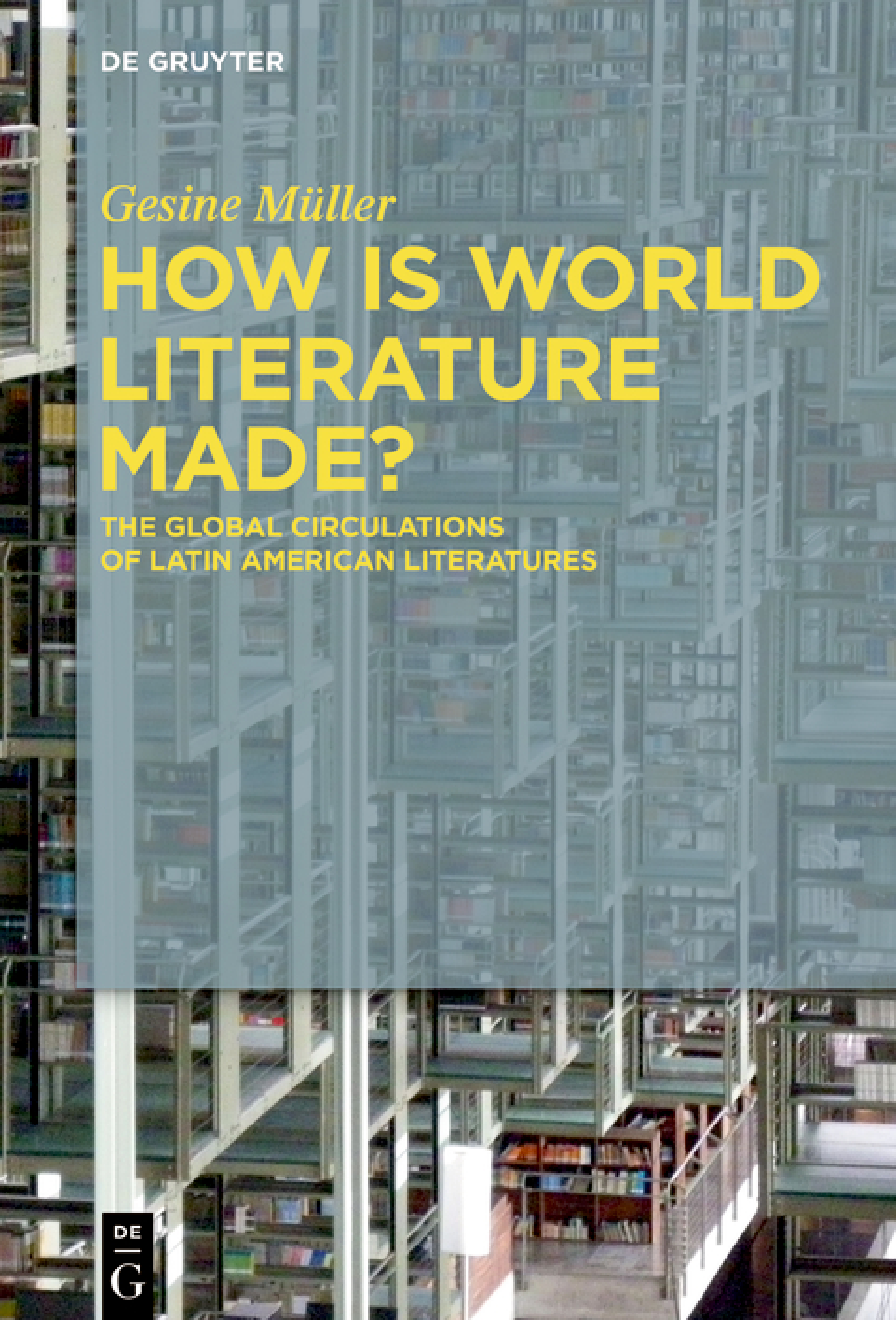
DE GRUYTER
Gesine Müller
HOW IS WORLD LITERATURE MADE?
THE GLOBAL CIRCULATIONS OF LATIN AMERICAN LITERATURES
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The Global Circulations of Latin American Literatures

Translated by
Marie Deer

DE GRUYTER

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Contents

I Introduction

I.1 On the Construction of World Literature

On March 6, 1983, Gabriel García Márquez was waiting patiently on the tarmac of New Delhi's Palam Airport, in the plane that had brought him, along with Fidel Castro, from Cuba to a summit conference of the Non-Aligned Movement in India. According to protocol, the Cuban revolutionary leader had to be the first to leave the plane – but then all of a sudden Indira Gandhi herself climbed the stairs to the plane, marched right past Castro, and called out: "Where is García Márquez?" From then on, García Márquez reported later, he and Gandhi were "inseparable," and "by the third day I felt as if Indira had been born in Aracataca" (Martyris 2014; Aracataca being of course García Márquez's Colombian home village, which made its way into world history as "Macondo" through his novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*).

What comes across here as just a little anecdote is in fact part of a sphere related to the "construction processes of world literature," the forces that stand behind works that circulate on the global stage, the forces that cause a novel to leave its more immediate sphere of influence and to become a part of world literature. What can be easily forgotten in the Western world – where García Márquez, under the strong influence of exoticizing readings, has become canonized as the model of an author from the South – is how familiar and almost commonplace García Márquez's narrative worlds may appear not only to Indira Gandhi or even Salman Rushdie but also to millions of other Indians.

The concept of world literature must itself be understood, to begin with, as a construct, rather than as a supposedly objective canon of works of especially high aesthetic quality: a construct that must of necessity hide the fact of its constructedness. My goal here is to direct our gaze to the dynamics and very concrete conditions of production of globally circulating literature, without in the process unthinkingly reproducing the same power relationships. This undertaking also played a key role in the discussion series Cologne Talks on World Literature (*Kölner Gespräche zur Weltliteratur*),[1] involving participants from the

1 The *Kölner Gespräche zur Weltliteratur* is a discussion series that has taken place at the University of Cologne every fall since November 2015 in the context of the European Research Council-sponsored Consolidator Grant Project "Reading Global – Constructions of World Literature and Latin America." The event that I refer to here included a panel discussion moderated by Benjamin Loy, with Florian Borchmeyer, Andreas Breitenstein, Jo Lendle, Sandra Richter, Andreas Rötzer, and Uljana Wolf, on November 14, 2018 (see the poster and details of the event at http://readingglobal.phil-fak.uni-koeln.de/26126.html#c164261).

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world of international literature, which took place in tandem with the creation of this volume over the last few years. As the poet Uljana Wolf put it in one of these conversations, depending on who is asking about world literature, the response might come in the form of even more questions: "Which world? From which viewpoint? Based on which translations, prepared on the basis of which aesthetic norms?" (*Welche Welt? Aus welcher Sicht? Auf Basis welcher Übersetzungen, die aufgrund welcher ästhetischen Normen verfasst werden?*)[2] Not only in the theoretical debate about world literature that has shaped cultural studies over the last twenty years in a way that hardly any other debate has done, but also in my exchanges over the years of my research on this book with writers, publishers, literary critics, and literary archivists, one thing has become clearer and clearer: any definition of the concept of "world literature" that is undertaken too quickly and based only on theoretical approaches will not be very useful, especially when we look at the processual nature of the creation of the concept. Instead, the discussion always becomes productive when we focus on the most pressing questions arising from the current debate, and above all the oh-so-simple-sounding but equally hard-to-answer question: how is world literature actually *made*?

This study aims to go beyond general and purely theoretical models and to show, in a concrete, material way, how the global selection and circulation processes of literature actually work. But how can theoretical positions be tested using demonstrable processes of selection and circulation? Is it possible to design a cartography that does not rely solely on the canonizing institutions of a world literature that is shaped in the West? In the panel discussion in the fall of 2018, the literary critic Andreas Breitenstein, like the writer Navid Kermani a few years earlier, asked: How, within world literature, can we differentiate a marketable, somewhat aesthetically globalized literature (what Breitenstein called "package-tour literature" [*Pauschalreiseliteratur*], using the analogy of the travel business) from aesthetically innovative projects and creations? And how can we even understand the relationship between nation and world, a relationship that continues to be so essentially constitutive to so many publishers, in this current phase of accelerated globalization? Jo Lendle, the publisher of the Hanser Publishing House, said: "When I look at what we have done at Hanser in the last few years and what we are going to do in the coming years, I see almost exclusively authors who are in some kind of in-between state." He mentioned Teju Cole, who was born in Michigan in 1975 and grew up in Nigeria

2 All translations in this text, unless otherwise indicated, are by Gesine Müller and Marie Deer.

and the United States, as well as the newcomer Aura Xilonen, born in 1995 (*The Gringo Champion*, 2015, German title *Gringo Champ*, Hanser 2019), "who came to the USA from Mexico and who writes in a language between Mexican [Spanish] and English, in other words who invents her own artistic language."[3]

One genuine problem in research into world literature is definitely the sheer mass of texts and the heterogeneity of the spaces of world literature. We have to ask ourselves what we can really say about the global construction of literature if we think of it without any clear limitation to a specific historical or geographic context. In this research project, therefore, I refer to a clearly determined cultural space within a precisely defined historical time, and one that can serve as a model paradigm for the processes of world literature: Latin America from 1959 to the present day. Within this space, which is relatively homogeneous in terms of both literature and culture, the clear delineation of a corpus of writers and texts, along with access to comprehensive archival material, should allow us to gain clearer insights into the factors that go into the circulation processes of world literature. Because this volume is strongly focused on the material at hand, there are inescapable tensions, in terms of the choice of writers, between questions of programmatic positioning and of material situation, and this will be evident in the individual chapters. The reason for beginning with 1959 is that the so-called Boom in Latin American literatures is often considered to have begun that year. The 1959 Cuban Revolution can be seen as the beginning point of the Boom, because the revolution was so heavily politically unifying for Latin American intellectuals as well as intellectuals around the world. This moment also marked the onset of an economically significant phase in which the censorship of the Franco regime began to relax and the country then began to open up. Given that writers in Spain had had so little freedom of expression up until that point, these developments now paved the way for a particularly favorable set of possibilities for the reception of Latin American literatures.

The "in-between" that Jo Lendle describes has characterized Latin American literatures, in particular, for generations, and affects all areas of literary production around the world today to a great degree. In order to be able to develop clear and workable terminology for use in this study, and to be able to

3 "Wenn ich mir ansehe, was wir bei Hanser in den letzten Jahren gemacht haben und in den nächsten Jahren machen werden, sind das fast ausschließlich Autoren, die irgendwo in einem Dazwischen sind." / "die aus Mexiko in die USA gekommen ist und in einer Sprache zwischen Mexikanisch und Englisch schreibt, also eine eigene Kunstsprache erfindet." All quotations are from the video of the panel discussion at the November 2018 *Kölner Gespräche zur Weltliteratur* (see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8_4SoJ-PiH4).

include these literatures of the "in-between" that are in fact no longer unambiguously localizable, I want to use the tension between the concepts of "world literature" and of "literatures of the world." In the process, this volume bridges the gap between an overview of the field of world literature and Latin America, on the one hand, and analyses of the specific processes of selection and circulation of selected works and writers, on the other.

One focus of this study is the material-based analysis of the selection processes around Latin American literatures on the part of publishers. While the existing theories of world literature center almost exclusively on literary, literary-historical, and philosophical texts in the formation of their hypotheses on the object of the research, here it is primarily the dimensions of the literary selection processes that come into view and that can give us some insight into the concrete factors that go into selection and reception. The texts that we will look at include, most notably, correspondence among authors, publishers, and translators; internal reports and editorial assessments; minutes of editorial meetings; travel reports; and the archival materials of advertising and licensing departments. This material is of great value for the following questions: How can a concept of world literature that is not explicitly formulated actually shape the concrete work of a publishing house? What are the selection criteria that emerge out of that process for foreign-language literatures? The Suhrkamp Publishing House was used for the material research for this book, and it was chosen as an example because it is representative and because it has a wealth of materials available, a state of affairs that is not to be taken for granted if one looks at comparable publishing archives in other countries.

This volume also focuses on more comprehensive perspectives, leading to a variety of "models" for the circulation of Latin American literatures worldwide. If we want to find out about the global circulation processes of literature, then we have to look as far beyond the classical model of relationships between the center and the periphery as we can. For these purposes, too, Latin America can be seen as an ideal research subject, because there has been so little concrete research in spite of the great importance that is placed on decentralized global exchanges. Using the examples of Gabriel García Márquez, Octavio Paz, and Julio Cortázar, this book will develop paradigms for circulatory structures. In the process, I will also, as far as possible, look into the literary circulation processes within the Global South that have barely been studied till now.[4]

4 Latin American literatures in India and China have not yet been fully explored. But the attention paid to this field is increasing, as can be seen in the work of Maurya (2014, 2015) or in the research concentration on literary-cultural South-South relationships, with an emphasis on relations between India and Latin America, at the Institute for Latin American Studies

In order to get a clear sense of how this volume is thus inscribed into the contemporary debate over world literature, it is worth starting with a look at the current situation and the fundamental issue of the debate. After all, the discussion of the concept of world literature, which has been conducted with renewed intensity over the course of the last twenty years or so, is among the controversies within cultural studies that are particularly closely bound up with questions of global interlinkages in a polycentric world.[5] Most of the leading theoretical contributions to the question of world literature attempt to enter into the contemporary diagnostic discourses on the symptoms of crisis in and the functioning of the current surge in globalization – discourses that call the institutional, economic, and cultural hegemony of the Global North over the South broadly into question. (Of course, these theoretical contributions themselves have persistent hegemonic implications.) And now, following up on this question, the most recent contributions to the debate bring up the issue of whether the concept of world literature has been too closely connected with the political and economic dynamics of globalization and must therefore, of necessity, lead to a dead end – an issue that cannot be addressed without bringing in the material side of the production of world literature, more intensively than has been done so far. If we ask ourselves to what extent the current concepts of world literature are still productive, and in what ways they need to be reworked or simply set aside in order to shed light on literary phenomena and processes worldwide beyond the dynamics of globalization, we need to have precise knowledge of how, concretely, the processes of selection, circulation, and canonization take place, and we need to examine how this kind of material knowledge can make it possible to differentiate among theoretical positions. During our January, 2018 conference in Cologne on "World Literature, Cosmopolitanism, Globality: Beyond, Against, Post, Otherwise,"[6] the discussion kept returning to the question of how the positioning of critical discourses on texts and

of the Freie Universität Berlin, under the direction of Susanne Klengel (see the website for the project at https://www.lai.fu-berlin.de/disziplinen/literaturen_und_kulturen_lateinamerikas/forschung/Fokus_LA_Indien/index.html). As for East Asia, much less research has been done there. For instance, although China is thematically a highly interesting field, the relations of literary exchange between Latin America and China play hardly any role in current research, which makes work on Chinese publishing structures much more difficult. One exception is the work of Yehua Chen in the context of the previously mentioned European Research Council project; see, in particular, her dissertation *Tan lejos, tan cerca: La traducción y circulación de literatura latinoamericana en China* (So far, so close: The translation and circulation of Latin American literature in China; forthcoming), as well as Chen (2018).

5 Compare also Erhard Schüttpelz (2014).

6 Organized by Mariano Siskind and Gesine Müller, January 24–25, 2018.

their context, for instance in the United States, can itself be reflected upon as a part of the discourse.

How, then, can we guarantee a debate that will name and overcome the globalization-related localizations of critical discourse while at the same time appropriately incorporating the practice of the literary marketplace in its processuality?[7] The current theorization of world literature rightly problematizes the fact that the "world" as a referential framework has overly positive connotations,[8] but in the process, the programmatic studies that are undertaken run the risk of losing sight of a different dimension of the "world," namely its concrete manifestations and, in particular, the resistant potential of its materiality. In short, there are too few efforts being made to practice a critical material examination of world literature.

Given this background, I believe that we must also, more intensively and with recourse to the material, look into the question of the degree to which we have concepts that go beyond an affirmative understanding, shaped by global economies, of the "world." How successful are the efforts to dissolve unipolar or national literary perspectives? Think, for instance, of the discussions about non-national or transnational concepts such as "parastate," "translingualism," "diaspora," "majimboism," "postcolonial deterritorialization," "circum-Atlantic," "refuge islands," or the "Global South" (Apter 2008: 582). The inadequacies of the available alternatives to the concept of a national literature are often noted.[9] This concerns the concepts of the world literatures that are associated with Goethe, insofar as they are based on cultural circulation, literary markets, and literary translation and therefore reproduce neoimperialist cartographies. The workings of material access to world literature, bound up as it is with Western institutions that are organized according to capitalist structures, are of course also subject to scrutiny. This issue becomes particularly salient when established canons are used as the exclusive point

7 On this question, see also my contribution to the volume that resulted from the conference (Müller 2019b).

8 Mariano Siskind even goes so far as to proclaim "the end of the world" (Siskind 2019 *passim*), in the sense of the "very stable notion of world as globe produced by hegemonic discourses of cosmopolitanism and financial and consumerist globalization" (206–7). In particular, he considers optimistic to utopian views of the world to be failures, and asks how we can adequately deal with the immense loss entailed by "the symbolic closure of the horizon of universal justice and emancipation" (211).

9 In addition to Apter (2008), see also Venkat Mani, who has, rightly, questioned whether world literature should in fact be seen as a liberation from national literature. Famously, he answers this question of the binary perception of literature in the negative, whether that is a binary of permanent vs. ephemeral, homogenizing vs. heterogenizing, comparative vs. assimilationist, universal vs. particular, original vs. translated (Mani 2017: 33).

of departure, so that, from my point of view, we ought to pay particular attention to those processes of (world) literary production that take place away from the beaten path of the market or that involve a smaller circulation of certain texts.

In addition, some newer approaches to the sociology of literature (Brouillette 2014, 2016; Helgesson and Vermeulen 2016), as also taken up by Ignacio Sánchez Prado (2018a, 2018c), are central to the progress of the scholarly debates about world literature, insofar as they critically interrogate concepts of the "world" and relate to the economic dynamics of a global market.

At the same time, this kind of research, more heavily oriented as it is towards the concrete material and towards the conditions of production, must not only lead us back to the known findings about where the denominating centers are to be found, as has happened in the past. This is not enough of an answer. What, then, can a literary reflection that is focused on the processes of selection and circulation provide that goes beyond that? The question of how world literature is *made* is, after all, already automatically aimed at the deconstruction of any kind of positivist apprehension of the world. If we take into account the global asymmetries in the production of world literature, as emphasized by Brouillette, and do not simply accept translation indexes and sales figures as our standard, then we might also have a chance to expand the canon of world literature, which has been cemented through the dominance of the Western literary marketplace, into literatures that have so far received little attention and, especially, to gain a new perspective on that canon.[10]

Latin American Studies, in particular, can and must ensure that critical conceptualizations of the world are thought of in tandem with materially based studies, given that the Latin American literatures have very much been the pioneers and representatives, within the Western literary marketplace, of other literatures that have (previously) been seen as peripheral. In 2017, the writer Ilija Trojanow reported that he had noticed, while researching the canonical lists of major Western media such as the *BBC* and *The Guardian*, that Gabriel García Márquez was almost always the only author listed from the Global South (Trojanow 2017).

10 In this process, new perspectives on already canonized authors are also important: see for instance Benjamin Loy's highly innovative study *Roberto Bolaños wilde Bibliothek. Eine Ästhetik und Politik der Lektüre* (Roberto Bolaño's wild library. An aesthetics and politics of reading; Loy 2019), in which Loy connects his analysis of Bolaño's intertextual "textual hall of mirrors" with the dynamics of the enormous global success of Bolaño's body of work in the course of the mythologization processes of the person of the author. He notes an "exaggerated identification of his stories with biographemes" (Loy 2019: 8) in literary criticism and addresses the question of the influence that the death of an author, and the resulting surfaces of projection, can have on the reception of that author's work.

Latin America represents, in a very particular way, the problems and possibilities of a global perspective on the cultural and, especially, the literary processes of circulation. The construction of Latin America as a geographical, cultural, and political space has taken place, more so than for any other region of the world, against the backdrop of external processes of projection and denomination that have their origins in the West. In addition, Latin America – unlike, for instance, the markedly heterogeneous cultural spaces of Eastern Europe, Asia, or Africa – is linguistically, historically, and culturally homogeneous, which is what makes it possible, in the first place, to examine the construction processes of world literature in a way that goes beyond individual writers or works. And on top of that, the time period of the increasingly global reception of the region's literature can be determined quite precisely, beginning in 1959 and going through various phases since then, which also contributes to the uniqueness of these literatures, compared to the rest of the world, in terms of their suitability as an object of analysis (see also Loy 2017).

I.2 The Debate over World Literature: Perspectives from a Material-Based Approach

Recent contributions to the debate over world literature almost have to include a reference to Goethe and his quotation, which has now become a topos, that the Germans should take a look around at foreign nations because the "epoch of world literature" was now at hand (Eckermann 2010 [1906]; Eckermann 1999 [1827]: 225).[11] Robert Stockhammer has very convincingly pointed out some of the contemporary aspects of Goethe's concept of world literature: the "ever-quickening speed of intercourse" (*sich immer vermehrende[] Schnelligkeit des Verkehrs*; Goethe 1999 [1830]: 866) was based, according to Goethe, not only on technical conditions such as "railroads, express posts, steamships, and all possible modes of communication" (*Eisenbahnen, Schnellposten, Dampfschiffe[n] und alle[n] möglichen Fazilitäten der Kommunikation*; Goethe 1993 [1825]: 277) but also, with respect to the circulation of texts, on translations: "Because whatever one might say about the inadequacy of translation, it nevertheless is and remains one of the most important and most worthwhile businesses in the general global intercourse" (*Denn was man auch von der Unzulänglichkeit des Übersetzens sagen mag, so ist und bleibt es doch eines der wichtigsten und würdigsten*

11 With respect to these fundamental questions, see also my previous publications on the question of world literature.

Geschäfte in dem allgemeinen Weltverkehr; Goethe 1999 [1828]: 434; cited in Stockhammer 2009: 258–59). If Goethe, at such an early phase in the acceleration of globalization, derived his conceptions of world literature from the contemporary commercial conditions (cf. Stockhammer, Arndt, and Naguschewski 2007: 8), then it should come as no surprise that now, in our current phase of globalization, debates over the status and the responsibilities of literary studies should also have breathed new life into the discussion over concepts of world literature (Stockhammer 2009: 259) – a discussion that has been vigorously pursued since the very beginnings of the concept of world literature. Ever since Erich Auerbach published his essay on "Philologie der Weltliteratur" (The philology of world literature) in 1952, Goethe's conceptualization has been subjected to ever-increasing criticism, especially with respect to its Eurocentric dimension and the possibility of a reference to national literature (Ette 2003: 22–23; Grotz 2008: 225). The cultural relationships of colonialism and the resulting asymmetries in the processes of appropriation were not yet an issue for Goethe. Even as the concept of world literature in the mold of Goethe's formulation was critiqued, the parameters of that critique were long dominated by static, Eurocentric concepts. The fact that his formulation stood for an elite understanding of high-brow literature that definitely exceeded the national context was indeed increasingly critiqued. But at the same time, world literature was only conceivable from the point of view of that context, while now the debate has moved beyond that point.

If we are now struggling to find a theorization for new forms of mapping that is adequate to the current phase of globalization, the issue is the expectation that from a global perspective, the separation between center and periphery in literary productions will be abolished and thus the origins of cultural production will be able to be conceived within transnational constellations. In the process, the question of which of the earlier-held implications of the concept of world literature can be maintained and passed on, and which ones must now be modified, is being discussed with increasing intensity. Shortly after the turn of the millennium, Franco Moretti at Stanford and David Damrosch at Harvard undertook extensive studies on the concept of world literature (see Damrosch 2003; Moretti 2000).[12] In his essay "Conjectures on World Literature," Moretti began with the thesis that within the framework of research in comparative literature, world literature was always a limited undertaking, and that only now does it constitute a truly global system. On the epistemological level,

12 I thank Benjamin Loy for important research and thoughts in connection with this question.

however, he too thinks fundamentally in dichotomies: center and periphery, source and target culture. The transfer of knowledge and culture always takes place in one direction, works and writers can apparently be clearly assigned to one of the two cultures, spaces are positioned in opposition to each other.

In *What Is World Literature?* (2003), David Damrosch maps out the enormous importance of the processes of reception and translation. He attempts to formulate a theoretical justification for the established practice of tying world literature to the existence of translations: "World literature is writing that gains in translation" (Damrosch 2003: 288, cited in Stockhammer 2009: 259). Damrosch's work has provided the most important foundation to date for opening Goethe's conception of world literature to discourses that are affirmative of globalization. Research that is material-based and that attempts to study the specifically verifiable current processes of literary production and reception, however, will necessarily run afoul of one of Damrosch's assumptions: for Damrosch, world literature always begins in a national literature that has some particular disposition; it always has an essence, a core that is disposed in some particular way, and this becomes problematic if we are trying to include the origins of literature in today's accelerated phase of globalization. If we also want to encompass "Literatures with no Fixed Abode" (Ette 2016), which dissolve the polarity of nation, on the one side, and world, on the other, then we find that these literatures are not allowed for in Damrosch's model.

So, then, what approaches do we now have at our disposal for implementing the idea of a literary-theoretical analytical model of world literature that is universal, or at least not confined by borders? Chettiarthodi Rajendran (2013) approaches related methodological questions by bringing together concepts from Western literary studies and classical Indian reception traditions: how much sense do the dichotomies *fiction/nonfiction*, *real/marvel*, *beauty/ugliness* make in this context, and also if we relate them to the literary production of today? And how can they be modified? Joachim Küpper, who assembled a number of important voices in his collection *Approaches to World Literature* (2013), puts the ethnographic approach to the debate over world literature of recent decades into question: is there in fact any specifically characterizable connection between ethnic and cultural belonging?

Rebecca Walkowitz (2006), in researching the literature of migration as world literature, focuses on the dynamic and heterogeneous components of cultural identity, on the one hand, and of the global book trade, on the other. Like Moretti, Damrosch, and also Pascale Casanova (1999), Walkowitz is interested in circulation and reception, but beyond that, she asks about how writers, translators, and editors all work to shape the literary field (Walkowitz 2006: 535), a question that William Marling (2016) also pursues in his study of

gatekeepers.[13] Walkowitz's central concept is *comparison literature*, a new form of world literature for which comparisons on a global scale are in the foreground, both thematically and formally: "It is no longer simply a matter of determining, once and for all, the literary culture to which a work belongs. Comparison literature . . . implies the intersection of three major methodologies: book history, theories of globalization, and translation studies" (Walkowitz 2009: 580–81).

In considering the highly productive and heterogeneous field of research into world literature, it becomes clear that almost all of the relevant contributions in the context of a new theorization have built their respective approaches around two fundamental issues of global literary phenomena. On the one hand, world literature is no longer seen as a static canon comprising a series of singular, authoritative works but rather as a complex and dynamic process in the sense of historically varying processes of reception around the world. Thus Pascale Casanova, for example, in *The World Republic of Letters* (2004), conceives of the concept of world literature, with an eye to Pierre Bourdieu, as an independent global literary field within which literary capital is generated not through the particular aesthetic processes or ideological conceptions of specific texts but rather as the networked interaction of concrete historical, material, and economic factors and discursive practices (Casanova 2004: 17–21). Damrosch, who sees world literature primarily as "a mode of circulation and reading" (2003: 5), and Franco Moretti (2000; 2003), already mentioned above, make similar arguments. The other fundamental issue that unites these studies is a recognition of the insoluble problem posed by the sheer abundance of material and the associated ability to operationalize the object of analysis, a problem that confronts every research project that addresses "world literature": "we are talking of hundreds of languages and literatures here. Reading 'more' seems hardly to be the solution" (Moretti 2000: 55).

The answers that the various theorizations have attempted to give to these two central problems confronting any approach to world literature must be viewed critically because they do not implement the knowledge that they themselves have formulated of the importance of circulation processes within global literary fields and the problem of the quantities of material on the level of

13 Generally speaking, in the social sciences, the term *gatekeeper* designates a factor (usually personal) that has a demonstrable influence on a decision-making process. For literary studies, Marling (2016) identifies the influence that particular actors such as publishers, advisers, translators, etc. have had on the global literary success of certain authors; however, his study relies very heavily on the context of the United States. Nevertheless, his remarks on García Márquez's gatekeepers – cf. section IV.1 of this book – as well as on the concept itself from the Latin American point of view, are very valuable.

concrete analysis. Neither Damrosch's attempt at an illumination of these processes using nine examples in *What is World Literature?* nor Moretti's concept of a "distant reading" (2013), which attempts to limit the material to be accessed by shifting the perspective of the investigation to the level of literary histories, ultimately sheds light on the question at hand here: How do global literary selection and circulation processes, going beyond individual works and authors (Damrosch) or the formal characteristics of individual genres (Moretti), actually operate?

In this context, the question of canons as phenomena of power and exclusion is of course a very central one. If, following Casanova, the literariness of works can be measured as the sum of the concrete material practices that operate on them within literary fields, then canons are doubtless one of the most visible and influential expressions of these practices. The question of a given work's belonging to a particular canon and of the role of these text selections, which always require a particular kind of commitment, has therefore rightly taken a central position within the debate over world literature. In the process, the understanding of a static canon has often been abandoned in favor of more dynamic approaches, for instance that of Damrosch, who suggests a three-step system consisting of "a hypercanon, a counter-canon, and a shadow canon" (2009: 511). Nevertheless, the assumption of a complex conception of the canon that includes a certain amount of internal mobility entails the same problematic that was already mentioned with respect to the general investigation into circulation processes in the context of the current debate over world literature: the establishment of the (paradoxical) existence of a "shadow canon" or "counter canon," separate from the canon and made up of non-canonized authors, is unconnected to the question of how these canonization processes work, in other words an analysis of the instances and strategies that are of importance within this process, which is always fundamentally guided by material and commercial interests. In this volume, therefore, starting from the foundation of a critical perspective on the existing theories, I will investigate the implicit selection mechanisms, within the global processes of reception and circulation, that have so far been mostly overlooked. For these purposes, rather than starting from the question of completed canonization or non-canonization, I will instead be focusing on the production and selection of literature.

For Emily Apter (2008), world literature is characterized by the fact that it homogenizes the world, under the influence of the hegemonic cultures and economies, and suppresses its cultural diversity. An essential feature of this understanding of world literature is its translatability, which is primarily defined by market conditions and thus, as a purely economic measure, makes up a component of global capitalism. The global literary system, for Apter, presents itself

as a universe in which national galaxies compete with each other in order to determine the universal shape of a world literature (2008: 593).

The newer literary-sociological approaches that have already been mentioned briefly, such as those of Sarah Brouillette, Stefan Helgesson, and Ignacio Sánchez Prado, insofar as they also take into account the asymmetrical power relationships of the global book trade, are central to a way of looking at the literature that focuses on the concrete processes of the development of world literature and manages not to further cement in place the outdated logics of center and periphery. According to Brouillette, the important thing here is not the fact that world literature is a consumable product shaped by market demand, but that the entire system of literary production is fundamentally determined by capitalist social relationships. These relationships only allow a small number of individuals to participate in the process of producing and circulating literature (Brouillette 2016: 93). Thus, world literature is by no means an instance of seamless global circulation but rather shaped by an international social differential, which is the reason why access to literature and the literary trade is limited.

Many of the contributions to the debate that have been formulated from the context of the intellectual centers of Europe and the United States have in fact neglected to reflect adequately on the denominational power of Western publishers and academies over world literature. As the dynamics within the field have become subject to review, the occasionally harsh critique of Pascale Casanova's positing of Paris as the meridian of modern world literature (see Sánchez Prado 2006) has itself become a topos. What becomes clear in that discussion (which does not always do justice to the complexity of Casanova's approach) is that it is long overdue to stop using traditional "centers" as a yardstick for measuring how "advanced" or "backward" supposedly peripheral literatures are.[14]

Even an investigation that is more strongly oriented towards concrete material must therefore always keep in mind that it has to go beyond the well-known recognition that the denominating centers continue to be located in the United States and Europe, although in some cases works then proceed to be disseminated, in a second phase, via the postcolonial centers of the erstwhile colonial powers, such as Mumbai or Cape Town. What is significant here are the circulation processes within the Global South, which this book will, as far as possible, programmatically address. The heavily discussed concept of the Global South has become even more important in recent years, through the work of theoreticians such as Boaventura de

14 Compare also Diana Roig-Sanz and Reine Meylaerts's book (2018), which looks at the work of cultural mediators, such as literary translators, in apparently "peripheral" positions.

Sousa Santos (2009).[15] In this volume, it will be used as a geopolitical and epistemological construct to denote regions of the world that, for the most part, have a colonial past and are located outside of the "old" established centers of Western thought. They can, ultimately, be anywhere on the globe: "The 'Global South' is not an existing entity to be described by different disciplines, but an entity that has been invented in the struggle and conflicts between imperial global domination and emancipatory and decolonial forces that do not acquiesce with global designs" (Levander and Mignolo 2011: 3; see also Müller, Locane, and Loy 2018: 3).

I have already touched on the current question, which is also so formative for the theoretical debate, as to which concept of the "world" is actually being referred to. In his book *What Is a World? On Postcolonial Literature as World Literature*, Pheng Cheah (2016) takes a closer look at this question. Taking the work of Hegel, Marx, Heidegger, Arendt, and Derrida as a foundation, his concern is to undertake a conceptualization of the world, using chronological concepts, that will create a normative basis for a transformation of the globalized capitalist world. This is also expected to lead to a radical rethinking of world literature: existing theories of world literature, in his opinion, suffer from the fact that they see the world as an analogy for the global market or that they underestimate the possibilities of literature as a world-shaping factor. What Cheah proposes is literature as a world-shaping power, as an observer in the processes of worlding, and as an active participant in these processes. The editors of the magazine *n+1* make a similarly programmatic argument in criticizing world literature as having become an empty shell, as being too easily digestible, too "bite-sized" and too trivial, and serving only to provide occasional self-affirmation for a "global elite." World literature should not follow the taste of the readers but should itself actively shape that taste, remaining authentic to itself; the difference, they write, lies in whether literature is perceived as a "product" or as a "project" ("World Lite" 2013; see also Brouillette 2016: 95–97). For the question of how world literature is *made*, the descriptive level, which is so very crucial and often so difficult to define, is central to this study, but reflections on the character of world literature as a *project* cannot be entirely excluded; to begin with, even just the choice of particular authors and works cannot be separated from that character. While Pheng Cheah, in his noteworthy work, also thinks in terms of a programmatic process of worlding, Mariano Siskind's reflections on world literature start from the fundamental premise

15 In the context of issues to do with world literature, mention should be made here of the two volumes edited by Ignacio López-Calvo (2007, 2012) and the special issue of *The Global South* for which Caroline Levander and Walter Mignolo were responsible (2011).

that "the world doesn't exist" (Siskind 2017: 47): that there is no world in the sense of existing symbolic and material structures on which the processes of circulation or transcultural aesthetic imaginaries could build: "The world . . . cannot be assumed to be a structure that predates the critical or aesthetic interventions that have to posit it in contingent and idiosyncratic ways" (48). What he outlines, instead, is an internally differentiated and uneven whole that is not identical to itself (49). As a result, for Siskind, the "world" of world literature is also formed primarily not through successful communication or harmonious processes of exchange ("connections, dialogues, collaborations, influence and borrowings") but rather through breaks and conflicts ("unsolvable tensions, unevenness, antagonisms and exclusions"; 49).

The theoretical frame of reference constituted by the "world" – or to be more specific, the tendency in the debate to imagine world literature as a seamless, all-encompassing system of circulation – is rightly problematized in this process, but this problem cannot be dealt with in the context of a philosophical materialism alone, nor with purely programmatic postulates. The decisive move is, rather, to connect it back to the actual, material processes taking place in the literary field. Ignacio Sánchez Prado also emphasizes the significance of material practices for the constitution of world literature, within the tension that he has diagnosed between ideal (the idealization of cosmopolitanism) and practice (literary-sociological approaches) in contemporary debates over world literature (Sánchez Prado 2006, 2018c). His approach, which focuses specifically on Latin America, combines the analysis of concrete cultural production with a critical look at global cultural circulation processes. He concludes that literature, as an aesthetic and epistemological object that is carried by the inequalities of the economic and symbolic work of culture on a global level, is a cultural form that is "significantly less global than globalization itself" (Sánchez Prado 2018a: 63–64). [16] He warns against an overly optimistic view of the way in which Latin American literature overcomes the long-established practice of the international division of intellectual work, a view that all too often neglects the symbolic, material, and institutional frictions of globalization (64).

How, then, can a methodological approach that intentionally aims to include the economic factors of the production of world literature avoid the trap of misunderstanding literature as a streamlined product that moves seamlessly

16 Sánchez Prado is referring here to Boaventura de Sousa Santos's *Una epistemología del sur*. This "epistemology of the South" is based on a "subaltern cosmopolitanism [that] argues that the understanding of the world largely exceeds the Western understanding of the world and that for that reason our knowledge of globalization is much less global than globalization itself" (Santos 2009: 180–81).

through the pipelines of global reception? As already mentioned, the question of the "making of world literature" must, from the outset, deal with the fact that a positive understanding of the world is problematic in itself. On the other hand, the emphasis on the literatures of the Global South, both on the level of content as well as on the level of successful or failed South-South connections within literary production and reception, can make visible the fundamental inconsistences of the "overlapped, palimpsestic worlds that constitute the material and symbolic grounds of world literature" (Siskind 2017: 49).

A materially oriented investigation into world literature must therefore also address the selection mechanisms and specific conditions of the emergence of global processes of literary circulation and reception and, at the same time, take into account not only an idea of the world that is shaped by the economic and cultural-hegemonic asymmetries within a global market order but one that is also, increasingly and on a much more fundamental level, proving to be unequal (and asynchronous), contradictory, and internally conflicted. In the connection of these two dimensions of the "world" there lies a great deal of critical potential to release the concept of world literature from its rigid frameworks and to open it up to its own internal ruptures and incoherences. The aim here is to go beyond the euphoria over globalization and to gain a new perspective on the canon of world literature by paying particular attention to liminal literary practices: a project for which the literatures of Latin America provide a useful object of study for multiple reasons.

I.3 Latin America: Paradigm of Global Circulation Processes

For a variety of reasons, Latin America in general, and in particular its literatures from 1959 to today, can be understood as a nearly paradigmatic example for the investigation into the global circulation processes of cultural imaginaries and literary representations. And while the focus on Latin American literatures here is, in particular, also a matter of concretizing the object of analysis, this dimension, which from the point of view of scholarly utility appears to be a positive one, must nevertheless also be problematized so as not to perpetuate the implicit mechanisms of exclusion that this book explicitly seeks to critique. The construction of Latin America as a geographical, cultural, and political space has been proceeding, ever since the continent was conquered by Europeans, against the background of external processes of projection and denomination, and global economic dimensions have played into these processes in a decisive way. The "invention of America" (O'Gorman 1958) by the "West" is something that Walter Mignolo, too, highlighted, showing the extent to which America

"was an *invention* forged in the process of European colonial history and the consolidation and expansion of the Western world view and institutions" (Mignolo 2005: 2). The literatures of the region have always been shaped by a tension between these tendencies towards external projections coming from the West, and the search, from within Latin America, for a political and cultural continental "identity." Jorge Luis Borges already gives an illustrative formulation of this contradiction, which points to the heart of the problematic of world literature, when he writes, in his essay "El escritor argentino y la tradición": "I want to point out another contradiction: The nationalists pretend to venerate the capacities of the Argentine mind but want to limit the poetic exercise of that mind to a few impoverished local themes, as if we Argentines could only speak of *orillas* [outbacks] and *estancias* [ranches] and not of the universe" (1962, 1964).[17] If this study postulates a concrete object of investigation, in the sense of a homogeneity among Latin American literatures, that is always in the context of a critical consciousness of that external perspective on Latin America. Up through the present day, Western perspectives are often accompanied by simplifications of the cultural and literary diversity of this world region.

For the purposes of understanding the workings of the global processes of literary construction and circulation, the literatures of Latin America from 1959 to today occupy a paradigmatic position.[18] In the context of the research into world literature, they provide a unique and very clearly delimited corpus, generated during the so-called Boom, the "emergence of an aesthetically coherent body of writing in Latin America . . . of a genuine literary unity on a continental scale" (Casanova 2004: 234). For the present study, it is also significant that the materials that are relevant to Latin American literatures are particularly accessible: if this volume emphasizes materiality as an innovative dimension within the current debate over world literature, that is also with a view to the particular archival situation bearing on the reception of Latin American literatures from 1959 through the present day. Unlike in the United States, where the circulation of Latin American literatures has already been closely documented (although not in the context of the debate over world literature), in Europe there have so far only been the beginnings of attempts to address the question of what concrete factors within publishing houses (for instance Gallimard in France, Seix Barral in Spain, Einaudi in Italy, Suhrkamp in Germany, and Meulenhoff in the

17 "Quiero señalar otra contradicción: los nacionalistas simulan aceptar las capacidades de la mente argentina y, sin embargo, quieren limitar el ejercicio poético de esa mente a algunos pobres temas locales, como si los argentinos sólo pudiéramos hablar de orillas y estancias y no del universo" (1955: 6).

18 I thank Benjamin Loy for his important suggestions in this context.

Netherlands) were decisive for the selection and marketing in each of the European countries (for Italy, see Carini 2012; for the Netherlands, see Steenmeijer 1989; for Spain, see Pohl 2003; for Germany, see Römer and Schmidt-Welle 2007; and for France, see Molloy 1972).[19] In the work that has been done, the material evidence of publishing policies seldom plays any explicit role,[20] although that evidence – in the form of correspondences with authors, editorial materials, advertising and bookkeeping documentation, etc. – is stored in the archives of the respective publishers and could provide insight into the motivations of those selection processes. Some of the archives, such as the Latin America collection at the Siegfried Unseld Archive (SUA), which has been accessible at the German Literature Archive (DLA) in Marbach since 2010, have only recently been opened to the public. The significance of the materials that are stored here can hardly be overestimated: the reception history of Latin American literatures in Germany in the 20th and early 21st centuries cannot be understood without the international literature program of the Suhrkamp House and the work of the publisher Siegfried Unseld, who died in 2002. The very particular and key position of a few publishers in the choice and dissemination of the literatures of an entire continent, and the possibility of analyzing these selection mechanisms through the documents that are available, represent a unique potential in the case of the Latin American literatures, and one that has so far barely been taken advantage of. In the field of Latin American studies, there have so far been a few studies of the material in the Siegfried Unseld Archive that I am focusing on in this book (for example Einert 2018; Pompeu 2018). With the opening of this archive, there is now for the first time in Germany very comprehensive material available that documents the period before the literary translation and the publication of Latin American writers in Germany. Thus, the processes of selection (for example) can be investigated in a concrete way that, with respect to German publishers dealing with Latin American literatures, has in no way been possible until now.

The premise of the unusual coherence of the corpus of internationally received literature from Latin America is founded, among other things, on the findings of Mads Rosendahl Thomsen. In his study *Mapping World Literature: International Canonization and Transnational Literatures* (2008), he understands the success of Latin American literatures from 1960 to 1980, known as

19 Pura Fernández at the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) in Madrid is also leading a noteworthy research project on "Transatlantic Networks: Publishing Practices of the Ibero-American Republic / Public Network" ("Redes Transatlánticas: Prácticas editoriales de la Re(d) pública Iberoamericana").

20 Exceptions include, for instance, the works of Pohl and Carini.

the Boom, as a "temporal sub-centre" of world literature, in other words as a part of those "literatures whose contributions to world literature can be confined to a relatively short period of time or to a limited number of authors" (35). Rosendahl's thesis, according to which there are "shifting focal points" (35) within the global history of literatures, is plausible with respect to the Latin American literatures insofar as there is a very clear decrease that can be noted in the interest in Latin America and its literary-cultural production after the end of the Boom, which is generally recognized as coming at the beginning or middle of the 1980s. There seem to be three principal factors that are responsible for this development. First of all, while the upturn in interest in Latin American literatures in Europe and the United States demonstrably took place against the backdrop of the political developments of the 1960s and 1970s in this world region, including their respective revolutionary movements, there was then a weakening of that utopian foil for Western projections as military dictatorships and their neoliberal politics established themselves in various countries of Latin America beginning in 1967; then, beginning in 1989, the process of redemocratization that was taking place in so many places along with the changed global situation after the end of the Cold War definitively pushed Latin America out of the focus of global attention. Secondly, this political normalization of Latin America and the loss of global interest were accompanied by a reorientation of publishing policies, towards "newer" cultural spaces such as China, India, and Eastern Europe. And thirdly, at the same time, within the Latin American literatures themselves there were far-reaching upheavals happening: beyond the authors (including a strong contingent of women) of the so-called Post-Boom, who were perpetuating the successful patterns of the Boom, there were new voices establishing themselves in the 1990s and 2000s that consciously broke with the (supposed) coherence of the corpus and denied the existence of a Latin American identity (and the way it was handled in literature).[21]

In addition to the publishers, there were also other institutions, as well as changing institutional structures, that played a central role in the global circulation processes of Latin American literatures. Through the massive translation grants provided by the Literature Program of the Center for Inter-American Relations (CIAR) in the context of the Boom, an absolutely unprecedented number of Latin American novels were selected, translated, and marketed specifically for the United States market. The CIAR transformed itself into a crucial guiding force for literary circulation, "deciding what should be imported from Latin America and how it should be read" (Mudrovcic 2002: 139). In Spain, meanwhile, the end

21 For a comprehensive analysis of this, see Volpi Escalante's essay (2009).

of the Franco regime and the "void" that had been created by the censorship in the Spanish book trade played a role in the strong reception of Latin American literatures. The Mexican writer Jorge Volpi refers to a "publishing neocolonialism" (Volpi Escalante 2009: 157) that followed the economic crises of the subcontinent at the end of the 1970s and the simultaneous strengthening of the Spanish publishing houses after the fall of Franco: almost the entirety of the Latin American publishing landscape was bought up, in stages, by major Spanish and globally operating publishers. Since the turn of the millennium, there have been increasing signs of yet further shifts in the centers of publishing, as small independent publishers have been able to establish themselves, especially in Buenos Aires and in Mexico but also in other Latin American countries, and are now publishing large numbers of acclaimed writers. And last but not least, the classic channels for the reception of literature have been radically changed by the virtual disappearance of cultural sections from newspapers and the rise of blogs and other elements of new media.

I.4 The Book Trade and World Literature: Actors in a Transnational Literary Field

In the past, a wide variety of academic disciplines have addressed the book trade in world literature and the book industry, but the state of statistical and systematic knowledge is not yet sufficient for a systematic survey of this difficult web of relationships among art, business interests, and the economic distribution system.[22] For the illustration and evaluation – of these complex structures of interconnection, of the processes of circulation and exchange in the international publishing industry, and of the processes of canonization in world literature – I have used Pierre Bourdieu's field theory, which was heuristically very valuable for this purpose because of its interdisciplinary character.[23]

In order to understand the current institutional establishment of world literature, we need to pay attention to multiple institutions and actors that act under very particular geopolitical and cultural conditions. The economic space of a global public where world literature is distributed can be seen, from the point of view of action theory, as a relational-dynamic spatial fabric that is

22 For a more detailed look at the mechanisms of the book trade, see Müller (2019c).

23 See, for example, James English's excellent study (2008) on the circulation of cultural capital through cultural prizes and awards. The recent anthology *Pierre Bourdieu in Hispanic Literature and Culture*, edited by Ignacio Sánchez Prado (2018b), examined in detail the specific relevance of Bourdieu's theories to Latin America.

constantly reproducing itself and whose structures, subsidiary spaces, and dimensions are constantly in flux due to a variety of processes of social action (Vogel 2011: 40). If we appeal to Bruno Latour's actor-network theory, then nonhuman entities such as objects or institutions can be seen as acting in concert with human actors in network-like clusters of activity, and therefore merge with them into agents. Anna Boschetti (2012) counts, among the actors in the book trade, all literary agents and institutions; every kind of organ of publication, review, and literary criticism; the editors; the translators; and the secondary and tertiary educational system, which plays an equally important part in canonization through its programming orientation and its curricula. The dynamic interaction of these networks is important here: various strategies of alliance, competition, and cooperation can be observed, along with all kinds of institutional, formal, and informal exchange and both open and bounded forms of association.

Following Bourdieu, it is important to consider the state of the literary field at the time of its production; this is the same as the school of thought that pursues the premises of the production and distribution of literature in the literary field; the processes of its legitimization, dissemination, and reception; and the emergence and assignment of a specific value to it. But just as important as the interests and needs of the actors on this level of the literary microcosm is the geopolitical social space in which that microcosm is embedded, given that power formations such as politics, economics, and religion play a significant role in the literary field. This also applies to any changes in the functioning of the cultural space that encompasses the field: "printed works, arts, audiovisual media, more or less disciplinarized forms of knowledge, education" (Boschetti 2012: 18). And it is these sectors, structured as they are through relationships of power, that are in constant interaction with each other and thus translate external determinations into the specific logic of the field, as if through a prism.

Gisèle Sapiro, who considers herself a successor to Pierre Bourdieu, takes his approaches further, with a view to the challenges that globalization poses to the literary field (see, for example, Sapiro, Pacouret, and Picaud 2015). She is also particularly interested, from a sociological point of view, in the production and circulation of world literature in a transnational literary field, or to put it more precisely, in the political, economic, cultural, and social factors that either propel or impede the circulation of world literature, independent of its intrinsic value (Sapiro 2016: 81). Within the mechanisms of the book industry, Sapiro points out the obstacles that stand in the way of the international dissemination of literature, such as missing distribution networks, expensive foreign rights, or profit as a criterion. According to her, the translation of literature is also always politically significant, because it corresponds to the power relationships between states:

"For a nation-state, exporting its literature in translation is a sign of its symbolic recognition on the international scene" (84). She views the effects of globalization on the dissemination of translated literature as double-edged:

> Though the dynamics of globalization stimulated the local book industry in many countries and fostered cultural exchange through translation (the number of translations in the world increased by 50% between 1980 and 2000 according to the Index Translationum), the concentration process has had a negative impact on cultural diversity. (87)

This development has to do with the fact that, to play it safe, publishers tend to buy the rights to books that other publishers have already acquired. This means that only certain books circulate, which makes the mass literary market more uniform and monocultural.

But there are also tendencies in publishing that go in the opposite direction, tendencies that are neither financially nor ideologically motivated. Sapiro explains the fact that the numbers of translations for individual peripheral languages are increasing with the assumption that literature can give us information about the culture and customs of a country (90). In the case of such selection criteria within publishing, it is symbolic criteria, such as prestige and recognition in the literary field, that play the most important role:

> The publisher plays a major role by transferring its symbolic capital – encapsulated in its brand name (like a fashion designer's signature) – to the single work and to the author. The credit of the publisher is thus bequeathed to the authors he chooses to publish after a selection process. There is, of course, a circularity in the dynamics of symbolic capital: a publisher partly accumulates symbolic capital by publishing authors that get attention through critical reception and prizes. (82)

For Sapiro, it was UNESCO's international cultural policies, especially through funding programs and literary prizes, that was crucial for the gradual inclusion, in the canon, of Asian and Latin American writers in the 1960s and 1970s as well as of postcolonial and female writers beginning in the 1990s. And yet the peripheral status of literary language and the cultural field still make for lesser recognition within world literature (91–92).

The processes of selection and canonization that are at work within a global literary marketplace can be understood a little more clearly if we look at some concrete examples, although we can't go into those in detail at this point. The current phase of globalization is not the first time that market-oriented decisions can be observed to be influencing the processes of selection and canonization. At the turn of the 20th century, publishers were already using established networks of political and economic power as catalysts. Paris, in particular, as the literary center of the 19th century – as Beckett later famously wrote, "what is not well known in Paris . . . is not well known" (cited in Casanova 2004: 127–28) – had a multifaceted

influence on the writing of all of the worldwide regions that, from this point of view, are considered peripheral. An example from the Latin American context that Jaime Hanneken (2010) mentions is the magazine *Mundial*, published by Rubén Darío from 1911 to 1914. Darío's idea was to use Paris's potentials, publishing a magazine in Spanish whose content would however be produced in Paris and which would also be distributed from that center. Darío also insisted on using the term *magazine* instead of *revista* in order to establish the close connection with modern English- and French-language publishing procedures and customs. Hanneken (unlike Franco Moretti for example, who refers much more to the genre of the novel in his analyses), sees journals and magazines as telling witnesses to the establishment of a modernism on the so-called periphery.

With his publishing strategy, Darío had two goals: he wanted to make *Mundial* into a mouthpiece for Latin American culture in Paris, and at the same time (in the opposite direction or intellectual movement) he wanted to spread Latin American culture from the metropolis outwards. And that strategy helped him not only to reach readers in France but to generate a lot of buzz among readers in Latin America: people there found the content of the magazine that much more exciting because it was disseminated from the European center (or what continued to be idealized, at least among the intellectual elite, as the center). The reception of *Mundial* gave the readers a feeling of exclusivity, of raised status, a form of being privileged while on the periphery.

If we compare these dynamics from the turn of the 20th century with the turn of the following century, there are of course not only parallels but also differences in publishing strategies. At the turn of the 21st century, we increasingly see structures emerging that testify to the desire of the supposed peripheries to disengage themselves from the large centers of book production; just think, for instance, of the efforts of Argentina, which is very rich in extraordinary authors, to become more independent of the Spanish book trade following the 1998–2002 economic crisis. In the 1990s, Argentina's book trade was completely determined by imports from the large Spanish publishers. But since the 1–1 parity with the dollar was abandoned following the economic crisis, the publishing landscape has changed and a large number of small, independent Argentinian publishers have emerged.

The Indian book market is also very interesting in this respect; as India rose to become an economic power starting in the 1980s, and there was an international boom in English-language Indian literature in the 1990s, the book market in India was and continues to be subject to numerous changes. In the meantime, an increasing number of writers writing in regional Indian languages are being translated by publishers operating on the global scene, and topics that were previously rejected as not being genuinely Indian are finding more

acceptance. But the most important antidote to the monoculturalization that at one point was threatening the Indian literary landscape because of the dominance of English, according to the 2006 *Börsenblatt des Deutschen Buchhandels* (German book trade financial news gazette), is the Internet: online magazines and blogs in the regional languages are flourishing, and while the economic upswing is exacerbating social difference, the Internet is leveling differences between city and country and between social classes (Kramatschek 2006: 11). The Indian example illustrates an overall change compared to the turn of the previous century, because the view of the overpowering centers of global literary production in the Western world, especially in Europe and the United States, has become more critical overall.

II World Literature from the Spanish-Speaking Americas

To better understand how Latin American literatures have been negotiated and circulated from 1959 through the present, it is worth looking at the literary-historical context of the Spanish-speaking Americas.[24] How were literary structures developed there, and how did the poetics that were increasingly received in the context of world literature come to be? How did these reception processes unfurl, especially between Latin America and Europe? Famously, the Spanish-language American literatures have been perceived, since their emergence, within a tension between emancipation from and accommodation to Europe; within that tension, the pressure to adapt to trends coming out of Europe, up through the *modernismo* of the late 19th century, is seen as being much stronger than the emancipatory drive. Following this phase, however, a literature emerged that was increasingly received as independent and genuinely Latin American. Finally, a series of writers centered on Gabriel García Márquez and Mario Vargas Llosa became world famous during the so-called Boom in the second half of the twentieth century, and for the first time in the history of Latin American literatures, they were able to achieve overwhelming successes in the international literary market. What factors were responsible for allowing these works to achieve such clout within world literature, and in what literary-historical contexts can this kind of reception of Latin American literatures as world literature be located?

In the first part of the chapter, a critical perspective on the very fundamental and, in some cases, problematic reception pattern of emancipation and accommodation at decisive moments in the history of Latin American literatures will allow us to reevaluate these in the context of the debate over world literature. In the second part of the chapter, we will look more closely at three examples that will show to what extent the capacity of a text or body of texts to tap into particular discourses or traditions can determine reception within world literature; these examples will also allow us to develop a critical understanding of how and why other conceivable examples of world literature were not received as such.

Closely interconnected with these considerations is the fact that, from the beginnings of the Latin American literatures in colonial times, and to a certain degree up through the present, decisions about belonging to a canon were made in the publishing centers of Europe, with important publishing structures

24 See also Müller (2019a).

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in the United States being added to that mix in the mid-20th century. Of course, we must also reflect on how those denominating centers developed over the centuries: when and where did the structures emerge that produced, or played a decisive role in determining, the reception of literary works from Latin America as world literature?

II.1 A Chronological Overview of Focal Moments

Colonial Times

Focusing on the writer Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (approx. 1648/51–1695) in New Spain, Vittoria Borsò (2015) has undertaken a very fundamental revision of the classical reception. Even though an explicit concept of world literature was only developed after Goethe, the 17th-century Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz constituted an almost ideal type of the most important criteria for world literature, according to Borsò's thesis, which she then expands using five criteria. First of all, Sor Juana connects the particular and the universal. In her work, she relates Greco-Latin traditions and Spanish and European philosophical approaches, in particular, to local Latin American cultures, especially that of the Nahuatl. Secondly, Borsò shows, Sor Juana's body of work functioned as a knowledge storehouse because she pulled contemporary knowledge from the most disparate fields, including medicine, into her thinking and work. Thirdly, Borsò talks about a political aspiration, the political commitment to diversity, that was very critically perceived in Sor Juana's clerical environment and that was already Enlightenment-like. Her will to intervene politically marks Sor Juana as the first of a series of politically committed writers from Latin America who can be counted as belonging to a canon of world literature. As the fourth criterion for counting Sor Juana as part of world literature, Borsò looks at an anthropological consideration, noticing the way in which Sor Juana negotiates between literature and life. She is interested here in a reorganization of knowledge, especially with respect to human sensory perception: Sor Juana, according to Borsò, anticipated the European sensualism of the 18th century. And finally, fifthly, Sor Juana shaped new philosophical and theological epistemologies, which for Borsò is one of the most important characteristics of the works of world literature.

Borsò develops her theses on the basis of a variety of texts and genres in Sor Juana's writings, but especially using the text "El divino Narciso" (1685; "Loa to Divine Narcissus"), an *auto sacramental* (one-act play) that is based on Ovid's text on the theme of Narcissus, which Calderón de la Barca then in turn developed further in his play *Eco y Narciso* (Echo and Narcissus). What is significant here is Sor

Juana's multilayer feat of translation and transformation with which she introduces the theological allegories of the genre into New Spain and inscribes a new kind of material, territorial, and physical concretization into the allegorical discourse. Through the translation of symbols and the staging of a diversity of cultures, a transformational space is opened, a hybrid cultural space of the Spanish territory in Latin America, whose influence should not be underestimated. In addition to Sor Juana, the Peruvian Juan de Espinosa Medrano (c. 1629–1688) and the New Spain writer Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora (1645–1700) should also be mentioned. Through a hybridity that incorporates various modes of perception of reality and various modalities of knowledge, the textual space calls the authority of the colonial order into question.

An understanding of the transformational power of the colonial baroque is crucial to determining the origins of the concept of world literature in Latin America. In his text "La curiosidad barroca" (Baroque curiosity; published in *La expresión americana* in 1957), José Lezama Lima challenges the depiction of assimilation and advocates a view that is based not on the hegemonic relation but on a free adaptation and an exchange of models. He also points to examples from Latin American clerical artistic practices, to which he ascribes greater artistic freedom and more resistance to the restrictive world of the Counter-Reformation than was to be found in Spain at the same time (Lezama Lima 1977 [1957]). It is only in the last few decades that there has been any adequate appreciation and categorization of the related artistic achievement, and to a certain degree it is yet to come.

Modernismo

The emergence of a particular and specifically Latin American literary tradition is usually considered by literary historiographers to have begun only with the representatives of *Modernismo* – and this is often expressed as the somewhat undifferentiated thesis of a first emphatic literary independence of Latin America from Europe. Using the example of the Uruguayan essayist and writer José Enrique Rodó (1871–1917), however, it can be shown that in fact the cultural heritage of European intellectual history was instead creatively transformed, both formally and in terms of content, and then further processed in a cutting-edge way (Ette 1994: 309).

There are definite parallels to someone like Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz in terms of these processes of artistic adaptation, although the context and the literary media are of course completely different. Rodó was received as a literary figure on the world stage because he achieved the new and so important symbiosis

of an orientation towards the Western cultural heritage with autonomous elements. This early example makes it clear what was to remain decisive for the categorization of Latin American writers as world literary figures throughout the various phases of their reception: in order to be able to be dealt with as literary figures on the world scene, they had to demonstrate that they were able to connect to classical elements of the European tradition. A similar dynamic can be seen playing an important role for other *modernistas* as well. In the case of José Martí (1853–1895), for instance, we would have to mention his volume of poetry *Versos libros*, first published, posthumously and in an incomplete version, in 1913: that volume introduced a completely new, unrhymed poetic language while at the same time processing a number of literary styles, tying in with a baroque rhetoric and, particularly, with romantic themes and models. A new and particular writing style that was received as specifically Latin American can be noted in Rubén Darío's (1867–1916) famous book of poetry *Azul*, published in 1888; that style was accessible in Europe because it was heavily influenced by contemporary French literature. In addition to a reception that involved French influences (in particular with Darío) and one that was connected to English-language literature (which could be seen very clearly in the case of Martí), there is another, further, development that can be seen in the example of Rodó or of *Modernismo*, which is decisive for the reception of modernist writers in the context of world literature.

In the second half of the 19th century, the literary field in Western Europe developed a relative level of autonomy, which had decisive consequences for the establishment of denominative processes in literature. Pierre Bourdieu has famously established that the effects of the Dreyfus Affair went far beyond France and produced important changes: the positive connotations of the concept of the intellectual in Europe, for instance, first emerged with that affair, in which Emile Zola, according to Bourdieu (1992: 186–87), cemented the literary-cultural sphere's claims to autonomy with his very clear public, journalistic statement supporting the young Jewish officer who had been unjustly accused. Scholars and writers who had acquired symbolic capital within their own narrowly defined fields now consciously used that capital to comment on topics of general public interest.

In Latin America, there was no question of an economic infrastructure in the literary field at that time. However, in the *Modernismo* movement, one can perceive a cautious echo of the Western European developments toward autonomy. With José Enrique Rodó, literary practice in Latin America gained a new importance. He addressed questions about the coordinates of a potential indigenous Latin American culture, identity, and literature, as well as their relationship to European and North American intellectual and cultural history.

In *Ariel*, Rodó's most widely received work, first published in 1900, the protagonist, Próspero (named after the main character in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*), following the teachings of the French philosophers Jean-Marie Guyau and Ernest Renan, proclaims an ideal of education that is genuinely universalist – a premodern, precultural, holistic state that was still possible before the "functional differentiation of social subsystems" (*funktionalen Ausdifferenzierung gesellschaftlicher Teilsysteme*; Lohmeier 2007: 9) that was so typical for modernization. Even in his Americanism, Rodó did not completely disengage himself from European culture.

Martí also pursued the project of intellectual unity for Latin America as a precursor to a political union, along the lines of what Rodó's Próspero proclaims. Its positioning in the context of the flow of journalistic information is very revealing in terms of a slowly developing and also structural independence of the literary field: while Martí's early magazine projects demonstrate the still dominant flow of information from East to West, Ottmar Ette has shown, using Martí's writings, how an intra-American flow of information from North to South was also established: "His [Martí's] chronicles and essays perfectly document a transfer of knowledge that was, for the first time, self-directed, and that was oriented to the needs of Latin American countries" (Ette 1994: 308).[25]

But how, after *Modernismo*, did something resembling a relatively autonomous field develop further in Latin America? Purely sociological factors would speak against any relative autonomy for the literary sphere in Latin America at the end of the 19th century. The illiteracy that was still widespread not only reduced the potential for readership from a purely statistical point of view but also made it more difficult for an intellectual elite to be constituted. The Mexican cultural theorist Carlos Monsiváis has described the difficult reception conditions at the time in Latin America (2000: 115), which included a fragile library system; a very small network of bookstores, which were located primarily in the capital cities; and a small number of publishing houses, which were sometimes unstable. The only example of a successful reception, Monsiváis writes, is Jorge Isaacs's bestseller *María*, published in 1844.

The oft-repeated thesis that with Latin America's *Modernismo*, we could already speak of a movement that was developing parallel to Europe not only in terms of content but also in terms of the conditions of the literary marketplace, does not hold water. The autonomy that Bourdieu has identified in France's

25 "Seine Chroniken und Essays dokumentieren in hervorragender Weise einen erstmals selbstgesteuerten Wissenstransfer, der an den Bedürfnissen der lateinamerikanischen Länder orientiert ist."

literary sphere in the second half of the 19th century cannot be projected onto Latin America, in spite of initial attempts at developing greater autonomy. Commentaries on society and politics remained limited, probably mostly because the actors were still firmly integrated into the political and economic institutions: until the 1960s, almost all writers, including Rodó, held government positions. As long as literacy and democracy were still limited to a small minority in Latin America, the development of an independent infrastructure of literary production was not yet possible. From the conditions in Latin America, which were not comparable to the structures available in Europe, given that at that point not even the concept of the intellectual could be transferred to Latin America, Nicola Miller draws the conclusion that "in Spanish America, by contrast, adoption of the word was symptomatic of the fact that the conditions for professional intellectual life were only incipient; in other words, the resonance of the idea was dependent on a nascent modernity" (1999: 4).[26]

The following literary generation, the Latin American avant-gardes of the 1920s, also faced severe restrictions with respect to the structuring and autonomy of the literary field. They wrote mostly poetry, which stayed among an exclusive circle of readership and therefore was not able to have a broad-ranging impact. As experimental and progressive as their works may have been, including those of the highly productive writers Vicente Huidobro (1893–1948) and César Vallejo (1892–1938), they were not able to create a full-fledged literary production infrastructure for themselves.

Jorge Luis Borges

In Latin America's transition to structural change and the freeing of its literary from its political sphere, Jorge Luis Borges (1899–1986) plays a special role. He was the first Latin American writer who could be counted among the canon of world literature, receiving correspondingly international acclaim, even though, in his lifetime, he was more successful among other writers and among publishers and critics than he was a bestselling author. His oeuvre occupies a monolithic position within Latin American literature, and it turns out to be extremely difficult to assign Borges to any particular literary group or movement, any particular genre or turning point. His work is extraordinarily dense with philosophical, religious, and artistic discourses, reflections, and contexts and is characterized by

26 See also Müller (2004: 74–78). Gonzalo Navajas (2019) recently presented a valuable study on the development of the figure of the intellectual in the context of modern ideologies.

texts that oscillate among literary-critical essays, realistic prose, and fantasy. This universalist approach (Bell-Villada 1999: 295) is also what makes it impossible to count Borges among the members of the Boom generation, given that its most important representatives wanted to create a genuinely Latin American literature with its own inherent operational mechanisms, genres, and contents. He can also hardly be classified as a purely modernist or postmodern writer. The question of why Borges's literary creations were canonized and what qualities raised them to the rank of world literature is a very complex one; Alan Pauls (2004), in particular, has addressed this question in exemplary fashion. Pauls emphasizes the many different forms that the response to Borges's work has taken, as well as the diversity of literary elements that characterize that work. He details the aspects of what makes this author's writing so unmistakable not only through his literary texts but also using interviews, postcards, letters, and radio reports, among other documents. Pauls also looks for clues in Borges's voice, his physicality, and especially on a level that he designates as both intimate and theatrical, private and public: "El Borges on stage" (Pauls 2004: 8). And while Borges certainly occupies a unique position in literary terms, this concept of "Borges on stage" does find an echo in the mise-en-scène of the Boom writers in a literary sphere that was undergoing rapid structural change.

One thing that is very interesting in the context of the question of world literature is the universalist concept, often applied to world literature, that Borges outlines in the essay "The Argentine Writer and Tradition" ("El escritor argentino y la tradición"), published in 1955. In that piece, he addresses contemporary positions on the question of what an Argentine or Latin American literature should look like, and he formulates a poetology that goes beyond national poetic classifications. At first, Borges criticized the fact that the *literatura gauchesca*, Gaucho literature, which was praised and proclaimed as a national Argentine literature, was actually not a continuation of the actual popular Argentine poetry, *poesía popular*. The imitation of folksy language and pseudo-mimetic representation of imaginary Argentine stereotypes was, he wrote, exactly the opposite of *poesía popular*. This actual popular poetry reflected, instead, much larger (epistemological, religious, and philosophical) global concerns, and in doing so used a more universal language and a variety of topically appropriate images and metaphors. Borges cites verses from Enrique Banchs's (1888–1968) *La urna*, in which Banchs uses the image of the nightingale, with the references it carries from both Greek and Germanic cultural history, in order to create a "higher poetry." Thus, Borges writes, it is a mistake for Argentine poetry to manifest itself exclusively in specifically Argentine characteristics. Borges cannot understand how one could categorize a writer by nationality, as a French or English poet, if his writings always treat themes that also go beyond any such categorizations (Racine with his

Roman and Greek topics, Shakespeare with Danish ones). He rejects the positions of an Argentine national literature and demonstrates that these are relatively new concepts with no basis in literary history. In this he also distances himself from the nationalistic assumptions, reminiscent of the 19th-century eugenicist, Darwinist, and racist theories of heredity, according to which a certain kind of writing is a result of historical lineage: if Argentines write like Spaniards, according to Borges, this is less a testimony to their inherited ability than it is proof of the universal intellectual versatility of the Argentines.

The opposite thesis, namely that the Argentines, because of their status as a still young and only recently founded nation (1816), have no past, are therefore a tabula rasa in terms of cultural history, and consequently must emancipate and distance themselves from Europe all the more, is equally untenable to Borges, however. For the historical events taking place in Europe in the 20th century – whether the Second World War or the Spanish Civil War – as conflicts between higher political and ideological positions, had just as much of an emotional effect on the Argentines, both as descendants of Europeans and as global citizens. Borges argues for an emancipation from all models that determine art and thought and calls for a self-confident approach to the European past and European cultural history (see Borges 1955).

Finally, it is probably also his repeated demand for Argentine, South American, and Latin American literature to take a universalist orientation that makes Borges into the key reference point for a large number of writers, and not only Latin American ones: writers who reject foreign control and restriction of their intellectual horizons and who often, even if in very different ways, work intertextually; writers such as Umberto Eco from Italy, Roberto Bolaño from Chile,[27] or Valeria Luiselli from Chile.

The Boom

Now that we have seen that Jorge Luis Borges was the first global literary figure who offered a poetology showing a path into the future that was relevant to this context and who made a broad international impact, I would like to trace the structural developments that paved the way for a much more sweeping reception of Latin American writers. According to Nestor García Canclini (1989), there were important developments in Latin America between the 1950s and the

27 On Roberto Bolaño's intertextual work and his global reception, see Benjamin Loy's study (2019).

1970s that indicate structural change: an economic upswing, urban growth, an expansion of markets for cultural goods, growing school and university attendance, and a reduction of illiteracy to 10 or 15%. In Argentina, Mexico, and Brazil there was a surge in the book industry around 1940. The Peruvian writer Mario Vargas Llosa noted in the mid-1960s that a more favorable climate for literature was finally emerging in Latin America. Book clubs and reading circles began to spread, and the bourgeoisie discovered that books were important and writers were something more than harmless fools; they discovered that writers had a task to fulfill (Vargas Llosa 1971 [1967]: 19). Martha Zapata Galindo uses the example of the newspaper section *México en la Cultura*, which was a feature of the newspaper *Novedades*, later replaced by the section *La Cultura en México* in the newspaper *Siempre*, to show how, in the 1950s, the most important intellectual groups in Mexico formed in connection with magazines, the cultural sections of newspapers, or university institutions, where they accumulated prestige and cultural power. This was also the point in time when writers and intellectuals began to distance themselves from the official nationalism of the Mexican state. Another important way station on the road to broader access to the globally relevant denominating centers that make decisions about world literature coming out of Latin America lies in the current founding or expansion in Mexico of publishing houses such as Era, FCE, Joaquín Mortiz, and UNAM, which have proven to be very open to younger writers (Zapata Galindo 2003: 103–5; see also Müller 2004: 78–79).

This structural change all across Latin America prepared the ground, in a continent-wide effect, for Latin American writers to be recognized internationally for the first time. The inextricable linkage of membership in the world literary canon with practical sociological factors can be seen in an exemplary fashion in the novelists of the 1960s, many of whom are counted as part of the Boom in Latin American literature. The first socioeconomic indicator for the autonomy that was achieved, even if it was only relative, was the institutional independence from the governmental system of someone like Gabriel García Márquez (and other writers of his generation), which had never before been seen to that degree in Latin America. Even more decisive, however, was the ethical independence that these writers asserted, appealing to the people as opposed to the political class, and for the sake of which they rose to become bearers of universal values. They claimed to articulate the needs of the people, of the *pueblo*, which they saw as being both economically oppressed by capitalist class interests and culturally controlled by European hegemony. These writers asserted their status as intellectuals by intervening in the political sphere while appealing to the genuine norms of the literary sphere. Their independence from state and social authorities and the associated independence of the literary sphere that

was implied by that was a decisive prerequisite for gaining access to the publishing centers of Europe and the United States (Müller 2004: 79, 275).

The Latin American literary Boom of the 1960s – involving the novels of Gabriel García Márquez, Mario Vargas Llosa, Carlos Fuentes, Julio Cortázar, and others, which quickly became best sellers – is associated not only with sociological but also with other factors that are highly relevant to the canonization processes of world literature. Julio Cortázar summed up the lowest common denominator of the Boom novels by saying "What is the Boom if not the most extraordinary awakening of the Latin American people to their own identity?" (*Qué más es el boom, si no la más extraordinaria toma de conciencia del pueblo latinoamericano de su propia identidad?*; quoted in Rama 1982: 244). From an intra-literary standpoint, questions of identity very clearly stand at the heart of the literary production of the Boom generation. The focus is on the process of becoming aware, the *search* for identity, whether that takes place through recourse to pre-Columbian myths, cyclical structures of time, or experimental narrative methods.

The movements for political and social liberation that were becoming ever more urgent on the subcontinent also played a decisive role. The Cuban Revolution can be seen as the beginning, even though the term "Boom" is certainly a reference to the purely economic successes, which are due mainly to the publisher Seix Barral in Barcelona, that introduced the Latin American writers to the market. All of the Boom writers shared a belief in the Cuban Revolution: they wanted to give a voice to the people, which had been condemned to silence through their illiteracy and poverty, and in this they were very much in line with Sartre's concept of the committed intellectual. At least this was true until 1971, when Herberto Padillo was arrested by the Castro regime because of a critical volume of poetry and, soon afterwards, made a public confession of guilt in a show trial. For many of Latin America's Marxist or Marxist-inspired intellectuals, this shook their belief in the Cuban utopia. They then distanced themselves from the Communist regime with a letter of protest to Castro and a petition in *Le Monde*.

Successes and Mechanisms of Exclusion in the Boom

Inherent to both the concept of identity and the concept of Latin America that form the basis of the successes of the Boom are mechanisms of exclusion that need to be critically examined and, in part, still require research. The central questions are those of gender and genre: namely why there is not a single woman even in the wider circle of the writers considered part of the Boom, and

why the Boom only affected narrative prose. Nor is there, in principle, any justification for the fact that Brazilian literature played such a marginal role in this massive global circulation of Latin American literatures.[28] Not only that, but how can we evaluate the fact that all of the members of the Boom were not only male and Spanish-speaking, but also belonged to the subcontinent's white middle and upper classes? What reasons are there for the fact that such extraordinary writers as Juan Carlos Onetti, Guillermo Cabrera Infante, Antonio Di Benedetto, and Salvador Elizondo, all of them contemporaries of the Boom writers, did not take part in the global success that was accorded to the network around García Márquez, Fuentes, and Vargas Llosa? The analysis of these implicitly operating exclusion mechanisms touches on the fundamental issue of translation as a sine qua non for world literature (see Venuti 2012). If, as David Damrosch famously puts it, a main criterion for world literature is "writing that gains in translation" (2003: 288), then we have to ask the question of what role the complex field of translation plays, in reference to these exclusionary processes, within the global circulation processes of literature. Emily Apter has pointed out that the texts that then become especially problematic are those for which elements of untranslatability would seem to make them less compatible with publishers' marketing and publication strategies (Apter 2013). However, the interest in theoretical questions of untranslatability has, for a while, obscured the concrete politics of translation, for instance with respect to funding for translation or the role that individual translators play.[29]

After the Boom

In the later work of the Latin American writers who had become stars, we can see a departure from the great projects of identity creation starting in the 1970s, but at the very latest from 1989 on. This shift comes down to a change in focus from the *pueblo* to the *público*, in other words a shift from the (Latin American) people, for whom these writers were supposedly speaking, to the public, most saliently a European and North American public, towards whose tastes and

28 On various aspects of the marginalization of Brazilian writers and of women, see Leonie Meyer-Krentler's work on Clarice Lispector: *Clarice Lispectors doppelte Isolation* (Clarice Lispector's double isolation, in production), on the dynamics of translation and reception in the context of current debates over world literature, as well as her volume *Clarice Lispector* (2019) in the series "Leben in Bildern" (Lives in Images), published by Deutscher Kunstverlag.

29 Roig-Sanz and Meylaert's edited volume on *Literary Translation and Cultural Mediators in "Peripheral" Cultures. Customs Officers or Smugglers?* (2018) is an exception.

expectations the writers increasingly turned. There is a retreat into an emphasis on readability, and narratives that look to European and North American examples not only in their narrative strategies but also in their choice of subjects – and finally, the literary staging of the writers' own early work, most saliently in the form of distancing but at the same time also constantly playing with (and evoking) their own successes.

Starting in the 1990s, younger writers rejected the topics of the 1960s, even more decidedly than had their literary predecessors. Thus, for example, in their manifestos, the Crack group, which included Jorge Volpi, and McOndo, including Alberto Fuguet, parodied Latin American specificity and often ostentatiously turned away from Latin American themes in their work. It is unclear whether that is related to a decline in the fortunes of the Spanish and Latin American publishing industry (see also Müller 2004: 257–61).

After the Boom, with its large sales successes in Europe and the United States, there is primarily one 20th-century Latin American writer whose work was considered to be among the ranks of world literature by literary critics, international publishers, and the field of literary studies: Roberto Bolaño (1953–2003), from Chile, whose influence and impact were as monolithic in his time as Borges's were in his own. Bolaño spent his youth in Mexico, then lived in Spain from 1977 onwards. After his death in 2003, and especially after the great success in the United States of his posthumous novel *2666*, the reception of his work among writers and critics was unparalleled, although he was not all that successful in the marketplace at first. Bolaño's poetology, like Borges's, is not so much Latin American. His understanding of literature is more universalist, pursuing literary references and influences from the most varied times and traditions, referring equally to Borges's stories and to Baudelaire or Mallarmé. His themes are very deeply anchored in the political and social Latin American present, however, especially as regards experiences of exile and violence. One of the outstanding achievements of Roberto Bolaño's literary work is that it awakens an understanding that these topics are not solely Latin American themes, even though they are told in their Latin American contexts, for instance that of the countless murders of women in the Mexican/U.S. border region in the 1990s (*2666*, 2004).

II.2 Patterns of Integration into World Literature

With the following reflections I introduce three variant forms of reception that show how particular authors or works can assert themselves within world literature through the ability of the literary works to connect to established discourses and traditions as well as through the programmatic (self-) positioning of the authors. My first example is Elena Poniatowska, whose work is characterized by a particular ability to connect to the leftist political discourses of the 1970s and 1980s, while at the same time the question of exclusionary phenomena also plays a role.[30] Secondly, I look at Jorge Volpi, who achieved worldwide success through his programmatic departure from the expectation of specifically Latin American writing and whose texts demonstrate a high degree of compatibility with the classics of Western history and history of science. Thirdly, Juan Gabriel Vásquez serves as an example of a specific kind of connection with traditions established in Europe and of the tendency to disengage, as a writer, from specifically Latin American identities and to position one's own work explicitly as world literature.

Elena Poniatowska

The work of the Mexican writer Elena Poniatowska (b. Paris 1932) has had a relatively small circulation in the context of the Boom. It has been pointed out over and over how exclusively male, white, and upper middle class the successful Boom writers were. Pierre Bourdieu, writing about social practices that promote male dominance, says: "whatever their position in the social space, women have in common the fact that they are *separated from men by a negative symbolic coefficient* which . . . negatively affects everything that they are and do, and which is the source of a systematic set of homologous differences" (2002: 93; *quelle que soit leur position dans l'espace social, les femmes ont en commun d'être* séparées des hommes par un coefficient symbolique négatif *qui . . . affecte négativement tout ce qu'elles sont et ce qu'elles font, et qui est en principe d'un ensemble systématique de différences homologues*; 1998: 100; emphasis in the original; see also Sánchez Prado 2018c: 140–41). This certainly also applies to the Latin American literary field of the 1970s and 1980s, a phase that was decisive for the reception of Poniatowska. At the same time, we must note that against this background,

30 On exclusionary processes and female Mexican writers, see the chapter on "The Idea of the Mexican Woman Writer" in Sánchez Prado (2018c: 139–82).

Poniatowska was often made into the exemplar of a woman writer who was also compatible with the positions of leftist European political discourses. Poniatowska contributed to the canon of the testimonial novel, the *novela testimonial*, with her decidedly politically motivated writing. Her work ranges from critical journalism to a very specific kind of literary writing that mixes interviews, data, and factual reports with fictional components. The point is often to give a voice to marginalized social groups. The distribution of her work was very much boosted by the interest of (overwhelmingly female) literary scholars in the United States in the 1970s and 1980s (Schuessler 2007: 243). Especially her two books *Hasta no verte, Jesús mío* (1969; *Until We Meet Again,* 1988; later *Here's to You, Jesusa*!, 2001) and *La noche de Tlatelolco* (1971; *Massacre in Mexico*, 1975) were given an intense and extremely positive reception.

La noche de Tlatelolco, a chronicle, based on interviews, of the bloody events of October 2, 1968, was first published in English in 1975 by Viking Press in New York (as *Massacre in Mexico*, translation by Helen R. Lane) and is considered one of the classics of Latin American testimonial literature. Cynthia Steele, in her 1992 study *Politics, Gender, and the Mexican Novel, 1968–1988: Beyond the Pyramid*, for example, describes Poniatowska as being "responsible," along with Carlos Monsiváis, "for converting the testimonial novel and the social and political chronicle into the quintessential narrative genre of the seventies and eighties" (11, cited in Schuessler 2007: 247). Steele then goes on to emphasize Poniatowska's commitment to the

> powerless, marginalized, and oppositional members of society who lack access to self-representation in print and the media: the handicapped, AIDS victims, earthquake victims, women artists and writers of the past, political performers, political prisoners, trade-union organizers, opposition leaders, servants, garment workers, Indian women.
>
> (11–12, cited in Schuessler 2007: 247)

Here we can see one of the two important strands in the international academic reception of Poniatowska, which focuses on the leftist social criticism towards which her writing tends and the literary documentation of marginalized living conditions, a strand that is also prominently represented in more recent publications:

> Elena Poniatowska's chronicles are effective, literary antidotes to the actions of the political system. To official and temporal oblivion, [she offers] memory and historical traces; to falsehood and the misrepresentation of facts, authenticity, and faithfulness; to superficiality, what is necessary and authentic; to the bare recording of facts, a creative and poetic treatment.[31] (Poot Herrera 2017: 21)

31 "Las crónicas de Elena Poniatowska son antídotos literarios y efectivos a las acciones del sistema político. Frente al olvido oficial y temporal, la memoria y la huella histórica; frente a la

Over the years, in addition, a number of academic works have appeared that analyze Poniatowska's writing through the lens of the paradigm of "women's writing," often in the context of other Mexican (or Latin American) women writers such as Elena Garro or Rosario Castellanos. Generally speaking, it can be said that her work is highly valued among literary scholars and critics; Poniatowska is often mentioned in the same breath as Octavio Paz, Carlos Fuentes, and Gabriel García Márquez. Since the beginning of the 1970s, both her journalism and her literary writings have been the subject of a constantly growing number of academic publications: by 2007, 24 dissertations had been written on her work in the United States alone. As a comparison, in the same time period, 70 dissertations were written on Carlos Fuentes, 53 on Octavio Paz, and 33 on Rosario Castellanos. Poniatowska was also a visiting professor at various universities in the United States and received a mind-boggling number of honorary doctorates (Schuessler 2007: 254). Poniatowska's literary fame was further solidified and publicized by a series of literary awards,[32] culminating in the bestowal of the Cervantes Prize in 2013, the most prestigious award for Spanish-language literature and an honor that had only been bestowed on three women before her (see Benmiloud and Lara-Alengrin 2014: 18). And in 2008, an Elena Poniatowska Literary Prize for Spanish-Language Literature was even established, which is now awarded every year at the Mexico City Book Fair.

The fact that Poniatowska's appeal spread far beyond the borders of Mexico, the United States, and the Spanish-speaking world is evidenced by the fact that in 2002, she won the Chinese prize for the best foreign novel for *La piel del cielo*.[33]

falsedad y tergiversación de los hechos, la autenticidad y la fidelidad; frente a la superficialidad, lo necesario y auténtico; frente al escueto registro de hechos, el tratamiento creativo y poético."

32 Among other things, Poniatowska was the first woman to receive the Mexican National Journalism Prize in 1978, in 2002 she received the National Prize of Sciences and Arts, and in 2004 Columbia University's venerable Maria Moors Cabot Prize for journalism. When she won the Alfaguara Prize (in 2001, for *La piel del cielo* [*The Skin of the Sky*]), it increased her visibility in the entire Spanish-speaking world (Schuessler 2007: 243). She has also received prestigious international literary prizes, such as the Rómulo Gallegos International Novel Prize (in 2007 for *El tren pasa primero* [*The Train Passes First*]), the Premio Biblioteca Breve prize (in 2011 for *Leonora*), and of course, as noted above, the Cervantes Prize (in 2013). In 2006, Poniatowska was the first Mexican woman to receive the International Women's Media Foundation's lifetime achievement award, in recognition of her stature as a model for countless young journalists and the services she rendered through her weekly literary workshop, where some of Mexico's most promising female literary talents have received their training (see Geddis 2007; Schuessler 2007: 256). She declined the Villaurrutia Prize, which she was awarded for *La noche de Tlatelolco*, because, she said, she asked herself, "who will give an award to the dead?" (*¿quién iba a premiar los muertos?*; Benmiloud and Lara-Alengrin 2014: 17).

33 See http://www.china.org.cn/english/culture/51680.htm.

Poniatowska is one of the best-known Mexican writers in China, as shown by the following quote about Guillermo Pulido Gonzalez, the director of the Institute for Mexican Studies at the Beijing Foreign Studies University: "When Guillermo Pulido Gonzalez first worked in China from 2008 to 2010, he was amazed that the Chinese people he encountered had been exposed to such Mexican writers as Carlos Fuentes, Elena Poniatowska and Octavio Paz through Chinese translations" (Zhou 2015). And yet we should not be all that surprised by this, because leftist literature in the testimonial vein benefited from a very grateful, intensive reception in China at that time.[34]

If we take a closer look at the international circulation of Poniatowska's books, we can see that over the course of decades, they have been consistently translated into many different languages: in addition to English, they have been translated into Polish, French, Danish, Dutch, German, Russian, Japanese, Italian (see Schuessler 2007: 258), and, as we saw, also Chinese. What is striking is that in the different countries very different titles were chosen to be translated. The novel *Dos veces única* (Twice only), for example, which was published in 2016 by Seix Barral, was also published in Poland that very same year, but not translated into any other language. The only Chinese translation, on the other hand, is of a title that was otherwise only translated into English (and that only a year after the Chinese edition appeared): *La piel del cielo* (*The Skin of the Sky*), which won the Alfaguara Prize in 2001. There was apparently no pattern of reception in publishing for her books that could have then developed a stronger assertive force for the work, helping Poniatowska to a broader reception as well as to success in terms of sales figures.

When she was asked, in an interview, about why, for instance, her book *Hasta no verte, Jesús mío*, which appeared only two years after Gabriel García Márquez's *Cien años de soledad*, did not receive anywhere near the same kind of international response, Poniatowska cited the fact that, first, as a woman writer she had a much more difficult position in the literary field than her male colleagues did, and second, as testimonial literature, the form of the book bordered on journalism (Pino-Ojeda 1998: 145). Questions of literary genre certainly play a role here; the mixture of reportage-like and literary elements and Poniatowska's collage-inspired style apparently didn't really fit into the marketing categories of the international publishing houses. So, for instance, one unresolved question is why *La noche de Tlatelolco* (1971), which

34 See Yehua Chen's dissertation (in press) on the translation and circulation of Latin American literatures in China, in which, among other things, she examines the political dimensions of the reception of these literatures in the 20th and 21st centuries during various phases of the development of the Chinese publishing field.

has been consistently counted as one of the writer's central works and was one of the bases for her fame, was for a long time apparently not translated into any language but English (1975, as *Massacre in Mexico*). This gap is particularly striking in the German literary market, and I will go more deeply into the background of the publishing politics involved in that gap in section III.2.8.

When we look at more recent trends in international reception, we can see some tentative new developments in recent years. For instance, Poniatowska's first novel, *Lilus Kikus*, which was first published in 1954 in Mexico, only began circulating internationally a half century after its appearance: it was translated into French and English in 2005 and into Italian in 2009. Poniatowska's United States publisher attributes the slowness of the novel's reception to three factors. First, when the novel was published in 1954, it was labeled as a children's book. Then, the author was an unknown woman. And finally, the feminist features of the novel did not resonate with the readership when it was first published, whereas in the 21st century that was precisely what people valued.[35] In Poland at the moment, publishers are very involved with Poniatowska's writings, which has to do both with the Cervantes Prize that she received in 2013 and with the writer's Polish ancestry. Two of the three Polish translations of Poniatowska's work were published in 2016 and 2017, respectively. In April of 2017, Marcin Żurek dedicated an extensive article to Poniatowska's life and work, in which he also announced that he was in the process of working on a translation of her *Juan Soriano, niño de mil años* (Juan Soriano, thousand-year -old child; Żurek 2017). And the very important *La noche de Tlatelolco* has also been available in French since 2014, thanks to the small Toulouse publishing collective CMDE, under the title *La Nuit de Tlatelolco. Histoire orale d'un massacre d'État* (The night of Tlatelolco. Oral history of a state massacre). From all of this we can draw the conclusion that Poniatowska's work is now slowly gaining a broader international reception.

Jorge Volpi

Jorge Volpi (b. 1968 in Mexico City) is, famously, the head of the literary Crack Movement, which established itself in the mid-1990s with its own manifesto. The main concern of groups like Crack or also McOndo is a rejection of the discourse of magical realism. In other words, by that point, the expectation of a

35 See the website of the University of New Mexico Press: https://unmpress.com/books/lilus-kikus-and-other-stories-elena-poniatowska/9780826335821.

specifically Latin American kind of writing from writers who are originally from Latin America had, at least among scholars of Latin American literature, finally become obsolete. This paradigmatic positioning, which was partially reflected in manifestos in the second half of the 1990s, then quickly became established as canonical within Latin American literary histories. It is therefore relevant, in asking how world literature is *made* in the first place, to determine what new patterns might facilitate the world literary reception this paradigm shift produces. What are the breaks and fault lines along which this realignment runs in Latin America itself, and what receptive filters are encouraged internationally as a result?

Jorge Volpi had his international breakthrough with the novel *En busca de Klingsor* (*In Search of Klingsor*), which was published in 1999 and deals with the Nazi regime's nuclear bomb project. Volpi had published five novels in Mexico before that: *A pesar del oscuro silencio* (1993; *In Spite of the Dark Silence*), about the Mexican poet Jorge Cuesta; *Días de ira* (1994; Days of fury); the political novel *La paz de los sepulcros* (1995; *The Peace of Tombs*); *El temperamento melancólico* (1996; The melancholy temperament); and *Sanar tu piel amarga* (1997; Healing your bitter skin). *En busca de Klingsor*, however, was the first one that appeared outside of Mexico; it was published in Spain by Seix Barral and changed Volpi's career as a writer, as happened with so many other Latin American writers. The novel was translated into 34 languages and sold in more than forty countries.[36]

Carlos Fuentes described *En busca de Klingsor* as a "moral fable of our time" (cited in Regalado López 2013: 101), and Guillermo Cabrera Infante spoke of a "German novel written in Spanish" (*novela alemana escrita en español*; quoted in López de Abiada and Leuenberger 2004: 359), which is probably based not only on the historical references to Germany but also on the implicit connections to Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus*. The genre is hard to define, but Cabrera Infante uses the term "science fusion" (*ciencia-fusión*, quoted in López de Abiada and Leuenberger 2004: 359), because the book combines science with history, politics, and literature. This mixing of genres, which goes far

36 *En busca de Klingsor* first circulated in Europe and the United States before the novel was then also received in the Latin American market (López de Abiada and Leuenberger 2004: 358). In 1999, the year that it was published in Spain, the translation rights had already been sold to publishers in the United States (Scribners), Great Britain (Fourth State), Germany (Klett-Cotta), France (Plon), Italy (Mondadori), and in the Netherlands, Brazil, Portugal, and Israel – rights worth a total of half a million US dollars (Ángel Villena 1999). Only a year and a half after its first publication it was already in its fifth printing in Spain and its seventh in Mexico (Hunziker 2005: 59). In 2004, Volpi himself wrote that the Spanish-language edition had already sold 70,000 copies (August 5, 2004 email, quoted in Hunziker 2005: 59).

beyond the classic outlines of a novel, comes up as a topic over and over: Volpi's work is described as "a sort of reasoned compendium" or "a kind of popular encyclopedia of modern science" (*una suerte de compendio razonado*; *una especie de divulgativa enciclopedia de la ciencia moderna*; Solano 1999: 13, quoted in Hunziker 2005: 57). The novel is said to be

> one of the most complex and captivating novels written in Spanish in recent times: an intensively documented narrative that is, in turn, fiction and testimonial, thriller or spy novel, a historical and scientific chronicle, a tableau of fascinating and contradictory characters, a history of fatal loves and obsessions, and finally, a novel of ideas.[37]
>
> (Dés 1999: 28, quoted in Hunziker 2005: 58)

In an interview with Volpi in 2000, Mihály Dés, the editor of *Lateral*, classifies the worldwide success of *En busca des Klingsor* this way: "the reception of the novel and the multiple foreign contracts are signs of a recognition that has not been seen since the novels of the Boom" (*la recepción de la novela y las múltiples contrataciones extranjeras son muestras de un reconocimiento que no se ha visto desde las novelas del boom*; Dés 2000: 28–29, quoted in Hunziker 2005: 59).

As already mentioned, neither the characters nor the scenarios in *En busca de Klingsor* are Latin American – in accordance with the Crack credo – which sparked a debate between the advocates of localism, on the one hand, and of cosmopolitanism, on the other. Some voices loudly proclaimed the novel to be a betrayal of Mexican tradition, for instance the literary critic and scholar José Felipe Coria, who was quoted in an article in *El País* on April 19, 2000 as saying:

> We no longer feel that he is a Mexican novelist speaking to the Mexican public; many of his themes are like a nostalgia for Europeanness. The way that he conceived the novel is not like a personal experience but like a choice without a past. He cares more about literary technique than about making an impact or trying to find a personal voice. The most serious issue is how impersonal one can end up being in one's writing. His work could have been created in Europe, South America, or anywhere.[38] (Ortega Ávila 2000)

37 "una de las novelas más complejas y arrebatadoras de los últimos tiempos escritas en castellano: un relato documentadísimo que es, a su vez, ficción y testimonio, novela de suspense o espionaje, crónica histórica y científica, retablo de fascinantes y contradictorios personajes, historia de amores y obsesiones fatales y, finalmente, una novela de ideas."

38 "Ya no notamos que sea un novelista mexicano que le está hablando al público mexicano, muchos de los temas son como una nostalgia del ser europeo. Su forma de concebir la novela no es como una experiencia personal, sino como una opción sin pasado. Les importa más la técnica literaria que llegar a impactar o tratar de encontrar una voz personal. Lo grave es la impersonalidad con que se puede llegar a escribir. Su obra pudo haber sido creada en Europa, Suramérica o cualquier parte."

The reproach here has to do with the cosmopolitan orientation of a Mexican writer. It applies to the Crack writers in general, but in particular to the novel with which Volpi managed to break through internationally:

> the *crack* novels are a heteroclite combination of unequal stories (some of them are disastrous) whose starting flag is a false cosmopolitanism, a literature written by Latin Americans who had decided to abandon, as if it was too radical, the old national subjects and introduce themselves as contemporary.
>
> (Domínguez Michael 2004: 48, quoted in Alvarado Ruiz 2017: 41)

Other readings of Volpi, however, see him as being more in the tradition of Jorge Luis Borges's short stories such as "Deutsches Requiem" or novels like José Emilio Pacheco's *Morirás lejos* (*You Will Die in a Distant Land*) and Roberto Bolaño's *La Literatura Nazi en América* (*Nazi Literature in the Americas*).[39] In addition, Volpi understands literature as a starting point for criticism and rejects absolute dogmas, and his constructive dialogue with critics and literary scholars from Spain, Latin America, and the United States turns out to be productive for his works as well, which constantly question stereotypical assumptions about what it is to be a Latin American writer (see for example Regalado López 2013: 101–4).

In the Latin American context, we can very clearly observe diverging ways of reading, some of which criticize the new literary direction of Volpi's worldwide success in particular and of Crack literature in general as a false cosmopolitanism, and some of which celebrate them as topical transterritorialism, and which, in their contradictoriness, follow the fractures and frictions that always accompany a paradigm shift. The reception of this "new" Latin American literature by literary critics outside of Latin America essentially moves between the two poles of approving a narratively innovative fusion of scientific and literary discourses, on the one hand, and critiquing Volpi's prose as too constructed and too didactic, on the other – which is, finally, nothing other than the critique of the narrative implementation of the merging of different genres and discourses.

His writing was, however, remarkably successful with the reading public, and especially in Germany, where the fact that it was particularly accessible played a role, the subject matter as well as the references to traditional literary elements such as the myth of Parsifal or the Faust story making it easy for German readers to connect to it. In the *Welt am Sonntag*'s special supplement for the Frankfurt Book Fair on October 7, 2001, Volpi's novel appeared in second place on the bestseller list (López de Abiada and Leuenberger 2004: 365).

39 On the marketability of and even booming business in various novels from Latin America dealing with Nazism, see in particular the first chapter in Hoyos (2015: 33–64).

With *En busca de Klingsor*, Volpi presented a novel that apparently played a decisive role in shaping a specific pattern of world literary reception. It still remains to be seen to what degree this will prevail as a lasting paradigm in world literature. With his following novels,[40] Volpi himself was not able to build on the success of *Klingsor*. But the criteria that had been established – that Latin American writers could take on themes that were considered "Western," using innovative narrative methods; that scientific discourses could be integrated into a novel on a variety of levels; and above all the aspect of the mixing of genres – can be identified in a whole series of Latin American novels that have had worldwide circulation in recent years.

Juan Gabriel Vásquez

In order to get a clearer view of how the conditions of the emergence of Latin American literatures intertwine with questions of becoming world literature in the current phase of accelerated globalization, we will now use a third example, that of Juan Gabriel Vásquez, to demonstrate a further dimension of relatability to established literary traditions.[41] And one of the central questions here is in what way the concepts of world literature can explicitly influence the actual creation, writers' work itself, today.

In the mid-1990s, the Colombian writer Juan Gabriel Vásquez went to Europe for several years: first to Paris, then to the secluded Belgian region of the Ardennes, and later to Barcelona; now he again lives in Bogotá (Vervaeke 2013: 279). This period of his life, dedicated to the nomadic life in the broadest sense of the term, was formative for Vásquez's artistic development and had, as we know from several different interviews and texts, a very particular influence on

40 In Paris, Volpi wrote *El fin de la locura* (*The End of Madness*; 2003), a novel about the relationship between intellectuals and power at the time of the student protests in Paris in May 1968. *No será la Tierra* (*Season of Ash*; 2006), a novel about the collapse of the Soviet system in 1989, taken together with *En busca de Klingsor* and *El fin de la locura*, makes up Volpi's 20th-century trilogy, which deals with three major historical events: the Second World War, the 1968 movement in Paris, and the collapse of the Soviet system (Regalado López 2013: 97–103). Eight more novels have been released, from a variety of publishers, since 2006, the last of which, *Una novela criminal* (A criminal novel), was awarded the Alfaguara Prize in 2018 (AFP 2018).

41 The following reflections on Juan Gabriel Vásquez are based on my article "Juan Gabriel Vásquez: ¿representante de una nueva literatura mundial?" (Juan Gabriel Vásquez: representative of a new world literature?; Müller 2017c).

his work, which has enjoyed an international reception since *Los informantes* (2004) was translated into English (as *The Informers*) and French in 2008.

Thus, it is not a coincidence that during his years in Europe, Vásquez headed for two of the world centers of literary creativity and the literary marketplace: Paris and Barcelona, which have to a certain degree defended their positions as literary capitals for Latin American writers over the last two centuries. To Vásquez, Paris remains the "navel of the literary world" (*ombligo del mundo literario*, De Maeseneer and Vervaeke 2010), as he put it in an interview. At the same time, however, and Vásquez also emphasizes this point, it is a place where a variety of works of the world literary canon, and not only French-speaking ones, came into being.

Juan Gabriel Vásquez, then, left home and went to Paris not (only) to follow the greats of world literature and trace their paths, but also to see to what extent a change of place – in his case a voluntary one – would influence and change his writing, his world view, his literary technique, his subjects and themes, his readings, and, finally, his understanding of his Colombian and Latin American home.[42] For Vásquez, the geographical shift functions as an experimental form of paradigm shift, which is virulently powerful, in its world-literary reach, on three levels: on the level of poetology, it is evident in ways of thinking about a universal "literature without a fixed abode" (Ette 2016); on the level of the text, it can be seen in the countless intertextual references, both implicit and explicit, that point towards it; and on the aesthetic level, finally, a connection to Gabriel García Márquez – as a Colombian and as a Latin American – is revealed in the terms of world literature. We have interesting statements on García Márquez's aesthetic by Vásquez himself, which he formulated in the short essay "Malentendidos alrededor de García Márquez" ("Misunderstandings Surrounding Gabriel García Márquez"; 2005), thus inserting himself into the reflection on world literature.

In a 2010 interview with Rita De Maeseneer and Jasper Vervaeke, Juan Gabriel Vásquez stated that writing great literature abroad as an expatriate is probably part of the identity of the Latin American writer and intellectual and is in no way something genuinely new in contemporary literature:

> Of course it is not something that either I or my generation invented, nor the writers of the Boom, who were all expatriate novelists: Cortázar, Garcìa Márquez, Vargas Llosa, and Fuentes all wrote their great novels far from their own countries. It seems to be at the root of a certain metaphysics of the Latin American writer.[43] (De Maeseneer/Vervaeke 2010)

42 I am grateful to Sylvester Bubel for important research on Juan Gabriel Vásquez.

43 "Desde luego es algo que no hemos inventado ni yo ni mi generación, ni tampoco los del boom, que eran todos novelistas expatriados: Cortázar, García Márquez, Vargas Llosa y Fuentes escribieron sus grandes novelas fuera de sus países. Parece estar en la raíz de una cierta metafísica del escritor latinoamericano."

When Vásquez speaks of a metaphysics of writing away from the "motherland," and is even able to recognize in that a unifying pattern among Latin America's unquestionable world literary figures Cortázar, Garcîa Márquez, Vargas Llosa, and Fuentes, he is advocating a thesis according to which literature that can have a chance of being accepted into the canon of world literature can only be achieved through distancing, through an act of self-liberation from habit, from the known and familiar. That includes leaving behind inherited, learned, cherished, but also limiting patterns of thought and attitudes: "establishing a distance from the place you come from, from home" (*establecer una distancia con el lugar de donde viene, con el hogar*) – this, then, was the impetus for his own emigration. Paris, the "host city for various literatures" (*lugar de acogida de varias literaturas*), he says, answered technical and thus also poetological questions for him, not least through the tradition and also the density of the literary enterprise there, and thereby became part of his own "personal mythology" (*mitología personal*), which he shares with so many international and Latin American writers. "My idea was that when I was away from my own country, my writing would manifest itself with less resistance and more elements of wisdom, and taking advantage of greater cross-contamination" (*Mi idea era que estando fuera de mi país la escritura se haría realidad con menos resistencias y mayores elementos de juicio, y aprovechando una mayor contaminación*; De Maeseneer and Vervaeke 2010), Vásquez goes on to say in the interview, and he would under no circumstances like to see his life away from home characterized as a kind of diaspora, because in that formulation there always resonates a "certain pretension of moral superiority" (*cierta pretensión de superioridad moral*). Even the concept of exile seems inappropriate to Vásquez, as it carries, he says, the connotation of a "curious prestige" (*prestigio curioso*) as well as a "political coloring" (*color político*) that always resonates with it because of the political and war-related events of the 20th century (Vásquez 2009b: 179).

For himself, someone who could have returned to his country of origin anytime he wanted without any problems or restrictions, Vásquez chose the term "inquiline" (*inquilino*),[44] using an analogy with the animal world to describe his situation: "an inquiline is 'an animal that lives habitually in the nest or abode of some other species'"[45] (*inquilino es cualquier animal que vive en la madriguera o el nido de un animal de otra especie*, 179). He especially likes the feeling

44 Vásquez arrives at this concept of the "inquiline" through his preoccupation with V. S. Naipaul, who was called that by a critic (see Vásquez 2009b: 179).

45 "Inquiline." *Merriam-Webster's Unabridged Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, https://unabridged.merriam-webster.com/unabridged/inquiline. Accessed March 15, 2021.

of traveling as an inquiline, of being in transit (*estar de paso*), and he considers this way of life, or more specifically the impulse to move to a foreign country voluntarily, to have a parallel with the act of reading:

> Since 1996 I have left three different countries, and it seems more and more likely to me that the reasons one has for living in foreign places end up being similar to the reasons one has for reading good fiction: expanding our unbearably limited, narrow, myopic, provincial notion of human experience, of what is and is not human experience. The only other reason for reading good fiction is to expand our understanding of what good fiction is. And that can be done – at least in theory – without going to live among animals of another species.[46] (180)

This attitude of Vásquez's, however, means that he has to deal with a common prejudice among literary intellectuals (personified and formulated by Philip Roth), namely the question of how an "uprooted" writer can find his or her *own* subject matter if they don't live in their own country, and Vásquez wants to counter this "Faulknerian tradition that considers that the only way to be universal is to be rabidly local" (*tradición faulkneriana que considera que la única manera de ser universal es ser rabiosamente local*) and to ask the question: "What does it mean, for a novelist and for his work, to be abroad while that work is being constructed, what does this uprooting mean?" (*Qué implica, para un novelista y para su obra, estar en el extranjero mientras esa obra se construye, qué implica el desarraigo?*; 180). One answer to this question, for Vásquez, is the hybridization that this kind of literary creative work undergoes: "Writing abroad, just like reading in other languages, means voluntarily submitting yourself to hybridization, to impurity" (*Escribir fuera, igual que leer en otras lenguas, es someterse voluntariamente a la hibridación, a la impureza*; 184). And in his opinion, it is precisely the Boom writers who succeeded in destroying the Spanish language to a certain extent, redesigning it, and putting aside typecast subjects, which is an important legacy:

> This, among other things, is the legacy that the novelists of the Latin American Boom have bequeathed to us: the right to break the Spanish language, to repudiate traditional rhetoric, and to embrace barbarisms. *Rayuela*, *Terra Nostra*, *Tres tristes tigres*: these are

46 "Desde 1996 me he ido de tres países distintos, y cada vez me parece más probable que las razones que uno tiene para vivir en lugares ajenos se acaben pareciendo a las que tiene para leer ficción de la buena: ampliar nuestra noción, insoportablemente confinada y estrecha y miope y provinciana, de la experiencia humana, de lo que es y no es la experiencia humana. Sólo hay otro motivo para leer buena ficción, y es ampliar nuestra noción de lo que es la buena ficción. Y eso se puede hacer – por lo menos en teoría – sin ir a meterse entre animales de otra especie."

> places where the Spanish language of someone like Ciro Alegría, in Latin America, or Azorín, in Spain, is barely able to serve as evidence.[47] (Vásquez 2009b: 184)

In other words, what the Boom helped to create is a new language, a language "of an itinerant, uprooted, multilingual, and contaminated character" (*del carácter itinerante, desarraigado, multilingüe y contaminado*), which the inquiline writer also has to use if he doesn't want to sound like an "accountant" (*notario*; 184, 186).

And so what does the *escritor inquilino*'s choice of topics look like? According to Vásquez, he wants to explore the unknown, he wants – and here, as with the term *inquilino*, Vásquez refers again to Naipaul – to "revive the reader's awe in the face of a world that is, in its own right, awesome" (*revivir el asombro del lector ante un mundo que es, por derecho propio, asombroso*; 186), and one of the most important virtues in this exploration of the submersion and reactivation of awe is topically freighted searching (*el buscar*). The parallel with Jorge Volpi, whose novel *En busca de Klingsor* includes the search right in the title – although in different terms – is inescapable here, and would certainly be worth a closer examination. Vásquez himself is vehemently opposed to the research and criticism that has repeatedly made this kind of "inquisitional investigation" (see "the novel's exploring or intensively questioning condition," *la condición exploradora o inquisidora de la novela*, 187) of a geographical space or a particular period unavailable to novelists writing in Colombia following Gabriel García Márquez's monumental work. The search for and discovery of stories and subjects in a given space is never "used up" or finished, he writes.

But it was his own personal life path, his travel through Europe as well as his broad reading and his preoccupation with world literary figures such as Joseph Conrad and V. S. Naipaul, that finally led Vásquez to write about Colombia, his country of origin, in *Los informantes* (2004; *The Informers*); it was precisely because the country represented the "condition of a dark zone" (*condición de zona oscura*; 2009: 187) that it became an important subject, if not the central subject, of his novels: "today, on the other hand, it is the lack of certainty that seems to me to be the best reason for undertaking the complex questioning apparatus that is a novel" (*hoy, en cambio, la falta de certezas me parece la mejor razón para emprender el complejo aparato preguntón que es una novela*; 188). The allusions to world literary subjects in *Los informantes*, in particular, fit seamlessly into the

47 "Esto, entre otras cosas, nos dejaron como legado los novelistas del boom latinoamericano: el derecho a romper la lengua española, a repudiar las prosas castizas y a abrazar los barbarismos. *Rayuela*, *Terra Nostra*, *Tres tristes tigres* son lugares donde la lengua española de un Ciro Alegría, en Latinoamérica, o de un Azorín en España, sirve apenas dar constancia."

conception of this kind of novel of Colombia. *Los informantes* tells the story of the protagonist Gabriel Santoro, Sr., a professor of rhetoric in Bogotá, who committed a crime during his adolescence: during the Second World War, he falsely and maliciously denounced Konrad Deresser, of German descent and the father of Gabriel's best friend Enrique, causing Konrad to be placed the United States' so-called "blacklist," become interned, have both his professional and his private life destroyed, and then as a result finally to kill himself using a "cocktail of brandy and gunpowder" (*coctel de aguardiente y pólvora*; 119). After his father's death, Enrique disappears. Seeking revenge, he then has his former friend Gabriel Santoro ambushed: in a machete attack by strangers, Gabriel loses several fingers. For decades, Gabriel attempts to keep his crime a secret, among other reasons also so as not to destroy his successful career, but his son, who shares his name, finally discovers it and, after his father dies in an accident in the early 1990s, writes a book called *Los informantes*.

Vásquez begins the novel with two prominently placed quotations from Demosthenes; in the chronology of reading, one first comes across these two mottos in the paratext, and they foreshadow essential elements of the novel. The first reads: "You will never wash out that stain; you cannot talk long enough for that"; then three questions follow: "Who wishes to speak? Who wishes to rake up old grievances? Who wishes to be answerable to the future?" (2009a: epigraph). Both quotations are from Demosthenes's very well-known "On the Crown," to which the novel repeatedly refers. The fact that Vásquez begins with what is probably the most important orator of antiquity as an an advocate or perhaps a symbol for the ubiquity of the Nazi horrors in the Colombian periphery illustrates the principle that he postulates in his poetics, namely that his "extraterritorial experience" (*experiencia extraterritorial*, 2009b: 188) as well as his universal engagement with literature have enriched the Colombian complex in the novel.

In the already-mentioned 2005 essay "Misunderstandings Surrounding Gabriel García Márquez," Juan Gabriel Vásquez talks about García Márquez as a point of reference for his own writing:

> How does one write in the shadow of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*? The question strikes me as a false problem, almost a rhetorical vacuity, and I have said so in more than one interview. But I'll now try to give my objections a less indignant and more rational, less informal and more articulate form.[48] (Vásquez 2011b)

48 "¿Cómo se escribe bajo la sombra de *Cien años de soledad*? La pregunta me parece un falso problema, casi una vacuidad retórica, y lo he dicho más de una vez en más de una entrevista. Pero hoy intentaré dar a mis reparos un empaque menos indignado y más racional, menos informal y más articulado" (Vásquez 2005: 42).

This connection probably has less to do with a Colombian bond between the two writers than with the Nobel Prize winner García Márquez's status as unquestionable within world literature, and here García Márquez may in fact be standing in for the entire Latin American Boom generation. The worldwide power of García Márquez's emblematic novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is closely intertwined with two fundamentally important pillars of the success of the Boom: first, literarily speaking, the successful staging of the project of a specifically Latin American search for identity, coupled with a formal dimension that allows the novel to be read as an epic; and second, in extra-literary terms, the Latin American writer's independence from the government, which was a new phenomenon, coupled with a leftist partisanship in the Sartrean sense, namely as a mouthpiece for the oppressed people. What this means, concretely, is that within the text there is a struggle for identity, preferably expressed using mythical elements like a cyclical understanding of time or special motifs like that of the mask. These elements are used to establish a collective identity that emphasizes the indigenous and the pre-Columbian, thus freeing itself from European hegemony. This emancipatory attempt is further amplified by the formal staging of the novel's contents, in that these motifs are integrated into "total novels" (*novelas totales*) and utopian projects. The combination of formal totality and the identity-creating moment makes it possible to read *One Hundred Years of Solitude* as an epic. The persuasiveness of this novel on the world literary scene (as is also the case for other Boom novels) therefore lies in the *project*, in other words in a specifically Latin American identity that is sought by way of recourse to a cultural essence (or origin).

In addition, as we saw in the first part of this chapter, in García Márquez's case, representing all of Latin American literature, a development was completed at the end of the 1960s that had already reached its climax at the turn of the century in Western Europe with what Pierre Bourdieu calls the autonomy of the literary field. The subsequent development of younger generations of Latin American writers – and in this case of Juan Gabriel Vásquez – is substantially related to the autonomy that the Boom generation achieved in the late 1960s.

Against this historical backdrop, the world literary significance of Vásquez's work can be repositioned and, at the same time, we can identify a new development in Latin American literatures in the context of world literary selection processes. The search for a specifically Latin American identity no longer seems to be the dominant reception filter. Vásquez's novels are less intent on utopia, less ideologically determined, less high-culture. Instead, we see a stronger expression of playfulness, parody, a mixture of high culture and everyday culture, and historical elements. In contrast to the earlier socially critical and utopian potential, the political dimension in Vásquez's work is less tendentious.

In the 1960s, in the Latin American literatures that were called world literature, what was shown was a Latin American culture that fed (diachronically) on its own roots and was coherently shown from the inside, while any direct confrontation with the contemporary cultural Others, especially Europe and North America, was lacking; in Vásquez's work today, on the other hand, identity is thematized as an individual development that only emerges in the (synchronous) confrontation with the Other. Of all of his novels, *El ruido de las cosas al caer* (*The Sound of Things Falling*) most strongly conveys an alternative model of identity to that of García Márquez or of the Boom novels in general. The appeal to the memory of a specific period in Colombian history – the 1980s and, especially, 1990s, as a "post-violence" phase – enables a collective reading experience that owes its originality to the overlap between two phenomena. Initially, for non-Colombian readers, this is an extremely exoticist staging of life amid the phenomenon of drug trafficking, which among Colombian readers works as an identity-creating bond. But this bond of what begins as a national reception framework is then broken up by irony and an anecdotal tendency that allows it to become compatible with an internationally established pattern of world literary reading.

The awakening of a collective memory of a pre-Columbian past in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is replaced by a very contemporary discourse of memory, that of the 1980s and 1990s:

> People of my generation do these things: we ask each other what our lives were like at the moment of those events – almost all of which occurred in the 1980s – which defined or diverted them before we knew what was happening to us.[49]
> Maya went back to remembering, back to the exhausting work of memory.[50]
>
> (Vásquez 2012)

Thus, an old exoticism is replaced with a new one, one that achieves its place in world literature through internal textual dimensions.

49 "La gente de mi generación hace estas cosas: nos preguntamos cómo eran nuestras vidas al momento de aquellos sucesos, casi todos ocurridos durante los años ochenta, que las definieron o las desviaron sin que pudiéramos siquiera darnos cuenta de lo que nos estaba sucediendo" (Vásquez 2011a: 227).

50 "Maya volvió a recordar, volvió a dedicarse al fatigoso oficio de la memoria" (Vásquez 2011a: 244).

III Concepts of World Literature within Publishing Practices

III.1 From World Literature to Literatures of the World

Now that we have examined in detail the topic of research perspectives in world literature, including the world literary concepts of writing itself, in the context of the particular characteristics of Latin American literary history, let us go on to focus on concrete examples from publishing practice.[51] We shall begin with a look at the canonization processes of Caribbean literatures by globally active publishers, processes that are currently in flux; this will give us a way to examine a conceptual field of tension that will turn out to be fundamental to our work on this material. Because of its specific material situation, the Latin America program of the German publisher Suhrkamp Verlag will serve as a framework for our concrete analyses.

For this practice-oriented approach, let us now also introduce a conceptual dimension that can be summarized with the term "literatures of the world" (see Ette 2004).[52] Although similar efforts have been made while retaining the term "world literature" (see for example the essays in Küpper 2013), the concept of "literatures of the world" should be seen, above all, as a programmatic modification: while the concept is certainly connected to "classical" understandings of world literature, the older term gains a completely new meaning here, a meaning that is unmistakably situated not only beyond the nation state but also beyond national literature, even though this last continues to be in possession of extremely important production, reproduction, and distribution entities. The literatures of the world have become less settled and have increasingly incorporated nomadic, moving patterns of thinking, writing, and perceiving (Ette

51 Jorge J. Locane, in his study of world literature in the Latin American context, also emphasizes the importance of the material processes of production and distribution as the sine qua non for world literature: "Thus, world literature, in which, unlike in local literatures, the chain of mediations and of added value expands exponentially, was to become the result of a complex system of connections and additions . . . . Without the mediations that are required to condition the literary artifact and offer it to that far-off reception, there is no world literature" (*Así, la literatura mundial, donde, por contraste con las literaturas locales, la cadena de mediaciones y agregado de valor se dilata de modo exponencial, sería el resultado de un complejo sistema de articulaciones y sumatorias . . . . Sin las mediaciones necesarias para acondicionar el artefacto literario y ofrecerlo a esa recepción distante no hay literatura mundial*; Locane 2019: 216).

52 I also address the tension between world literature and literatures of the world, with different specific focal points, in Müller (2014a, 2015a, 2015b, 2017a, 2017d, and 2018c).

https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110748383-003

2004: 179). The following characteristics are similarly applicable to both concepts, "world literature" as well as "literatures of the world," but often have diametrically opposed focuses depending on the perspective taken:

1) Multilingualism: while the translation tally is decisive for world literature, a common characteristic of literatures of the world is that multilingualism is staged *within* the novels.
2) Movement: the staging of movement is always linked back to a European perspective within the concept of world literature, whereas literatures of the world stand for a dissolution of center and periphery.
3) Global/local: for proponents of world literature, the orientation towards the regional is usually intended to present a microcosm that stands in for a macrocosm, while in literatures of the world the concrete staging of regionalism often stresses the particular.
4) Non-settledness: the location of the writing is indirectly, though not necessarily, a condition for classification into one of the two concepts. Non-settled writers are in a privileged position for being included in the canon of literatures of the world.
5) Interpretational sovereignty of Europe and the United States: both of the concepts aspire to canonize universally authoritative literatures, although a European claim to interpretation is asserted for world literature. The proponents of literatures of the world have declared this to be obsolete, and yet it is nevertheless practiced – given the actual processes of institutionalization – in the Western and Northern hemispheres.

The term "literatures of the world" has started appearing, since about the year 2000, in the context of a variety of institutions within the literary and cultural industry that have attempted to broaden their perspectives: Berlin's House of World Cultures (Haus der Kulturen der Welt), for examples, uses the plural formation to pursue a programmatic aspiration to transmit culture and literature beyond Western hegemony; the same is true for Berlin's International Literature Festival, which has had a separate programming sector dedicated to "literatures of the world" since 2001. The Goethe Institute uses the term to recognize the special achievements of the Society for the Promotion of African, Asian and Latin American Literature in funding translations since the 1970s, using it to try to include marginalized literary works and traditions in the German book trade.

The term entered into use in academic discourse in 2002, when a conference was held in Düsseldorf with the title "World Politics – World Consciousness – Literatures of the World," co-organized by Vittoria Borsò und Ottmar Ette. But scholars have coined different phrases: while Ottmar Ette (2004, 2013) speaks of

"literatures of the world," thereby pushing for a radical departure from the Eurocentrisms that are often implicit in the debate over world literature, Elke Sturm-Trigonakis (2007), with similar aims, uses the term "new world literature." The literary critic Sigrid Löffler, with a clear canonizing intention in alignment with these globalized times that are marked by transnational lives, uses this conceptual formation for her book *Die neue Weltliteratur und ihre großen Erzähler* (The new world literature and its great storytellers; 2014), where she introduces outstanding world-class storytellers to a broader, non-academic public. As announced on the website of the publisher C. H. Beck, "a completely new, non-Western literature has emerged, which is written mostly by migrants and people changing languages, from former colonies and regions in crisis. In rich and colorful language that is thoughtful and tremendously varied in tone, nomadic writers tell stories of mixed backgrounds and hybrid identities, transnational migrations and difficult integrations."[53] And although the characterization "rich and colorful" may be a well-established exoticization of literatures in Indian and Latin American contexts, for example, what is nevertheless evident here is that in the literary industry, as well, we are seeing a change in perspective in the debate over world literature.

Three dimensions of this paradigm shift seem to be particularly important:

a) the departure from Eurocentric terminology and the Eurocentric canon;
b) the focus, for canonization in the current phase of globalization, on the concrete conditions under which texts are written, taking into account the concrete processes of translation or publishing policies; and
c) a newly superimposed tendency related to content, that is to say to subject matter and to writers' biographies, in the literatures of our time on the international and transnational levels.

The term "literatures of the world" is particularly suited to capturing these dimensions because it both indicates an academic conceptualization – though one that is far from complete – and addresses a current practice in the literary business. In literary criticism and in publishing, "world literature" and "literatures of the world" are mostly used in different contexts that are clearly

53 "[Es ist eine] völlig neue, nichtwestliche Literatur entstanden, die zumeist von Migranten und Sprachwechslern aus ehemaligen Kolonien und Krisenregionen geschrieben wird. Nomadische Autoren erzählen farbig und prall, reflektiert und in den unterschiedlichsten Tönen Geschichten über gemischte Herkünfte und hybride Identitäten, transnationale Wanderungen und schwierige Integrationen" (https://www.chbeck.de/loeffler-neue-weltliteratur/product/12403092).

delineated from each other: while "world literature" still implies the undeniable significance of a work and thus promotes the sales of the title or emphasizes the importance of the discussion about the author, "literatures of the world," in publishing speak, often refers more to contemporary, repositioned literatures from lesser-known areas of the world that are interesting for that very reason, and that are significant but have not yet entered the consciousness of the readers. Also understood are a greater abundance of material, greater complexity, a juxtaposition of many works and traditions, and a greater openness to incomplete or questionable selection processes.

III.1.1 Caught in the Tension between Publishing Concepts: The Example of Caribbean Literatures

After these initial reflections on the concepts of "world literature" and "literatures of the world," it is worth taking a deeper look at the literatures of the Caribbean and here, in particular, also at the literary production of the French Antilles and their international reception.[54] After all, more than almost any other literary tradition, Caribbean literatures represent the interplay of deterritorialization and topographical concretization, the transcultural translation and transformation processes of epistemes and aesthetics, and the literary modelings of transterritorial linkages.[55] They are thus unusually well-matched to the criteria that have been formulated for "literatures of the world." At the same time, Caribbean literatures have in the past been strongly underrepresented in what is considered to be "world literature." In this area of tension we can recognize a newly established interaction between the two concepts on the practical level of publishers' selections: while they represent two different possibilities of paradigm formation within literary theory and the cultural industry, and their criteria often have a great deal of overlap in the choice of primary literary texts, this overlap can be seen especially clearly in the international marketing and reception of Caribbean literatures. Or to put it more precisely: when the Western-dominated publishing industry chooses international literatures from regions that used to be called peripheral, the first step is the application of the concept of "literatures of the world" as a selection filter. Literary texts that have

54 See also Müller (2017a, 2017d).

55 Birgit Neumann, among others, has discussed this in our joint contribution to Vittoria Borsò's volume *Weltliteratur* (World literature), which is forthcoming in the series *Grundbegriffe der Literaturwissenschaft* (Basic concepts in literary studies), published by the Walter de Gruyter.

successfully passed through the eye of this needle then, as a next step, become "world literature."

Examples from the English-speaking Caribbean illustrate the phenomenon of a large overlap between the two concepts: world literature from the Anglophone Caribbean that has already been canonized demonstrates the relevance of the newly formed criteria for the concept of literatures of the world, the concepts namely of non-settledness, of the staging of movement where the logics of center and periphery have been dissolved, and an emphasis on the particular, often also on the archipelago. The texts from the English-speaking Caribbean that have been canonized as world literature are apparently precisely those texts that correspond to the abovementioned change of perspective towards literatures of the world. Think for example of Derek Walcott's postcolonial 1990 epic *Omeros*, "in many respects . . . [a] paradigmatic work of world literature – not so much because it has been translated into other languages as because of the literarily executed stories of transfer and transformation that make it into a multilayer experimental space for a divided but locally situated world consciousness" (Müller and Neumann forthcoming).[56]

In the context of the logics and canonization processes of world literature, it plays a crucial role if texts do not first have to be translated into English, which remains the most important language for global processes of circulation; that is why the English-speaking Caribbean occupies a special position here. Notable texts that have been successfully canonized within world literature, in addition to Walcott's *Omeros*, include Edward Kamau Brathwaite's *The Arrivants* (1967–1973), Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966), V. S. Naipaul's *The Enigma of Arrival* (1987), and Dionne Brand's *In Another Place, Not Here* (1996). While literatures from the English-speaking Caribbean have thus definitely been received as world literature and at the same time can serve as guideposts for the concepts connected with literatures of the world, texts from the Spanish-speaking and especially the French-speaking Caribbean have not succeeded in attaining world literary canonization, or at any rate only in exceptional cases, of which I would like to spotlight three:

1. For the first half of the 20th century, Saint-John Perse, who was born and grew up in Guadeloupe, indisputably belongs to the canon of world literature with his poetry (*Eloges* 1911; *Anabase* 1924; *Exil* 1942; *Vents* 1946; *Amers*

56 "in vielerlei Hinsicht . . . [ein] paradigmatisches weltliterarisches Werk – und dies weniger wegen seiner Übersetzung in andere Sprachen als vielmehr wegen seiner literarisch vollzogenen Transfer- und Transformationsgeschichten, die es zu einem vielschichtigen Experimentierraum für ein geteiltes, aber lokal situiertes Weltbewusstsein machen."

1957), which is precisely oriented not towards the reality of Caribbean life but towards modern French poetry in the tradition of Arthur Rimbaud. Saint-John Perse received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1960.

2. The Négritude movement, with its new "Black" self-confidence, was originally shaped by French speakers and grew stronger in the 1930s; writers from the Spanish-speaking Caribbean also found their way into this movement. The Cuban writer Alejo Carpentier is of particular – and certainly world literary – importance in this context. His works can be characterized as an idiosyncratic variation of magical realism. That concept, for which Latin American writers would later become world famous, can be traced back to a formulation in the foreword of Carpentier's novel *El reino de este mundo* (1949; *The Kingdom of this World*). The selection filters that were particularly favorable for the reception of the literary quality of Carpentier's work are its ability to connect to French surrealism as well as a specific way of representing reality that stages mythical-magical practices as real and that resonated as exotic with the European public.
3. From the Cuban Revolution in 1959 through the late 1970s, Cuban literatures as a whole functioned as a model that definitely enjoyed a reception on the level of world literature and was also affirmed within the landscape of European and United States reception by leading publishers with intellectual aspirations. This is connected to the 1960s Boom in Latin American literatures, as discussed in section II.1. As a brief example from Cuba, let us mention Guillermo Cabrera Infante, whose literary influence developed through a political (albeit anti-Cuban) dimension as well as through the ability of his work to connect with the experimental writing processes that had been shaped, primarily, in the French New Novel movement.

While the reception enjoyed by the above-mentioned authors took place primarily in the context of a rather specialized readership and the authors' ability to connect with European and especially French traditions, there was a group of French-speaking writers that famously established itself worldwide beginning in the early 1990s and that produced not only literary texts but also a philosophically motivated essayistic oeuvre nourished by the context of the Caribbean experience. The concern of the writers surrounding Patrick Chamoiseau and Raphaël Confiant, from Martinique, can be read as a variation of the conceptual implications of multilingualism *in* literary texts, as noted at the beginning of this chapter as a characteristic of literatures of the world: with their re-valuing of oral Creole traditions, they link the act of rebellion against cultural assimilation, which represents an important element of the literary debate in the Antilles, to the level of aesthetics rather than of

content. The success of this literary language may have consequences for standard French, because texts in French that is permeated with oral Creole have increasingly – by way of the important literary prizes and at the very latest since the award of the 1992 Prix Goncourt to Patrick Chamoiseau for his novel *Texaco* – entered into a French literary canon that is reshaping itself and which, in its traditional form, formed the basis for standard written French. The year 1992, in which the prestigious Prix Goncourt was once again awarded, after a gap of more than seventy years, to a writer from the Antilles, was definitely a turning point. The last time had been 1921, when René Maran won that prize for his novel *Batouala*, and that was an event that went down in history as the first time that an author considered "Black" won a well-known French literary prize. After a long hiatus that was not commensurate with the literary production in the Antilles, then, Patrick Chamoiseau won the prize in 1992 for *Texaco*, a novel that can be considered paradigmatic for the concept of literatures of the world: the text begins at the edge of Fort-de-France, Martinique's capital, where a suburb made of improvised apartments has grown up on the former compound of the Texaco oil company, an illegal neighborhood that is now to be bulldozed. What gives the novel its energy are the voices of a multitude of characters who bring the colonial history of Martinique to life, depicting the intertwining of the country's African, European, and Asian influences. There has not been a Prix Goncourt awarded to a Caribbean writer since then, but in 2009 the Prix Médicis was awarded to Dany Laferrière, who had relocated to Montreal, for his *L'énigme du retour* (*The Return*), which was again a key moment for Caribbean literary production and its international recognition. The text takes an external viewpoint, telling the story of a family between Haiti and Canada in which the protagonist, a Haitian novelist in exile, returns to Haiti for his father's funeral.

Awards like this continue to be the exception rather than the rule. We can, however, observe that the publisher Gallimard, which first published Édouard Glissant, Raphaël Confiant, and Patrick Chamoiseau, is increasingly representing writers from the French-speaking Caribbean, after a long period in which Antillean literature was dominated by Cuban writers, such as Alejo Carpentier, already mentioned as a bright light. The initial spark for this new turn could be seen as the often-cited manifesto *Pour une littérature-monde* (For a world literature), published by Gallimard in 2007, to which numerous well-known writers such as Maryse Condé, Édouard Glissant, Fabienne Kanor, and Dany Laferrière contributed, a manifesto that spoke out resolutely against the logic of center and periphery embedded in the concept of La Francophonie. Another crucial point is that these Gallimard writers from the French-speaking Caribbean very strongly represent the criteria for literatures of the world.

Thus, while Caribbean literatures can have privileged access to the designation of literatures of the world, we can also see, from this brief look at the situation at Gallimard, and possibly also far beyond that, an increasingly established interplay between the world literary criterion of the translation tally and "literatures of the world" on the level of canonization by the publishers: what has already been true for literatures of the English-speaking Caribbean, namely that the criterion of "literatures of the world" is becoming more and more important for the publishing industry in choosing Caribbean writers, can now also be observed in the French book trade.[57] Literary texts that have passed through the narrow constraints of this initial selection filter then have to undergo the next step, which, for international canonization, is still primarily situated in the Western world, in this case in France.[58]

The example we have looked at here, that of Caribbean literatures, allows us an insight into the processes of transformation that can be observed in publishing practices with respect to areas of conceptual tension within the debate over world literature. In order to be able to pursue, on the level of concrete materials, the question of how world literature is actually made, we will now take a look at the case study of one publisher: How do a publishing program or catalogue's conceptual orientations in the question of world literature come about in the first place? To what extent can a publisher's programming agenda be determined? To what extent can selection mechanisms, especially unspoken ones, be deduced?

III.2 Case Study: Latin American Literatures at the Suhrkamp Publishing House

In the second half of the 20th century, Suhrkamp was the decisive authority in the dissemination of Latin American literatures in Germany. I chose it to use as a case study here because it is one of Europe's central globally active publishers and it is also in a unique material situation: over the course of many decades, very detailed publishing records were archived, to an unusual degree, and it is from these records that I draw for the following observations. Based on this material, it can be shown that the publishing program at Suhrkamp Verlag is

57 This observation was made in March of 2017.

58 This finding, that the increased international circulation of literatures of the world is based on concrete publishing policies, is an observation that still needs to be systematically investigated.

based on an unspoken understanding of world literature that shapes the selection criteria for foreign-language literatures.

How, then, is the history of the reception of Latin American literatures in Germany – a history in which Suhrkamp, with its almost four hundred titles, takes the leading role – related to a particular understanding of world literature? Siegfried Unseld was the head of Suhrkamp until his death in 2002 and shaped the history of the publishing house for more than forty years; he dedicated the selection mechanisms of his international literary program to the idea expressed by the founder of the former Insel Verlag, Anton Kippenberg: world literature as a *biblioteca mundi*, a world library based on universal categories of quality. In the following, we shall examine to what extent this selection criterion of universality, which is an elusive idea, particularly in terms of reception theory, was also joined by the idea of the exotic. To begin with, the crucial point here is that we will trace and analyze how the concept of world literature has been negotiated against the theoretical background of a consideration of transfer processes (see Werner and Zimmermann 2002), based significantly on the previously unpublished correspondence between the publisher and its authors.

III.2.1 Source Material: The Siegfried Unseld Archive at the German Literature Archive in Marbach

In December of 2009, the full collected papers of the Suhrkamp Verlag – a publishing house that had, in George Steiner's words, created something like an international Suhrkamp culture as a world literary seal of approval – became part of the German Literature Archive in Marbach (*Deutsches Literaturarchiv*, DLA), thereby expanding the entire archive in Marbach by a quarter (see Bürger 2010: 20). The publishing house was planning to move from Frankfurt am Main to Berlin in 2010, and this move was the reason for the sale of the documents from the "vault" in Frankfurt – the room in the basement of the publishing house in Frankfurt where business documents and correspondence with authors was stored (Cammann 2010). There was talk of more than 2100 moving boxes coming from the publishing house; along with the documents from the publisher Siegfried Unseld's villa, the estate comprises more than twenty thousand document files and more than twenty-five thousand books from the Suhrkamp and Insel publishing houses, all of which were transported to Marbach. This inventory "reflects Unseld's goals, strategies, and his enormous influence even more clearly than do his essays, books, and speeches" (*spiegelt Unselds Ziele, Strategien und seinen enormen Einfluss noch deutlicher wider als seine Aufsätze, Bücher und Reden*; Bürger 2010: 16).

The Siegfried Unseld estate is considered to be the most valuable purchase in the history of the DLA, whose centerpiece until then was the collection of Cotta Verlag, the publishing home of Goethe and Schiller. Since its acquisition, the Siegfried Unseld Archive (SUA) in Marbach has gradually been made accessible for research. Ulrich Raulff, the head of the DLA at that time, spoke to the press about the acquisition as a once-in-a-century stroke of luck. Because of the press's "great dedication to filing" (*hohen Ablagemoral*; per Raulff, cited in Cammann 2010), the archive includes not only correspondence with Suhrkamp authors such as Samuel Beckett, Jürgen Habermas, and Julio Cortázar but also internal reports and editorial assessments, minutes of editorial meetings, informative travel reports including Unseld's own reports, and the files of the advertising and licensing departments (see Bürger 2010: 17).

From a Latin American point of view, in particular, this material is extraordinarily valuable, because Suhrkamp Verlag has played such a very decisive role in the international publishing world with respect to Latin American literature. This is the first time that such comprehensive material has been available in Germany, and we can use it as a basis from which to investigate a point in time before the literary translation and publication of Latin American writers in Germany. This makes it possible to concretely examine the selection processes of German publishers with respect to Latin American literatures, for instance, to an extent that was not even remotely possible until now. Jan Bürger describes the archive and its particular value in his commentary on the DLA's acquisition of the Unseld estate, as follows:

> The notes on his [Unseld's] first encounter with Octavio Paz are an example of how carefully, in his daily work, he thought not only about the present, which the revered poet favored, but also about posterity. All of the letters from the management of the publishing house were saved and systematically filed by Unseld's staff (above all the legendary Burgel Zeeh), along with all the notes and minutes. Every trip was documented in reports . . . . All of this resulted in the archive surviving with unusually few gaps.[59] (Bürger 2010: 17)

Of course even in this archive, which was so carefully prepared and assembled in the publishing house over the course of decades, the level of the material coverage varies from author to author. For this study, I have taken the material

59 "Die Aufzeichnungen über seine erste Begegnung mit Octavio Paz führen exemplarisch vor, wie sorgfältig er bei seiner täglichen Arbeit nicht nur an die von dem verehrten Dichter favorisierte Gegenwart dachte, sondern auch an die Nachwelt. Alle Briefe der Verlagsleitung wurden aufgehoben und systematisch von Unselds Mitarbeiterinnen (allen voran die legendäre Burgel Zeeh) abgelegt, ebenso wie die Notizen und Protokolle. Jede Reise wurde in Berichten dokumentiert . . . . Dies alles hat dazu geführt, dass das Archiv mit ungewöhnlich wenigen Lücken überliefert ist."

situation into account in a detailed way; in other words, I have chosen Latin American writers for whom there is indeed material available and accessible that is informative on the question of world literature. Hence, the institional preconditions for the material basis are in place. But how do the publisher's international selection mechanisms relate to a possible idea of world literature?

III.2.2 The Choice of International Literatures at Suhrkamp: Previous History with Samuel Beckett

In the first phase of the formation of its international program, in other words between the early 1950s and the mid-1960s, in the context of a history of world literary success at Suhrkamp, Samuel Beckett comes to mind, whose work, more than that of anyone else, corresponds to the concept expressed by George Steiner in 1973 of extraterritoriality as a constitutive element of a "Suhrkamp culture." This can be seen, for example, in a well-known passage from Beckett's *Molloy* (1951), in which critics often point out a "doubled voice," which can never be clearly traced back to a particular speaker, and about which even the first-person narrator is unclear (Weber 2010: 101, 110): "I had forgotten who I was (excusably) and spoken of myself as I would have of another, if I had been compelled to speak of another. Yes it sometimes happens and will sometimes happen again that I forget who I am and strut before my eyes, like a stranger" (Beckett 1955; *J'avais oublié qui j'étais (il y avait de quoi) et parlé de moi comme j'aurais parlé d'un autre, s'il m'avait fallu absolument parler d'un autre. Oui, cela m'arrive et cela m'arrivera encore d'oublier qui je suis et d'évoluer devant moi à la manière d'un étranger*; Beckett 1982: 55).

The Beckett case allows us to observe an example of how much publishing success depended on particular constellations in the publishing field. One need only think of Beckett's failures when he tried to publish his work before the Second World War and his success afterwards, when he finally found publishing houses that were interested in the experimental nature of his literature and met publishers such as John Calder in London, Barney Rosset (at Grove Press) in New York, or indeed Peter Suhrkamp and Siegfried Unseld at Suhrkamp in Frankfurt.[60]

60 The archived materials in the SUA also make it possible to draw interesting conclusions about the marketing strategies of other publishers working in the international market. In the 1930s, for example, when Beckett was still in a very precarious position, his US publisher, Prentice (Chatto & Windus), advised him not to write like Joyce, or rather to break away from Joyce's influence. At the same time, Beckett was "sold" to the public as a student of Joyce's as a way to guarantee his connection to modern world literature (see Nixon 2011: 3).

These publishing houses, all of which were established in the 1950s, wanted to promote a new aesthetic and were open to Beckett's literature, whereas the longer-established publishers continued to resist it (see Nixon 2011: 4–5).

In 1953, during a stay in Paris, Peter Suhrkamp attended the first production of *Waiting for Godot* (Hartel 2011: 131). That same year, he agreed with Jérôme Lindon of Éditions de Minuit, Beckett's French publisher, that Suhrkamp would receive the rights to the German translation of the play. In 1959, Theodor W. Adorno commented favorably on Suhrkamp's involvement and foresight with respect to the success of avant-garde art, saying that Suhrkamp was succeeding in selling the unsellable, creating success for those who did not strive for it, and bringing things to the public that were "difficult to make use of" (Hartel 2011: 132). And indeed, Beckett's works sparked intellectual debates throughout the whole of postwar Germany society (Huber 1991: 31).

Eckart Voigts-Virchow describes Beckett as a trans-European writer, because he transcends the boundaries of national literatures (2009: 97). Beckett research has indicated that Unseld already recognized this transcultural dimension of Beckett's work before it had been noticed in other countries or in academic contexts (Sievers 2005: 241). The radicalization of extraterritoriality in the form of an exophonic materialization on a literary level was ideally suited to Unseld, given that he made the particularity of literature as opposed to all other discourses the point of departure for his publishing activity. On June 1, 1962, Unseld wrote to Beckett:

> As far as I know, you are the only important writer to have written in two languages. This fact seems to me to be worth respecting and emphasizing in an edition of your dramatic works. Therefore, I would like to publish an edition in three languages . . . . What do you think of this project? Of the project of an edition of your dramatic works, as well as of the "triglot" project? I do not yet know whether the third solution will be feasible, but before doing any more research, I would like to know your opinion?[61]
>
> (Letter from S. Unseld to S. Beckett dated 6/1/1962, SUA)

61 "Autant que je sache, vous êtes le seul écrivain important qui ait écrit en deux langues. Ce fait me paraît digne d'être respecté et souligné dans une édition de vos œuvres dramatiques. J'aimerais donc publier une édition en trois langues . . . . Que pensez-vous de ce projet? Du projet d'une édition de vos œuvres dramatiques ainsi que du projet 'triglotte'? Je ne vois pas encore si la troisième solution sera réalisable, mais avant toute autre recherche j'aimerais savoir votre avis?"

For their kind permission to publish these quotations from the holdings of the Siegfried Unseld Archive, I very much thank the authors and their heirs, as well as the German Literature Archive in Marbach.

Suhrkamp was in fact the only publisher at that time that deliberately made a point of Beckett's bilingualism: the two-volume work in three languages that Unseld had suggested appeared in 1963/64 as *Dramatische Dichtungen* (Dramatic poems), which made Beckett feel highly appreciated (see Hartel 2011: 133–34). Unseld became a strong advocate for Beckett, although his work was very hard to market because he would give neither interviews nor public readings (Sievers 2005: 226). Unseld worked ambitiously for his author Beckett and for Beckett's international reception: after he sent for the version of the play *Happy Days* that Fischer Verlag wanted to produce with the Deutsche Grammophon recording label, he let Beckett know that the texts had been abridged. Beckett reacted by transferring the rights to the play to Suhrkamp, along with the rights to all further plays from 1962 (see Hartel 2011: 135). In 1969, Beckett won the Nobel Prize in Literature. The first paperback Suhrkamp ever published was Beckett's pivotal play *Waiting for Godot*, which appeared in 1971, also as a trilingual edition. The 15,000-copy printing sold out within a year (ibid.). Unseld also encouraged Beckett to create a film version of his play *Not I* and to direct it himself.

His handling of Beckett's work is an example of how extremely important Unseld was for some of his foreign-language writers. Unseld was very aware of his position as a gatekeeper (in the terms of Marling 2016) and of his role in the international success of his writers in general and of Beckett in particular, as we can see from the following excerpt from another letter he wrote to Beckett after he was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1969: "Dear Sam, I didn't write you immediately after the news, so as not to contribute to the avalanche. You know that I am very pleased with this news and you also know that I contributed quite a bit to the whole thing" (*Lieber Sam, ich habe Ihnen nach der Nachricht nicht geschrieben, um die Lawine von mir aus nicht zu vergrößern. Sie wissen, daß ich mich über diese Nachricht sehr freue und Sie wissen auch, daß ich Einiges zu der ganzen Sache beigetragen habe*; Letter from S. Unseld to S. Beckett, 11/06/1969, SUA). Beckett, in turn, confirmed his German publisher's important role very explicitly in his response (letter from S. Beckett to S. Unseld, 11/06/1969, SUA). The warm tone of the correspondence is an indication of the friendly connection between the writer and the publisher. And it was Unseld's particular involvement that would also become very valuable for a series of Latin American writers. It was not without reason that Octavio Paz wrote, in a letter dated July 31, 1980, about his first trip to Germany in June of that same year, "but our great discovery in Frankfurt was Siegfried Unseld" (*aber unsere große Entdeckung in Frankfurt war Siegfried Unseld*, cited in Bürger 2010: 13). Beckett's publication history at Suhrkamp displays a collection of characteristics that are also significant for the consideration of the selection of Latin American

literatures made by the publisher. As in the case of Octavio Paz, who will be the subject of section III.2.5, Unseld maintained a very personal and even emotional relationship with Beckett as well as an intensive intellectual exchange – although, unlike with Paz, it was much more difficult in Beckett's case to connect him with other Suhrkamp authors (Rathjen 2013: 109).

In summary, we can say that even though the successes of someone like Samuel Beckett, or of a writer like Marguerite Duras, began earlier, neither French literature nor any other international literature at Suhrkamp ever experienced such a resounding reception as Latin American literature did. The expectations for extraterritoriality relinquished the imprint of linguistic-philosophical intellectualism that characterized Samuel Beckett, and what took its place was a specific place named Macondo. What might be the reason for that?

III.2.3 The Latin America Program, Part I: The Success Phase, 1969–2000. Between Universalism and Exoticism

Following Latin American literature's international Boom (see section II.1) at the end of the 1960s, Suhrkamp Verlag's Latin America program[62] developed steadily. Beginning with the first edition of Vallejo in 1963, it was constantly expanded; the high point was when 17 titles were published in 1976 alone, when Latin America was the focus of the Frankfurt Book Fair, as well as when several million copies of Isabel Allende's *House of the Spirits* were sold in the 1980s.[63] How, then, was this literature received in Germany?[64] A cursory look at the reviews that appeared following the publication of Gabriel García Márquez's *Cien años de soledad* (*Hundert Jahre Einsamkeit* in German, 1967) or Mario Vargas Llosa's *La casa verde* (*Das grüne Haus* in German, 1965) quickly make it clear that the concept of world literature was the implicit yardstick. Vittoria Borsò has pointedly detailed the connection between world literature as a selection criterion and the reception by publishers. And what she notes for *Hundert*

62 The program category at Suhrkamp is officially called "Literature from Latin America, Spain, and Portugal," and therefore also includes titles from the Iberian Peninsula. However, the focus is clearly on Latin American literatures; the text on Suhrkamp Verlag's home page introducing this category, for example, only refers to the subcontinent (https://www.suhrkamp.de/themen/literatur_aus_lateinamerika_spanien_und_portugal_192.html). And because the focus of this study is also on Latin American literature, I refer to it as the "Latin America program."

63 As of 2002, this number was already over three million (see Heine 2002: 120).

64 In Müller (2014a, 2015a, and 2015b), I also address this phase of Suhrkamp's Latin America program, among other things.

Jahre Einsamkeit, which was published by Kiepenheuer & Witsch, can also be applied to Suhrkamp authors such as Vargas Llosa: the literary reviews can be summarized as emphasizing that the assimilation of European and international traditions, along with, at the same time, the integration of oral narratives from pre-Columbian cultures, are what indicate membership in the world literary canon. These writers were enriching the European and Western traditions with the lush colors of the tropical world. The paradigm of identity, and specifically the search for a specifically Latin American identity, was a decisive criterion for making the novels acceptable within world literature (Borsò 2004: 236).

According to Borsò, another feature that elevated these novels, and especially *La casa verde*, to the rank of world literature was the fact that what took place in the mythical Amazonian town on the Marañón River (comparable with García Márquez's Macondo) was not just the history of Latin America but also the history of the world, as represented by the abundant allusions to the Book of Genesis and to archetypal myths of origin (ibid.). In sum, we can state that the reception of these books by literary critics and literary scholars primarily paid attention to their ability to connect to modern world literature, with a particular emphasis on the combination of exoticizing representations of alterity with established European postmodern writing processes.

How do the publishing industry's opinions compare to this? The archival holdings of the Suhrkamp Publishing House, especially Siegfried Unseld's correspondence with the authors but also with his closest Latin America advisers, Michi Strausfeld and Wolfgang Eitel, provide vivid material for us here. Encounters with some leading Latin America scholars, such as Klaus Meyer-Minnemann, Dieter Janik, and Karsten Garscha, are also reflected. In May, 1979 Unseld wrote in his notebook: "Octavio Paz made a big impression on me. A personality that unites poetry and learnedness, wisdom and science. I invited Paz and also Carpentier to come to Germany for a visit" (*Octavio Paz hinterließ mir einen großen Eindruck. Eine Persönlichkeit, in der sich Poesie und Gelehrsamkeit, Weisheit und Wissenschaft vereinen. Ich habe Paz und auch Carpentier zu einem Besuch nach Deutschland eingeladen*; Unseld travel report, Paris, 5/20–5/22/1979, SUA). One thing was evident: anyone who belonged to the illustrious circle of non-German Suhrkamp authors had to be considered "able to be treated as belonging to world literature." The equation of the publishing program with world literature seems unquestionable. The fact that Octavio Paz fulfilled this function particularly well may also be connected with his positive understanding of a genuinely European modernity.

Unseld particularly liked to use the German classics as a measure for his selections. Thus, after a meeting with Alejo Carpentier in Paris, Unseld noted that Carpentier "spoke about his work and about the world with equal

confidence. He is a Latin American Thomas Mann" (*sprach von seinem Werk und von der Welt gleichermaßen souverän. Ein Thomas Mann Lateinamerikas*; Unseld travel report, Paris, 5/20–5/22/1979, SUA). The Cuban author, in return, confirmed through his enthusiasm for Germanic literatures that the "Thomas Mann" seal of approval was a criterion for Unseld. Thus, in his travel report, Unseld continues: "That gave Carpentier the opportunity to speak at length about the Icelandic sagas, the Celtic myths, and the German heroic legends, and then I was completely astonished when he brought up Wolfram von Eschenbach's 'Parzival' as an important document" (*Das gab nun Carpentier die Veranlassung, ausführlich über die isländischen Sagen, über die keltischen Sagen, über die deutschen Heldensagen zu sprechen und völlig verblüfft war ich dann, als er Wolfram von Eschenbachs "Parzival" als wichtiges Dokument hervorhob*; Unseld travel report, Paris, 5/20–5/22/1979, SUA). And while in this case the modern German classic author Thomas Mann was used as a comparison, in another context Unseld made reference to contemporary leftist cultural theorists, such as Herbert Marcuse:

> Octavio Paz . . . . You get the impression that the experiences of long periods of social and literary revolutions have converged in him. To me, he is an important character in our times, when the belief in progress and the belief in a historical process seem to be fading . . . . In himself, he creates variations on what Marcuse said about the "zest for life" in the Römerberg discussion series.[65] (Unseld travel report, Paris, 5/20–5/22/1979, SUA)

III.2.4 Suhrkamp as a Producer of Leftist Theory: The Case of Darcy Ribeiro

There is a political component that plays an essential role for the German reception of Latin American Boom authors, as it does for their worldwide reception. Not only is the Suhrkamp Verlag's Latin America program an example of this phenomenon, but the publisher also decisively helped to shape it, given that Suhrkamp is considered to have been the forge for nondogmatic leftist theory in Germany from the 1960s through the 1980s.[66] The publisher's sociopolitical commitment in general, and Unseld's similar commitment in particular, as well as the role that the reception of Boom literature played within that commitment,

65 "Octavio Paz . . . . Man hat den Eindruck, in ihm seien Erfahrungen langer Zeiten von sozialen und literarischen Revolutionen zusammengeflossen. Für mich ist er in unserer Zeit, wo der Fortschrittsglaube und der Glaube an den historischen Prozeß zu verdämmern scheint, eine wichtige Persönlichkeit . . . . Er variiert für sich das, was Marcuse in den Römerberggesprächen zum Thema 'Lebenslust' ausgeführt hatte."

66 On this topic, from a slightly different perspective, see also Müller (2014c, 2017b).

is directly connected with political interest in Latin America: to a certain extent, in the 1960s and 1970s, the subcontinent became a sociopolitical laboratory, a beacon of hope for Western European, but especially German, leftists, and later, with the arrival of the military dictatorships, served to legitimize the critique of capitalism (under the terms of dependency theory). The literary interest in Latin America, following this line of thought, can then be seen as the flip side of the political interest in and commitment to a more socially just world, as well as a fictional undergirding of the theoretical critique of capitalism.

A decisive dimension of the German reception of Latin American literature can be seen here, a dimension that comes to a head in the case of a Brazilian Suhrkamp author who, though he was neither a classic bestselling author nor part of the Boom, is nevertheless and for that very reason symptomatic of the dominant patterns of reception with respect to Latin American literatures: Darcy Ribeiro. In his report on his trip to Paris from May 20th to 22nd, 1979, Unseld writes: "What about the Darcy Ribeiro complex? Will this continue in the academic field? I'm asking Mr. Herborth for news. A few days earlier, Darcy Ribeiro gave a brilliant speech while accepting his honorary doctorate from the Sorbonne" (*Wie steht es mit dem Komplex Darcy Ribeiro? Geht das im wissenschaftlichen Bereich weiter? Ich bitte Herrn Herborth um Nachricht. Darcy Ribeiro hat einige Tage vorher eine blendende Rede zur Entgegennahme seines Ehrendoktors an der Sorbonne gehalten*; SUA).

Unseld's implicit categories for evaluating literary quality are then also fed by this kind of academic recognition from one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in "old Europe." Ribeiro, a sociologist, scholar of cultural studies, and writer, published *The Americas and Civilization* with Suhrkamp in 1985 (German title *Amerika und die Zivilisation*), the second volume of a series of studies in cultural anthropology in which Ribeiro examined the history of the American peoples and their development perspectives, using his own specific theory of civilization. He was received in Germany as part of the generation of Latin American intellectuals who, according to the critics, established the modernity of the subcontinent by going back to its roots – its indigenous, African, and European origins. Ribeiro's novels, in particular, such as *Maira* and *Mulo* (in Brazilian Portuguese *O mulo*), were elevated to the rank of world literature on the basis of the already existing exoticizing and universalizing selection criteria, to which in Ribeiro's case another, equally decisive, dimension was added: the political.

III.2.5 Octavio Paz: The "Model" of a Latin American World Literary Figure?

In order to further determine what standards Unseld used as a publisher in terms of world literary relevance and the negotiability of Latin American writers, it is worthwhile to take a closer look at the example of Octavio Paz.[67] On April 30, 1998, ten days after Octavio Paz's death, Siegfried Unseld wrote a letter of condolence to Paz's wife Marie-José including the following lines, which strikingly describe the two main dimensions of the relationship between Paz and Unseld:

> For all of us Octavio is the great author. We are proud to have taken care of his work. And you can be sure that we will continue to work for him and his work, to have his books in print and to publish new ones, so that his ideas can continue to irradiate and illuminate the German public.
>
> (Letter from S. Unseld to M.-J. Paz, Frankfurt am Main, 4/30/1998, SUA)

Unseld is speaking here in two modes. The first is that of the resourceful, successful businessman who took Paz into his Latin America program years earlier, with wise foresight and delicate marketing insight, and was then retroactively validated and rewarded for his faith in the Mexican author when Paz won the Cervantes Prize in 1981 and then the Nobel Prize in 1990. But the other shows us Unseld's picture of Paz – or to put it more strongly, his projection onto Paz – as a man of letters who was Latin America's 20th-century Enlightenment man and whose ideas, characterized by their progressiveness for their time, their farsightedness, their educational character, and, not least, their world literary quality, must not be allowed to vanish. The 1980s image of Paz is reflected in a statement by the former German president Richard von Weizsäcker, who gave the speech honoring the winner of the German book trade's Peace Prize in 1984: "In his own way, Octavio Paz has become the defining voice of Latin American culture, and its conscience" (*Octavio Paz ist auf seinem Weg zur prägenden Stimme lateinamerikanischer Kultur geworden, zu ihrem Gewissen*; cited in *Suhrkamp Verlagsgeschichte* 1990: 122).

Unseld's programmatic understanding of what constituted a deserving and potentially successful Suhrkamp author worth publishing in the Latin America program should be understood, in particular, against the backdrop of the Suhrkamp House's classic, established, and in particular German-language authorial poetics as well as of the 1970s and 1980s West German context of cultural

67 The following observations on Siegfried Unseld's reception of Octavio Paz can also be found, in a similar form, in an article that I wrote with Sylvester Bubel (see Müller and Bubel 2016).

consumption by the educated middle class. When we take a closer look at Octavio Paz's poetological, existential-religious, and sociopolitical ideas and convictions, then, we can see how interesting and relevant they made him for Unseld and for Suhrkamp's Latin America program in this context. These characteristics of Paz and his work were poetological parameters that allowed him entry into the world literary guidelines that Unseld and Suhrkamp had established for the Latin America program, and that made it possible for his texts to be integrated into and functionalized for the German-speaking market. According to Unseld, Octavio Paz's work fit Suhrkamp's world literary criteria in exemplary fashion.

In his report on his meeting with Paz in May, 1979, in Paris (which was probably their first meeting), Unseld was deeply impressed by the Mexican writer's demeanor and deep knowledge. He noted: "an impressive figure, poet and scholar, wise and knowledgeable" (*eine imponierende Erscheinung, Poet und Wissenschaftler, Weiser und Wissender*; Unseld travel report, Paris, 5/20–5/22/1979, SUA). But what was the basis for this assessment by Unseld of Paz the intellectual and man of letters? This raises the question of whether and to what extent it is Paz's work that allows this (projectionist) perspective, or whether Unseld simply superimposed Suhrkamp's publishing categories onto Paz's person and oeuvre for pragmatic reasons to do with the politics of publishing.

So what are the substantial and formal aspects and methods with which Paz, the "wise and knowledgeable," was able to secure his status as a Latin American polymath and Enlightenment man in Unseld's perception? In order to better understand this connection, we need to undertake a short and fragmentary description of Unseld's understanding of a world-class "Enlightenment man" or "knowledgeable" figure; this can best be accomplished by looking at the implications of the comparative categories with which Unseld tried to grasp Paz within his own artistic understanding. Thus, Unseld sees the triad Cortázar/Paz/Carpentier as the "greats of Latin American literature. All three of them impressive, because they reflect not only what is their own, their own continent, but also the others in themselves" (*Großen lateinamerikanischer Literatur. Alle drei beeindruckend, weil sie nicht nur das Eigene, den eigenen Kontinent, sondern auch die anderen in sich reflektieren*; Unseld travel report, Paris, 5/20–5/22/1979, SUA). Thus, Unseld categorizes Paz as a "universalist" writer who is able to go beyond his own national and ethnic limits and boundaries and address the – supposedly – higher, existential questions in his work. A "world traveler"[68] who oscillates, conceptually, between the reference points of Latin America and Europe.

68 As Michi Strausfeld put it in an internal draft, headed "es-NF-Lateinamerika," probably from 1980 (SUA).

Behind this intellectual elevation of Paz to a nobleman of Latin American literature – alongside Julio Cortázar and Alejo Carpentier, the "Thomas Mann of Latin America" (Unseld travel report, Paris, 5/20–5/22/1979, SUA) – one could also, however, suspect a gimmick for the sake of publishing policy: with Cuba, Mexico, and Argentina all together, Unseld could unite the most politically interesting regions of Latin America into one category in his publishing program and thus make them concrete for the German postwar middle class.

Meanwhile, in addition to considerations of publishing policy and the above-mentioned Enlightenment paradigm, Unseld's reception of Paz's poetics includes a third and decisive aspect: the publisher was deeply impressed by a lecture that Paz gave in Frankfurt am Main in the summer of 1980, and the central message that Unseld took away from the Mexican writer's aesthetic and poetological considerations was this: "Yes, it's true: *America Latina es una cultura* – Latin America is one culture" (*Ja, es ist wahr:* America Latina es una cultura – *Lateinamerika ist eine Kultur*; letter from S. Unseld to O. Paz, 07/04/1980, SUA). In spite of the very great diversity with respect to politics, culture, ethnicity, language, and, finally, literature, Unseld wanted Latin America to be seen as a homogeneous whole, whose political process of individuation was not only thoughtfully accompanied, but also actively guided and propelled, by contemporary literature. And thus, Suhrkamp often promoted Latin American literature with the label "existentialist" and advertised Latin America as a kind of "untainted" emotional (continental) space still being constituted. It is no wonder, then, that in 1979 Suhrkamp's Latin America program was published under the title "17 Authors Write the Novel of the Latin American Continent" (*17 Autoren schreiben am Roman des lateinamerikanischen Kontinents*) or that it contained this concise comment by Unseld:

> Of all the non-German contemporary literatures, it is Latin American literature that certainly seems to me to be the most important for the coming decade. It is a particular kind of existential literature, a kind that in other countries, for whatever reasons, can only be written in individual cases. This literature encourages a new education in feelings, and its very real figures are not afraid to name the values in life nor to rank them.[69] (SUA)

69 "Von allen außerdeutschen zeitgenössischen Literaturen scheint mir die lateinamerikanische sicherlich für das nächste Jahrzehnt die wichtigste zu sein. Es ist eine besondere Art existentieller Literatur, wie sie in anderen Ländern, aus welchen Gründen auch immer, nur noch in einzelnen Fällen geschrieben werden kann. Diese Literatur macht Mut zu einer neuen Erziehung zu Gefühlen und ihre so realen Gestalten scheuen sich nicht, Werte des Lebens zu benennen und in ihrem Rang zu bestimmen."

This kind of "existential" Latin American literature, one that was able to "name the values in life" and even kindle a new "sentimental education," still, however, followed familiar coordinates in Unseld's understanding: on the topic of Paz's poem "Piedra de sol" ("Sunstone"),[70] with whose "hunger for existence" (*Hunger nach Sein*), as he put it, Unseld was explicitly impressed, he wrote that he was particularly fascinated by how the poem ended, the "symbol of the river 'that turns, moves on, / doubles back, and comes full circle, / forever arriving,' the soft water in motion" (*Symbol des Flusses, "als der, der sich windet, verdrängt, zurückweicht, einen Umweg wandelt und immer ankommt," das weiche Wasser in Bewegung*; Unseld travel report, Paris, 5/20–5/22/1979, SUA; English translation of poem fragment from Paz 1991). It does not appear to be a coincidence that it was exactly this kind of metaphors, images, and figures using the topoi of literary and philosophical history, such as the Heraclitean *panta rhei*, that Unseld particularly appreciated in Paz's work. If we think of the orientation of the Latin America program and its strategy of "Latin American awakening," then this metaphorics, which was steeped in history and could be interpreted in a universalist way, was necessary in order to be able to bring Latin America close enough so that the almost uninformed German-speaking audience could grasp it.

In addition, this metaphorics was what qualified the Mexican writer Paz – who, because he was Mexican, still seemed exotic to German-speaking audiences of that time – to be included in the group of Suhrkamp's historically significant authors. It was Unseld's ambition, in his Library of Modern Classics (*Bibliothek der Klassiker der Moderne*), which has become historically significant, "not [to publish] the excavations of esoteric occasional writings but rather [to aim for] a unity in the final object that would, in spite of the highly divergent topics, justify the claim: here literature becomes an escape into life" (*keine Ausgrabungen abseitiger Gelegenheitsarbeiten [zu publizieren], vielmehr trotz divergierendster Themen eine Geschlossenheit im Ziel [anzustreben], die die Behauptung rechtfertigt: Hier wird Literatur zur Flucht in das Leben*; Unseld 1989). Unseld seems to understand this escape into life as specifically modernist, shaped by Friedrich Nietzsche's emphatic "yes to life" and Bergson's "vital impulse," as well as by politically engaged literature – from the Weimar Republic (including Hesse and Brecht) to its existentialist manifestations (including Sartre and Camus); and the more points of intersection with these literary greats Unseld can find in the aesthetics of the Latin Americans, the more valuable he finds their work.

70 This poem is one of Octavio Paz's major works, and Unseld can be shown to have read it. Suhrkamp published it in German in 1977, in the volume *Octavio Paz. Gedichte* (Octavio Paz. Poems) and again in 1979 in *Suche nach einer Mitte. Die großen Gedichte* (The search for a center. The great poems).

Unseld's conviction that literature is inseparable from social engagement and sociopolitical action is demonstrated not only by the programmatic orientation of Suhrkamp's postwar "Bibliothek Suhrkamp" book series but also by the extremely positive light in which Unseld saw socially engaged writers and intellectuals (such as Darcy Ribeiro) who were not spending their time in the ivory tower of *l'art pour l'art*. Paz's aesthetic distinguished him from such artistic escapisms (the kind we know, for instance, from Symbolism) without making him into a mouthpiece for political or social positions. All too often, politically committed literature is unable to free itself from the teleological thought patterns of bourgeois rationality, so that it can in fact be seen as the poet's role to create a protected space, through poetry, in which supratemporal ideas and knowledge can survive unaffected by the zeitgeist, freed from any appropriation by bourgeois categories of thought. Thus, for example, Paz writes in *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz o Las trampas de la fe* (*Sor Juana or, the Traps of Faith*):

> Bourgeois rationalism is, in a manner of speaking, constitutionally averse to poetry. Hence poetry, from the beginnings of the modern era – that is, since the last years of the eighteenth century – has been a form of rebellion. Poetry is not a genre in harmony with the modern world; its innermost nature is hostile or indifferent to the dogmas of modern times, progress and the cult of the future . . . . Poetry, whatever the manifest content of the poem, is always a violation of the rationalism and morality of bourgeois society. Our society believes in history: newspapers, radio, television, the *now*; poetry, by its very nature, is atemporal.[71] (Paz 1988: 5)

Here Paz rejects the politicization, appropriation, and influence of bourgeois values on literary production and ascribes a unique rebellious power to poetry and the poet, a power that is able to produce a genuinely *different* epistemology: namely, a timeless, morality-generating knowledge of life, beyond positivism, rationalism, or empiricism. It is through this separate kind of literary politicization that the poet fulfills his responsibility to society, as Paz stresses in "La letra y el cetro" (The letter and the scepter): "But we cannot disavow politics; that would be worse than spitting into the sky: it would be spitting at

71 "El racionalismo burgués es, por decirlo así, constitucionalmente adverso a la poesía. De ahí que la poesía, desde los orígenes de la era moderna – o sea: desde las postrimerías del siglo XVIII – se haya manifestado como rebelión. La poesía no es género moderno; su naturaleza profunda es hostil o indiferente a los dogmas de la modernidad: el progreso y la sobrevaloración del futuro . . . . La poesía, cualquiera que sea el contenido manifiesto del poema, es siempre una transgresión de la racionalidad y la moralidad de la sociedad burguesa. Nuestra sociedad cree en la historia – periódico, radio, televisión: el ahora – y la poesía es, por naturaleza, extemporánea" (Paz 1985 [1982]: 16).

ourselves" (*Pero no podemos renegar de la política; sería peor que escupir contra el cielo: escupir contra nosotros mismos*, Paz 2002 [1972]: 754–55).

What Unseld so values in Paz's work is exactly that creative, rebellious power that Paz sees in the medium of literature and especially of poetry. The attempt to establish poetry as its own separate epistemological category can be found in many of the modernist poets in the orbit of the Suhrkamp Verlag, for instance in Hugo von Hofmannsthal, who was so highly esteemed by Unseld, and whose 1906 essay "Der Dichter und diese Zeit" (The poet and this time)[72] shows striking similarities to Paz's thinking:

> No thought that impresses itself on him [the poet] must he chase away, as though it were from a different order of things. For every thing must fit into his order of things. In him everything must and wants to come together. It is he who in himself knits together the elements of time. The present is in him or nowhere . . . . Just as the innermost sense of all people creates time and space and the world of things around them, so does he create, out of past and present, out of animal and human and dream and thing, out of large and small, out of the lofty and the trivial, the world of connections.[73]
>
> (Hofmannsthal 1979 [1906]: 67–68)

For Unseld, Hofmannsthal certainly represented one of the most important European *tertia comparationis* with which to evaluate Paz's oeuvre. A letter from Unseld to Paz dated July 4, 1980, for example, in which Unseld reminisces about a weeklong visit that Paz and his wife Marie-José had made to Germany, testifies to the publisher's urge to position Paz within the tradition of established Suhrkamp authors and German-speaking intellectual greats. During the trip through West Germany (Bonn, Frankfurt, Heidelberg), not only is it "obvious" that a visit to the Goethe house should be included, but in the Goethe library, they also had to be shown "Hofmannsthal treasures," because according to Unseld, Hofmannsthal "was after all one of the few German poets who knew Spanish" (*war ja einer der wenigen deutschen Dichter, die des Spanischen mächtig waren*, letter from S. Unseld to O. Paz, 07/04/1980, SUA). Against the background of these comparisons with Hofmannsthal, the following

72 This essay consists of a lecture that Hugo von Hofmannsthal gave several times at the end of 1906. "Der Dichter und diese Zeit" was first published in March of 1907 in Berlin, in the *Neue Rundschau*.

73 "Keinen Gedanken der sich an ihn drängt, darf er von sich scheuchen, als sei er aus einer anderen Ordnung der Dinge. Denn in seine Ordnung der Dinge muß jedes Ding hineinpassen. In ihm muß und will alles zusammenkommen. Er ist es, der in sich die Elemente der Zeit verknüpft. In ihm oder nirgends ist Gegenwart. . . . . Wie der innerste Sinn aller Menschen Zeit und Raum und die Welt der Dinge um sie her schafft, so schafft er aus Vergangenheit und Gegenwart, aus Tier und Mensch und Traum und Ding, aus Groß und Klein, aus Erhabenem und Nichtigem, die Welt der Bezüge."

quotation from Unseld's 1979 travel report, from which I have already cited, becomes all the more significant:

> In our time, where the belief in progress and in the historical process seem to be fading, he [O. Paz] seems to me to be an important person. His experience, based on a half century of upheavals: no one knows what the future will look like; we have to be vigilant, careful, and skeptical, but we should also have hope. And for him, the most important thing is this: the highest value is not the future, but the present. "The future is not the time of love: what someone really wants, he wants now. He who constructs the house of future bliss is building the prison of the present." And the verdict on progress is this: "It has filled history with the miracles and monstrosities of technology, but it has emptied the lives of people; it has given us more things, not more being."[74]
>
> (Unseld travel report, Paris, 5/20–5/22/1979, SUA)

Here, again, Unseld critiques the bourgeois belief in progress and the dichotomous relationship between "being and having," as Erich Fromm put it, within bourgeois value systems. In a volume of interviews published in 1996, Paz expresses that ambivalence this way:

> There is a radical opposition between the values of modern society and poetry. The culture of capitalist society is fundamentally based on the morality of utility. And poetry is always an expense, a squandering. There is an incompatibility between bourgeois morality – which is the morality of thrift – and poetic morality, which is the morality of giving, of profligacy.[75] (Peralta 2014 [1996]: 40)

Here we can recognize echoes of the radical Sartrean existentialism of the 1950s and, once again, Unseld's attempt to group Paz into his kaleidoscope of influential (European) thinkers and writers.

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74 "Für mich ist er in unserer Zeit, wo der Fortschrittsglaube und Glaube an den historischen Prozess zu verdämmern scheint, eine wichtige Persönlichkeit. Seine Erfahrung aus einem halben Jahrhundert der Umstürze: niemand weiß, wie die Zukunft aussieht, wir müssen wachsam sein und aufpassen, skeptisch sein, aber wir sollten doch auch hoffen. Und für ihn ist das Wichtigste: der höchste Wert ist nicht die Zukunft, sondern die Gegenwart. 'Die Zukunft ist nicht die Zeit der Liebe: was der Mensch in Wahrheit will, das will er jetzt. Derjenige, der das Haus der künftigen Glückseligkeit konstruiert, errichtet das Gefängnis der Gegenwart.' Und das Urteil über den Fortschritt lautet: 'Er hat die Geschichte mit den Wundern und Monstren der Technik bevölkert, aber er hat das Leben der Menschen entvölkert, er hat uns mehr Dinge gegeben, nicht mehr Sein.'"

75 "hay una oposición radical entre los valores de la sociedad moderna y la poesía. La cultura de la sociedad capitalista está basada fundamentalmente en la moral de la utilidad. Y la poesía siempre es un gasto, un desperdicio. Hay incompatibilidad entre la moral burguesa – que es la moral del ahorro – y la moral poética, que es la moral del dar, del despilfarro."

Unseld's striving for legitimation is striking: he wants Latin American literature to be taken seriously enough that it will receive its justified inclusion in the canon of world literature: "I have to add that Latin American literature is a newcomer. It is the youngest of all Western literatures . . . . Latin America is a Far West" (*Ich muß hinzufügen, daß die lateinamerikanische Literatur ein Neuankömmling ist. Sie ist die jüngste aller westlichen Literaturen . . . . Lateinamerika ist ein Ferner Westen*; Unseld travel report, Paris, 5/20–5/22/1979, SUA). The "Far West" label serves to shift the established categories of affirmative Orientalism (which is also a world literary indicator) to a transatlantic sphere and, in the process, to adopt the established measures of value for the literary staging of the Other as the exotic. The ability to connect to the German tradition of cultural education (in the form of its highly canonical writers), coupled with leftist theorization, created a reception filter that was useful to the publishing house, because it pragmatically combined key topics of the "Suhrkamp culture": religiosity, ethics, and existentialism. In a lecture that he gave at Yale University on December 4, 1976, Paz put it this way:

> Our literature is made out of relationships – clashes, influences, dialogues, polemics. Monologues between a few personalities and a few literary tendencies and styles that have crystallized into a work. These works have crossed national and ideological borders. The unity of fragmented Latin America can be found in its literature.[76] (Paz 2011 [1976])

III.2.6 Isabel Allende: A "Stroke of Luck for Literature"

Isabel Allende did not at first fit into this concept of a Latin American literature that, while shaped by conflicts, nevertheless itself created an important unity. She had little support as a writer in Latin America, and many critics opined that she was only serving Western literary tastes. But her work strongly shaped Suhrkamp's publishing program, albeit for completely different reasons than in the case of Octavio Paz. In the *Suhrkamp Verlagsgeschichte 1950–1990* (The history of the Suhrkamp Publishing House, 1950–1990), Siegfried Unseld wrote the following about the publication of Isabel Allende's debut novel *La casa de los espíritus* (1982, published in German as *Das Geisterhaus*, 1984):

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76 "Nuestra literatura está hecha de las relaciones – choques, influencias, diálogos, polémicas. Monólogos entre unas cuantas personalidades y unas cuantas tendencias literarias y estilos que han cristalizado en una obra. Esas obras han traspasado las fronteras nacionales y las ideológicas. La unidad de la desunida Hispanoamérica está en su literatura."

> Isabel Allende's novel *Das Geisterhaus* [*The House of the Spirits*], translated from the Spanish by Anneliese Botond, appeared on March 12th. It is the first book by this author, the niece of the Chilean president Allende; after the September 11th, 1973 coup, she left Chile and now lives with her family in Venezuela as a journalist . . . . Nowhere was the success as great as in Germany . . . . The book was number 1 on the *Spiegel*'s best seller list for many months. This "stroke of luck for literature" has now sold two million copies in Germany (as of June 1990).[77] (1990: 163–64)

Isabel Allende (b. Lima 1942) is one of the most read authors in the world today, and certainly also the most commercially successful literary voice of the Spanish-speaking world.[78] By her own account, she has published 23 books, which have been translated into 42 languages and have sold a total of 74 million copies.[79] From a purely quantitative standpoint, the distribution of her work could only be compared with someone like Paulo Coelho, as Ilan Stavans remarked in the *Times Literary Supplement* in 2001 (cited in Heine 2002: 116). Over the course of Allende's career, she has received a large number of honorary doctorates and international literary prizes; at this point the number is more than 60 prizes, from more than 15 countries.[80] Two of her novels have been made into movies. The first was *La casa de los espíritus*, made into the movie *The House of the Spirits* (1993), starring Meryl Streep, Jeremy Irons, and Glenn Close and directed by Bille August; the second was *De amor y de sombra*, filmed as *Of Love and Shadows* (1994), starring Antonio Banderas and Jennifer Connelly, directed by Betty Kaplan (Strausfeld 2012: 71).

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77 "Am 12. März erscheint Isabel Allendes Roman Das Geisterhaus, aus dem Spanischen übersetzt von Anneliese Botond. Es ist das erste Buch dieser Autorin, der Nichte des chilenischen Präsidenten Allende, die nach dem Putsch vom 11. September 1973 Chile verließ und nun mit ihrer Familie als Journalistin in Venezuela lebt . . . . Nirgendwo war der Erfolg so groß wie in Deutschland . . . . Das Buch ist viele Monate lang die Nummer 1 der Bestsellerliste des 'Spiegel.' Dieser 'Glücksfall für die Literatur' ist in Deutschland (Stand Juni 1990) mit zwei Millionen Exemplaren verbreitet."

Note that it's very hard to get reliable information on sales numbers for books because publishers, as business enterprises, are not required to be accountable to the public. In some cases the various figures that are given diverge considerably from each other.

78 An October 2009 article in the *Latin American Herald Tribune* calls Allende "the world's most widely read Spanish-language author" ("Isabel Allende" 2009).

79 As of March 2019. This information comes from the website of the Isabel Allende Foundation, the author's foundation to campaign for the rights of women and girls worldwide (https://s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/isabelallende.com/assets/bio/Bio_Isabel-en.pdf?kaodas541ks). Suhrkamp talks about "more than 57 million copies" (https://www.suhrkamp.de/isabel-allende_939.html), apparently based on Strausfeld's numbers (2012: 71), which were more than six years old at the time of this research.

80 These numbers also come from the website of the Isabel Allende Foundation (https://s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/isabelallende.com/assets/bio/Bio_Isabel-en.pdf?kaodas541ks).

Even within this global success story, Allende's reception in Germany occupied an even more rarefied position, as Siegfried Unseld's account, quoted above, indicates; commercially, Allende's work was certainly a unique "stroke of luck" in publishing. The sales of the German translations that were published by Suhrkamp, especially of *Das Geisterhaus* (*The House of the Spirits*), can only be described as phenomenal, and played a notable role in fueling Allende's brilliant international career. In a 2002 interview, Jorge Heine listed sales figures for her first nine titles, broken down by language.[81] These numbers show that of the approximately 32.5 million copies of these novels and stories in worldwide circulation, almost 8 million, in other words almost a quarter, are German translations (and therefore published by Suhrkamp). These numbers are also impressive because they make it clear that there were more German editions sold of these nine titles than editions in any other language, even more than in Spanish – in Spain and Latin America together (just under 6.6 million). This is particularly noticeable for Allende's debut novel *La casa de los espíritus*, which had sold more than 3 million copies in Germany just through 2002 (out of 10.8 million copies sold worldwide; Heine 2002: 120).[82]

How did this come about? The manuscript of *La casa de los espíritus* was rejected by a few Latin American publishing houses to begin with, so Allende sent it to the Spanish agent Carmen Balcells, who also, famously, represented Gabriel García Márquez, among others. The novel was finally published by the Spanish publisher Plaza & Janés, in 1982, and won the Mazatlán Prize that same year. Allende came to the attention of Michi Strausfeld, who at that point was working as an independent literary talent scout for Suhrkamp, at the book launch in Barcelona. Strausfeld recommended the book to Suhrkamp, which

81 Heine (2002: 120) gives figures for the following countries or linguistic regions: Germany (we can assume that he means the entire German-speaking area, in other words also Austria and Switzerland), Brazil, Denmark, Spain/Latin America, Finland, France/Canada, Greece, the Netherlands, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Turkey, and the United States/Great Britain.

82 In 2007, Sperschneider (2007: 108) also mentioned the fact that *La casa de los espíritus* had sold 3 million copies in the German translation, as *Das Geisterhaus*. As early as 1987, Gottfried Honnefelder, then managing director at Surhkamp, spoke of 500,000 copies sold in talking to *Die Zeit* (Greiner 1987). Three years later, as mentioned above, Unseld then gave the number of 2 million (*Suhrkamp Verlagsgeschichte* 1990: 163–64). As for the novel's circulation worldwide, Suhrkamp's website gives the unbelievable figure of 51 million copies sold (https://www.suhrkamp.de/isabel-allende/das-geisterhaus_942.html). That must surely be a mistake; Suhrkamp must have taken an old number for total sales of Allende's books (the number that is still given on the writer's German Wikipedia page, https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isabel_Allende), and wrongly assigned it to the first novel alone.

then acquired the German rights and had Anneliese Botond translate the novel into German. In 1984, it was published with the title *Das Geisterhaus* (Brown 1994: 37). Botond won the Johann-Heinrich-Voß Prize for her translation, a prize that is given by the German Academy for Language and Literature for "outstanding achievements in translation." In 1985, *Das Geisterhaus* shot to number 1 on the German bestseller list, and for the entire year it was always among the top ten (Gerling 2007: 74). At first, Suhrkamp advertised Allende in the "young author" category (Strausfeld 2007: 165). Her next three books, two novels and a short story collection that came out in rapid succession, also landed on the German bestseller list: *Von Liebe und Schatten* (1986; original Spanish title *De amor y de sombra*, 1984 [*Of Love and Shadows*]), *Eva Luna* (1988; original Spanish title *Eva Luna*, 1987), and *Geschichten der Eva Luna* (1990; original Spanish title *Cuentos de Eva Luna*, 1989 [Stories of Eva Luna]; Brown 1994: 60). And even though nothing approaching *Das Geisterhaus*'s impressive sales figures was ever again attained, Isabel Allende's novels remain reliably among the *Spiegel*'s top ten bestseller list to this day.[83] Their enormous commercial success meant that the time that elapsed between the original publication of her works in Spanish and the appearance of their German translations[84] became shorter and shorter, until they were appearing at almost the same time, whereas the comparable time lag for less successful writers is much larger, often as much as a few years (Sperschneider 2007: 108).

What are the significant reception patterns with respect to Isabel Allende's literature in this context? In Latin America, literary critics have accused the author of catering only to Western literary tastes, of turning away from Latin America and belonging to the United States in her heart, and have claimed that she will use any means to market her books – people especially resent her self-designation as a political exile.[85] This background is necessary to explain why, in spite of her great international literary renown, the author was never officially recognized in Chile, her country of origin, until 2010, when she won the National Prize for Literature there (Strausfeld 2012: 71). In the English-speaking

83 See most recently *Ein unvergänglicher Sommer* (*Más allá del invierno* [*In the Midst of Winter*]), at number 4 in the summer of 2018.

84 While Anneliese Botond translated Allende's debut novel, Dagmar Ploetz took over the translation of *De amor y de sombra* into German. Unlike her predecessor, Ploetz was heavily criticized for her translation (see Brown 1994: 39). The third novel, *Eva Luna*, was translated by Lieselotte Kolanoske, who remained Isabel Allende's German voice for 15 years, until Svenja Becker took over that role in 2003.

85 Cf. Heine (2002: 116), who cites a variety of critical voices.

world, where her books are also best selling hits, there are mixed reactions to the phenomenon that is Isabel Allende. Some people reject her novels as unconvincing imitations of the great classics of magical realism; in 2001, for example, Ilan Stavans wrote in the *Times Literary Supplement* that Allende was the first woman to be taken seriously in the context of the Latin American Boom,[86] but that she had also ushered in the end of that literary experiment, replacing it with pure entertainment. Allende, he wrote, had carried to the extreme the transformation of literature into a mass-market consumer good (cited in Heine 2002: 116). But there are opposing voices as well; Philip Swanson, for instance, saw in the critiques of *La casa de los espíritus* an overwhelming set of expectations, focused primarily on politics and complexity. These always involve a "radical leftist politics preferably expressed through a radically subversive narrative form" (Swanson 2003: 57). But Swanson himself sees the great strength of the novel precisely in the fact that it breaks with the tendency of Latin American literature towards complexity and the unknown and brings so-called magical realism back into a more communicative form.

On the whole, German-language newspapers' culture sections were more generous to *Das Geisterhaus* and the following novels, although criticisms of aspects of Allende's work that are considered shallow or commercial keep coming up. Eighteen years after the publication of *Das Geisterhaus*, Martin Ebel looked back on Allende's oeuvre in the pages of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* as a "soft, comfortable version of Latin American modernism: Isabel Allende played the female García Márquez, without narrative risk, without the power, breath, and rage of the Nobel Prize winner, without his edges and ambitions. What she offered was what you could call literary cuddle sex" (*kommode[] und softe[] Variante lateinamerikanischer Moderne: Isabel Allende gab den weiblichen García Márquez, ohne erzählerisches Risiko, ohne Kraft, Atem und Furor des Nobelpreisträgers, ohne seine Härten und Ansprüche. Was sie bot, war sozusagen literarischer Kuschelsex*; Ebel 2002: 40). Another reviewer wrote about *Geschichten der Eva Luna*: "The exotic, perfumed magic of a narrative art that chased away Nordic gloom in such an entertaining way seemed all too seductive" (*Allzu verführerisch erschien der exotisch parfümierte Zauber einer Erzählkunst, die den nordischen Trübsinn auf so unterhaltsame Weise vertrieb*; Brown 1994: 123). *Eva Luna* is called, among other things, an "exotic fairy tale" (*exotisches Märchen*, 121) that "colors the South American ambience . . . with thick dabs of sweat, semen, blood" (*mit dicken Tupfen aus Schweiß, Sperma, Blut . . .*

86 This is how literary critics classified her; in literary scholarship, however, Isabel Allende is not considered part of the Latin American literary Boom.

[das] südamerikanische Ambiente koloriert, 126). Here we can see very clearly a crucial reception framework that focuses on an exuberant, sensually based exoticism that clearly played an enormous role in making Allende's work such a favorite with the public. Suhrkamp's marketing strategy also pointed in that direction, praising *Das Geisterhaus* on the one hand as one "of the most successful novels of world literature" and on the other hand advertising it with an appeal to exoticism and sensual promises: "In a world inhabited by spirits and full of secrets and dark suspicions, Isabel Allende produces flesh-and-blood figures driven by their convictions and passions" (*In einer von Geistern bewohnten Welt, voller Geheimnisse und dunkler Ahnungen lässt Isabel Allende Figuren aus Fleisch und Blut auftreten, die von ihren Überzeugungen und Leidenschaften getrieben sind*).[87] In his review of *Portrait in Sepia*, Martin Ebel puts the role that Suhrkamp's Latin America program assigned to Isabel Allende's novels in a nutshell:

> Isabel Allende is not exactly a jewel in Suhrkamp Verlag's impressive line-up of international writers – but on their balance sheet, she certainly is. There are colleagues for whom it is the other way around, and both of those should be present and ought to be allowed in a publisher's calculated mix. (2002: 40)

III.2.7 Excursion: North American Literature at Suhrkamp: The Case of William Faulkner

Writers from the United States, none of whom found success on the level of the Latin American writers, were mostly included in the "Bibliothek Suhrkamp" book series, which represented modern classics, such as those of William Faulkner, Sherwood Anderson, Gertrude Stein, and Truman Capote. It is worth taking a look at William Faulkner here, if only because most of the writers of the Latin American Boom say that they could not have written without him. Édouard Glissant, the Martiniquan writer and cultural theorist who died in 2011, dedicated a 300-page literary essay to Faulkner entitled *Faulkner, Mississippi*. If we want to understand the strong reception that Faulkner's work received from Latin American writers, we have to take into consideration the omnipresent hemispheric dimension of the Americas in that work. Marcel Vejmelka has very convincingly pointed out the resulting cultural-theoretical implications: Yoknapatawpha County, the fictitious county that Faulkner built up around the city of Jefferson over the course of numerous novels and stories, contains a multitude of historical dimensions that connect it with other areas of the American

87 https://www.suhrkamp.de/isabel-allende/das-geisterhaus_942.html.

continent.[88] The "essential rationales of the colonial and postcolonial configuration" (*Grundlogiken der kolonialen und postkolonialen Konfiguration*) of his culture that become visible in Yoknapatawpha positioned Faulkner's southern United States in complex interrelations with other regions of "plantation America," characterized by the simultaneously colonial and capitalist machinery of the plantation economy (Vejmelka 2009: 157–58). The historical experience of the plantation economy – of the white landowners and African slaves, as well as of the Deep South conquered by the modern North of the United States, of the suffering of a region that was forcibly incorporated into the modern national project of the (northern) United States and internally colonized but that also knows of the guilt it carries as a slaver society – this historical experience that Faulkner displays creates a relational logic that makes it possible to look at Yoknapatawpha County from beyond its regional specifics and to analyze it with regard to fundamental questions of the cultural configuration and identities of the Americas. Thus, Faulkner's work positions itself on the border within the Americas that is accepted, asserted, questioned, or problematized, respectively, from both the North and the South (158).

It makes sense that Édouard Glissant would gratefully build on this material: in *Faulkner, Mississippi*, his literary travelogue, he brings to light the constellation of "master's house and slave hut" that the anthropologist Gilberto Freyre investigated in northeastern Brazil in 1933, making reference at the same time to Faulkner's estate near Oxford – from one South to another South (Vejmelka 2009: 172–73). Vejmelka shows the extent to which Glissant maps this "spatial miniature of Brazil" (*räumliche Miniatur Brasiliens*) – of its economic, social, and in particular ethnic development – onto the plantations of the South of the United States, where Faulkner's life and work are rooted (163). It is precisely in the temporal balancing act of these hemispheric constructions of America between Faulkner and Glissant that the unity of the Americas becomes evident, in both the act of writing and the act of reading. This cultural-theoretical dimension, which has been underestimated in Latin American studies, is also reflected in the reception in Germany and thus also has consequences for the worldwide processes of canonization. What, then, is Suhrkamp's specific position?

Not much of Faulkner's work was published in German. Suhrkamp only published his novel *Als ich im Sterben lag* (1961; *As I Lay Dying*), the short story *Der Bär* (1953; *The Bear*), and the novel *Wilde Palmen* (1957; *The Wild Palms*); but because they didn't appear until after he had already won the Nobel Prize,

88 For these remarks on Faulkner I draw directly from Marcel Vejmelka's valuable work (2009: here p. 157).

the publisher cannot pride itself on having done any pioneering work in publishing him. As for Glissant, he has still only been published by the small, vanguard Heidelberg publishing house Das Wunderhorn. This non-publication can only make us ask, at this point, how, in the context of an investigation of the history of the publishing house, a history of exclusions could be written, which would be highly relevant from the point of view of cultural studies.

III.2.8 Elena Poniatowska: Belated Interest at Suhrkamp

Some of the works of the Mexican writer Elena Poniatowska, who was, among other things, a winner of the Cervantes Prize, also fell through the world literary selection grid of the international publishers and gatekeepers, as already mentioned in section II.2. This forces us to ask: while Suhrkamp published four of the author's works over the years, why did they not publish her work earlier and not publish more of it? And above all, why did they not publish her discourse-defining works? The SUA files in Marbach show that as early as 1971, Mauricio Schoijet, a literary agent who worked for Poniatowska's publisher Era in Mexico, had written to Hans Magnus Enzensberger to recommend to Suhrkamp several of the books that Era had published, including, first of all and most importantly, *La noche de Tlatelolco*, at that time still a new classic of testimonial literature, about the bloody suppression of the student protests on October 2, 1968, in Mexico City. Schoijet called the book a "great journalistic collage" (*große journalistische Collage*) and also emphasized the unusual sales success of this literary-journalistic chronicle in Mexico, estimating that 50,000 copies had been sold. At the same time, he not only reflected on the difficulties to be expected in translating the book into German, given the many local references and the heavily Mexican-tinged Spanish, he also recommended a qualified and proven translator, who herself lived in Mexico City and would be able to translate the work in dialogue with the author. In addition, the agent offered to provide an annotated version of the text tailored to the German reading public, and had even organized a writer for a potential afterword on the political situation in Mexico (letter from M. Schoijet to H. M. Enzensberger, 11/30/1971, SUA).

Suhrkamp decided against the publication. At that time, its Latin America program was almost exclusively publishing essays on the leftist movements and political upheavals in Latin America, such as *Peru 1965. Aufzeichnungen eines Guerilla-Aufstands* (*Peru 1965: Notes on a Guerrilla Experience*; Héctor Béjar Rivera, 1970); *Venezuela. Die Gewalt als Voraussetzung der Freiheit* (Venezuela: Violence as the condition of freedom; Orlando Araujo, 1971); and *Guatemala. Unterentwicklung und Gewalt* (Guatemala: Underdevelopment and

violence; Juan Maestre Alfonso, 1971). The first book of Darcy Ribeiro's that Suhrkamp published, *Der zivilisatorische Prozeß* (*The Civilizational Process*), also came out in 1971. In terms of content, then, Poniatowska's documentary work would have fit in perfectly with Suhrkamp's selection criteria for works by Latin American writers. Nor should the collage-like construction of *La noche de Tlalelco* have been perceived as particularly problematic or uninteresting, given that Suhrkamp absolutely saw itself as a progressive publisher in literary terms. However, there was not one single woman among Suhrkamp's Latin American authors at that time, in the early 1970s. This did not change until 1978, when Suhrkamp published a book by the Brazilian Rachel de Queiroz, followed three years later by Clarice Lispector (1981, 1982, and 1983). The first female Spanish-language Latin American writer that Suhrkamp published in its Latin America program was Isabel Allende, in 1984.

As for Elena Poniatowska, it was not until the early 1980s that Suhrkamp began to be interested in her work. In late 1980 and early 1981, Michi Strausfeld, who was still significantly responsible for Suhrkamp's Latin America program, wrote evaluations of two of Poniatowska's works: first, on *Hasta no verte, Jesús mío* (*Until We Meet Again/Here's To You, Jesusa!*), a testimonial novel about the unusual life of a simple Mexican woman, based on interviews; and second, on *Fuerte es el silencio* (Silence is strong), a volume of five journalistic reports that had just appeared. Strausfeld's conclusion about *Hasta no verte, Jesús mío* was as follows:

> A very well-written biographical novel, with which the author has also made a name for herself as one of the few good female writers in Latin America . . . . Given that these "life stories" clearly resonate in Germany, I would recommend publishing this book – it is one of the best of its kind.[89] (Evaluation by M. Strausfeld, 12/18/1980, SUA)

Strausfeld leaves no doubt about the literary quality of the book, ending her evaluation with a superlative: as a journalist, Poniatowska counts as "the best" in Latin America. But this novel was apparently also not a good enough fit for the Suhrkamp Verlag's reception patterns. Instead of being published by Suhrkamp, this second major work of Poniatowska's, to which she owed her international reputation and which was also translated into English, French, and

89 "Eine sehr gut geschriebene Roman-Biographie, mit der die Autorin sich zugleich als eine der wenigen guten weiblichen Schriftstellerinnen Lateinamerikas profiliert hat . . . . Da diese 'Lebensberichte' offensichtlich gutes Echo in Deutschland finden, würde ich die Publikation des Buches empfehlen – es zählt zu den besten seiner Gattung."

Italian, appeared in German in 1982 as a publication of the small publisher Lamuv Verlag, with the title *Allem zum Trotz . . . : das Leben der Jesusa*. The first thing that Suhrkamp published of hers was *Stark ist das Schweigen. 4 Reportagen aus Mexiko*, a translation of four of the five reports in *Fuerte es el silencio* (Ediciones Era 1980), and that was not until 1987. In her report in early 1981, Michi Strausfeld had already been downright enthusiastic:

> Every topic is captivatingly written; literary reportages that piece together, from the many carefully researched details, stories that hauntingly and graphically show us Mexican reality. The author has truly loaned her voice to those people who cannot speak themselves: and she writes in such a way that you will never forget the topic . . . . I urgently recommend the publication of these reports![90] (Evaluation by M. Strausfeld, 01/19/1981, SUA)

In 1989, two years after *Stark ist das Schweigen*, the decision was made at Suhrkamp to publish another work, out of Poniatowska's already existing oeuvre, for the German market. However, the publisher did not choose the chronicle of the Tlatelolco massacre, which would have been a perfect segue from the previous publication and also featured an event that was iconic for the leftist movement; the period of political utopias connected to Latin America was long past its prime. Instead, Suhrkamp published *Lieber Diego* (original Spanish title *Querido Diego, te abraza Quiela*, Ediciones Era 1978 [*Dear Diego*]), an epistolary novel that dealt with Diego Rivera, another Mexican icon, and that was, apart from that, more anchored in private, emotional themes. The next books to appear from Suhrkamp were *Tinissima. Der Lebensroman der Tina Modotti* (1996; original Spanish title *Tinísima*, Ediciones Era 1992 [published in English as *Tinisima*]) and *Frau des Windes* (which appeared in Suhrkamp's Insel Verlag imprint in 2012; original Spanish title *Leonora*, Seix Barral 2011 [also published in English as *Leonora*]). Poniatowska, a politically and socially engaged writer, has played a rather subordinate role in the publisher's programming choices; the predominant reception pattern, especially for the last three publications, can be considered exoticizations, combined with a decidedly female perspective. Neither the volume of reportages nor the novels, however, are currently listed as available on Suhrkamp's website (as of April 2019).

90 "Jedes Thema ist mitreissend geschrieben; literarische Reportagen, die aus den vielen, sorgfältig recherchierten Einzelheiten Geschichten zusammensetzen, die die mexikanische Realität eindringlich und plastisch vor Augen führt. Die Autorin hat wirklich ihre Stimme jenen Menschen geliehen, die nicht selber reden können: und sie schreibt so, dass man das Thema nicht wieder vergisst . . . . Ich empfehle die Publikation dieser Reportagen ganz dringlich!"

III.2.9 The Latin America Program, Part II: The Post-Success Phase, 2000–2017. After Exoticism

After the Boom, how did Latin American literatures develop before they arrived in Germany? As we have already seen (in section II.1), there was a conspicuous departure from specifically Latin American topics, in some cases already here and there in the late works of the successful Boom writers, but then very distinctly among the young generation of writers starting in the early 1990s. What was Suhrkamp's reaction? While the publisher's Latin America program continued to flourish in the 1980s and 1990s, from 2000 onward it began a significant stagnation.[91] From 2001 to 2017, the program included "only" 105 new titles. By comparison, in the 17 years before the turn of the millennium (from 1984 to 2000), that number had been 164 publications. If we compare the annual statistical mean of the two time periods, the number of annual publications from Latin America was cut almost in half, from ten titles a year before the turn of the millennium to six titles a year after it.

The jacket copy (which is of necessity market-oriented) on a novel from Latin America that appeared in Germany in 2011 can give us some insight into Suhrkamp's publication strategies. The novel, *35 muertos* (German title *35 Tote*), is by Sergio Álvarez (b. 1965), from Colombia, and the promotional copy reads as follows:

> After *One Hundred Years of Solitude* – the great Colombian novel. In this country, anyone who has never killed someone has no future. Breathtaking, harrowing, captivating. With *35 muertos* [35 dead], Sergio Álvarez offers a powerful response to García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*.[92]

To what extent, then, are the literary tendencies of the younger generation compatible with the erstwhile aspirations to the "world literature" stamp of approval? With respect to the paradigm shift within literary and cultural studies from "world literature" to "literatures of the world" (see section III.1), Suhrkamp has responded in accordance with its earlier aspirations to be in dialogue with the current tendencies of the intellectual avant-garde and to have a significant determining voice in the debates through its choice of authors. Thus, for

91 I address this phase of Suhrkamp's Latin America program, among other things, in Müller (2014a, 2015a, 2015b).

92 "Nach *Hundert Jahre Einsamkeit* – der große Kolumbien-Roman. Wer in diesem Land niemanden getötet hat, der hat keine Zukunft. Atemberaubend, erschütternd, fesselnd. Dem magischen Realismus von García Márquez' *Hundert Jahre Einsamkeit* setzt Sergio Álvarez mit *35 Tote* einen kraftvollen Roman entgegen."

example, the publisher's website promotes the Suhrkamp author Nedim Gürsel, from eastern Turkey, who was the Samuel Fischer Guest Professor for Literature: Literatures of the World at the Free University of Berlin in 2011–12. Suhrkamp takes on the demands of the title of this professorship in an affirmative fashion, emphasizing the publisher's intention to "promote a critical reflection on the literatures of the world" (*eine kritische Reflexion über die Literaturen der Welt zu fördern*).[93] After all, this refers to texts that situate themselves within global relationships and in which cultural positionings are reflected or in fact developed.

Given the conditions of transnational lives and the privileged situation of non-settled literatures, there are of course literary texts, particularly in Latin America, that make such readings possible. An example is one of the most recent novels by the longtime Suhrkamp author Mario Vargas Llosa, *El sueño del celta* (*The Dream of the Celt*), published in 2010 by the prestigious Spanish publisher Alfaguara. In the book there are transnational movements between three regions of the world: Ireland, Congo, and the Brazilian Amazon. And yet Suhrkamp was not particularly interested at first: During the Frankfurt Book Fair, in October of 2010, when it was announced that Mario Vargas Llosa had been awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature (see Meyer-Krentler 2010), the Suhrkamp Verlag immediately made much of its position as Vargas Llosa's illustrious German publisher, but shortly thereafter it came out that only four weeks earlier, in negotiations for rights to publish the German edition of *El sueño del celta*, Suhrkamp had passed on it, and now Rowohlt had acquired the rights. In the context of the Nobel Prize, the decision not to publish the most recent novel became a publishing scandal that dragged on for several months, until Rowohlt finally renounced the rights and the novel was able to be published by Suhrkamp after all, under the title *Der Traum des Kelten*. This was celebrated in the fall of 2011 with an inaugural event at the Haus der Berliner Festspiele. The opening lecture by Ulla Berkéwicz, the head of Suhrkamp at that time, hailed the novel as Vargas Llosa's return to his original storytelling, emphasizing the otherness of what was specifically Peruvian in the book as well as its magical narrative style.

93 http://www.suhrkamp.de/news/samuel_fischer_gastprofessur_fuer_ literatur_1702.html.

III.2.10 Samanta Schweblin: Most Recent Trends in Publishing

In Suhrkamp's Latin America Program, Samanta Schweblin represents the most recent tendencies in publishing policies, which assert a global relevance, in the sense of a universalist aspiration, for the current literature of the subcontinent, but without any particular reference to specifically Latin American discourses. Schweblin, whom Mario Vargas Llosa called "one of the most promising voices of modern Spanish-language literature,"[94] was born in Buenos Aires in 1978. She has published three short story collections and two novels so far, which have been translated into 25 languages (Literaturport). Her short story collections *El núcleo del disturbio* (2002; The nucleus of the disturbance), *Pájaros en la boca* (2008; *Mouthful of Birds*), and *Siete casas vacías* (2015; Seven empty houses) have won the National Arts Foundation Prize (Argentina), the Casa de las Américas Prize (Cuba), the Juan Rulfo Prize (France), and the highly endowed Ribero del Duero Short Story Prize (Spain). In addition, the English translation (*Fever Dream*) of her first novel, *Distancia de Rescate* (2014), was shortlisted for the 2017 Man Booker International Prize (UK) and won the 2018 Shirley Jackson Award (USA).

In the international press, the reviews did not hold back with their superlatives: *El País* called Schweblin a "master of the short form" and considered her to be in the same league as Jorge Luis Borges, Julio Cortázar, and Juan Rulfo;[95] *La Nación* celebrated *Fever Dream* as a "decisive literary event";[96] and *Clarín* simply wrote that Schweblin was "the most prestigious, most award-winning, and most translated Argentine story-writer of the moment" (*la narradora argentina más prestigiosa, premiada y traducida del momento*, Fernández 2018). Reviewing Schweblin's debut novel *Fever Dream*, the *Economist* wrote that it "wraps contemporary nightmares, both private and public, into a compact, but explosive, package" ("Samanta Schweblin" 2017). In China, where Schweblin spent two months as part of the Shanghai Writers' Program,[97] and where the Shanghai publishing house 99reader translated her collection *Pájaros en la boca* in 2013, her literature is received as enthusiastically as it is in the Western world. Many of the discussions of Schweblin's writing emphasize her use of imagery. Thus Daniel Alarcón writes that like a poet, she communicates through images – and the Chinese novelist A Yi goes so far as to compare

94 Quoted in https://www.suhrkamp.de/autoren/samanta_schweblin_8074.html.

95 Quoted in https://www.suhrkamp.de/buecher/sieben_leere_haeuser-samanta_schweblin_42804.html.

96 See https://www.suhrkamp.de/buecher/das_gift-samanta_schweblin_42503.html.

97 See https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samanta_Schweblin.

Schweblin's stories to Chinese paintings, seeing parallels in how both art forms open up a space for the reader's imagination (Xi 2013).

It was not until 2010 that the German-language reading public was able to discover Samanta Schweblin. On the occasion of Argentina's appearance as guest of honor at the 2010 Frankfurt Book Fair, Suhrkamp commissioned a translation of Schweblin's second short story collection, *Pájaros en la boca* (*Mouthful of Birds*), with financial support from the Argentine translation fund PROSUR. Since then, in addition to that first translation (by Angelica Ammar), published in German as *Die Wahrheit über die Zukunft*, Suhrkamp has also published *Das Gift* (2015, translated by Marianne Gareis; original Spanish title *Distancia de Rescate*, 2014 [*Fever Dream*]) and *Sieben leere Häuser* (2018, also translated by Marianne Gareis; original Spanish title *Siete casas vacías*, 2015 [Seven empty houses]). If we look at the book presentations and international press reviews that Suhrkamp presents on its home page to advertise its publications of Schweblin's books, there is a noticeable focus in the vast majority of the reviews on Schweblin's particular writing style. Thus, for example, Suhrkamp emphasizes her "masterfully laconic" (*meisterhaft lakonischen*)[98] style and the fact that she creates her "own, wondrous narrative cosmos" (*einen eigenen, wundersamen Erzählkosmos*).[99] *Le Monde*, in turn, praises the author's "unique way of looking at things" (*einzigartigen Blick auf die Dinge*, in Suhrkamp's translation).[100] Until recently, there was always an obligatory reference to their origins in discussions of Latin American writers, but that appears no longer to be the primary reception model at Suhrkamp: neither in the form of a literary genealogy, as was done for Vargas Llosa, whose novel *El sueño del celta* was (mistakenly) praised, as recently as 2011, as being a continuation of magical realism; nor as a revolt or struggle against the Boom-generation forefathers, as in the case of the Crack movement, McOndo, or, specifically with respect to Suhrkamp, the case of Sergio Álvarez, whose literary relevance was noted on the jacket copy of *35 Tote* as consisting of an alternative to García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (see section III.2.9). When the reviews do praise Schweblin by discussing her "linguistic precision" (*sprachliche Präzision*) as something that "is very rarely found in Latin American writers" (*wie man sie nur*

98 https://www.suhrkamp.de/buecher/sieben_leere_haeuser-samanta_schweblin_42804.html.

99 https://www.suhrkamp.de/buecher/die_wahrheit_ueber_die_zukunft-samanta_schweblin_42142.html.

100 Cited in https://www.suhrkamp.de/buecher/sieben_leere_haeuser-samanta_schweblin_42804.html.

ganz selten bei lateinamerikanischen Autoren antrifft),[101] or when the notorious buzzwords of the Latin American Boom are lined up again for her ("in Samanta Schweblin's Argentina, the magical becomes political"; *in Samanta Schweblins Argentinien wird das Magische politisch*, Heidemann 2015), it seems strangely disjointed and almost anachronistic, an outdated reflex.

As far as literary or aesthetic affinities go, the book reviews and writer profiles certainly also contain well-founded references to an Argentine literary tradition, especially to the neofantasticism of such writers as Adolfo Bioy Casares, Julio Cortázar, and Jorge Luis Borges (see for example Halter 2015; A. Müller 2010). Of course, this also has to do with the genre of the short story, which is one of Schweblin's preferred artistic forms and also has a strong tradition in Argentina. The author herself, however, only accepts this attribution to a limited degree. For one thing, the literary role models that she herself names tend to be North American writers, such as Flannery O'Connor, John Cheever, Raymond Carver, and J. D. Salinger (Schweblin 2010; Quiroga 2015), and for another, she stresses how important it is to her that her literature remains suspended between the real and the unreal: "Argentine literary criticism sees me as being in the tradition of Jorge Luis Borges or Julio Cortázar. That is of course an honor; I admire their work. But I don't believe that my stories can be considered fantastic literature. Because they could all happen exactly that way!" (Klobusiczky 2012). The more appropriate references might be those to Franz Kafka or to David Lynch's hallucinatory visual worlds (cf. Person 2010; Halter 2015; Heidemann 2015). What we see in Schweblin's work are by no means regionally specific forms, such as the "magical," but in fact quite the opposite, namely topics and perspectives that are at the same time both radically individual and universally valid, as the author herself puts it in an interview, with respect to *Distancia de rescate*: "it is a novel written in the first person, the very absolute first person, from beginning to end. It takes place inside a woman's head, and everything is personal. And when everything is personal, it becomes universal" (*es una novela escrita desde la primera, primerísima persona, de punta a punta. Pasa en la cabeza de una mujer, y todo es personal. Y cuando todo es personal, se vuelve universal*; Benavides 2018).

101 Tobias Wenzel, from the WDR, cited in https://www.suhrkamp.de/buecher/sieben_leere_haeuser-samanta_schweblin_42804.html. The entire article can be found at: https://www1.wdr.de/kultur/buecher/sieben-leere-haeuser-104.html.

III.2.11 Concepts of World Literature in the Publishing World: Current Perspectives

We see, therefore, that to this day, the literatures of America are sorted through the dominant reception filter of "world literature" at Suhrkamp. The Goethean provenance of the concept plays at least a latent role in this process. The division of the publishing house into regionally distinct sectors is symptomatic. The great successes among Latin American novels corresponded to these European criteria of world literature. But from the moment that the writers began to disregard those criteria, they lost recognition. The decline in the Latin American Boom at Suhrkamp is a response to the failure to comply with Eurocentrically defined rules of world literature, in which both universalism and exoticism are inherent: it was Latin American literatures, in particular, that gained recognition through the staging of an exoticizing discourse of identity, which defined itself in contrast to a European self-understanding. At the moment when the novels ceased to focus on the staging of what was specifically Latin American, they lost their attractiveness in terms of world literature and now no longer have the central importance within Suhrkamp's publishing program that used to be accorded to them.

As we have seen, the concept of "literatures of the world" has become increasingly prevalent in literary studies and in the literary trade in the last twenty years, and some publishers and cultural institutions have also taken up this term. At first glance, it would seem as though Suhrkamp had also jumped on this bandwagon, as implicitly as with the concept of "world literature"; but when we look more closely, it becomes clear that it really only seems that way. The contradiction between the boldly expressed claims on the website, on the one hand, and the Vargas Llosa case in 2010, on the other, speaks for itself. The gaps in the system – such as the non-inclusion of William Faulkner and Édouard Glissant, as well as of certain works of Elena Poniatowska's – are particularly instructive in understanding the policies of the publisher, and allow us to draw a chronological line from the beginning of the Suhrkamp era, in the 1950s, to today. The case of Samanta Schweblin, however, does show that there is currently a break being made from the longstanding expectations that were placed on Latin American literatures and the exoticist and essentialist elements that were supposedly inherent in them.

IV The Circulation Processes of Latin American Literatures

IV.1 Gabriel García Márquez: Worldwide Circulation and South-South Dynamics

In order to be able to make further progress in answering the central question of the present study, namely "How is world literature made?" we need to focus now on the global connections among the circulation processes that constitute the conditions for a worldwide reception of Latin American writers.

On its way to becoming world literature, Gabriel García Márquez's work would appear at first glance to have passed through the classic nodal points for (Latin American) literary circulation in the 1960s.[102] Via Barcelona, Paris, and New York, it reached the centers within the former colonial empires, such as Bombay (now Mumbai) or Cape Town, where the privileged language of English had a canonizing function. If, in asking how world literature is made today, we are also concerned with the global differentiation with which the map of the world has, as we know, been redesigned, then the canonization processes at work for García Márquez will, precisely, allow us to ask: what does the oft-proclaimed worldwide abandonment of the former logic of center and periphery mean for literary canonization processes? To what extent do the new literary circulation routes in the so-called Global South affect the denomination processes of world literature?

Thus, if we take a second look in order to focus more seriously on perspectives that take the concept of a Global South, on an epistemological level, into account, such as in the direction of Asia or of the Arabic world, a much more differentiated picture emerges on the level of South-South relationships. Aamir R. Mufti criticizes the fact that in current concepts of world literature, the problem of Orientalism has not been given enough attention (Mufti 2010: 458; cf. also Mufti 2018); although Mufti refers mostly to the 18th and 19th centuries, this problem is just as important in the context of the worldwide reception of García Márquez. In addition to the facts and figures of the book market, the issue here, on an intra-literary level, is also to what extent the aesthetic realm shows us concrete intertextual references between García Márquez and authors of the Global South, and to what extent we can distill from that the processes of

102 I also address the world-literary circulation processes of Gabriel García Márquez's work in Müller (2018a, 2018b, 2018c).

https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110748383-004

reception and transformation with respect to particular literary topoi, genres, or paradigms.

Let us take here, as illustrative of García Márquez's work, his central novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and its reception in the United States, India, and China, focusing as well on the Arabic world and Russia. In 1967, *Cien años de soledad* was published in Buenos Aires by Editorial Sudamericana with an unusually large first edition of 8000 copies, which was three times the norm; that same year, there were then even three more reprints, of 20,000 copies each (see Marling 2016: 25). As a result, García Márquez's earlier work was then also given more notice and republished in larger editions (Cohn 2012: 1). The main impetus for the international reception of the Boom in general and of García Márquez in particular, however, came from Spain, followed closely by France; Barcelona, where the author lived from 1968 to 1975 (see Shaw 2010), constituted a crucial node.[103, 104]

IV.1.1 The United States as a Key Filter and Driver of Reception Processes

Because García Márquez was a committed Communist and worked for Fidel Castro's *Prensa Latina* in Havana, Bogotá, and New York from 1959 to 1960, he was first met with suspicion, at the very least, in the United States. In his *Conversations with Gabriel García Márquez*, William Kennedy (2006: 61) gives a couple of reasons for the lack of interest, within the US, in Latin American culture and literature. First of all, there was a widespread tendency in the 1960s to reject socialist or communist systems outright. And on top of that, most of the US population considered Latin America at that time to be "worthless" because of its political and economic insignificance. This is the context in which the following commentary by García Márquez on the integration of Latin America into the (intellectual) map, made in 1967, should be understood:

103 This first and definitely decisive stage of international reception has been intensively studied over the course of the last decades and has developed into the stock theme of Latin American literature of the 1960s, which is why I do not examine it further here.

104 William Marling (2016) emphasizes how significant certain important people and particular life stages were for the world literary career of the Colombian Nobel Prize winner. Marling has mapped out which gatekeepers influenced García Márquez's successes. To name just a few examples: García Márquez's friend Plinio Apuleyo Mendoza; the writers' group in Baranquilla; Carlos Fuentes, as an older writer; an interview with Luis Harss; the literary agent Carmen Balcells; but also various governments and media conglomerates, as well as the cult surrounding the translator Gregory Rabassa.

> We're writing the first great novel of Latin American man. Fuentes is showing one side of the new Mexican bourgeoisie; Vargas Llosa, social aspects of Peru; Cortázar likewise, and so on. What's interesting to me is that we're writing several novels, but the outcome, I hope, will be a total vision of Latin America . . .. It's the first attempt to integrate this world. (Castro 1967: vii)

If the Cuban Revolution represents Latin America's attempt to liberate itself from foreign control by the United States on a political level, the Boom represented the achievement of cultural autonomy, and with it the end of cultural colonialism in the literary and intellectual realm, in particular with respect to the US.

The attitude of the readership in the United States, which had ranged from uninterested to critical, changed abruptly in 1970 with the appearance of the English edition of *Cien años de soledad*, in a translation by Gregory Rabassa titled *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. The text was immediately voted one of the twelve best novels of the year by the editors of the *New York Times Book Review*. The paperback edition, published by Avon in 1971, then also began to circulate among the genuinely non-literary reading public (Johnson 1996: 133). For most North Americans, reading *One Hundred Years of Solitude* was their first contact with Latin American literature and therefore, at the same time, an introduction to that literature, which led to a perception of the novel as a microcosm of the entire "exotic" Latin American world. Because of the novel's success, much more Latin American literature was then published in the United States, and it was received by a much broader public (Shaw 2010: 27). In 1971, Ronald Christ – who was also the first person to use the phrase *magic realism* (Marling 2016: 37) – was the editor of a special supplement to the magazine *Review*, which mostly included articles and reviews translated from Spanish into English but also incorporated reviews of *Cien años de soledad* from French- and German-language sources. García Márquez's soaring reception in the English-speaking world was then given a further boost by the first academic treatise written in English about his work: in 1977, the Frederick Ungar Publishing Company published George McMurray's *Gabriel García Márquez*, the first monograph dedicated to a Latin American, in its series on world literary figures such as Saul Bellow or Truman Capote. McMurray's book paved the way for a variety of English-language editions of essays and interviews, as well as other monographs.[105] In Great Britain, on the other hand, it was not until 1990 that the Macmillan Modern Novelists series included a book by Michael Bell on

105 This includes the groundbreaking works of Bell-Villada (1990), Bloom (1989), Janes (1989), and McNerney (1989).

García Márquez, also the first Latin American in that series. Donald Shaw calls the recognition of García Márquez's work by the English-language world of Hispanic studies the "consecration of Gabriel García Márquez as a world author" (2010: 33).

The above-mentioned exoticist understanding of *Cien años de soledad*, however, in which Macondo was a microcosm for "foreign" Latin America, is only one side of the coin of the reception in the United States. The other side involved the staging of archetypical universalisms and anthropological constants. The fact that there were multiple kinds of connectivity made it easy for reviewers and especially also literary scholars to weave the novel into a network of universalist world literature. Intertextuality research, in particular, identified countless allusions to the Bible, Faulkner, and Dostoevsky, among others (McGrady 1981, cited in Ortega Hernández 2007). This sort of interpretive line, leaning on Western literary traditions, is no small part of what contributed to the resounding success that *Cien años de soledad* found in the metropolises of the Western and North American worlds (Marling 2016: 38; see also Düsdieker 1997: 335).

In addition, García Márquez's narrative style, often characterized as "premodern" or "fairytale-like," was credited with having a decisive impact on postmodern writing: he is supposed to have triggered a narrative turn and initiated the rediscovery of storytelling (Düsdieker 1997: 324). What is significant here is the turn away from the fragmented narration of modernity and a "reorientation toward a consciously anachronistic orality" (*Rückbesinnung auf eine bewußt anachronistische Mündlichkeit*, ibid.), which, in its fairytale-like character, stands in opposition to the *nouveau roman* and to the temporal regimen of modernity. In this view, Thomas Pynchon and Toni Morrison (most markedly in her 1987 novel *Beloved*), for example, are considered to be carrying on the narrative tradition of Marquez's poetics.

It was precisely the matter-of-fact way in which the characters' antirational and mythical understanding of reality was presented in *Cien años de soledad* that made Macondo into a model not only for all of Latin American literature but also for broad swaths of US literature. There are actually disparate and paradoxical currents combined within García Márquez's art that functioned as points of reference for writers in the United States after 1970: the mixing of literature and anthropological knowledge, of facts and fiction, of the trivial and the extraordinary. An example of this dimension of reality is the pastor in *Cien años de soledad*, who speaks of nothing but the arrival of the Antichrist – who then, in that fictional world, actually appears (see Düsdieker 1997: 323, 324, 353). In terms of its contents, then, García Márquez's novel provides literary material that can be picked up and used by (ethnically, religiously, etc.) marginalized

groups on potential peripheries in order to undermine the "discourses of domination, knowledge, and history" (*Herrschafts-, Wissens- und Geschichtsdiskurse*, Düsdieker 1997: 336) that have been established by the literary and political centers. Through its own English-language canonization of Gabriel García Márquez's work, the United States became the primary driver of the reception of that work for the English-speaking Global South, to which we now turn our attention.

IV.1.2 Reception in India

In India, the first reception of *Cien años de soledad* took place in English. The first translations into regional Indian languages followed the enormous surge in popularity and reputation that García Márquez enjoyed after he was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1982; these translations were undertaken from English into Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Malayalam, and Tamil (Maurya 2015: 252).[106] Indradeep Bhattacharyya (2014) describes the astonishing increase in sales of Gabriel García Márquez's books after his death in 2014: his works were on display in all of Kolkata's major bookstores – Kolkata also being the site of the world's largest annual public book fair – and were soon sold out.[107] Bhattacharyya also draws parallels with the developments in the Indian book market after the Nobel Prize award in 1982.[108] As he tells it, the reception of García Márquez in India appears to be characterized by two sudden upswings, one following the Nobel Prize and one following the author's death. But the cautious story of García Márquez's reception in India already began in the early 1970s, in Bhattacharyya's account:

> Way back in 1971, when Manabendra Bandyopadhyay introduced him in the comparative literature syllabus at Jadavpur University, nobody had heard of the author, but he noticed an instant liking among students for *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. "The first sign was

106 The four-volume *Bibliographic Guide to Gabriel García Márquez* (ed. Nelly Sfeir de González) includes the following translations for the years from 1949 to 2002: Malayalam: *Cien años de soledad* (tr. Kottayam, India: Di. Si. Buks, 1995), *El amor en los tiempos del cólera* (Vi ke Unnikrsnan, tr. Kottayam, India: Di. Si. Buks, 1997, 1998); Gujarati: *La Mala hora* (Nirañjana Taripathi, tr. Amadavada, India: Gurjara Grantharatna Karylaya, 1991).

107 See Bhattacharyya (2014): "Ranjit Adhikary, sales manager of Supernova Publishers, Penguin's exclusive distributor in eastern India, said: 'The demand for Garcia Marquez's books has shot up exponentially. Every day we receive orders for at least 90–100 copies of each title. The two books most in demand – *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and *Love in the Time of Cholera* – are out of stock. They will be back in circulation next week.'"

108 "College Street bookseller Suvojit Saha said, 'Demand for Garcia Marquez's books had shot up in 1982. It has again peaked after his death. We are sending away customers as there is no supply. We had about 30 titles; we sold out last Saturday'" (Bhattacharyya 2014).

> that students read the text themselves, which was definitely not the case with someone like Joyce," Bandyopadhyay said. (2014)

One key to Gabriel García Márquez's success in India, then, can be found in a certain literarily staged familiarity and the associated "readability" that appeals to every reader, regardless of their level of education or cultural background, with its orality and fairytale-like character.

Magical Realism as an Intensifier of Reception

> *El realismo magical* [sic], "magic realism," at least as practiced by Garcia Marquez, is a development of Surrealism that expresses a genuinely "Third World" consciousness. It deals with what Naipaul has called "half-made" societies, in which the impossibly old struggles against the appallingly new, in which public corruptions and private anguishes are more garish and extreme than they ever get in the so-called "North," where centuries of wealth and power have formed thick layers over the surface of what's really going on. (Rushdie 1982)

As this quotation from Salman Rushdie makes clear, the global establishment of magical realism on the basis of the shared experiences of a Global South is of critical importance for the reception of Gabriel García Márquez in Indian literature. Magical realism, as an aesthetic form, became the mantra of what was then called the Third World, immediately applicable as it was to other marginalized and socially segregated places, forms, and spaces – the reception of the later India Boom was also influenced by it. Mariano Siskind's (2012) study leads the way in examining the worldwide diffusion of magical realism as a postcolonial form of expression, giving Gabriel García Márquez and the "globalization of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*,"[109] or to be more specific the material and concrete process of the global circulation of the novel, a central role in this development (867, note 80). For "Macondo is the mediation between the idiosyncratic hyper-localism of the Colombian tropical forest and the general situation of the continent. Macondo is the village-signifier that names the difference of Latin America, and later, perhaps of the Third World at large" (854). Siskind describes the magical perspective, with respect to a specific subaltern sociocultural experience of colonialism and of other forms of local or global oppression, as a particular intraliterary characteristic of the

109 Worldwide, the number of writers in postcolonial situations whose work was significantly influenced by García Márquez's novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is large. In addition to Salman Rushdie and Toni Morrison, who have already been mentioned, we should also list Latife Tekin (*Dear Shameless Death*, 1983), Ben Okri (*The Famished Road*, 1991), Mia Couto (*Sleepwalking Land*, 1992) and Mo Yan, whom I will discuss in more detail later (cf. Siskind 2012: 857–58).

postcolonial variation of magical realism, which began with *One Hundred Years of Solitude*: "the narrative and interpretative horizon opened up by García Márquez by rendering visible the relation between the universality of (colonial, postcolonial, capitalistic) modern history, and the particularity of local forms of oppression" (2012: 855).

In other words, it is the universalistic dimension of magical realism in the context of the Global South that Indian readers find so fascinating in the texts of the Colombian writer, paired with the specific entanglement of reality and fiction, as the García Márquez translator Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee explains: "Take *The Autumn of the Patriarch*, for instance. The sweep of the novel startled me. At that time, Latin America had seven-eight military dictators who exercised ruthless power. It could be the story of any of them – their despotic rule as well as their helplessness" (Bhattacharyya 2014).

The success of Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981) is another factor not to be dismissed in García Márquez's success in India. In numerous reviews and interviews, Rushdie himself professes his admiration for his Latin American colleague; for example, in retrospect, he emphasizes the enormous impression that reading *One Hundred Years of Solitude* made on him and the feeling of familiarity that he experienced with it:

> And of course when I did read it, I had the experience that many people had described of being forever lost in that great novel. Unforgettable. I think all of us can remember the day when we first read Gabriel García Márquez; it was a colossal event. One thing that struck me, . . . was the incredible similarity between the world he was describing and the world that I knew from South Asia, from India and Pakistan. It was a world in which religion and superstition dominated people's lives; also a world in which there was a powerful and complicated history of colonialism; also a world in which there were colossal differences between the very poor and the very rich, and not much in between; also a world bedeviled by dictators and corruption. And so to me, what was called "fantastic" seemed completely naturalistic. (Rushdie 2007, cited in Siskind 2012: 860–61)

In scholarly circles, as well, we can observe that the reception of Gabriel García Márquez in India picked up speed after the publication of Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and the awarding of the Nobel Prize to García Márquez. In Hyderabad, for instance, the first "International Seminar on García Márquez and Latin America" took place in 1984.[110] Then, beginning in the 1990s, a broad

110 A selected collection of the lectures can be found in Bhalla (1987). Analogously to the developments after the Nobel Prize in 1982, after García Márquez's death the English and Foreign Languages University in Hyderabad organized a further seminar on his work, on March 25, 2015, entitled "Márquez and Literatures of India." The program can be viewed online at http://efluniversity.ac.in/images/Documents/schedule.pdf.

field of research into postcolonial fiction and magical realism opened up, within which García Márquez, along with Rushdie and some others – and particularly García Márquez's influence on Indian literature – played a prominent role.[111]

Gabriel García Márquez's Influences on Indian Culture

In Indian literature, or at least in its internationally circulating literature, the traces of García Márquez's literary aesthetic are truly remarkable. The connections between the works of García Márquez and Salman Rushdie, already mentioned above – especially in terms of magical realism – are well-known and have been intensively studied all around the world. Thus, for example, Deep Basu writes:

> And not to forget Salman Rushdie, whose first epoch making novel *Midnight's Children* and controversial novel *Satanic Verses* were heavily influenced by Marquez's Magic Realism. Rushdie once told in an interview that there was "a whole group of writers" including himself who, "broadly speaking, are thought of as a family," namely a Magical Realism family. (Basu nd)

Amitav Ghosh (*The Circle of Reason*, 1986) and Arundhati Roy (*The God of Small Things*, 1987) are also a part of this group. Comparisons between Roy's novel and García Márquez are as common as they are a part of the commercialization of Roy's work. Responding in an interview to a question about his literary models, Ghosh, for his part, names García Márquez as the most important source of inspiration for his work (Aldama 2002: 87).

But even beyond literature, in the narrower sense, the influence that García Márquez has had on Indian culture has been enormous – on the movie screen, for instance, it opens up possibilities of having recourse to an oral and magical tradition in order to draw critical attention to colonialism, imperialism, and their effects. Here Deep Basu, again:

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111 More recently, Christopher Warnes (2009) and Taner Can (2015) have also written about magical realism in the English-language postcolonial novels. Both of them extend an invitation to take a new look at magical realism, which they consider to be central to English-language postcolonial fiction, for example in the work of Salman Rushdie, Shashi Tharoor, Ben Okri, and Sly Cheney-Coker. On the question of the relations between Latin America and India, in particular, Susanne Klengel and Alexandra Ortiz Wallner have recently developed a new paradigm, which uses the label *Sur/South* to provide an alternative to the concept of the Global South, and which brings up the question of new Orientalisms (see Klengel and Ortiz Wallner 2016).

> Lijo Jose Pelliserry's film *Amen* has been described as the most successful experiment with magic realism in Malayalam cinema. He says that though India and Colombia exist in two different hemispheres, the sensibilities are almost the same. Indians also have uncountable legends and supernatural stories and lores borne out of fertile imagination, robust beliefs, large families and a culture of strong family and community bonds. (Basu nd)

In summary, the reception of García Márquez in India can be characterized as having gone through several stages. What prepared the ground was surely the slow dissemination of magical realism on a global level, advanced by the awarding of the Nobel Prize to Miguel Asturias in 1967, the year in which *Cien años de soledad* was published. When the novel was translated into English in 1970, worldwide success swiftly followed, and in 1971 it was already on the syllabus in India's comparative literature programs. As of the 1980s, the significant influence of Gabriel García Márquez's work on Rushdie and other "postcolonial" writers could be clearly seen. When García Márquez was awarded the 1982 Nobel Prize in Literature, that acted as a further catalyst for these developments, strengthening scholarly interest in García Márquez's work from a postcolonial perspective, which is linked with magical realism. This tradition lives on in countless Indian fiction writers who also have international visibility (beginning with Ghosh and Roy). And finally, when García Márquez died, in 2014, the interest in his work and the allusions made to it by Indian writers grew very intense once more.

IV.1.3 Reception in China

Gisèle Sapiro (2016: 84) writes that in countries in which the economic realm is subordinated to the political realm, and the institutions that determine cultural production and the organization of the intellectual professions are run by the state, such as in Fascist or Communist countries, the production and circulation of symbolic goods is highly politicized. This could be the headline for the reception of García Márquez in China.

Literary Boom in the 1980s: García Márquez as Figurehead

In the early 1980s, in the aftermath of the painful cultural revolution, the newly crowned Nobel Prize winner García Márquez became a literary and cultural figurehead for the "New China." The background context for this can be outlined very quickly: the 1980s marked an unusually successful and productive phase for literature in China, after the most important writers of 20th-century world literature had been translated and made accessible in China in the 1970s:

writers like Franz Kafka, James Joyce, William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, Kawabata Yasunari, Mario Vargas Llosa, and also Gabriel García Márquez, who had not fit, prior to that, into the framework of a model socialist literature. García Márquez's literature, in particular, gave great support to intellectuals. As one Chinese critic noted, "It was as though a pal from your own village had become a millionaire" (*Es como si un compadre del mismo pueblo se hubiera convertido en millionario*; Ye 2015: 29), because in China García Márquez was still considered a "third-world artist."

The Nobel Prize also marked the beginning of the major reappraisal of García Márquez's oeuvre in the Chinese literary marketplace: in 1982, Yiwen Chubanshe (Translation Publishers of Shanghai) published an anthology of his works from 1950 to 1981, and in 1987 two different versions of *El amor en los tiempos del cólera* were published, as well as the famous poetological interview *El olor de la guayaba* (The smell of the guava), with Plinio Apuleyo Mendoza (Ye 2015: 29). In 1983–84, interestingly, there was at the same time an official campaign directed against magical realism because of its anti-socialist "mind pollution." Because of that, China had to wait until 1994 for a complete translation of *Cien años de soledad*. And it was not until 2011 that the first authorized edition appeared on the market.[112] There were indeed two editions of the novel published as early as 1984 – one based on the Spanish original, and the other translated from the English (Ji 2015: 358) – but both of them were drastically shortened, as the novel had been criticized as being obscene and representing superstition (see Ye 2015: 29).

The 1980s was also when China's Xungen literary movement was formed, which looked to the roots of Chinese civilization and strove for an artistic style that would harmoniously combine tradition and modernity. Han Shaogong, one of the main protagonists of the Xungen movement, noted in 1985 that: "Literature has its roots. Literature has to be deeply rooted in the ground of the people's traditional culture. If not, the Tree of Literature will never bloom" (Han 1985: 2, cited in Ye 2015: 30). Chinese writers found points of connection in García Márquez's poetics, and a real enthusiasm for Latin American culture broke out (Gálik 2000: 161). But entirely new translation strategies had to be developed, because there was no established literary movement in China that could be compared with magical realism (Ji 2015: 358).

112 All previous editions of *Cien años de soledad* in China had appeared without the official permission of the author. Chen Mingjun, the head of the publisher Thinkingdom House, finally acquired the rights for a million dollars (see Flood 2011).

Mo Yan and Magical Realism in China

Mo Yan (b. 1955) is the most internationally recognized of the Xungen writers, and he won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2012. His 1986 story cycle 红高粱家族, *Hóng gāoliang jiāzú* (*Red Sorghum*), very closely follows García Márquez's magical realism narrative style. And in his 1996 novel 丰乳肥臀, *Fēng rǔ féi tún* (*Big Breasts & Wide Hips*), he not only deals with the obsessions of the protagonist that give the book its title, but also rewrites China's extremely varied 20th-century history. With a sharp eye for the peculiar, he deconstructs the official historiography of the Chinese revolutionary age (see Siskind 2012: 857). The events are reflected in Yan's Chinese counterpart to Macondo, the provincial universe of his fictionalized birth city, Gaomi, in the province of Shandong. The author confesses in an interview, "I was born here, I grew up here, my roots are here" (Ye 2015: 30). Thus, it is no coincidence that Mo Yan was recognized by the Nobel Prize committee for his "hallucinatory realism" (Flood 2012), which can be seen as an adaptation of the 20th-century Latin American poetics of magical realism. García Márquez's influence on Yan's writing can also be seen in the fact that the theme of center and periphery always enters into Yan's narratives.

Mo Yan once commented that his experience of famines during his childhood constituted a formative learning process for him, which he calls "thinking about life through my stomach and knowing the world through my teeth" (*pensar la vida con el estómago y conocer el mundo con los dientes*; Ye 2015: 30). The literary embodiment of such experiences of privation is similar in the work of Yan and of García Márquez, an embodiment that can be understood as the expression of a specific literary aesthetic of the Global South. This can be seen, for example, in literary stagings of the consumption of inedible things. In Yan's story "Iron Child," for example, because there is nothing to eat, the protagonist eats steel rods; in *Cien años de soledad*, meanwhile, unrequited love turns Rebeca into a geophagist, an earth eater. Fan Ye interprets this behavior as a transcultural posture of dissent and a silent protest by the marginalized against their oppressors (31–32).

In one of his "Confessions," Mo Yan records the poetological and ideological influence that García Márquez and Faulkner had on him (37), in the process, interestingly, categorizing García Márquez as a Western writer:

> In the year 1985 I wrote five novellettes and more than ten short stories. There is no doubt that where their world view and artistic devices are concerned, they were strongly influenced by foreign literature. Among Western works the greatest impact came from García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and William Faulkner's *Sound and Fury*.
>
> (Gálik 2000: 161)

IV.1.4 Remapping World Literature?

Of course there are other regions of the world and other cultural contexts in which aspects of the enormous global impact of García Márquez's literature can be examined and developed, for example Japan, South Africa, or Russia, where 2012 was declared the Year of García Márquez, in honor of his 85th birthday, and celebrated with a large variety of cultural events: for instance, seven metro cars, decorated with a larger-than-life portrait of the author and quotations from his writings, were driven around Moscow. The reception in the Arabic world, where *Cien años de soledad* was translated into Arabic from the French version in 1979, is also interesting. As with India and China, the two areas of the Global South that we have discussed, there are also a whole series of social, economic, and political problems that are shared between many Arab and Latin American countries and that encourage similar reading patterns and expectations. This is the basis for the cross-fertilization between local literary traditions turned postcolonial and globally spreading magical realism – especially in the form of *Cien años de soledad* – which enables the reproduction of political and cultural fractures and disruptions using the means of orality and the fairytale form. As a spotlight on the contemporary literature of the Arab world in this context, we can turn to *Les 1001 années de la nostalgie* (1001 years of nostalgia), by the Algerian Rashid Boudjedra,[113] a book that not only alludes, in its title, to *One Hundred Years of Solitude* as well as *A Thousand and One Nights*, but also adopts narrative structures from both of those works (see Jarrar 2008: 307; Rabia 1981: 96).

Gabriel García Márquez is without a doubt a world literary figure, one who finds the same kind of enthusiastic response in both the Global North and the Global South. If we look at the various reception filters, taken together, we can identify two intra-literary tendencies. First, for a successful reception in the Western world in the 1970s and 1980s, it was essential for a work to be able to be woven into a net of universalistic world literature that had been canonized in the West and, at the same time, for it to be Orientalist. Secondly, in the countries that stand here for a Global South, a specific shared experience and aesthetic related to the postcolonial situation also appears to be of importance. These two reception filters are also on display in the often-used explanation of the success of *Cien años de soledad* that what makes it convincing everywhere in the world is its unique combination of connectedness to the universal

113 Published 1979 by Denoël (Paris). In 1981, the novel was also published in Arabic (entitled *Alf wa´am min al-hanin*).

dimensions of modern history with the particularity of local forms of oppression (Siskind 2012: 855).

It is the combination of these aspects that provides an important indication as to why García Márquez remains predestined, to this day, to be the only writer from the Global South to appear in Western rankings of world literature (see Trojanow 2017). The reception of García Márquez as a now-irrevocable part of the Western canon of world literature can be understood as the reassurance that space has been made for the thoughts and memories of marginalized voices, without having to leave the framework of established Western thinking. This is the context in which we should understand Mo Yan's matter-of-fact categorization of García Márquez as a Western writer.

If we look at the canonization history of García Márquez as a world-renowned author, we can say that, in spite of a global differentiation, there is nevertheless a series of stages to be moved through, and one has to go past Barcelona, Paris, or New York to get to Mumbai, Beijing, and Casablanca. The denominating centers of the West and North continue to wield an enormous amount of power. This finding is also confirmed by the fact that the worldwide reception of García Márquez's work intensified following the two significant moments of his Nobel Prize award and his death.

But it also becomes clear that a South-South perspective has heuristic potential, which is nourished by the question of the possible existence of decidedly "Southern" aesthetics and forms of representation. This seems to be even more significant when we look at the literary modeling of shared historical experiences within the Global South, experiences that reach from colonial history through integration into the economic, social, and cultural transformation processes of global modernity.[114]

114 This perspective brings up the question of whether Gabriel García Márquez could not also serve as an example of how cultural products contribute to the creation and recreation of narratives of the global, thereby reaching a transnational readership. Compare Héctor Hoyos's reading of Borges and Bolaño (Hoyos 2015: 4).

IV.2 Octavio Paz's Path to Recognition in World Literature: Network Building and International Reception

If we ask ourselves what configurations made Octavio Paz, in turn, a world-renowned author, we will of necessity have to look at his networks and his extra-literary commitments, which made him not only a literary figure on the world stage but also a key intellectual figure. In this volume, we have already looked at Octavio Paz's work from a different angle: for the publisher Siegfried Unseld, Paz's work matched up almost perfectly with the European-defined criteria that the Suhrkamp Verlag applied to world literature in the 1970s and 1980s. A comparable course of reception became visible on an international level in 1990, when Paz, at the age of 76 and after a long literary and intellectual career, was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature. In the European media, this honor "was met with unanimous approval, thus making the image of the typical 'candidate' for the prize visible" (*eine einstimmige positive Kritik erntete und damit das Bild des typischen "Anwärters" auf den Preis sichtbar machte*; Bazié 1999: 83).[115] In the following, I will first take a detour into the translation statistics in order to illustrate some of the characteristics of Octavio Paz's international canonization, and then go on to show how decisive, in his case, his extra-literary activities were for his rise to worldwide literary fame. Of course, those extra-literary factors only worked in combination with the intra-literary ones. Octavio Paz, more than almost any other Latin American writer, is an absolute exemplar for these processes.

IV.2.1 On the Translation Statistics

Unlike with García Márquez, Paz's world literary career cannot be traced based on one or several outstanding works, which is why in Paz's case, we have put together overviews of the translation statistics for his entire oeuvre.[116] His rise to

115 Bazié examines French, German, and British responses to the Nobel Prize in Literature award, taking into consideration the extent to which literary critics in each of their national contexts support the award of the Nobel Prize to writers who are already very well-known, a criterion that applied to no other Nobel prize winner in the period studied, 1984–1994, so perfectly as it did to Octavio Paz (Bazié 1999: 83).

116 This research into the translation statistics, carried out in 2016 and 2017, was based on UNESCO'S Index Translationum (see http://www.unesco.org/xtrans/) as well as a multitude of sources for each of the various languages. I am grateful to Katharina Einert, Vicente Bernaschina Schürmann, Elena Sandmann, and Maxi Hoops for their research on this data.

Table 1: Translations before and after the Nobel Prize (through 2017).

Language	Number of Translations (Up to 1990)	Number of Translations (1991 Onwards)
French	39	16
English	35	16
Portuguese	18	11
German	17	12
Dutch	12	5
Swedish	9	3
Italian	8	13
Japanese	7	15
Turkish	6	9
Persian (Farsi)	4	10
Polish	3	7
Chinese	0	10

the stature of world literary figure does appear, at first, to have taken a classic path, in that it can be identified, in particular, through translations for the European and United States literary marketplace. This can be seen based on the languages into which Paz's work was translated, early and very often. The following tables provide a brief overview of the translation statistics in order to roughly trace this path. The first table shows the number of translated monographs before and after the 1990 award of the Nobel Prize to Paz, ranked by the languages into which his work had been most translated before 1990.

Table 2: Total Number of Translations, by Language.

Language	Number of Translations
French	55
English	51
German	29
Portuguese	29
Japanese	22
Italian	21
Dutch	17
Turkish	15
Persian (Farsi)	14
Swedish	12
Chinese	10
Polish	10

Aside from a few individual texts, Paz's work was first published in France, in the US/UK, in Brazil/Portugal, and in Germany before being translated into the languages of regions that were considered less decisive for the institutions of an international literary canonization in the second half of the twentieth century – such languages as Japanese, Turkish, Polish, and Chinese. When we look at the total number of translations (Table 2), therefore, those languages into which there had been relatively few translations before the Nobel Prize award and then more translations afterwards move higher up on the list, an effect that can be observed, for instance, in the Japanese market.

And what, then, is the relationship between these observations and the chronological sequence of the first translations into each of the respective languages? If we compare the year of publication of the first translations in various linguistic regions (Table 3), we will notice that Paz was translated into a large number of different languages very early; for example, he was already translated into Swedish in the early 1960s.

Table 3: Year of the First Translation into Each Language.

Year	Language	Original Title
1957	French	*¿Águila o sol?*
1960	Swedish	*La estación violenta*
1961	English	*El laberinto de la soledad*
1961	Italian	*El laberinto de la soledad*
1963	Turkish	*Piedra de sol*
1970	German	*El laberinto de la soledad*
1972	Portuguese	*Constelação*
1974	Dutch	*Piedra de sol* /*¿Águila o sol?*
1977	Japanese	*El mono gramático*
1981	Polish	*Poezje wybrane* [poetry volume collected especially for the translation]

Here it can be seen that in some linguistic areas the reception began relatively late but then intensified rather quickly, for example with Dutch and with Japanese, whereas for other languages, there were early translation efforts but they did not lead to a particularly large number of translations over the years. What meaning do these pronounced reception tendencies have, beyond mere statistics, in the context of Paz's career as a writer on the world literary stage?

IV.2.2 Writer–Diplomat–Scholar

Octavio Paz provides an exemplary case for showing how it was above all his extra-literary activities that helped him achieve international literary success. Some of the important components of that engagement included his ambassadorship in India, guest professorships (especially in the United States), and magazines that he founded.

Paz's international reception began in 1936, shortly after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, when he wrote the poem "No pasarán" in support of the Republicans (Volpi 2008: 13). This poem brought Paz attention around the world, and thanks to Pablo Neruda, who had read Paz's poetry collection *Raíz del hombre* (The root of man; 1937), Paz was invited to the anti-Fascist Second International Congress of Writers for the Defense of Culture (*II Congreso Internacional de Escritores Antifascistas*) in Valencia in 1937 (Volpi Escalante 2008: 15). After he came back from Europe, Paz founded the magazine *Taller* (Workshop; 1938–1941) along with Rafael Solana, Efraín Huerta, and Álvaro Quintero Álvarez. This magazine provided a forum not only for the poetry of Paz's generation but also for the Republican poets from Spain who had been granted asylum in Mexico under President Lázaro Cárdenas (1934–1940; Perales Contreras 2013: 41). This was the beginning of the literary and intellectual network between Latin America and Europe that Octavio Paz created. Among the Spanish writers published in the magazine were Manuel Altolaguirre, Ramón Gaya, Juan Gil-Albert, Emilio Pradós, Antonio Sánchez Budo, Luis Cernuda, Federico García Lorca, José Bergamín, and María Zambrano (Perales Contreras 2013: 42).

This network continued to grow when Octavio Paz spent a year in the United States on a Guggenheim Fellowship and then entered Mexico's Foreign Service and in 1945 was sent to Paris. During this time, Paz met Pablo Picasso, the surrealist poets Louis Aragon and Paul Éluard, the sociologist Raymond Aron, and also François Bondy, publisher of the liberal magazine *Preuves* (Proofs), in which some of Paz's texts were later to appear (Perales Contreras 2013: 57). During Paz's time in Paris, he also published some poems in the magazine *Fontaine* (Fountain; Perales Contreras 2013: 58). Fabienne Bradu and Philippe Ollé-Laprune add to this list more writers and intellectuals whom Octavio Paz met in those years and who later became friends as well as disseminators and translators of his work: Henri Michaux, Jules Supervielle, Georges Schéhadé, Jean Cassou, Raymond Queneau, Roger Caillois, Julien Gracq, Cornelius Castoriadis, Emil Cioran, and his first translators into French: Guy Lévis-Mano, Jean-Clarence Lambert, Carmen Figueroa, and André Pieyre de Mandiargues (Bradu and Ollé-Laprune 2014: 156). Paz also met other Latin American writers in Paris, however: Alejo Carpentier, Gabriela Mistral, José Bianco, Adolfo Bioy Casares,

Blanca Varela, Luis Cardoza y Aragón, and also the painter Fernando Szyszlo. Paz would end up remaining friends with and connected to some of these people for a long time (Perales Contreras 2013: 59). In the context of the UNESCO publication of an *Antología de la poesía mexicana* (Anthology of Mexican poetry), Paz met Samuel Beckett and helped him to translate the anthology into French; there was also an edition in English (Perales Contreras 2013: 60; Domínguez Michael 2014: 605).

After a few months in India, Japan, and Switzerland, Octavio Paz returned to Mexico in the fall of 1953. Thanks to the friendship that he had made with José Bianco while he was in France, Paz also began to work on the Argentine magazine *Sur* (South) during this time, one of Latin America's most important literary magazines (Perales Contreras 2013: 65). In 1962, he was named Mexico's ambassador to India, and he also became increasingly prolific in his writing. During these years he also collaborated on the magazine *Mundo Nuevo* (New world), which was published in France and headed by Emir Rodríguez Monegal.

In response to the Tlatelolco massacre in 1968, Paz resigned his ambassadorship. He traveled to Barcelona, then to France, and finally to the United States. There he was first in Pittsburgh, where he gave a lecture on Latin American literature. After that, he gave the Hackett Memorial Lecture in Austin, Texas, on October 30, 1969. In that lecture, he emphasized how absolutely he had distanced himself from the Mexican government and, as a result, that his role was now that of an intellectual who was independent of the state. Three months later, he taught literature in Austin and participated in the local poetry festival, along with Robert Duncan and Robert Creely. Shortly after he returned to Mexico in 1971, he went to England, where, on the recommendation of his friend George Steiner, he was named to the Simon Bolívar Chair in Hispano-American Literature at Cambridge University (Perales Contreras 2013: 111). Back in Mexico, Octavio Paz founded an independent cultural magazine, *Plural*. The development of this magazine increased and consolidated Paz's international stature and the extent of his networks.

IV.2.3 First Phase of Reception: France

In terms of Paz's reception in France, the dominant interpretations of his work in the 1950s saw him as the representative of a reformulated surrealism. Particularly in France, this kind of interpretation took as a reference point what was proper to oneself, going from there to demonstrate an openness to the new.

The first poems and essays of Paz's to circulate in French appeared between 1946 and 1956 (Bradu and Ollé-Laprune 2014: 156–57). The first translation of a

complete volume of poetry to appear in France was *Aigle ou soleil?* (1957; *Eagle or Sun?*; original Spanish title *¿Águila o sol?*). Over the next 13 years, publications of Paz texts in French included "Soleil sans âge" (in *Le Surréalisme, Même*, Nr. 5, 1959); *Le Labyrinthe de la solitude* (1959); *L'Arc et la lyre* (1965); *Liberté sur parole* (1966); *Marcel Duchamp, ou le Château de la pureté* (Geneva, 1967); *Deux transparents: Marcel Duchamp et Claude Lévi-Strauss* (1970); and *Versant Est, et autres poèmes, 1957–1968* (1970), as well as other essays and poems that appeared in a variety of magazines (Bradu and Ollé-Laprune 2014: 157–60). After those first 13 years, his work in France had proven to be not only a further development of surrealism but also a critical examination of it.

Claude Esteban's foreword to *Versant est*, "De la poésie comme insurrection" (On poetry as insurrection), is an important reference. In it, he shows how Paz's poetry and poetics became established in France in the 1960s (Bradu and Ollé-Laprune 2014: 87–101) and points out two important changes in their reception: a distancing from surrealism, and a reading of the poems in the context of the metapoetic and critical ideas presented in Paz's prose work. Thus, while Esteban does note similarities to surrealism in Paz's poetry, he also explains the point at which Paz distanced himself from André Breton and his group (Bradu and Ollé-Laprune 2014: 89). This distance, this "disagreement" (*desacuerdo*) with surrealism is documented using theoretical, metapoetic, and poetological observations from *El arco y la lira* (*The Bow and the Lyre*). It is interesting to note that from that moment forward, Octavio Paz's essayistic and critical work came more to the fore in his French reception than did his poetry.

We can see a parallel to this in Sweden: that was where, in 1960, after the first volume of poetry that appeared in French, the second translation anywhere in the world of a work by Paz into another language appeared. The translator of the volume, *Den våldsamma årstiden* (The violent season; original Spanish title *La estación violenta*), was the poet and travel writer Artur Lundkvist, who was also later well-known on the international literary scene because he was considered an influential member of the Swedish Academy; he belonged to the Nobel Committee for Literature from 1969 to 1986. Beginning with this poetry translation, with which Lundkvist, who was particularly interested in Spanish-language literatures, introduced Paz to the Swedish public at a very early point in time, we can observe a development that is comparable to that in France: in Sweden, there was an early interest in Paz's poetry and his version of surrealism that then, however, subsided around the same time as it did in France, when interest in Paz was transferred more towards his essayistic work; in Sweden, however, there were many fewer Paz translations overall than there were in France. The two poets Artur Lundkvist and Lasse Söderberg, who translated Paz's poems and essays in the 1960s and 1970s, underscore the particular

development that surrealism underwent in Paz's poetry. Lasse Söderberg explains that his motivation for translating Paz was above all a poetic one, which developed after doing some of his own reading in France and after meeting Paz in person (Zetterlund 2016: 176).

IV.2.4 Second Phase of Reception: The United States

Octavio Paz repeatedly testified to the importance of his numerous stays in the United States for his career as well as for his positive connection with the neighbors to the north. During his years in Cambridge and at Harvard, Julio Scherer, the head of the newspaper *Excélsior*, also invited him to found the cultural magazine *Plural*, for which he drew on his international contacts:

> His collection of national and foreign collaborators was exceptional, to begin with, because it included the broad network of contacts that Paz had woven together over two decades. Residing at Harvard for long periods, Paz sent contributions from the friends that he made or met again to the offices of *Plural* in Mexico. During that period, the magazine published pieces by the Americans Bellow, Howe, Bell, Galbraith, Chomsky, and Sontag; the Europeans Grass, Eco, Lévi-Strauss, Jakobson, Michaux, Cioran, Barthes, and Aron; the Spaniards Gimferrer and Goytisolo; the Eastern Europeans Miłosz, Kołakowski, and Brodsky; and the Latin Americans Borges, Bianco, Vargas Llosa, and Cortázar.[117]
>
> (Krauze 2014: 175)

In his book on Paz's network of contacts, *Octavio Paz y su círculo intelectual* (2013; Octavio Paz and his intellectual circle), Jaime Perales Contreras describes this phase and these networks in detail. In his description, it becomes clear how important the ramifications of his work with *Plural* were for Paz, because it connected him not only with very influential people in highly diverse fields of knowledge in the United States, but also with the scholarly debates and central innovative achievements of his time.

While *Plural* ensured widespread recognition for Octavio Paz as a poet and intellectual in Mexico and Latin America, it also allowed him to cement his position in the United States. Among the essay collections of his that were published in English in the 1970s, especially noteworthy are *The Bow and the Lyre*

117 "Su cuerpo de colaboradores nacionales y extranjeros era, de entrada, excepcional, porque recogía la amplia red de contactos que Paz había tejido a través de dos décadas. Avecindado por largos períodos en Harvard, Paz enviaba a las oficinas de *Plural* en México las colaboraciones de los amigos que reencontraba o hacía. En esa época publicaron los americanos Bellow, Howe, Bell, Galbraith, Chomsky, Sontag; los europeos Grass, Eco, Lévi-Strauss, Jakobson, Michaux, Cioran, Barthes, Aron; los españoles Gimferrer y Goytisolo; los europeos del Este Milosz, Kolakowski, Brodsky; los latinoamericanos Borges, Bianco, Vargas Llosa, Cortázar."

(Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973, with multiple printings in 1975, 1983, and 1991); *Alternating Current* (New York: Viking, 1973, second printing 1974; and further editions with other publishers: London: Wildwood, 1974; New York: Seaver Books, 1983; New York: Arcade Publishing, 1990); and *Children of the Mire* (Harvard University Press 1974, second printing 1975). In these texts, we see the development of Octavio Paz's political, poetic, and cultural ideas on modernity, a subject that would turn out to be central to the reception of his work in the United States but also in Europe. In Jürgen Habermas's essay "Modernity – An Incomplete Project" (original 1981 German title "Die Moderne – ein unvollendetes Projekt"), for example, he quotes from several of Paz's articles. For a whole series of writers, Paz's ideas functioned as a diagnosis of the situation of modernity in the world, especially with respect to the development of Western modernity outside of Europe.[118]

In 1976, the magazine *Plural* ceased publication, and Paz founded a new magazine, *Vuelta* (Return/revival/revolution). Unlike *Plural*, *Vuelta* was not financed by a newspaper but rather by advertising and private backers. In this magazine, which was much more strongly shaped by Octavio Paz himself than *Plural* had been, he could develop his own position in a unique way. These years, during which Paz once again lived in Mexico, also show in what very different ways Octavio Paz's intellectual and political position has been interpreted. This also has to do with a process of change in Paz himself, which is not always easy to get an overall sense of. Sergio Roncagliolo writes that "in a certain sense, Paz went through a process that was the opposite of Neruda's, something like George Orwell . . . The experience of the Spanish Civil War left him feeling rootless and confronted him with the moral ambiguity of all political factions" (2011). Enrique Krauze writes that he met Octavio Paz in 1976, and that the Octavio Paz whom he met was no longer a revolutionary – or at least not the same poet who had supported the Spanish Republicans in the 1930s and the Mexican students in the 1960s. Or was he?

> Or rather, I should say, he was, but in a different way: his critical passion . . . had turned against himself, not to negate the human aspiration to brotherhood, justice, equality, and liberty, but rather to cleanse it of the lie that dogmatic ideologies and totalitarian regimes had converted it into.
>
> This search for objective truth implied a reevaluation of democratic liberalism. Undertaking such a search in Latin America was not a simple decision: it did not have the glorious aura of Marxism, nor did it promise utopia. It proposed a tolerant, clear-headed

118 For a relatively up-to-date interpretation of Octavio Paz's work along these lines from the United States, see Greiner (2001), especially chapter 4: "A Critique of Modernity" (77–108).

> coexistence among people, an active and alert citizenry, the harbinger not of an ideal society but of a civilized life.[119] (Krauze 2014: 10)

Among leftists and students in Mexico, his ideas were met with rejection, but among liberal intellectuals in Latin America, Europe, and the United States, they were met with strong approval (Krauze 2014: 219). In the United States, in fact, Paz's literary, cultural, and political ideas were well received by liberal and conservative intellectuals both.

Without going further into the details of his reception in the United States and the awards he won there, we can say, overall, that the reception and dissemination of Octavio Paz's works in the United States in the 1970s and 1980s was fundamental to his development as a writer on the world literary stage. The translation of his poems into English was influenced by the interest of poets who were friends with him (including Charles Tomlinson, Eliot Weinberger, and Paul Blackburn). Paz's residencies at various universities in the United States, especially his visiting professorships at Harvard, gave him a scholarly authority that influenced the reception of his essays – published by such presses as Cornell University Press, the University of Texas Press, Viking, Grove, and Harvard University Press – around the world.

IV.2.5 Examples of Global Reception: Asia

Given that we are examining the degree to which Octavio Paz's literary success as a writer of world stature in Europe, Latin America, and the United States was promoted by his extra-literary activity and his networking, we should look here at two further places that, like France and the United States, became part of his biography and played a special role in his career: India and Japan. How was Paz received in each of these countries?

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119 "Mejor dicho, sí lo era, pero de otro modo: su pasión crítica . . . se volvía contra sí misma, no para negar la aspiración humana a la fraternidad, la justicia, la igualdad y la libertad sino para depurarla de la mentira en que la habían convertido las ideologías dogmáticas y los regímenes totalitarios.

Esa búsqueda de la verdad objetiva implicaba una revaloración del liberalismo democrático. Asumirlo en América Latina no era una decisión sencilla: no tenía el aura gloriosa del marxismo ni prometía a utopía. Proponía una convivencia tolerante y lúcida entre las personas, una ciudadanía activa y alerta, el presagio no de una sociedad ideal sino de una vida civilizada."

India: One-Way Reception

Octavio Paz lived in India for a long time: first in 1952, from January through June (when he was called to Tokyo), and then again as the Mexican ambassador to New Delhi from September 1962 through October 1968. One day after the October 2, 1968 massacre of peacefully demonstrating students in Tlatelolco, he resigned his office and left India, a country that without a doubt left an important mark on him and famously played a major role in his literary work.

The first edition of "Viento entero" ("The Wind from All Compass Points") was published in India in 1965 (New Delhi: The Caxton Press); this edition of the poem, which Paz prepared in tandem with the publisher, Om Parkash, is highly valued to this day. It was a small edition, of only 197 copies, which in 1965 circulated especially among Paz's friends in Mexico, the United States, and Asia (see Vargas 2014). This publication and the way in which it was distributed gives an indication that it was only particular circles that were reading Paz, while he was never read by a broad public in India. Although it would seem natural to assume that over the years, Paz's work could have met with a strong response, there is in fact no evidence of that. One place where one might expect to find such clues would be in the scholarly journal *Hispanic Horizon*, published by the Centre of Spanish Studies of Jawaharlal Nehru University, in New Delhi, whose first issue appeared in 1985. In the nine issues of the journal that appeared between 1985 and 1991, in addition to a lecture by Octavio Paz entitled "India and Latin America: A Dialogue of Cultures" (no. 3, 1986) – a lecture that he gave on November 13, 1985, as the 18th Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Lecture – there are only two items about him: an essay by R. S. Sharma on "The Indian Poems of Octavio Paz" (no. 5, 1987–1988) and a short note on "The Many-Splendoured Genius of Octavio Paz" (no. 9, 1991), written by Susnighda Dey on the occasion of the bestowal of the Nobel Prize in Literature on Octavio Paz.

Sharma's essay comments on a number of poems from *Ladera Este* (*Eastern Slope*), arguing that India was not just an inspiration for Paz's poetry but in fact a veritable rebirth[120] and the beginning of a period of poetic maturity. Susnighda Dey, for his part, emphasizes the importance of Octavio Paz for Spanish-language literatures. He stresses the great variety in his work, but also comments on Paz's difficult relationship with Latin American leftism. These remarks illustrate one of the possible reasons why Octavio Paz was not interesting to India's intellectuals and writers. In Germany, for example, in spite of the transition in his political position that we have described, his work continued for a long time to be received

120 Paz himself used the image of his own rebirth in India in talking about meeting and marrying Marie José Tramini in India (see Lambert 2014: 25).

in connection with leftist theory construction, along with that of other Latin American writers, but in India's postcolonial constellation it was apparently other writers, writers who unlike Paz represented an aesthetic and experience that was perceived as shared, who were found to be relatable. We can discover a hint to this trend by looking at which contemporary Spanish-language writers were much more strongly received in India than was Paz: Pablo Neruda, Gabriel García Márquez, Camilo José Cela, Federico García Lorca, César Vallejo, Juan Ramón Jimenez – these are the names that one repeatedly encounters when looking through Indian publications on Latin American or Spanish-language literatures from the second half of the 20th century. Even a later entry in *Hispanic Horizon*, "Octavio Paz in India" (no. 19, 2000), written by Edmundo Font who was himself also a Mexican ambassador, emphasizes once more how important India was for Octavio Paz but never mentions any possible influences of Octavio Paz on India.

We can also find six issues (from 1993–1995) of another journal from India, *Hispanística: Indian Journal of Spanish and Latin American Studies*, which did not mention Paz at all in those years. In the 1995 collection *Tierras lejanas, voces cercanas: estudios sobre el acercamiento indo-ibero-americano* (Faraway lands, nearby voices: Studies on the Indo-Iberian-American connection), although there is indeed one essay about Octavio Paz and India, there is no indication of any ways in which Paz's work was received in India. In most publications on the subject – for example the volume *Octavio Paz et l'Orient* (Lambert 2014; Octavio Paz and the Orient) – it is mostly the influence of Indian experiences on Paz, the influence of Eastern ways of thinking, aesthetics, and religion on his work, that are discussed.

Lines of Reception in Japan

The situation is completely different in Japan, where Paz lived for not quite five months in 1952 (June 5 to October 29), a very short time. Mexico had broken off diplomatic relations with Japan in 1942, and Paz was sent to Tokyo in 1952 as the chargé d'affaires in order to reestablish the embassy. This was his first position of responsibility in the foreign service. This can also be seen from Paz's correspondence from the previous months, which were published a few years ago (see Asiain 2014a: 57). Aurelio Asiain writes very knowledgeably about Octavio Paz's experience in Japan and his connection with Japanese literature, thanks in part to Asiain's own five-year experience working for the Mexican embassy in Tokyo (Asiain 2014a: 60). Asiain points out that the short time Paz spent in Japan, as well as the position that he held there, were not the right conditions to allow him to establish any real contact with Japanese culture or with the

people there, especially since Octavio Paz did not speak any Japanese.[121] But Asiain nevertheless indicates the ways in which, before Paz's stay in Japan and also, in particular, afterwards, he repeatedly sought out connections with Japanese writers and subjects: "My passion for Chinese and Japanese poetry predates my first visit to the Orient. It began in late 1945, in New York" (*Mi pasión por la poesía china y japonesa es anterior a mi primer viaje a Oriente. Comenzó a fines de 1945, en Nueva York*), Paz wrote on the occasion of the death of José Juan Tablada, whose library had first prompted Paz to occupy himself with those literatures (cited in Asiain 2014b: 14). This is a reference to the first of three decisive phases that shaped Octavio Paz's interaction with Japan: Paz's return in 1945 to reading Tablada's work, which Paz credited with having introduced haiku into Spanish-language literature (see Lambert 2014: 18n3). The second phase is his reading of Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki's studies of Zen Buddhism in Paris, around 1950; the third is his 1952 stay in Japan and his reading and rereading of Chinese and Japanese poetry in English translation (Giraud 2014: 335–36).

During his long and successful career as a translator, the only book that Paz ever translated in its entirety was the volume *Sendas de Oku* (*The Narrow Road to the Deep North*) by the Japanese poet Matsuo Bashō (Asiain 2014b: 12; see also Lambert 2014: 489). Pivotal poems in Paz's collections *Viento entero* (Entire wind), *Blanco* (White), and *El mono gramático* (The monkey grammarian) are influenced by Japanese literary traditions, along with a number of shorter poems in *Piedras sueltas* (Loose pebbles) and the haikus in *Árbol adentro* (The tree within). Although, when discussing Paz's biography as well as his Asian influences, Japan is often mentioned more or less in the same breath with India, Japan was of course politically and culturally very different from the Indian subcontinent. Paz himself reports, at the beginning of his time in Japan, that the youth in Japan was very strongly oriented towards the lifestyle of the United States, as well as reporting a kind of astonishment at how the Japanese populace dealt with him as a Mexican diplomat and especially with influences from the United States:

> Contrary to what I expected, I have not perceived any resentment against the North Americans. This could be a superficial impression, because the May Day incidents appear to prove otherwise. But I do not believe I am wrong in saying that I have found a state of mind that is very different from that to be found in Europe, especially in France: neither bitterness nor resentment. I do not sense any hatred of foreigners . . .. Nor is there anything to recall the atrocious misery of India – nor the reserve and distrust, almost always

121 On this topic, see also Paz's correspondence with Alfonso Reyes (cited in Lambert 2014: 20).

> masked as self-sufficiency, of the Hindu bureaucracy. The youth, from what I have seen in the streets, is very "Americanized." In no country is the influence of the manners and customs of our neighbors so visible.[122] (Cited in Asiain 2014a: 61–62)

If we put aside these political and cultural constellations and preconditions, which do of course strongly distinguish India from Japan, the question that remains is: How, then, was Paz's work received in Japan, in a concrete way? Are there any indications that, also in his role as a liberal writer who could no longer be categorized as belonging to a leftist movement, he was assigned a different status by the Japanese public than he was, say, in India?

It is very clear that, independently of any concrete local networks, Paz was received much more intensively in Japan than in India. The translation statistics alone already show that in a general overview of all translations before and after the Nobel Prize, Japanese stands at a remarkable fifth place among all languages in the world. Aurelio Asiain, in his above-cited work, *Octavio Paz en Japón*, where he quotes from four Japanese translators of Paz's work, gives some information about the context, commenting that when he invited Paz's Japanese translators to an event at the Mexican embassy in 2002, he had more than twenty such translators to choose from. The fact that there were so many translators was positive, on the one hand, because it made clear the enormous interest that there was in Japan for Paz's work, but on the other hand it could also be seen in a negative light because it was an indication that that work was divided up among so many publishers and translators in Japan. There was no one publisher that had continuously devoted itself to Paz's complete works (Asiain 2014b: 324).

In the fall of 1952, after his short stay in Japan, Paz left the country, mostly because his wife was ill and needed further treatment in Europe. When he came to Japan for the second time, a lot of time had passed, time in which he had also engaged with Japanese literature. In 1984, then, Paz gave lectures at Keio University and Sofia University, two of Japan's most prestigious private universities. Keiko Imai, a scholar who wanted to hear Paz's lecture in 1984, recalls that the auditorium of Sofia University in Tokyo was overcrowded: "Some

122 "Contra lo que esperaba, no he percibido rencor contra los norteamericanos. Esta impresión puede ser superficial, pues los incidentes del primero de mayo parecen demostrar lo contrario. Pero no creo equivocarme al afirmar que he encontrado un estado de espíritu muy distinto al de Europa, especialmente al de Francia: ni amargura, ni resentimiento. No se percibe odio al extranjero . . .. Tampoco nada que recuerde la atroz miseria de la India – ni la reserva y desconfianza, casi siempre enmascaradas de autosuficiencia, de la burocracia hindú. La juventud, por lo que he visto en las calles, se encuentra muy 'americanizada.' En ningún país es tan visible la influencia de las maneras y costumbres de nuestros vecinos."

people came from very far away, from Hokkaido and Okinawa. The lecture was supposed to begin at 6 p.m., but there had been people waiting since 6 o'clock in the morning. Paz is a very beloved author among the Japanese. He had not yet won the Nobel Prize" (*Algunos vinieron de muy lejos, de Hokkaido y de Okinawa. La conferencia se inició a las seis de la tarde, pero desde las seis de la mañana había público esperando. Paz es un autor muy querido por los japoneses. Aún no le daban el premio Nobel*; cited in Asiain 2014b: 323).

The contributions of the four translators allow us to deduce a few details about the history of Paz translation in Japan. Hidetaro Yoshida, a university professor, was already working on a Japanese edition of *El laberinto de la soledad* as early as the mid-1970s; the text was then published in 1979 by Shin sekaisha in Tokyo. Thus, when Norio Shimizu was commissioned by the Shinchosha publishing house to very quickly prepare a translation of *El mono gramático* in the mid-1970s, Paz was still an unknown writer in Japan[123] – at that point the only existing translation of the text was in French, but there was clearly a sense that it might meet with a certain amount of interest in Japan. It was only when the translator was already halfway through his work that he received a copy of the original Spanish-language version and realized how much had gotten lost in the transfer process from Spanish to French. Shimizu describes his own engagement with the French translation, including references to Hindu mythology and to Buddhism, and indicates what kinds of challenges were involved in the necessary cultural translation (Asiain 2014b: 325–26) before the text could be published in 1977.

Fumihiko Takemura, who translated *Los hijos del limo* (*Children of the Mire*) into Japanese in the early 1990s, also reports that the translation work was very stressful and challenging, and that it took three years before he was able to turn in the manuscript, but that that time was also very enriching to him as a translator. His words make it clear how thoroughly a translator has to internalize the poetology that Paz creates in order to be able to do this work. Fumihiko Takemura writes: "What surprised me, more than anything else, was the breadth of Octavio Paz's vision" (*Me sorprendió, ante todo, la amplitud de la visión de Octavio Paz*). He emphasizes what widely disparate realms of knowledge Paz brings together as well as the fact that the author succeeds in connecting very different cultural and historical points of view to central concepts in his own writing (Asiain 2014b: 326). Takemura goes on to explain: "As I was translating it, one characteristic of his style impressed me in particular: the parallel placement of nouns (nominal sentence construction), a device that in Japanese we call

123 Research could not confirm Norio Shimizu's recollection that *El laberinto de la soledad* was already available in Japanese when he started his translation work (cf. Asiain 2014b: 325).

meishi-koobun or *teigen-dome* . . .. This peculiarity of Paz's writing produces lean sentences, with no fat. It brings prose closer to poetry, with clear logic" (*Al traducirlo, me impresionó particularmente una característica de su estilo: la colocación paralela de los sustantivos [construcción sustantiva de oraciones], recurso llamado en japonés* meishi-koobun *o* teigen-dome . . .. *Esta peculiaridad de la redacción de Paz produce oraciones esbeltas, sin grasa. Acerca la prosa al verso, con lógica clara*; Asiain 2014b: 327). The way in which Paz's work is able to connect with Japanese tradition on various levels – in terms of both content and style – plays as important a role here as does the integration of the most varied traditions and perspectives into his poetology.

Finally, the descriptions by the most "current" of the Paz translators on the panel of experts, Fumiaki Noya (b. 1948) – who was a former professor at the Rikkyo University, Waseda University, and the University of Tokyo (that last one a state school), and who at the time of the conversation had just completed a translation of *Águila o sol* – are enlightening. Noya was very well known in Japan at that time as an expert on Latin American literatures, and in addition to Paz, he had also translated the work of Borges, Neruda, Cortázar, García Márquez, Vargas Llosa, Puig, and Bolaño. He says that his interest in Paz, and the particular energy that translating Paz gives to him, comes not so much from Paz's literature but rather from a character trait of Paz's himself that shaped his life and literature: "What encourages me is, more precisely, his courage. As much in his life as in his writing, Paz was very courageous. It is a courage that is in his language, but also in episodes of his life" (*Lo que me anima es, más precisamente, su valentía. Tanto en su vida como en su escritura Paz ha sido muy valiente. Es una valentía que está en su lenguaje, pero también en episodios de su vida*; Asiain 2014b: 332). He tells the story of an episode from the time when Paz was writing *Águila o sol* in Paris: when he met Jean Paul Sartre, whom many intellectuals had so uncritically fallen for, Paz, as a completely unknown writer in Paris, dared to accuse Sartre of writing about Spanish affairs and Spanish-language literature without knowing anything about them (see Asiain 2014b: 333). Fumiaki Noya explains his perspective on Paz like this: "Many people attacked and reviled him. But nevertheless, his posture was always consistent. What impressed me is this and, thanks to the presence of Paz, I feel that I can be at peace even when I am alone. This is what I feel when I dedicate myself to the translation" (*Fue atacado y denostado por muchos. Aun así, su postura fue siempre coherente. Lo que me ha impresionado es eso y, gracias a la presencia de Paz, siento que puedo estar tranquilo aunque esté yo solo. Eso es lo que yo siento al dedicarme a la traducción*; ibid.). Noya goes on to say that at the end of discussions about Paz, people usually say how exceptional his literature is ("they often end with people affirming that Paz is excellent"; *muchas veces se termina afirmando que Paz era excelente*; ibid.), but

that he has to say that Paz, too, has his limits, his mistakes, that should not be ignored. In a sense, he turns the reproach that Paz once made to Sartre back against Paz: "With respect to Japanese literature, Paz did not know very much, but he translated a few works" (*A propósito de la literatura japonesa, Paz no tuvo muchos conocimientos pero hizo la traducción de algunas obras*; ibid.).

In other words, one of Japan's most influential and knowledgeable translators of Paz's work does not stress the content-related connections of Paz's writing to Japanese literary traditions, as has often been done in scholarly contexts (cf., for example, Giraud 2014). Instead, what he brings out is the significance of the personal stance that Paz achieved in the context of his work and his career and which then flowed into his work, a kind of individual intellectual vision that also, for Noya, distinguishes Paz from other writers. Here, again, the extra-literary aspects are decisive in highlighting Paz's significance for the Japanese context.

IV.2.6 Octavio Paz as an Intellectual Figure in the Global Context and the Epochal Change of 1989–90

In conclusion, when we look at all of the prizes and awards that shaped Paz's career as a world literary figure, it becomes clear that the significance of the intellectual presence that is Octavio Paz, to which the Japanese translator Fumiaki Noya was referring, can also be seen from yet another, more comprehensive, perspective. The prizes that Paz won before 1968 were the Xavier Villaurrutia Prize in Mexico, in 1956, for *El arco y la lira*, and the Grand Prize of the Biennales Internationales de Poésie of Belgium's International House of Poetry, in 1963, for his poetry. After 1968, however, his international awards multiplied. Even aside from the ten honorary doctorates that were bestowed on him between 1973 and 1995, Paz was awarded sixteen international prizes and awards (including the Nobel Prize in Literature). Of these sixteen, which are ostensibly connected with literature, only three of them are primarily based on his poetry (the 1972 Flanders Poetry Festival Prize, the 1982 Neustadt Prize for Literature, and the 1985 Oslo Poetry Prize). The other thirteen pay tribute to his entire oeuvre and, especially, the role that Octavio Paz plays in society as an intellectual. Among these, I would particularly point out the Jerusalem Prize for the Freedom of the Individual in Society (1977), the Miguel de Cervantes Prize (1981), the German Book Trade Peace Prize (1984), the Alexis de Tocqueville Prize (1989), and of course the Nobel Prize in Literature (1990). And if we look at the rationales for these prizes and awards, insofar as they are available, as well as Paz's own speeches upon accepting them, we can reconstruct Paz as an intellectual "figure" that he himself created

and that, as could be seen throughout the various stages of his career, became a central foundation for the worldwide reception and interpretation of his work beginning in the late 1970s. In his speeches, Paz defended the position of poetry in the modern world, from a variety of perspectives, and he repeatedly emphasized how essential the practice of poetry is for the achievement of freedom, peace, and democracy. His statements on the occasion of his various prizes can also be connected with the respective world political contexts, for instance with the international tensions of the Cold War and the extreme polarization that took place in many countries in the 1960s and 1970s.

In his reflection on the awarding of the Nobel Prize in Literature to different Latin American writers, Santiago Roncagliolo writes about Octavio Paz: "He was the first [Latin American] honoree since Asturias who was not a committed revolutionary but was instead quite the opposite, a representative of liberal thinking." Roncagliolo also returns to the influence of Artur Lundkvist, the Swedish poet and critic who translated Paz so early on and then later became a member of the award committee for the Nobel Prize in Literature. According to Roncagliolo, Artur Lundkvist's appreciation of Latin American literatures also owed a lot to his leftist politics; I have already discussed the demand for a way to combine aesthetics with leftist theorizing, which allowed Latin American writers of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s to break through onto the world stage. Roncagliolo calls Lundkvist a "friend of Neruda's with Communist sympathies." Lundkvist died in December of 1991 after having been very ill for a while, and he was no longer an active member of the Swedish Academy when Paz won the Nobel Prize in the fall of 1990. Roncagliolo understands Lundkvist's death at that point in time "as a metaphor for a turning point" after which the much-vaunted revolutionary Latin America – to which Lundkvist had so dedicated himself and to which, according to Roncagliolo, the previous Latin American Nobel laureates in literature had belonged – no longer existed in the same form. The fact that Paz was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature at such a politically pivotal time, in 1990, when the Soviet Union was disintegrating, was "like a portent of the new world order" (Roncagliolo 2011). The choice of Paz, again according to Roncagliolo, turned out to be prophetic, because after the Berlin Wall fell, the liberal democracies in Latin America stabilized, except in Cuba, and the kind of dictatorial figures that García Márquez and Asturias had described were wiped off the map. This is the context for the comments that Isaac Bazié compiled by literary critics from France, Germany, and the English press on the award of the Nobel Prize to Paz: the key catchphrases are an "aesthetic cosmopolitanism" (*ästhetischer Kosmopolitismus*) and Paz's "profile as a citizen of the world" (*weltbürgerliches Profil*; Bazié 1999: 85, 93), which were consistently praised in the press and which provide the basis for the unusually

broad consensus in the Western press on a positive reaction to the Nobel Prize decision. A similar line of reception could be ascertained in Japan, whereas in India, it was not the same. In sum, we can say that through the connection of his literary work with his strong extra-literary activities, Paz had acquired a reputation as a liberal cosmopolitan intellectual who would be in a position to comment on the great political changes of the years that followed 1989–90, with their global consequences.

IV.3 Julio Cortázar's World Literary Success: Between Translation Work and Politics

To address the guiding question of this study, *How is World Literature Made?*, let us, finally, look at the work of one more writer for whom there is enough material available that we can address the global contexts of circulation processes, but who also forged his own path: Julio Cortázar.[124] Here again, using our findings on Paz and García Márquez, we can work out clearly definable factors that were responsible for the worldwide reception of Latin American writers.

Although Julio Cortázar is one of the Boom writers, and his novel *Rayuela* (1963; *Hopscotch*) is one of the best-known texts of the Boom in the world today, his international reception history did not begin with any kind of large sales success, as it did for García Márquez with *Cien años de soledad*. Fernando Estévez, the editor-in-chief at Alfaguara, counts Cortázar as one of the long sellers, authors whose sales figures are not so enormous over a short time span but who have a permanent readership (Guerriero 2001).[125] Peter Standish lists three contributing factors for Cortázar's significance: first, the quality of his literary output, especially of his short stories and of his novel *Rayuela*; second, the diversity of that output, which was often hard to categorize into traditional literary genres; and third, the fact that he became politically active, relatively late, and was a well-known and controversial character (Standish 2001: xi). How, then, did these various factors play into the circulation and reception of his work?

Rayuela, the Cortázar text that undoubtedly stands at the center of the worldwide success of his literature (even if it is not the only one), has been

124 I would like to thank Vicente Bernaschina Schürmann and Katharina Einert for important information in this context.

125 According to Estévez, as of 2001, the total sales of all of Cortázar's works that had been published by Alfaguara came to 200,000 (Guerriero 2001).

translated into more than thirty languages, in spite of the fact that the complex structure of the text, as well as Cortázar's linguistic inventions (including his invented language *el glíglico*), make the translation of his work so much more difficult. The publication dates of the translation allow us to trace the stages of Cortázar's reception as proceeding across the world from Argentina, to Paris, to the United States, and then to other countries. The fact that Cortázar was writing straight from Paris, even though his works were initially published in Buenos Aires, is an important part of the background for the fact that Paris played a more important role in the reception and diffusion of his works than did Barcelona. What follows is a closer analysis of the contexts for the international circulation history of his works, with a particularly close look at his letters. Because Cortázar himself collaborated on several of the translations of *Rayuela* into other languages, and maintained lively correspondences, this material is exceptionally valuable in his case and, at the same time, indicates which of the relatively early stages of his reception in Europe and the United States we will need to emphasize most. Determining the global dimension of his reception by, for instance, using the South-South axes as a guide, would be impossible or at least very inadequate, based on the material available on Cortázar.

If we look through Cortázar's correspondence beginning in the early 1950s or, more precisely, since the publication of *Bestiario* (1951; *Bestiary*), we can follow, in great detail, the way in which he tried to make his work known abroad using intensively cultivated contacts and friendships. At first, it was particularly his contacts in France (where Cortázar lived from 1951 on), Mexico, Argentina, the United States, and Germany that were noteworthy; then, starting in the early 1960s, Italy begins to be mentioned, and later there are increasing numbers of translations into languages that Cortázar himself did not speak.

From the early letters of the 1950s we can reconstruct how Cortázar built up his connections with translators. First he met a French-Uruguayan couple, Marta Llovet and Jean Barnabé, in Montevideo, and their friendship gave rise to the first attempts to translate his stories into French and have them published. After Barnabé's French translations failed, Cortázar found a new translator, Laure Guille-Bataillon. Then, with his eye on the United States, Cortázar used his contact with the poet and translator Paul Blackburn, who soon also began to function as a literary agent, to distribute his stories in the United States. The translator Edith Aron, whom Cortázar knew personally, first made his work known in Germany and was behind his success there. In the 1960s, in order to make *Rayuela* accessible in other languages beyond Spanish, Cortázar worked intensively not only with the French translator Laure Guille-Bataillon but also with Gregory Rabassa, who translated the novel into English; then Cortázar worked on the Italian translation, which was an extremely time-consuming

undertaking that completely occupied him at times. At one point he apologized to Rabassa for a delay, explaining that he had had to devote himself to some work on the French translation first. He wrote: "Then I had to take a break, because this book of mine is already starting to provoke revulsion in me just from opening and closing it all the time in order to respond to all the problems that these revisions raise" (*después tuve que descansar, porque este libro mío ya empieza a darme asco a fuerza de abrirlo y cerrarlo todo el tiempo para responder a todos los problemas que me plantean estas revisiones*; Cortázar 2012c: 119). The international success that *Rayuela* has enjoyed over the course of the years can be attributed not least to Cortázar's intensive efforts to assure that the translations would be up to the standards of the original.

IV.3.1 Julio Cortázar: Reception Paths

Cortázar achieved his first breakthrough between 1959 and 1960, with the almost simultaneous publication of *Las armas secretas* (*The Secret Weapons*) and *Los premios* (*The Winners*) with the Sudamericana publishing house in Argentina. Both books sold very well in Argentina. *Los premios* was then quickly translated into French, followed by inquiries from England and the United States. But Cortázar had to fight for years in order to get a collection of short stories published, in both France and the United States.

Rayuela appeared in Buenos Aires, also published by Sudamericana, on June 28, 1963. Michi Strausfeld had this to say about the significance of this work: "*Rayuela* changed an entire generation of readers and writers. It had the most influence that you can possibly imagine a book having because it changed the reading habits of an entire continent, plus Spain" (Rayuela *hat eine ganze Generation von Lesern und Autoren verändert. Es hat den größten Einfluss ausgeübt, den man sich von einem Buch nur vorstellen kann, weil es die Lesegewohnheiten eines Kontinents plus Spanien verändert hat*; quoted in Karnofsky 2014: 14). According to Rowan van Meurs, the novel is considered a pioneer of European postmodernism, putting an end to realism and its concepts. The use of the made-up language *el glíglico*, van Meurs writes, stands for resistance to a language that is nothing but a product of conventions. The anachronistic order and the fantastical elements that are present in *Rayuela*, among other texts, underscore the innovative character and pleasure in experimentation that mark Cortázar's works (van Meurs 2014: 14–15). Michael Rössner stresses Cortázar's development leading up to *Rayuela*:

> In the 1963 novel, the tendencies of all of the author's earlier works converge: those of the fantastical short story that wants to encourage the reader to question the apparent order of their environment through its "corrective disorder," as well as those of the longer narratives in search of a center or of a paradise called "the other."[126] (Rössner 2009: 216)

On the ability of the novel to connect to European cultural traditions, he writes:

> The completely disillusioned Argentine Oliveira is familiar with and quotes from Hofmannsthal's "Letter of Lord Chandos" as well as Musil's *Confusions of Young Törleß* and *The Man Without Qualities*; he is positioned within a cultural tradition that was taken over from Europe and in which the crisis phenomena of the early 20th century persist.[127] (ibid.)

Rössner draws parallels with surrealism and describes *Rayuela* as "an experiment that concerns the whole person, that marries the Latin American search for identity with the European discomfort with culture" (*ein Experiment, das den ganzen Menschen angeht, das lateinamerikanische Identitätssuche mit europäischem Unbehagen an der Kultur verbindet*; 217). What is of course very central to the reception of the novel is Cortázar's idea that a text is newly produced with every reader and that it only exists through active reading – the deconstruction of formal novelistic conventions.

In *Julio Cortázar en los Países Bajos*, van Meurs writes that Cortázar's works are very accessible to the European readership because those readers can easily identify with the characters, who come from metropolises like Buenos Aires or Paris, and that because the author had lived for a long time both in Argentina and in Europe, he was able to combine both worlds in a universal work (van Meurs 2014: 15). This brings up further questions: In what way was *Rayuela*, given this background, received in the United States, which is so important for an international circulation? Are there fundamental differences between the reception in the United States and the early reception in Europe? The question of further "specific" reception contexts, with their own reception paths, is of course also of interest.

In Nicaragua, for instance, the political positioning and the reception of the novel lined up: *Rayuela* was received very intensively there, especially among

126 "In dem 1963 erschienenen Roman laufen die Tendenzen aller früheren Werke des Autors zusammen: der phantastischen Kurzerzählung, die durch ihre 'berichtigende Unordnung' den Leser zu einem Infragestellen der Scheinordnung seiner Lebenswelt anregen will, ebenso wie der längeren Erzähltexte auf der Suche nach einem 'Zentrum' oder 'das Andere' genannten Paradies."

127 "Der völlig desillusionierte Argentinier Oliveira kennt und zitiert Hofmannsthals 'Brief des Lord Chandos' ebenso wie Musils Törleß und den *Mann ohne Eigenschaften*; er steht in einer von Europa übernommenen Kulturtradition, in der die Krisenphänomene des beginnenden 20. Jh.s fortwirken."

the Sandinistas. When *Rayuela* was first published, Sergio Ramírez, later a Sandinista revolutionary and then the vice president of Nicaragua, was a 21-year-old student. He reported:

> For my generation, *Rayuela* was our Bible for matters of behavior. *Rayuela* was not a political novel, but a novel that suggested dynamiting the bourgeois world, the world as it was then, the traditional values. And from that perspective, it was a very educational book. It stood for nonconformism. It was about breaking out of the old forms, which was what we Sandinistas also did. Acting differently. I think that in that sense, *Rayuela* was, aside from its literary value, a generationally specific reading for rebellion, a book of anarchistic suggestions, I would say. Because *Rayuela* only suggests a de-construction of the world, and not its rebuilding.[128] (Karnofsky 2014: 13)

We can presume that it is this nonconformist element that was also strongly recognized in other countries of the Global South. In China, for example, the book first appeared in 1996.[129] A few of the original Spanish-language editions in Latin America are crucial for understanding the circulation history of Cortázar's literature and certain related paths that its reception took.

IV.3.2 Precursor to Success in Argentina: Mexico

In spite of the resounding success he had in the 1960s, especially in 1963 with *Rayuela*, Cortázar was by no means so successful in Argentina to begin with. In his letters from the mid-1950s, he reports on great enthusiasm in Mexico for his literature, as well as on his attempts to become more widely published in Argentina. In a letter dated May 27, 1956, Cortázar wrote to Eduardo Jonquières, the Argentine painter, that the Mexicans were apparently so excited about him that they were even interested in his novel *El examen* (which was ultimately only published posthumously):

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128 "Für meine Generation war *Rayuela* eine Bibel, was das Verhalten anbelangt. *Rayuela* war kein politischer Roman, aber ein Roman, der vorschlug, eine Ladung Dynamit an die bürgerliche Welt zu legen, an die Welt, wie sie damals war, an die althergebrachten Werte. Und aus dieser Perspektive war es ein sehr lehrreiches Buch. Es stand für Nonkonformismus. Es ging darum, wie wir Sandinisten es ja auch gemacht haben, die alten Formen aufzubrechen. Sich anders zu verhalten. Ich glaube, in diesem Sinne war *Rayuela*, von den literarischen Werten abgesehen, eine generationenspezifische Lektüre der Rebellion, ein Buch von anarchischen Vorschlägen, würde ich sagen. Denn *Rayuela* schlägt nur eine De-Konstruktion der Welt vor, nicht deren Neuaufbau."

129 See the piece "Una Rayuela china" (A Chinese hopscotch) that appeared in May, 1996 in *La Nación*. For countries such as China and Russia, we do not have enough data to be able to draw broader conclusions, and so I do not go into that topic any further here.

> The other news is that in Mexico, they have been enthusiastic about that novel that you know (*El examen* [The exam]), and it looks like they are going to ask me to edit it. Although it is now already old, I would still like for it to be published; it would be an a posteriori vision of the Peronist hell. It's just that people won't believe that it was written earlier, but I suppose some friend will write a kind of prologue-certificate, solemnly swearing that he read the originals in 1950.[130] (Cortázar 2012b: 93)

Other comments and questions that Cortázar wrote to Jonquières on October 10, 1956 tend in a similar direction. At the end of the letter, Cortázar writes that he has heard that Goyanarte is publishing a good magazine in Argentina, in book form.[131] Cortázar says he would like to send a long story (probably "El perseguidor" ["The Pursuer"], because he keeps talking about it in the previous letters) to that magazine rather than to Mexico: "I have a *very long* story (60 pages!!) that I think is very good. I would like to publish it in Argentina, rather than in Mexico, where they are asking me for it" (*Tengo un cuento* muy largo [*60 páginas!!*] *que me parece muy bueno. Me gustaría publicarlo en la Argentina y no en México, donde me lo piden*; Cortázar 2012b: 109). In 1956, we can conclude from these descriptions, Cortázar was already a sought-after author in Mexico, while in Argentina he was still largely unknown. "El perseguidor" ended up being published in the *Revista Mexicana de Literatura* (issue 9.10) in 1957.

On May 9, 1957, Cortázar wrote to Eduardo Hugo Castagnino to report that his stories had been very well received in Mexico. He also mentioned that there were two Argentines who were important advocates of his in Mexico at that time:

> I was glad to hear that you liked my book. In Mexico it has been received extremely well – to such an extent that a book has just come out by two Argentines who live and teach there (Emma Speratti and Ana Barrenechea), dedicated to the literature of the fantastic in Argentina. They devote a chapter to each of Lugones, Quiroga, Macedonio, Borges, and your own correspondent. It is not a small honor, and it has left me stunned.[132]
>
> (Cortázar 2012b: 130)

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130 "La otra noticia es que en México se han entusiasmado con aquella novela que conoces (*El examen*) y parece que me la van a pedir para editarla. Aunque ya vieja, lo mismo me gusta que se publique; será una visión a posteriori del infierno peronista. Sólo que la gente no creerá que fue escrita antes, pero supongo que algún amigo escribirá una especie de prólogo-certificado, jurando solemnemente que leyó los originales en 1950."

131 The magazine is *Ficción* (a quarterly magazine book), published by Juan Goyanarte, whose first issue appeared in Buenos Aires in April/May 1956.

132 "Me alegró saber que mi libro te había gustado. En México ha caído más que bien. A un punto tal que acaba de salir un libro de dos argentinas que viven y enseñan allá (Emma Speratti y Ana Barrenechea), dedicado a la literatura fantástica en la Argentina. En sendos capítulos, se ocupan de Lugones, Quiroga, Macedonio, Borges y el que te escribe. El honor no es pequeño, y me ha dejado turulato."

IV.3.3 First Phase of Reception: Argentina

With the almost simultaneous publication of *Las armas secretas* and *Los premios* in Argentina in 1959 and 1960, Cortázar became known to a broader public for the first time, which then greeted the publication of *Rayuela* in 1963 with an enormous response. Cortázar commented on how important it was to him that the Argentine novel *Rayuela* was so successful there. According to a magazine survey of booksellers, there had not been a homegrown bestseller in Argentina for twenty years: "One of our own books comes out and for a few weeks it leaves Huxley and Moravia behind" (*Por ahí salga un libro nuestro y por unas semanas lo deje atrás a un Huxley o a un Moravia*), Cortázar wrote to his Sudamericana publisher Paco Porrúa on August 11, 1963 (2012b: 425–26). On September 13, 1963, he continued in the same vein, reporting that he constantly received letters from young people in Argentina "who feel as though they have been beaten to death after reading it [the book *Rayuela*] and who write me their bewilderment, their gratitude (mixed with hate and love and resentment)" (*que están como muertos a palos después de haberlo leído y me escriben su desconcierto, su gratitud [mezclada con odio y amor y resentimiento]*; 430). He described something similar to Ana María Barrenechea on October 21, 1963:

> Listen, ever since my book appeared in Buenos Aires, I have received and continue to receive a lot of letters, especially from young and unknown people, in which they tell me things that would be enough to make me feel justified as a writer . . .. They prove to me that *Rayuela* has the emetic qualities that I wanted to give it, and that it is like a fierce shaking by the lapels, a shout of warning, a call to the necessary disorder.[133] (2012b: 433)

Cortázar's first wife, Aurora Bernárdez, talked about this transition towards a younger reading public for *Rayuela*:

> Cortázar is a great storyteller. And then came *Rayuela*. The problem was that an author who had written stories was supposed to stick with that, as far as the readers of his generation were concerned. But there were also other readers, the young readers of the day. The response from them was unanimous. From the twenty-year-olds. And Julio wrote *Rayuela* for the forty-year-olds, but no, it was the twenty-year-olds who accepted it. And to this day, it is the twenty-year-olds who read it.[134] (quoted in Karnofsky 2014: 13)

133 "Mira, desde que mi libro apareció en Buenos Aires, he recibido y recibo muchas cartas, sobre todo de gente joven y desconocida, donde me dicen cosas que bastarían para sentirme justificado como escritor . . .. Me prueban que *Rayuela* tiene las calidades de emético que quise darle, y que es como un feroz sacudón por las solapas, un grito de alerta, una llamada al desorden necesario."

134 "Cortázar ist ein großartiger Geschichten-Erzähler. Und dann kam *Rayuela*. Das Problem war, dass ein Autor, der Geschichten geschrieben hat, aus Sicht der Leser seiner Generation

Cortázar himself told Paco Porrúa about some of the arguments that *Rayuela* provoked in Argentina. On October 29, 1963, he wrote to Porrúa:

> The funniest thing is the impressive mess that was put together in *El Escarabajo de Oro* [The golden beetle, a literary magazine published by Abelardo Castillo]. Before I went to Vienna, I received a letter from Arnoldo Liberman praising the book and calling me a beast, an animal, etc., the fashionable vocabulary for hiding emotion. Then a letter arrived from Abelardo Castillo, more moderate but equally enthusiastic. And now, on my return, I find a review by Mrs. Liliana Heker that throws me up against the wall, along with a letter from Liberman letting me know that he has resigned from the co-editorship of the magazine to register his disagreement with that review. In other words, as you can see, the spiritual aggression that the novel intended has begun to manifest itself in some places.[135] (2012b: 438–39)

In the context of an inquiry from the United States, he wrote to his United States agent and translator Paul Blackburn that *Rayuela* was "what you would call a scream in Argentina, a best-seller and a matter of scandal, literary rows and never-ending polemics" (2012b: 447).

IV.3.4 Second Phase of Reception: France

Cortázar's efforts to arrange translations into French began in the 1950s, after he had moved to Paris in 1951. On October 10, 1956 he told Eduardo Jonquières that he had received translations of his stories into French from Jean Barnabé – and in collaboration with Barnabé, Cortázar tried to get the story collection *Bestiario* published in France as well. Cortázar intended to propose these translations for publication to an editor at Plon (Cortázar 2012b: 108). But it turned out that his contact no longer worked at Plon.

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auch dabei hätte bleiben sollen. Aber es gab auch andere Leser, die jungen Leser jener Zeit. Bei denen war die Reaktion einmütig. Bei den Zwanzigjährigen. Dabei hat Julio *Rayuela* für die Vierzigjährigen geschrieben, aber nein, es waren die Zwanzigjährigen, die ihn annahmen. Und bis heute lesen ihn die Zwanzigjährigen."

135 "Lo más divertido es el despelote imponente que se armó en *El Escarabajo de Oro*. Antes de irme a Viena recibí carta de Arnoldo Liberman elogiando el libro y tratándome de bestia, animal, etc., el vocabulario a la moda para disimular la emoción. Después llegó una carta de Abelardo Castillo, más moderada pero igualmente entusiasta. Y ahora a la vuelta me encuentro con una reseña de la señora Liliana Heker que me sacude contra las cuerdas, y una carta de Liberman donde me anuncia que ha renunciado a la co-dirección de la revista en señal de la discrepancia con esa nota. O sea, como ves, la agresión espiritual que pretendía la novela empieza a manifestarse en algunos sectores."

Four days later, on October 14, 1956, Cortázar wrote directly to Jean Barnabé to bring him up to date. According to Roger Caillois, at Gallimard, to whom Cortázar had personally taken the stories, they had no chance on the French book market:

> [Caillois] told me that from an editorial point of view, he doesn't believe that there is anything that can be done, because when French publishers hear the word "short stories," they take out their revolvers. The readers here only like novels. But he added that, for now, he was going to read the translations, choose one or two of the stories, and have them published "in magazines."[136] (Cortázar 2012b: 110)

He also reported that he had sent the stories to Éditions du Rocher, in Monaco, because there was a woman who worked there who was apparently very interested in texts from the Río de la Plata area (ibid.). Then, on May 8, 1957, in a new letter to Jean Barnabé, Cortázar reported on the failure of their plan to get *Bestiario* published in French:

> I believe I told you in my last letter . . . that I had taken *Bestiaire* to Caillois. He returned it to me, saying that he thought the translations seemed to him to be "too close to the original" (sic). When I asked him to explain what he meant, he maintained that you had been "too faithful" in some things, departing from French in order to stay closer to the Spanish twist, the rhythm of the phrase, etc . . ..; apparently, people like Caillois consider that the author is not of any great interest: the only thing that matters is to save the GRRRAANNND French style at all costs, the French way of saying things . . . even at the risk of any kind of betrayal.[137] (125)

A few lines later, Cortázar explained that the biggest problem is not these adjustments to the translations but rather that this is a collection of short stories by an author who is unknown in France (ibid.). A week later, Caillois informed Cortázar that he had chosen the story "La noche boca arriba" ("The Night Face Up") to publish in an anthology. But for this anthology, the text was translated by someone else, namely René L. F. Durand (Cortázar 2012b: 126). In a letter to

136 "Me dijo que desde el punto de vista editorial él cree que no hay nada que hacer, porque los editores franceses cuando oyen hablar de cuentos sacan el revolver. Los lectores de aquí sólo gustan de las novelas. Pero agregó que, por el momento, iba a leer las traducciones, escoger uno o dos cuentos, y hacerlos publicar 'en revistas.'"

137 "Creo haberle dicho en mi carta anterior . . . que le llevé *Bestiaire* a Caillois. Me lo devolvió diciéndome que las traducciones le parecían 'demasiado apegadas al original' (sic). Cuando le pedí que me aclarara lo que quería decir, sostuvo que usted había sido 'demasiado fiel' en algunas cosas, alejándose del francés para mantenerse más cerca del giro español, del ritmo de la frase, etc . . ..; evidentemente la gente como Caillois considera que el autor no interesa gran cosa: lo único que cuenta es salvar a toda costa el GRRRAANNN estilo francés, la manera francesa de decir las cosas . . . aun a riesgo de cualquier traición."

Jean Barnabé dated August 7, 1957, Cortázar thanked him for his authorization to allow the translations to be checked and modified.

> In any case, against my will, I accept your opinion and the full powers that you have given me, so generously: the translations are already in the hands of Miss Laure Guille, a professional translator and excellent person, who has promised to read them and to compare them to the original. Since she likes my stories, . . . I think that she will give us a good perspective *à la française*.[138] (136)

After the double publication of *Las armas secretas* and *Los premios* in Argentina in 1959 and 1960, Cortázar then succeeded in publishing both volumes in France as well. He had been trying to get short stories published by Gallimard for nine years before *Les armes secrètes* came out with them in 1963, in the translation by Laure Guille-Bataillon. On April 20, 1963, Cortázar thanked his translator, with whom he had worked together closely, for the news that the book had been published, and asked for two copies. One of them, the letter makes clear, was for him to send to Jean Barnabé in Uruguay. Cortázar had dedicated the volume to him: Barnabé was the first person who had tried to translate Cortázar into French. *Les gagnants* achieved unexpected success in France. Against the background given here of the attempts to get the stories published, the success of *Les gagnants* in France should certainly also be viewed critically – it is notable, at the very least, that a text that can under no circumstances be considered one of the author's strongest initially met with a more positive response than did some of Cortázar's best short stories (for example "El perseguidor," which had since appeared in the short story collection *Les armes secrètes*). His text *Rayuela*, which was later celebrated as a novel of the century and which broke so thoroughly with narrative conventions, was also not at first easy to get accepted by his French publisher.

In a letter to Francisco Porrúa dated August 14, 1961, Cortázar first commented on the success that *Los premios* appeared to be having in France, while in Latin America there were still critical voices, such as that of Ángel Rama:

> Here, the French are still talking [with respect to *Les gagnants*] about Huxley, just because it was mentioned on the flap, which proves that "criticism" is not that different from one latitude to another. They have treated me with an almost tropical generosity; but luckily, in among all those compliments, I received Rama's review in *Marcha*, where he takes me

138 "De todos modos acepto contra mi voluntad su opinión y los plenos poderes que me da usted, tan generosamente: las traducciones ya están en manos de Mlle. Laure Guille, traductora profesional y excelente persona, quien ha prometido leerlas y cotejarlas con el original. Como le gustan mis cuentos . . . pienso que podrá darnos un buen punto de vista *à la française*."

> to task severely. The young man is trying to say something that I would like to understand better, but I have not really been able to figure out why he does not like the book . . .. If I go to Montevideo, I will buy him a cup of coffee at Tupinambá, and maybe I will learn something useful. Speaking of Montevideo, I got one of the best rewards of my life: a letter from Onetti in which he tells me that "El perseguidor" gave him a rough two weeks. For me, that's like telling me Musil or Malco[l]m Lowry, that category of planets.[139]
>
> (Cortázar 2012b: 248)

What was remarkable in those years was the circulation of *Historias de cronopios y de famas* (*Cronopios and Famas*). Although these prose pieces – with which Cortázar invented his very own genre – did not appear as a book in Argentina until 1962, they had already circulated to great success in France and in the United States in the form of magazine publications.[140] In addition to his reputation as a writer of fantastical literature, Cortázar now showed a humorous, somewhat Dadaist side that was to bring him many literary admirers. Michi Strausfeld wrote about the connection between these texts and the public perception of their author:

> It was during a concert in Paris that he got the idea for the "cronopios," those "wet green thingies": they are bristly, messy, and casual, dreamy and intuitive, poetic nonconformists, trusting optimists, humorous bon vivants, best friends, who can carry on philosophical nonsense dialogues. Many people see in them the author's vital alter ego. Cronopios never use lined paper for writing, and nor do they squeeze the toothpaste tube from the bottom to the top. For all of his fans, the cronopios became the epitome of Cortázar, of his view of the world.
>
> He himself is the greatest cronopio. He always looked like a lanky youth, in spite of his height (well over six feet), and he never seemed to age. His blue eyes were set wide apart, registering everything, as he listened modestly and carefully hid his encyclopedic knowledge. His guttural "r" was striking, a legacy of Brussels, as he said.[141]
>
> (Strausfeld 2014)

139 "Aquí los franceses siguen hablando de Huxley, simplemente porque se lo mencionaba en la solapa, lo cual prueba que la 'crítica' no varía mucho de una latitud a otra. Han sido de una generosidad casi tropical conmigo; menos mal que entre tantos elogios me llegó la nota de Rama en *Marcha*, donde me sacude severamente contra las sogas. El mozo quiere decir algo que a mí me gustaría comprender mejor, pero no he podido darme bien cuenta por qué el libro no le gusta . . .. Si voy a Montevideo le pagaré un café en el Tupinambá, y a lo mejor aprendo cosas útiles. Hablando de Montevideo, tuve una de las mejores recompensas de mi vida: una carta de Onetti en la que me dice que 'El perseguidor' lo tuvo quince días a mal traer. Para mí es como si me lo hubiera dicho Musil o Malcom Lowry, esa clase de planetas."

140 For example with Olympia Press, which put out a magazine that appeared monthly in Paris, London, and New York and had a circulation of sixty thousand copies (see Cortázar 2012b: 251).

141 "Während eines Konzerts in Paris kam ihm die Idee zu den 'Cronopien,' jenen 'nassgrünen Dingerchen': Borstig sind sie, unordentlich und lässig, verträumt und intuitiv, poetische

Historias de cronopios y de famas appeared in Argentina as a monograph in 1962, just a few months before *Rayuela*, on which Julio Cortázar had worked intensively for four years. In a letter dated October 29, 1963, he described to Paco Porrúa why he thought it was that getting *Rayuela* published with Gallimard was not as easy as one might have assumed given the history in France and also the urgent inquiries from the United States, for instance, about buying the rights to *Rayuela*:

> And now I move on to something very private, but you need to know about it because it surpasses everything in terms of being inconceivably distasteful. You know that Gallimard is considering *Rayuela*. You know that the original typescript of the book was submitted to Roger Caillois a year ago. You don't know (but now you do) that Caillois hasn't read it, for the simple reason that Caillois is not able to read Spanish; he can barely get beyond the syntactic rigor of a prose like Borges's. At any rate, Miss Monique Lange, who is in charge of Latin American editions and is fervent to the point of delirium about *Les armes secrètes*, has just told a close friend of mine that Gallimard probably won't publish *Rayuela* because Caillois has vetoed it.[142] (Cortázar 2012b: 441)

Cortázar then went on to speculate about the backgrounds and contexts for such a decision, bringing up literary as well as political aspects:

> Can you see the machine working? The first gear is engaged in B.A., of course, and it's called whatever you want, the group from the *Sur*, right-thinking people, guardians-of-correct-and-curseless-language; it is called, most of all, DELENDA EST COMUNISMUS [Communism must be destroyed]. Your nice anecdote of a few months ago about V. O. [Victoria Ocampo] meshes closely with this school. To say Caillois is to say V. O. And

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Nonkonformisten, vertrauensvolle Optimisten, humorvolle Lebenskünstler, beste Freunde, die philosophische Nonsens-Dialoge führen können. Viele sehen in ihnen das vitale Alter Ego des Autors. Cronopien benutzen nie liniertes Papier, um zu schreiben, drücken die Zahnpastatube auch nicht von unten nach oben. Für alle Fans wurden die Cronopien zum Inbegriff Cortázars, seiner Sicht der Welt.

Er selbst ist das grösste Cronopium. Immer sah er wie ein schlaksiger Jugendlicher aus, trotz seiner Grösse (fast zwei Meter), und er schien nie zu altern. Seine blauen Augen standen weit auseinander, registrierten alles, während er bescheiden zuhörte und sein enzyklopädisches Wissen sorgfältig verbarg. Auffallend sein gutturales 'r,' ein Erbe Brüssels, wie er sagte."

142 "Y ahora paso a algo muy privado, pero que es necesario que sepas porque sobrepasa todo lo inconcebible en materia de asco. Sabés que Gallimard tiene a estudio a *Rayuela*. Sabés que el libro, en original a máquina, fue entregado a Roger Caillois hace un año. No sabés (pero ahora sí) que Caillois no lo leyó, por la sencilla razón de que Caillois es incapaz de leer castellano apenas escapa al rigor sintáctico de una prosa como la de Borges. Pues bien, la señora Monique Lange, encargada de las ediciones latinoamericanas, y fervorosa hasta el delirio de *Les armes secrètes*, acaba de decirle a una íntima amiga mía, que probablemente Gallimard no editará *Rayuela* porque Caillois la ha vetado."

> from there, he obeys all the directives: they will have sent him Ghiano's review, adding that I am a dangerous Communist with sharp and bloody fingernails. And Caillois's voice is omnipotent at Gallimard, and his veto will sink the book *for ever and ever*.[143]
>
> (Cortázar 2012b: 441)

Here we see the resonance of the outsized role that individual publishers had, as gatekeepers in Marling's sense of the word, as well as the decision-making power that they wielded in deciding what literature would enter into worldwide circulation and thus have a chance to enter into the canon of world literature. And yet three weeks later, Cortázar denied the rumor that Roger Caillois had prevented the publication of *Rayuela* at Gallimard. Nevertheless, Cortázar's earlier thoughts on the matter are very telling with respect to the ways in which the novel was received, in connection with reservations about Cortázar's political (re-)positioning, which was also and especially influenced by his first trip to Cuba that same year. On November 20, 1963, Cortázar relativized what he had written earlier in a new letter to Paco Porrúa:

> After an informal conversation with Caillois in a hallway at Unesco, I believe that the gossip was exaggerated . . .. It seems that Caillois only said that *Rayuelo* wouldn't fit into "La croix du Sud," because it was too cosmopolitan in spirit, but that it would have to be published in the collection "Du monde entier." As you can see, this completely changes things. But that's not the end of it: two days ago, Caillois phoned me to ask me to come see him as soon as possible, and as if he wanted to demonstrate to me his undeniable goodwill, he told me that Claude Gallimard was wavering over whether to take the book, but that they also did not want to lose me. What were their reasons? Four readers' reviews, which included misgivings of various sorts, based on the typical system of presupposing what a novel is supposed to be and then being scandalized by the book's "oddities."[144] (456)

143 "¿Ves funcionar la máquina? El primer engranaje actúa en B.A. of course, y se llama como vos quieras, grupo de *Sur*, gentes bien pensantes, guardianes-de-la-literatura-correcta-y-sinputeadas; se llama, sobre todo, DELENDA EST COMUNISMUS. Tu amable anécdota de hace unos meses sobre V.O. engrana minuciosamente con esta escuela. Decir Caillois es decir V.O. Desde aquí el obedece a cualquier directiva; le habrán mandado la nota de Ghiano, con el agregado de que soy un peligroso comunista de afiladas y sangrientas uñas. Y la voz de Caillois es omnipotente en Gallimard, y su veto funde el libro for ever and ever."

144 "después de una entrevista casual con Caillois en un pasillo de la Unesco, creo que los chimentos eran exagerados . . .. Parece que Caillois dijo solamente que *Rayuela* no podía ir en 'La croix du Sud,' porque era demasiado cosmopolita como espíritu, pero que había que publicarlo en la colección 'Du monde entier.' Como ves, eso cambia completamente la cosa. Pero eso no para ahí: hace dos días me telefoneó Caillois para que fuese a verlo lo antes posible, y como si quisiera demostrarme su innegable buena voluntad, me dijo que Claude Gallimard vacilaba en tomar el libro, a la vez que tampoco quería perderme. ¿Razones? Cuatro notas de

On January 5, 1964, Cortázar wrote to Paco Porrúa about the negotiations between Sudamericana and Gallimard:

> I think that Sudamericana needs to tell Gallimard: a) that the translation is going to present serious problems; b) that the author lives in Paris and would be willing to monitor those problems; and c) that the author believes that, in order for this not to take two or three years, the book should be translated by *two* people, one of whom would be in charge of the "fictional" part and the other in charge of the "Morellian" part and the texts connected with that. I think that Sudamericana should firmly insist that Gallimard connect with me to adjust those aspects; otherwise, they will give the book to some random person, who is going to misunderstand it and take four years to deliver a bad translation, and we will all be the losers.[145] (471)

In December of 1965, Cortázar (2012c) reported to Porrúa that he was working with Laure Guille on the French translation, which would soon be finished (209), and on April 6, 1967, he wrote to him about the early stages of the reception in France: "As for *Marelle*, I want you to know that after two idiotic reviews, something reasonably good just came out in *Le Monde*" (*En cuanto a* Marelle*, quiero que sepas que después de dos reseñas idiotas, acaba de salir algo bastante bueno en* Le Monde; 400). Today, although it never achieved comparable international sales successes, Cortázar's *Rayuela* ranks along with García Márquez's *Cien años de soledad* as one of the best-known 20th-century novels by a Latin American writer. The text was a real hit with the French reading public in the late 1960s and became a cult book, beginning in Paris, for an entire generation of intellectuals.

IV.3.5 Third Phase of Reception: The United States

The book's translation history in the United States, like that in France, is marked by Cortázar's intense involvement in relationships with publishers and

lectura, en las que había reparos de diversa índole, basadas en el sistema típico de presuponer lo que debe ser una novela, y escandalizarse después por las 'rarezas' del libro."

145 "Creo que Sudamericana debe indicarle a Gallimard: a) que la traducción va a plantear serios problemas; b) que el autor vive en París y estaría dispuesto a supervisar los problemas que eso plantee; c) que el autor cree que, a fin de que no pasen dos o tres años, convendría que el libro fuese traducido por *dos* personas, una de las cuales se haría cargo de la parte 'novelesca,' y la otra de la 'morelliana' y textos conexos. Creo que Sudamericana debe pedirle redondamente a Gallimard que se conecte conmigo para ajustar esos aspectos; de lo contrario, le darán el libro a cualquier señor que lo entenderá mal, y tardará cuatro años en entregar una mala traducción, con lo cual saldremos perdiendo todos."

translators. In his study of author-publisher relationships, José Luis de Diego writes about Cortázar:

> Over and over, as we can see, Cortázar defended the contacts that he had created with publishers and translators, and that *double agency* in the business dealings often resulted in conflicts with Sudamericana. But, beyond those conflicts, it is clear that Cortázar chose well: Pantheon Books, Gallimard, Einaudi, Suhrkamp.[146] (2015: 177)

In 1959 and 1960, Cortázar wrote first to his French translator, and next to his then-translator in the United States, Paul Blackburn, who was also acting as his agent, to say that he had excluded their respective working relationships when his Argentine publisher offered to represent his interests on the international book market. At the beginning of 1960, he wrote to Blackburn:

> *By the way*, my publisher in Argentina offered to become my literary agent worldwide. I said yes, with the exception of the United States, and I gave them your name so that they know that you are my agent there. (I'll give you a piece of information, *I mean I'll give you a hint*: my publishers told me that Knopf is looking for Argentine writers who would be worth their time. Don't you think that *Las armas secretas* might interest them?)[147] (2012b: 213)

Even in the United States, it was not easy to find a publisher for a volume of short stories, although it was *Las armas secretas* that Cortázar, rightly, wanted to get published in English more urgently than, say, *Los premios*. And yet it was *Los premios*, which was first published by Sudamericana in 1961 and already appeared in its French translation in 1961, that was Cortázar's first work to be published in English in its entirety. *The Winners* came out in the United States in March of 1965, in the translation by Elaine Kerrigan. The novel received a number of reviews, both good and bad; its reception was apparently mostly filtered through its ability to connect to motifs within the European and North American tradition. *Los premios* enters into a tradition of fantastical literature (in the footsteps of Jorge Luis Borges), and Cortázar also takes up mythical traditions from world literature. Using the motif of navigation and ship travel,

146 "Como se ve, Cortázar defendió, una y otra vez, los contactos que fue creando con editores y traductores y a menudo esa *doble agencia* de los negocios trajo conflictos con Sudamericana. Pero, más allá de esos conflictos, es evidente que Cortázar elegía bien: Pantheon Books, Gallimard, Einaudi, Suhrkamp."

147 "By the way, mi editor en la Argentina se ofreció para convertirse en mi agente literario en el mundo entero. Acepté, con la excepción de los Estados Unidos, y les di tu nombre para que sepan que eres mi agente allá. (Te paso un dato, I mean I'll give you a hint: mis editores me dijeron que Knopf andaba buscando autores argentinos que valieran la pena. ¿No crees que *Las armas secretas* les interesarían?)"

which is also very present in contemporary literature, *Los premios* was able to be compared, for instance, with Sutton Vane's *Outward Bound* (which *Los premios* explicitly alludes to [Cortázar 1965: 116]) and Katherine Anne Porter's *Ship of Fools* – two works that were well-known and very present to readers in the United States (Chapman 1985: 20–22).

In spite of the existing translations into French (including *Les gagnants*, 1961), Cortázar had been largely ignored by literary critics in the United States, who therefore did not take into account the fact that in addition to *Los premios* he had also published a play (*Los reyes,* 1949) as well as three short story collections – *Bestiario* (1951), *Las armas secretas* (1959), and *Historias de cronopios y de famas* (1962) – and that he had a second novel out, namely *Rayuela* (1963). But this relative ignorance from the United States also gave him the advantage of being treated with the same curiosity as a debut author would have been (Chapman 1985: 19).

Cortázar also benefited from the fact that in the winter and spring of 1965, *Los premios* was extremely socially relevant in the United States. Given the civil rights marches and boycotts, the student uprisings, the emerging conflict in Vietnam, and the assassination of John F. Kennedy, many US citizens viewed their government skeptically and were afraid they were being manipulated or even brazenly lied to by it – something that was thematized and reflected in *Los premios* (20).

In the US book market, which was saturated with European books and movies, an author from Argentina was a welcome change, which increased the curiosity about Cortázar's work. At the same time, the way had been paved for him to some degree by earlier translations of Argentine works: *Black Valley* (1928), *Stone Desert* (1928), and *Peach Blossom* (1929) by Hugo Wast; *Nacha Regules* (1922) and *Holy Wednesday* (1934) by Manuel Gálvez; and *Fiesta in November* (1942) and *The Bay of Silence* (1944) by Eduardo Mallea. But of particular importance was the fact that Jorge Luis Borges was Cortázar's immediate predecessor in the chronology of publishing. Borges's *Fictions* and *Labyrinths* appeared only two years and *Dreamtigers* only one year before *The Winners* (Chapman 1985: 22).

The quality of the translation also played an important role in the reception of the book. Although Arnold Chapman criticizes a few of the idiomatic expressions, he is nevertheless convinced that after a new revision, *The Winners* "could stand among the best translations of Spanish American fiction" (36). *The Winners* received a broad-based response, with the first preliminary review, on January 15, 1965, in *Kirkus Service*, describing it as having "the suspense and serial ruminations of a top-rate philosophical creepy." *The New York Times* gave the book both its best (William Goyen) and worst (Orville Prescott) reviews. The rest of the reviews were situated somewhere between these two extremes (Chapman 1985: 23–26). In spite of the diversity of the reviews, they all contributed,

taken together, to Cortázar's becoming a deservedly established and recognized writer around the world, as Chapman summarizes it (36).

In a letter dated November 11, 1963, Cortázar wrote to Paul Blackburn about inquiries from the United States about the rights to *Rayuela*: "A Mrs. Cornelia Schaeffer, from Atheneum, has been chasing me all around Europe. The poor soul thought I was the master of my fate and even the pilot of my soul concerning copyright in the USA . . .. She seems to be awfully interested in *Rayuela*" (2012b: 447). He reminded Blackburn that Pantheon Books had priority in acquiring the rights. The letters also provide insight into Cortázar's collaboration with Gregory Rabassa, who translated the novel for Pantheon Books, where it was first published in English, in 1966. Rabassa, as is well-known, won the US National Book Award for Translation for his translation of *Hopscotch*.[148] He also later translated *Libro de Manuel* (*A Manual for Manuel*, 1978) and *62 Modelo para Armar* (*62: A Model Kit*, 1972).

Commenting on the translation process for *Hopscotch*, Cortázar wrote to Rabassa on March 15, 1965 that he continued to be very satisfied with Rabassa's work: "I still find it splendid," "so intelligent and so sensitive" (*me sigue pareciendo espléndido*; *tan inteligente y tan sensible*). He confessed that "Sometimes I am afraid to seem silly or pedantic to you, but I hope that taken together, my observations can be helpful to you" (*A veces temo parecerte tonto o pedante, pero creo que en conjunto mis observaciones pueden ayudarte*; 2012c: 48). He continued with an example: "In this case, and because chapter 36 is fundamental for me, I have insisted that you examine a few things. I think that you have gotten the tone perfectly, but because there are difficult passages, it was natural that in some cases you would make mistakes; I think that in each case, there are easy fixes" (*En este caso, y dado que el capítulo 36 es fundamental para mí, he insistido que examines unas cuantas cosas. Creo que has conseguido perfectamente el tono, pero como hay pasajes difíciles, era natural que en algunos casos te equivocaras; creo que todo tiene fácil remedio*; 48–49). On July 18, 1976, when he sent Rabassa back the final corrections, Cortázar also included, yet again, reflections on their work process, and expressed his thanks:

> In every letter I have written to you when returning pages to you, I have told you how grateful and appreciative I was for your work. Now that it is finished . . . I must tell you again how much it has meant to me to find a translator – who has also become a great friend – in whom I could have complete confidence.[149] (138)

148 https://www.nationalbook.org/books/julio-cortazars-hopscotch/.

149 "En cada carta que te he ido escribiendo cuando te devolvía las páginas, te he dicho cuánto apreciaba y agradecía tu trabajo. Ahora que está terminado . . . necesito repetirte lo

After this laborious, meticulous translation and reviewing process was finished and the book had been published, the publisher sent Cortázar a series of reviews in English, "some of them very good and intelligent, the rest of them as idiotic as expected. But, as always in the USA, even the most intelligent of them do not understand the book's metaphysical quest; they see it, praise it, and extol it as a novel, and nothing more than that. Finally, and it's a lot" (*algunas muy buenas e inteligentes, las otras esperablemente idiotas. Pero como siempre en los USA, ni siquiera los más inteligentes intuyen la búsqueda metafísica del libro; lo ven y lo elogian y lo exaltan como novela, nada más. En fin, y es mucho*; 280). Writing to Rabassa on July 30, 1966, he commented on the negative reviews of *Hopscotch* and made a key observation about the reception among critics in the United States:

> All of the many reviews of *Hopscotch* have one thing in common: that the reviewer was wrong and, like the one from *Time Magazine*, believed that you have to read the book twice. And it seems like my theory about female readers – remember? – is truer than it seemed. If a literary critic makes this kind of mistake from the beginning, what can we expect of the *common reader*?[150] (316)

There is, however, also a suspicion that arises here that some of the literary critics who followed were taking their cue as much from the reviews that had already appeared as from their own reading of the book – it would certainly be instructive to check whether a careful comparison of the various reviews confirmed this suspicion. Cortázar went on:

> I have to laugh at the frequency of these mistakes: at least 15 of the reviews start from this false assumption, and of course they found the book unbearable. I would feel that way too if I had to read it two times in a row but in a different order . . .. I am sorry that *Hopscotch* did not meet with a better reception, and you must believe that I mean it very seriously when I tell you that I am much sorrier on the Blackburns' behalf than on my own . . .. But there is something in this book that does not coincide with the *Weltanschauung* of American intellectuals; its metaphysics bothers them, and they see my technical experiments, which are more serious than they assume, as exhibitionism.[151] (ibid.)

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mucho que ha significado para mí encontrar a un traductor – que además se ha vuelto un gran amigo – en el que yo podía tener una total confianza."

150 "Las muchísimas críticas de *Hopscotch* coinciden todas en una cosa: en que el reviewer se equivocó y creyó, como el de *Time Magazine*, que había que leer dos veces el libro. O sea que mi teoría sobre los lectores-hembra, ¿te acuerdas?, es más verdadera de lo que parece. Si un señor crítico se equivoca de entrada en esa forma, ¿qué se puede esperar del common reader?"

151 "Me da risa la frecuencia de esas equivocaciones; por lo menos 15 críticas parten de esa base falsa, y naturalmente el libro les pareció insoportable. A mí también me lo parecería si tuviese que leerlo dos veces seguidas, aunque fuera en un orden diferente . . .. Lamento que *Hopscotch* no haya tenido mejor acogida, y puedes creer que soy muy sincero si te digo que lo

It is indeed very telling that the novel was so fundamentally misunderstood in this way, and that its formally innovative character was not understood, in the United States, of all places. From Cortázar's perspective, there was also something more about the "worldview" of the reviewers in the US that was a bad fit with his literature: he did not meet the expectations of North American literary critics for a Latin American writer. Cortázar continued:

> It bothers the American critics that an Argentine or a Mexican would have a universal, European spirit instead of writing about little ranches, *capitulín*, tequila, or sad cowboys; there are several of them who imply that. In other words, an Argentine has no right to be cosmopolitan. But what would Hemingway, Scott Fitzgerald, Gertrude Stein, or so many other Americans have done without the great European experience? It hasn't occurred to them to think about that when they accuse me of being a playboy of Frenchified literature. Anyway, let them go to hell, they're not who I'm writing for.[152] (ibid.)

For a long time, Cortázar felt unappreciated in the United States, and misunderstood as precisely this "playboy of Frenchified literature." He wrote something similar to Eduardo Jonquières in a letter dated August 3, 1966:

> By the way, I have read a lot of good studies of *Rayuela* over the last few months; in the United States, they have almost never understood the intention of the book and they accuse me of being a "Europeanizer." Subconsciously, the Yankees only want Argentines or Chileans to write novels with gauchos, mate, and *sweet señoritas*. As soon as we start to open the lens a little wider, they criticize us . . .. It's all very well, but I don't see why the masters from New York have to require localism in order to approve of what we do.[153] (320–21)

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lamento por los Blackburn mucho más que por mí . . .. Pero hay algo en ese libro que no coincide con la *weltanschauung* de los intelectuales americanos; les molesta su metafísica, y toman por exhibicionismo mis experiencias técnicas que son más serias de lo que suponen."

152 "A los críticos americanos les molesta que un argentino o un mexicano tenga espíritu universal, europeo, en vez de escribir sobre ranchitos, capitulín, tequila o gauchos tristes; hay varios que lo dan a entender claramente. O sea que un argentino no tiene derecho a ser cosmopolita. ¿Pero qué hubieran dado Hemingway, Scott Fitzgerald, Gertrude Stein, tantos otros americanos, sin la gran experiencia europea? No se les ha ocurrido pensarlo cuando me acusan de ser un playboy de la literatura afrancesada. En fin, que se vayan al carajo, no es para ellos que yo escribo."

153 "Por cierto en estos meses he leído cantidad de buenos estudios sobre *Rayuela*; en los USA no han entendido casi nunca la intención del libro, y me acusan de 'europeizante.' Subconscientemente, los yanquis quisieran que un argentino o un chileno sólo hicieran novelas con gauchos y mate y sweet señoritas. Apenas abrimos el diafragma, nos censuran . . .. Está muy bien, pero no veo por qué los dómines neoyorkinos tienen que exigirnos localismo para encontrar bien lo que hacemos."

The reactions to the British English edition, which was published in London in 1967, were remarkable. On March 6, 1967, Cortázar reported to Paul Blackburn that the British edition of *Hopscotch* had come out that week: "I had two reviews, one from *The Sunday Observer*, quite lousy (the fellow didn't read the book) and one from *The Sunday Times*, which I liked a lot" (382). Elsewhere, he wrote: "But I read the reviews: the one by Raphael is decent, even though he doesn't like the book . . .. The one in the *Observer* is a lousy mess" (*Pero leo las reseñas: la de Raphael es digna aunque no le guste el libro . . .. La del Observer es una cochina*; 384).

Overall, Cortázar came to the following conclusion (as he wrote in a letter to Sara and Paul Blackburn, dated May 11, 1967): "Did I tell you that the critical reception of *Hopscotch* in England has been more brilliant than in North America? There were fewer mistakes, and in general, the critics were better at perceiving some of the novel's intentions" (*¿Te dije que la crítica inglesa de* Hopscotch *ha sido más brillante que la norteamericana? Hubo menos equivocaciones, y en general los críticos percibieron mejor algunas de las intenciones de la novela*; 424). A critical analysis of the reviews and of Cortázar's assessments of the same would surely be helpful, even with the time that has since elapsed, in order to analyze these relationships in detail. But regardless, Cortázar's perception, as expressed in his *Letters*, once again underscores the fact that his literature was able to connect in Europe but that in the US, which was so important to the international circulation of his work, there were definite difficulties at first in terms of how literary critics received and transmitted his work. In writing to Paul Blackburn – and this is also very revealing for an understanding of some of the circumstances of those years – Cortázar summarized what he saw as the challenges of what had been required of him in the now-finished phase of intensive work on the text of *Rayuela* in various translations:

> It took me four years to write *Rayuela*; then there followed a year of managing and reviewing the American version; then, as soon as that was done, I had to deal with the task of taking care of the French version, which has now just come out in Paris. And then, when I thought I was only going to receive a review or commentary every now and then, I found myself dealing with the beginning of the Italian version, which represented another year of consultations, letters back and forth, please tell me how to say "idiotic shit" in Italian, etcetera. Luckily, I'm running out of known languages here.[154] (384)

154 "Cuatro años me llevó escribir *Rayuela;* luego empezó un año de control y revisión de la versión americana; apenas terminada, me cayó encima la tarea de cuidar la versión francesa, que acaba de salir en Paris. Y cuando sólo creía recibir de cuando en cuando alguna reseña o comentario, se me aparece el comienzo de la versión italiana, que representará otro año de

It has become very clear that Cortázar devoted himself intensely to collaborating with the translators in all of the languages that he spoke and, in addition, that he studied all of the reviews that appeared of his publications, including the translations. José Luis de Diego pointed out something crucial in this regard: He writes that Cortázar focused on the two aspects of translations and reviews in his behavior with respect to the book market, but that otherwise, he always dodged his publishers when it was a matter of advertising his books, of interviews, readings, etc. He also harbored a negative image of various publishers; given that, his relationship with Porrúa at Sudamericana – especially from 1959 to 1968 – which had grown positive and trusting, was an exception. De Diego writes: "We can affirm that the relationship with Porrúa ushered in Cortázar's successful period, beginning with the 1959 publication of *Las armas secretas*. However, his work as a publisher on Cortázar's work began in 1960, with the publication of *Los premios*" (*Se puede afirmar que la relación con Porrúa inauguró el período exitoso de Cortázar, a partir de la publicación, en 1959, de* Las armas secretas. *No obstante, su labor como editor, en relación con la obra de Cortázar, comenzó en 1960, con la publicación de* Los premios; 2015: 171). De Diego calls the years from 1959 to 1968 the "Porrúa period" (175); at the same time, however, "If we extend our gaze a little bit . . . we will notice that the successful writer appears to stubbornly turn his back on the market" (*Si extendemos un poco la mirada . . . advertimos que el escritor de éxito parece ponerse obstinadamente de espaldas al mercado*; ibid.). De Diego justifies this, on the one hand, with evidence that Cortázar refused to take part in literary contests (he did not want to submit to Emecé or Kraft, for instance). On the other hand, he writes, Cortázar also frequently refused interviews and promotional events. Porrúa once suggested that he give an interview to the weekly *Primera Plane*, because they so generously advertised his books. He finally agreed to the interview, as an exception, but then he again refused to sit on the jury of a literary prize that the newspaper awarded – according to de Diego, he didn't want to be part of that kind of give and take (cf. ibid.). De Diego concludes that:

> This attitude seems to contradict the generalization that some critics, including Ángel Rama and David Viñas, have made regarding the exposure of the Boom authors to the rules of the market, a phenomenon that is visible with writers such as Mario Vargas Llosa and Carlos Fuentes, but not with Cortázar, or at least not in what we have called the

consultas, carta va y carta viene, la prego di spiegarme come si dice 'turro de mierda' in italiano, etc. Menos mal que aquí se me acaban los idiomas conocidos."

> "Porrúa period." And yet while, on the one hand, he rejected what we usually call the mechanisms of consecration, there are two aspects connected with the market that constantly mobilized his attention.[155] (176)

These aspects are the two we have already named, namely Cortázar's work on translations and response to reviews.

IV.3.6 Further Contexts of Reception in Europe

Italy

While Cortázar, who at that point was already an internationally famous author, had difficulty getting his short story collections published in France and the United States at first, in Italy it was precisely his short stories that were received and promoted. Here, again, some individual letters are revealing. On May 19, 1962, for instance, Cortázar wrote to Porrúa to say that he was finished with *Rayuela* and with the new edition of *Final del juego* (with nine new stories). He complained that he had not yet received any copies of *Cronopios*. He also mentioned that Einaudi wanted the book: "I haven't received the cronopios . . .. I would so like to see how the little book turned out. Did you know that Einaudi is desperately asking for it? Also send me a copy that I can send to them from here" (*No he recibido los cronopios . . .. Quisiera tanto ver cómo quedó el librito. ¿Sabés que Einaudi lo reclama furiosamente? Mándame también un ejemplar para que yo se lo haga llegar desde aquí*; Cortázar 2012b: 275).

The first Cortázar volume to appear in Italy was *Le armi segrette*, which was published by Rizzoli in 1963. Cortázar gained access to Einaudi a little later through Italo Calvino. According to de Diego's description (2015: 178), a special arrangement was reached: in return for Einaudi publishing Cortázar, Minotauro, the publishing house that Porrúa had founded in 1955, published three volumes by Italo Calvino: *Le cosmicomiche (Cosmicomics)*, *Ti con zero (t zero)*, and *Le città invisibili (Invisible Cities)*.

On February 13, 1964, Cortázar wrote to Paco Porrúa that he had just received part of the Italian manuscript of *Los premios* and that he thought the translation

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155 "Esta actitud parece contradecir la generalización que algunos críticos, como Ángel Rama y David Viñas, han realizado con respecto a la exposición de los autores del boom a las reglas del mercado, fenómeno que es visible en autores como Mario Vargas Llosa y Carlos Fuentes, pero no en Cortázar, al menos en lo que hemos llamado el 'período Porrúa.' Pero sí, por un lado, rechazaba lo que solemos llamar mecanismos de consagración, hay dos aspectos relacionados con el mercado que movilizaron constantemente su atención."

was very well done (2012b: 491). In the fall of that year, on October 26, 1964, Cortázar asked Porrúa for written permission for Einaudi to publish all of his stories in one volume in Italy. In that letter, Cortázar also referred to Italo Calvino's role as a mediator:

> For a long time now, Einaudi (through Italo Calvino, who has become a fan of my stories) has been talking about putting together one single volume with all of my published stories. It appears that they made up their minds a month ago, and have entrusted the preparation of the volume to a young woman who has already translated *Los premios* (which will have to wait in line at Einaudi because, unusually for a publisher, they would rather release the stories first).[156] (2012b: 589)

Il gioco del mondo (*Rayuela*) appeared in 1969; for this volume, too, Cortázar collaborated with the translator, Flaviarosa Nicoletti Rossini.

Germany

Cortázar had contacts in Germany beginning early on, even though he himself did not speak German. He mentioned these contacts, among other things, when he was working towards getting his short stories published in Argentina, in the late 1950s. At the end of a letter to Eduardo Jonquières dated January 15, 1958, Cortázar addressed María Rocchi (Jonquière's wife) and wrote about his attempts to get *El examen* and various stories published in Argentina. In the process, he briefly mentioned that "La noche boca arriba" had been published in a magazine in Berlin and, apparently, also read on a radio show:

> The people at *Sur* did not take *El examen*, because Victoria [Ocampo] wrote to me in Paris to say that the quota for 1958 had been met and even exceeded. I still don't know whether Sudamericana is going to accept the four stories that I left with them; I am going on with my novel [*Los premios*], which I have told Eduardo something about, and I have just received a beautiful German magazine, published in Berlin, which includes the translation of one of my stories, "La noche boca arriba." Apparently it was read on the radio and left the "*boches*" [French insult for Germans] staring at the ceiling. As a Creole nationalist would say, it's time those gringos found out who we Argentines are . . .[157] (2012b: 147)

156 "Hace ya tiempo que Einaudi (por vía de Italo Calvino, que se ha vuelto un entusiasta de mis cuentos) está hablando de hacer un volumen único con todos mis cuentos publicados. Parece que hace un mes se decidieron, y le confiaron el montaje de la edición a una muchacha que ya tradujo *Los premios* (que deberá esperar turno en Einaudi porque, cosa rara en un editor, prefieren lanzar primero los cuentos)."

157 "Los de *Sur* no me aceptaron *El examen*, pues Victoria me escribió a París diciéndome que la cuota para 1958 estaba cubierta e incluso superada. Todavía no sé si Sudamericana aceptará los cuatro cuentos que le dejé; yo sigo con mi novela, de la que algo le digo a Eduardo, y acabo de recibir una preciosa revista alemana, editada en Berlín, donde figura la traducción de uno

In a letter dated February 15, 1958, Cortázar wrote to Jean Barnabé that his *Historias de cronopios y de famas* had also been read on the radio:

> My *Historias de cronopios y de famas* – which I don't think you know – were read on the radio in German yesterday, in Saarbrücken. I wonder how the audience reacted . . .. Apparently, I have success in Germany. A luxurious magazine in Berlin has published 'La noche boca arriba,' and they are talking to me about a possible edition in Zurich. That would be fun.[158] (2012b: 149)

The force behind this German success was the translator Edith Aron, who was one of the crucial figures for the early mediation of Cortázar in Germany, according to Katharina Einert.[159] Cortázar wrote to Paul Blackburn on March 27, 1959, to give him permission to publish his *Historias de cronopios y de famas* in *New Directions in Poetry and Prose*, no. 17 (1961), and in that letter he also mentioned Edith Aron, with whom he had had an affair in the early 1950s, as becomes clear from the letters, and with whom he then remained friendly: "Before I left Paris I saw Edith, who is doing very well. She is going to have my stories published by the Insel Verlag. How strange to find oneself translated into German! But people like my things in Germany; it must be because of a great-grandmother from Hamburg who is in my blood" (*Antes de salir de París la vi a Edith, que está muy bien. Me va a hacer publicar los cuentos en la Insel-Verlag. ¡Qué raro verse traducido al alemán! Pero mis cosas gustan en Alemania, debe ser por una bisabuela de Hamburgo que llevo en la sangre*; 2012b: 183).

Luchterhand was the first German publisher to bring out Cortázar's stories and his novel *Los premios* (as *Die Gewinner*), in Edith Aron's translation. Beginning on September 2, 1964, his letters started to discuss problems between Aron and Cortázar's German publisher, the Luchterhand Verlag (573–74). Essentially, the dispute had to do with the publisher's dissatisfaction with Aron's translation of *Los premios* as well as with her unreliability in the working process (Einert 2018: 178–184). At Suhrkamp, which started becoming interested in Cortázar in the 1970s, there was no longer any discussion about working with Aron (190).

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de mis cuentos, 'La noche boca arriba.' Parece que fue leído por radio y los dejó a los 'boches' mirando p'al techo. Como diría un nacionalista criollo, ya es tiempo que sepan esos gringos quiénes somos los argentinos . . . "

158 "Mis *Historias de cronopios y de famas* – que creo que ustedes no conocen – fueron leídas ayer en alemán por la radio de Sarrebrück. Me pregunto cómo habrá reaccionado el público . . . Parece que tengo éxito en Alemania. Una lujosa revista de Berlín ha publicado 'La noche boca arriba,' y me hablan de una posible edición, en Zürich. Sería divertido."

159 On this subject in more detail, see Katharina Einert's dissertation, *Die Übersetzung eines Kontinents* (The translation of a continent), especially her chapter on Julio Cortázar and his translations in West Germany (Einert 2018: 159–216).

In Germany, as elsewhere, Cortázar did not have any kind of quick success; instead, some of his volumes became long sellers over the years. In France, *Rayuela* had become a cult book for the intellectual avant garde, and of course that did not go unnoticed in Germany. Nevertheless, it took 18 years before the original edition of 1963 was finally able to appear in translation. In 1980, after years of waiting for the translation by Fritz Rudolf Fries, the book was finally supposed to appear at Suhrkamp. Unseld had just released the manuscript for printing when he read a scathing review of another newly released Borges book in Germany, which had been translated by Curt Meyer-Clason, one of the few other renowned translators of Latin American literature in Germany. The review so alarmed him that he gave the galley proofs of the Fries translation to his editor for Latin American literature, Wolfgang Eitel, to inspect again. After a three-week -long examination by Eitel and a consultation among Unseld, Eitel, Michi Strausfeld (Suhrkamp's agent for Latin America), and Elisabeth Borchers, a very experienced editor, the Carpentier translator Anneliese Botond was commissioned to reexamine the *Rayuela* galley proofs. This process is documented in the Siegfried Unseld Archive at the German Literature Archive in Marbach; it was surely one of the most complex translation processes in the entire history of the publishing house (see Einert 2018: 199–205). In August, 1980, Unseld wrote to Cortázar:

> I have now spoken with Ms. Botond, and her conclusions are pretty devastating for us. Apparently, the level and the tone of Fries's rendering aren't bad, but the translation is variable, sometimes brilliant and sometimes clumsy (she suspects what two other people had suspected before her, that a preliminary translator or a second translator may have been helping Fritz Rudolf Fries). But even if we accept the variability, the translation is just impossible because of all of the errors that would have to be corrected.[160]
>
> (Letter from S. Unseld to J. Cortázar, 08/27/1980, SUA)

Unseld then commissioned Anneliese Botond to revise the entire translation one more time. The German version, which unlike the French, English, or Italian ones was created without Cortázar's collaboration, thus required multiple revisions before it could finally appear. Overall, the history of Cortázar translations in Germany underscores the complexity of the task, although in this particular case several unfortunate circumstances certainly contributed to the fact

160 "Inzwischen habe ich mit Frau Botond gesprochen, ihr Resultat ist für uns ziemlich niederschmetternd. Das Niveau und der Ton der Übertragung von Fries seien nicht schlecht, aber die Übersetzung sei unterschiedlich, mal glänzend, mal holprig (sie vermutet, was vor ihr schon zwei andere Personen vermutet haben, dass vielleicht ein Vor-Übersetzer oder ein zweiter Übersetzer Fritz Rudolf Fries zur Seite gestanden haben). Aber selbst, wenn man diese Unterschiedlichkeiten hinnähme, unmöglich sei die Übersetzung wegen der Fehler, die korrigiert werden müßten."

that it took such a long time for *Rayuela* to reach the German-speaking reading public.

The Netherlands

In terms of the reception in the Netherlands of Latin American literatures as a whole, Rowan van Meurs has pointed out that until 1967, Spanish literature was more popular than Latin American literature, although García Márquez's *Cien años de soledad* (which first appeared in 1967), in particular, contributed to the reversal of this trend (van Meurs 2014: 28–29). *De Mierenmoordenaar* (*Historias de cronopios y de famas*) was the first Dutch translation of one of Cortázar's works, and also appeared in 1967. From that point on, more and more Latin American literature was translated, published, and reviewed (van Meurs 2014: 19–20). Between 1946 and 1985, Cortázar, with 16 translations of his work, was the third most popular Latin American writer in the Netherlands, according to van Meurs (29); the first two were García Márquez (with 18 translations) and Neruda (with 17).

The Meulenhoff press, in particular, devoted itself to the publication of Latin American works. Cortázar became one of Meulenhoff's regular authors after the first three translations went into reprints (van Meurs 2014: 35–36). Beginning in 1972, Barber van de Pol was the main translator of his works (van Meurs 2014: 36), and in 1975 she was awarded the Martinus Nijhoff Prize for her translation of *Rayuela*. Of the 41 reviews listed by van Meurs that appeared in the Netherlands of Cortázar's books, 13 of them were entirely positive, 13 mostly positive, and 3 mostly negative, while 12 reviews contained no clear judgment; none of them categorized the work under review as entirely negative (2014: 46). The Netherlands was among the countries of Europe in which Cortázar was published and read over the course of many years, very clearly also in the context of a growing interest in Latin American literature overall.

Spain

At this point, at the very latest, the question arises of why Cortázar was not canonized by way of Barcelona. After all, that was the first phase of the reception of so many other Latin American writers of that time. The first title of Cortázar's to appear in Spain was *Ceremonias*, in 1968, which brought together stories from *Final del juego* and *Las armas secretas*. More publications followed in the 1970s. But why so late? That is a question that José Luis de Diego asks (2015: 179), reporting that of course Cortázar also grappled with this question, and repeatedly asked Porrúa what was going on with Spain. Carlos Barral was interested in publishing Cortázar and tried to negotiate directly with the author, but Cortázar

pushed for the matter to be arranged in agreement with Sudamericana, his Argentine publisher. And Sudamericana apparently preferred either to publish Cortázar through Edhasa, their own branch in Spain, or else to arrange an exchange, whereby Sudamericana authorized Seix Barral to publish Cortázar and in return, Seix Barral gave Sudamericana the rights to publish Vargas Llosa, who was under contract with Seix Barral, in Argentina. In December of 1966, Cortázar wrote to Porrúa at Sudamericana:

> Don Carlos [Barral] has maintained his impenetrable silence that I told you about. As far as I'm concerned, he can go to hell, I am already completely fed up with this business with Spain, but the bad part is that I keep getting requests from there, and it really is a shame that because of the *Old Man*'s intervention, or whatever it is, there is an impasse where something should have happened a long, long time ago. It seems absolutely nuts to me that I am being published in Bratislava but not in Barcelona.[161]
>
> (quoted in de Diego 2015: 180)

De Diego quotes from Barral's journals to show that although he did want Cortázar on his publishing list (he worked on making that happen from 1964 to 1967), Barral did not personally appreciate Cortázar's literature:

> After a quick, cold supper, I returned to the table, I kept reading (still that big old novel by Cortázar), and I proofread Metropolitano without much conviction. During the day, like last night, I scribbled a few pages, but I didn't have much fun. Both that boring book of Cortázar's (I shouldn't have brought that book home) and the dog, whose needs I have not yet been able to find room for in my project, in the sluggish distribution of my time, have kept me from any noticeable efforts of concentration.[162]
>
> (Barral 1993: 119, quoted in Diego 2015: 180–81)

161 "Don Carlos se mantuvo impenetrablemente silencioso desde lo que te conté. Por mí se puede ir al carajo, esta historia con España ya me tiene harto, pero lo malo es que continuamente me llegan pedidos desde allá, y finalmente es una lástima que por la intervención del Old Man o lo que sea, haya un impasse en algo que hace ya mucho, pero mucho, que tendría que estar hecho. Que me editen en Bratislava y no en Barcelona me parece demencial."

162 "Tras una cena fría y rápida he vuelto a la mesa, he leído de nuevo (siempre ese novelón de Cortázar) y hecho sin mucha convicción una lectura de correcciones de Metropolitano. Durante el día, como anoche, he garabateado algunas cuartillas, sin divertirme demasiado. Tanto ese pelma de Cortázar (no debía haber traído ese libro) como el perro, cuyas necesidades no he acabado de ubicar en mi proyecto, en mi perezosa distribución del tiempo, me han impedido esfuerzos de concentración notables."

IV.3.7 Political Activism and World Literary Reception

I do not want to close this chapter without returning to the role that Cortázar's political activism played in the reception of his work in a world literary context – although the controversies over Cortázar's political activism can certainly not be dealt with in their entirety here. As Standish (2001) writes, political issues significantly increased Cortázar's visibility, but on the other hand, they also massively limited his reception: many intellectuals found Cortázar's positions, especially with respect to the revolutions in Nicaragua and Cuba, untenable, and he was strongly attacked. In his relationship with the French publisher Roger Caillois, we can see some of the distance that people in parts of the literary business maintained from a "Communist" like Cortázar. As Mario Benedetti writes:

> If he had yielded to pressure and joined the chorus of the detractors of Cuba and Nicaragua, two revolutions that he knew from up close and that he always defended, the biographies drawn up on the occasion of his death would certainly have included a whole list of top-notch international prizes. But Cortázar is leaving without any awards, at least in the Spanish-speaking world (the French did give a prize to the *Libro de Manuel*).[163] (2014: 272)

It is remarkable, and certainly not due to the literary quality of his various texts, that Cortázar won an award for *Libro de Manuel* but not, during his lifetime, for any other of his writings (the only other literary prize he won was the Konex Award for Excellence in the category of Letters in 1984, the year of his death).

In terms of his political activism, Cortázar's life can be divided into two parts (see Standish 1997). For the first forty years of his life, which he spent in Argentina, he himself said that he was "emphatically indifferent to the political situation" (*acentuadamente indiferente a las coyunturas políticas*). Although he felt "anti-Peron, he had never joined any political groups that could have led to any kind of political anti-Peronist activity" (*antiperonista pero nunca [se integró] a grupos políticos . . . que pudieran tratar de llegar a hacer una especie de práctica del antiperonismo*; see Prego 1985: 127–30, cited in Standish 1997: 466). At that time, his focus was on the aesthetics of literature, and he was willing to "sacrifice human values for the sake of formal perfection in his stories" (*sacrificar un poco*

163 "Si hubiera cedido a las presiones y se hubiera sumado al coro de detractores de Cuba y Nicaragua, dos revoluciones que conocía de cerca y que siempre defendió, las fichas biográficas pergeñadas con motivo de su muerte habrían incluido seguramente toda una nómina de premios internacionales de primer rango. Pero Cortázar se va sin premios, al menos en el área hispánica (los franceses galardonaron el *Libro de Manuel*)."

de valor humano en aras de una perfección formal). Nevertheless, there are stories in *Bestiario* (1951) and *Final del juego* (1956) that include political allegories. "Casa tomada," for instance, alludes to the decadence of a calcified bourgeois order, while "Las Ménades" contains a warning against the dangers of national gullibility, political fanaticism, and the inaction of those who know enough to keep a certain distance from social events (Standish 1997: 466).

Cortázar's attitude changed when he moved to Paris in the early 1950s, beginning his voluntary exile. The Cuban Revolution, along with a chain of other events, including the Vietnam War and economic crises, caused him to become politically active. He found something "cathartic" in his first trip to Cuba, in 1963, and in 1964, he published *Reunión*, one of his realistic stories, which is written from the point of view of Che Guevara and includes the protagonists Luis and Pablo, who are veiled versions of Fidel and Raúl Castro. Cortázar increasingly spoke out on political issues, took part in the Russell Tribunal on human rights, declared his opposition to the military dictatorships in Argentina and Chile, and supported the Sandinistas in Nicaragua (Standish 1997: 466). At the same time, Cortázar continued to publish stories that had no political undertones, and in the late 1970s, he found himself once again in debates, with Mario Vargas Llosa among others, over the role and responsibility of Latin American intellectuals. Cortázar defended the opinion that literature should not be subordinated to a particular purpose, that the author should always be free to write about whatever came to his mind ("he found intellectual dictatorship to be no less intolerable than the political kind" [*la dictadura intelectual no le resultaba menos intolerable que la política*; Standish 1997: 470]). As a result, he was strongly criticized by the militant left (467–69).

Libro de Manuel appeared in 1973 and was Cortázar's fourth novel and his most controversially discussed; it angered people on both the political right and the political left. While rightists accused him of betraying his bourgeois roots, leftists objected to his intellectualism and demanded that he write more colloquially. Outside of Latin America, the book was received more positively, but modestly. In France, however, as mentioned above, it won an important prize:

> The fire of controversy surrounding *Libro de Manuel* was rekindled in 1974, when it won the Prix Médicis, awarded annually in France for the best foreign novel. In a symbolic and very public gesture, Cortázar donated the prize money to the Chilean resistance movement. The award of the Prix Médicis, and Cortázar's donation of it, increased his already considerable visibility. (Standish 2001: 132–33)

In a 1974 debate in the Argentine magazine *La Opinión*, Osvaldo Tcherkaski, a reporter for France-Presse, claimed that Cortázar's donation of the prize money

to the Chilean resistance was evidence of France's fashionable interest in Latin American guerrilla movements and revolutions. Cortázar's friendship with Chile's ousted president, Salvador Allende, was also noted (Standish 2001: xvi, 12, 132–36). The intense debate was later continued in a special issue of *La Opinión*, with contributions from a variety of Latin American writers. There certainly could have been some political interest behind the prize, also given the previous reception of the work, which was mostly mixed.

In Argentina itself, Cortázar had many critics who wanted to deny him the right to an Argentine literary prize on the grounds that someone who had left his fatherland was not entitled to such an honor. The short story collection *Alguien que anda por ahí* (1977) was censored by the Perón government and did not appear in its entirety, because the story "Segunda Vez" referred to the disappeared in Argentina. Instead, the entire volume appeared, once again, in Mexico (Standish 1997: 467–68).

In summary, we can say that the political dimension certainly drew a lot of attention, and to some degree promoted the reception of Cortázar's work (for instance the reception of *Libro de Manuel* in France after the prize was awarded), but that to an even much greater degree, it apparently stood in the way of an appropriate recognition, for instance with respect to internationally recognized literary awards. Of course, there were other writers who also supported the revolutionary movements in Latin America or rejected the dictatorships of the Southern Cone and yet, at the same time, received important literary prizes. In his appraisal following Cortázar's death, Benedetti confirmed some of the dynamics that Cortázar had already addressed in his letters:

> It is true that other Latin American writers, who took political stances similar to Cortázar's, have been favored with important prizes, but there were several things for which he was not forgiven: first, for having started as a writer in a literary context (specifically, that of the magazine *Sur* from Buenos Aires) that was frankly conservative, even reactionary, but then later taking such definitely leftist positions; and then, being a writer of fantastical topics (magic, fantasy, and dreams often serve as a way to escape from compromising reality today), for linking himself so closely to very concrete grievances of the real world, to so many anguishes of poor America.[164] (Benedetti 2014: 272)

164 "Es cierto que otros autores latinoamericanos, políticamente afines a Cortázar, han sido favorecidos con importantes recompensas, pero a él no se le perdonaban varias cosas: por lo pronto que, habiéndose iniciado como escritor en un marco literario (concretamente, el de la revista *Sur*, de Buenos Aires), francamente conservador y hasta reaccionario, asumiera luego tan definidas posiciones de izquierda, y también que, siendo un escritor de temas fantásticos (la magia, la fantasía, los sueños sirven hoy frecuentemente para escabullirse de la comprometedora realidad), se vinculara tan estrechamente a muy concretas reivindicaciones del mundo real, a tantas angustias de la América pobre."

The Argentine writer Ricardo Piglia (2014) refers to another important point, namely the view that Cortázar is a better short story writer than he is a novelist – an opinion that apparently established itself among many of Cortázar's readers after his death. We should recall at this point what was already mentioned earlier, namely that Aurora Bernárdez had already talked about the forty-year-olds who still expected short stories from Cortázar during his lifetime, while *Rayuela* was enjoying success with a very young audience. Piglia does point to the strong connections linking short stories and novels – *cuentos* and *novelas* – as well as the fact that Cortázar is very strongly rooted in the tradition of the Argentine novel (including Macedonio Fernández, Leopoldo Marechal, Roberto Arlt, and Adolfo Bioy Casares). But in addition, he describes Cortázar's poetics, in the novels, as "a poetics of risk, a poetics of rupture" (*una poética del riesgo, una poética de la ruptura*), explaining:

> It seems to me that the opinion that Cortázar the short story writer is better than Cortázar the novelist tends to take that which is most conventional in Cortázar, not because Cortázar is not an extraordinary short story writer but because in his production as a writer of short stories he is closer to what we could call a kind of writing that meets the requirements of what could be considered a literature that responds to certain types of categories, that can be understood as literary common sense. Whereas Cortázar the novelist is basically the one who works with experimentation, rupture, schism, and who always goes a little beyond the ordinary.[165] (414)

Piglia emphasizes that these breaches of convention can of course also become conventionalized forms themselves, over time, but that it is important to recognize Cortázar's achievement in this context: "What I am saying is that Cortázar should be valued for this position, which always tended to put him in danger, in situations that were not safe from the point of view of what he had achieved as a writer, and that this poetics is more visible, more fully present in his novels than in his short stories" (*Estoy diciendo que Cortázar debe ser valorado por esa posición que tendía a ponerlo siempre en peligro, en situaciones no seguras desde*

165 "me parece que la opinión que es mejor el Cortázar cuentista que el Cortázar novelista tiende a tomar de Cortázar lo más convencional, no porque Cortázar no sea un extraordinario cuentista sino porque, en su producción, como narrador de cuentos está más próximo a lo que podríamos llamar una escritura que cumple con los requisitos de lo que puede considerarse una literatura que responde a ciertos tipos de categorías, que pueden entenderse como el sentido común literario. Mientras que el Cortázar novelista es el que básicamente trabaja la experimentación, la ruptura, el corte y que va siempre un poco más allá de lo que se puede considerar que es el lugar común."

el punto de vista de lo que él había conseguido como escritor, y que esta poética es más visible, es más plena en sus novelas que en sus cuentos; ibid.). Julio Cortázar's literary achievement, we could say in conclusion, in agreement with Piglia, can be seen precisely in the places where he is least accessible, which would seem to make a critical look at the processes of circulation all the more necessary in his case.

V Epilogue: (Not) a Summary. The Material and its Resistance

"The farmer reads what he knows – and García Márquez" (*Der Bauer liest, was er kennt – und García Márquez)*: that was what the writer Ilija Trojanow (2017) said as he looked through the canonical lists that had been published in Western media such as the BBC or *The Guardian* on the topic of world literature, and it is symptomatic, underscoring the paradigmatic character of Latin America in the context of questions of world literature. But the Latin American literatures are not only significant, in this context, as forerunners or representatives of literatures from the Global South in the traditional centers of denomination. In the last decades it has proven true again and again, even long after writers like Jorge Volpi or Alberto Fuguet brought out their manifestos rejecting the expectations of a specifically Latin American kind of writing: whenever there is a demand for a reorientation of world literary concepts in the practice of the business of literature, Latin America is never far away as a guide. One need only think of the wave of reception in the United States of Roberto Bolaño as a brilliant commentator on the derailed processes of globalization, focused on his novel *2666*; of the metaphysics of writing outside the motherland, formulated by Juan Gabriel Vásquez, producing a programmatic connection with writers like Cortázar, García Márquez, Fuentes, and Vargas Llosa; or of the enthusiastic reception of the young Aura Xilonen by Western publishers after she made her debut in 2015 with a novel that drives linguistic and national borders to the point of absurdity.

The aim of this study has been to draft a coherent picture of Latin American literatures with regard to the question of how world literature is actually "made" – using material evidence in order to make the very concrete processes of construction visible. From a literary-historical perspective, I have been able to show how strongly the concepts of detachment from traditional dynamics of center and periphery, and of following transnational perspectives, which are highly relevant today in the course of the debates over world literature in cultural studies, are anchored in Latin American literary production.

Using the example of the Suhrkamp publishing house, I was able to demonstrate, with regard to the paradigmatic character of Latin American literatures, how a Latin American writer was able to become a publishing benchmark, so to speak, for "world literature" from other linguistic regions: for the publisher Siegfried Unseld, Octavio Paz embodied the ideal world literary figure from the "Latin American Far West." By examining worldwide processes of circulation, we were able to trace (continuing with this example) how Paz, later to become a

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Nobel laureate, was canonized in the United States, Europe, and finally also in parts of Asia through the staging of his persona as a cosmopolitan intellectual who was in a position to comment on and act as a guide through the massive upheavals in the West in 1989 and 1990, while in other regions he was not accessible in that way.

The picture that has emerged over the course of this analysis of such processes of selection and circulation, using the example of Latin American writers, is also valuable in that it captures not only what is typical but also the unpredictable and less representative. It is only when we have constructed a context that can be bounded and derived from literary history but that is also not limited to individual writers that we can also address phenomena that would otherwise remain invisible. In other words: what is valuable here is also, and in particular, what I called the "resistant potential of the material" at the outset.

For one thing, there is the question of the political commitment of the writers, or the political aspects of their work, and the influence of that commitment or those aspects on the translation in other countries, the circulation, and the reception of their work. In many European countries, leftist intellectuals, for whom the Suhrkamp Verlag functioned in Germany as a forge for theories, definitely harbored literary sympathies for the literatures of the Latin American continent out of political interest, as can be seen, for instance, in the case of Darcy Ribeiro. But which of the Latin American writers in the Suhrkamp Verlag's program actually fulfilled these expectations, and in what way? First off, the image of Paz as a model world literary figure was, to begin with, a projection of his publisher's. Second, Elena Poniatowska, who could have been interesting, was initially not published at all or only very hesitantly. Finally, Julio Cortázar, who was highly valued by left-wing intellectuals particularly in the post-1968 period, must be recognized, in the final analysis, for an attitude and a poetics that were not very accessible – especially since the great literary prizes of the West and the honors of the Spanish-speaking world were denied to him.

To what extent, then, using concretely verifiable processes of circulation, also within the Global South, can we speak of a remapping of world literature in the sense of current positions in the debate over world literature that look critically at globalization? For the writers we have discussed here, we can say that, in spite of a global differentiation, the current model still involves phases in which Barcelona, Paris, and New York must be passed through in order to reach Mumbai, Beijing, or Casablanca. The denominating centers of the West and North continue to wield enormous power. This finding is also confirmed by the fact that the reception of García Márquez, for example, was intensified worldwide after he was awarded the Nobel Prize, and then again after his

death. At the same time, new axes, such as the examination of South-South dynamics and associated modes of reading, are indispensable as supplements to the traditional perspectives. In the process, this study has also shown how complex it is to explore contexts that have so far been studied either not at all or very little, for instance with regard to China. Nevertheless, it is necessary to continue to open up such paths, some of which we were only able to explore partially here. In order to achieve that, a great deal more, and more comprehensive, material must be acquired, in order to provide reliable foundations for research on world literature or the literatures of the world.

Last but not least, we are confronted with the question: how successful are attempts to dissolve unipolar or national literary perspectives in the practice of the literary market? One thing that has become clear is how deeply rooted these perspectives still are for actors in a global book market. Based on the examples from publishing houses that have played a central role in this study, however, we can observe that a change is occurring. It seems entirely possible that even from the point of view of publishing strategies, the genesis of literature can already be thought of in its transnational constellations, in agreement with what has been the consensus for literary scholars for at least twenty years now. During our *Kölner Gespräche zur Weltliteratur* in the fall of 2018, the publisher Jo Lendle reported that in recent years, as well as in the plans for the coming years, the Munich publishing house Hanser Verlag has been and will be publishing mostly writers who find themselves in an in-between state and can no longer clearly be assigned to a particular country of origin. The literary-critical reactions to Aura Xilonen's debut novel from Hanser also indicate that the writer has touched a nerve of her times, which is especially associated with her style, "in which there do not seem to be any boundaries between states and languages" (*in dem es Grenzen zwischen Staaten und Sprachen nicht zu geben scheint*; Freund 2019). Beyond such tendencies, the example of Samanta Schweblin at Suhrkamp has shown that conventional selection patterns in the literary business – such as for instance the insistent references, with every Latin American writer, to some kind of relationship with magical realism – although they are still effective in book marketing, now have less and less traction: that a writer's origins now play a smaller role in the marketing of literature. This development, which is also influenced by the new media, is far from complete and will of course require further research.

In the effort to undertake a critical, material examination of world literature, there is always the challenge of making sure that the complexity, contradictions, and resistance of the analytical results are not flattened or ignored in the interests of theorization. It even becomes possible, here, to think about new perspectives in potential but not yet implemented publishing decisions: the

history of someone such as Elena Poniatowska at Suhrkamp, for example, could not be told without a thorough knowledge of the criteria and patterns according to which Latin American literatures entered into the publisher's program.

When we take all of these examples together, we can see that Latin America can serve as a paradigm for concretely understanding world literary processes of selection and circulation – and this premise is not only valid in theory, but also applies to the practice of the literary marketplace. The preliminary data on such dynamics should be seen as an impetus for further research in this direction. In the course of looking at the global circulation of texts in this study, we have also been able to develop models according to which the circulation histories of writers from other contexts could emerge in a sharper light – although it should also be noted that even in the area of Latin American studies, it is only for very few writers (and overwhelmingly male writers, unfortunately) that there is enough material available to create such detailed analyses on the basis of concrete data and a worldwide reception history. Material approaches therefore offer both enormous opportunities and also – still to this day – very clear limits for research.

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