



BRILL

# World Literature as a Special Issue

*Francesca Orsini* | ORCID: 0000-0003-3608-005X  
SOAS, University of London, London, UK  
*fo@soas.ac.uk*

## Abstract

In India, as in other parts of the world, readers' exposure to the world and to world literatures largely took place through the pages of magazines, via translations, reviews, snippets of information, survey articles, and so on. The 1950s to 1970s were the golden age of magazine publishing in Hindi. Several Hindi magazines devoted to the short story not only showcased new literary talent but also invested much effort in translating writings from foreign literatures and from other Indian languages. Competing Cold War efforts to promote literatures from their rival spheres of influence produced a profusion of literary translations in magazine and book form, on which enterprising Hindi editors freely drew. This essay focuses on the spectacular special issues curated by Kamleshwar for two Hindi story magazines to explore the nexus between the short story, the magazine, and the world.

## Keywords

magazine – special issue – Cold War – Hindi – translation

If you were a Hindi reader in the decades of the 1950s to 1970s, chances are that you would encounter world literature not in the shape of books in bookshops or (more likely) on urban pavements or the libraries of foreign cultural centres. You were far more likely to encounter foreign writers and texts on the pages of magazines. What difference does this make – this special issue asks? As in book anthologies, world literature appears in most magazines either directly via translations or indirectly through critical or introductory essays, book reviews and snippets of literary news. This essay focuses on the magazine special issue, which arguably comes close to the anthology in terms of gathering a large number of literary texts and arranging them in particular con-

figurations/constellations – thereby producing and enhancing visibility. But whereas anthologies update or map a field (Tharu and Lalitha) and canonise, and their criteria of inclusion and literariness are subjected to great reflection, scrutiny, and debate (Lawall), magazine special issues are more ad hoc affairs. They betray a more hurried and provisional temporality, with pieces usually arranged for variety and variation rather than following a structured logic. In magazines, visibility and familiarity accrue gradually and recursively over time, and translations often follow the rhythms of book publication.

Even when it acknowledges that magazines come in many different formats, scholarship on magazines and world literature has tended to focus on avantgarde “little magazines,” reproducing the sharp distinction obtaining in the United States between small-scale literary magazines and large-scale commercial magazines.<sup>1</sup> Little magazines evoke small coteries of artists and intellectuals and the global phenomenon of modernism – as Eric Bulson puts it, “No little magazines, no modernism” (1). And although scholarship on global modernism now lays greater emphasis on local articulations (Eatough, Moody and Ross), it is nevertheless almost impossible to think of modernism without thinking of networks. Within the Cold War context, Elizabeth Holt has argued that the “near-simultaneous publication of essays, interviews, and sometimes stories and poems in multiple [CCF] journals and affiliated publications engender[ed] a global simultaneity of literary aesthetics and discourses of political freedom and commitment” (89), a global simultaneity that evokes Pascale Casanova’s idea of a Greenwich meridian of world literature that sets world literary time.

In India, too, “little magazines” have attracted greater critical attention for the postcolonial period (Nerlekar, Zecchini). But they were not the only, or indeed the main, platform through which readers accessed world literature. This essay focuses on world literature in mainstream Hindi story magazines of the 1960s and 1970s. *Naī Kahānīyān* (New Stories, New Delhi, new series 1959) and *Sārikā* (Starling, Bombay, 1960) were mainstream story magazines directed at ordinary readers. Under the editorship of Kamleshwar (1932–2007),

1 The term little magazine denotes a “noncommercial, experimental medium produced in limited quantities (usually under a thousand) for a select group of readers between 1910 and 1940” (Bulson 2). “But what do we do with the *rivista*, *revista*, *periódico*, *zhurnal*, *zeithschrift*, *dōjin zasshi*, *tidskrift*, *samizdat*, *foljóirat*, and *patrika*?” he adds. Boulson’s book charts the “plurality of shapes, styles, and formats around the globe both in response to modern advances in transport and communication technology, which enabled the formation of an increasingly interconnected (but not totalizing) global infrastructure” (3), but the core definition of the little magazine as “*decommercialized*, *decapitalized*, and *decentered*” (14) remains.

himself a celebrated writer, both magazines produced some truly spectacular special issues on the world story. These special issues made Asian, Middle Eastern, Latin American, and African literatures visible to Hindi readers for the first time, and produced a vision of the world – and of world literature – that was distinctly re-oriented towards the Third World and the global South – both terms that Kamleshwar used. These special issues clearly registered the ideological and geopolitical tussles of the Cold War and of decolonization – and the ideological and aesthetic debates between modernist Experimentalists and Progressives within the Hindi literary world. They also drew on the wealth of translations and printed literature produced by the competing Cold War literary internationalisms. At the same time, unlike *Quest* (1954, Bombay, ed. Nissim Ezekiel) or *Lotus* (1968, Cairo, ed. Yussuf El Sebai), neither *Nai Kahāntīyān* nor *Sārikā* were part of Cold War literary networks.<sup>2</sup> Their spectacular special issues reveal substantial curation and an original articulation of the aesthetics of Third World literature that shows how these tussles cannot be flattened into simple choices between modernism and social(ist) realism.<sup>3</sup> They also allow us to consider world literature – and the short story – in a different format and from a different perspective from that of the avantgarde little magazine and its networks. Nor were these stories published in book form afterwards.

Finding the original publications and the routes by which the editor sourced the stories has been tricky, since the original titles and sources are never mentioned (unsurprising in Hindi magazines), and approximate transliterations make it sometimes difficult even to identify authors' names. At times the source was a book anthology or a periodical digest of translations: it was therefore a *relay* of translations – rather than a network – that allowed the production of this expansive and bold vision of world literature in the first place. Thinking of relay rather than network emphasises the role of re-translations and the curatorial hand of the editor who selected and discarded, remixed and reconfigured existing translations. It also highlights, as Cold War literary studies have done, the importance of politics and political interest in the creation and circulation of world literature – whether of the “committed” or “autonomous” kind (Orsini, Srivastava and Zecchini).

2 For magazines connected to the CCF, see Scott-Giles and Lerg; for *Quest*, see Zecchini; for *Lotus*, see Halim, Yoon.

3 See Orsini, Srivastava and Zecchini; Kalliney “Modernism” and *Aesthetic Cold War*; Popescu.

## 1 Indian Magazines

Magazines had been the primary forum for Hindi literary writing and public debate since the early 1900s, so much so that a whole period in Hindi literary history is named after the editor of one of them, *Sarasvatī* (1900–1975).<sup>4</sup> Published by the Indian Press of Allahabad, which also brought out influential journals in English and Bangla (the *Modern Review* and *Prabāshī*, both edited by Ramanand Chatterjee), *Sarasvatī* exemplifies the beneficial synergy Indian colonial publishers established across languages and between periodicals and “stable” (*sthāyī*) literature: articles, stories, and poems first published in one journal were translated for a journal in a different language or reprinted in textbooks. Moreover, in this period the periodical was often a “cut-and-paste assemblage of publications from elsewhere” that relied on “the undated excerpt, essay or clipping,” as Isabel Hofmeyr (13) has argued. World literature, too, often appeared in periodicals in truncated and relayed forms, as snippets or gleanings (Orsini “World Literature”). Already in the colonial period, magazines invested in special issues hundreds of pages long. Some of them made important interventions on burning social or political issues, like revolutionary nationalism, untouchability, or the plight of widows, and courted controversy ... and colonial censorship (Orsini *Hindi Public Sphere* 268). Others marked special festive times in the calendrical year, like Durga Pooja or the New Year.<sup>5</sup> Special issues showed off the best writing, attracted new readers, and became collectable items that transcended the periodical’s ephemerality.<sup>6</sup>

By comparison with colonial periodicals, Hindi magazines of the 1950s were slimmer and more colourful objects, often with bright, attractive covers and plenty of illustrations and adverts, aiming as much at ordinary readers as at literary ones. In fact, Indian magazines in the 1950s and 1960s were many things to many different people: to some they were a *taiimpas* (timepass) on a long train journey. To writers, they were a lifeline and their main avenue for publication, but also their entry into the wider “family” of writers, readers, and critics. To lower-middle class provincial readers, magazines were ways of “being modern at no expense,” their glossy advertisements proxies for a consumption in which they could not indulge but about which they wanted to know.<sup>7</sup>

4 Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi, who edited *Sarasvatī* between 1903 and 1920; see Mody.

5 More recently, the Bengali fortnightly magazine *Desh* publishes a special issue in connection with the international Kolkata Book Fair, which has been running since 1976.

6 A few special issues of the Hindi monthly *Chānd* (The Moon, 1923) have been re-printed in facsimile editions in recent years.

7 “I learnt about many modern comforts from newspapers and advertisements. To the point

Magazines brought together commercial and literary print culture. As Kamleshwar put it, “big industrial families [*gharāne*] were running large periodicals. They needed big names as editors, that is, writers who were established and accepted in the literary field. It was an experiment [...] in the sense that the editor had to be not a journalist but a litterateur” (*Ādhārshilāen* 169). Both large and smaller magazines could be highly entrepreneurial in their literary activism, and some boasted very high circulation figures.<sup>8</sup>

Story magazines like *Kahānī* (Story, 1954, ed. Shripat Rai, Shyamu Sanyasi, Bhairavprasad Gupta), *Nāī Kahānīyān*, and *Sārikā* embraced literature as a democratic idea and aimed to provide plentiful, good and affordable reading material that would help form readers’ character and refine their tastes. *Kahānī*, for example, boasted of publishing “good stories at a good price” and offering “750 pages at Rs 3 per annum” (23). Story magazines invested in finding and nurturing new writers, and crucially helped make the story the key literary genre of the time (Mani). Kamleshwar later boasted that the New Short Story (*Nāī Kahānī*) had “prepared broad readership [*pāṭhakvarg*] that was middle and lower middle class [...] it was neither intellectual nor elite [*kulīn*] in its education nor illiterate, like workers and farmers” (*Ādhārshilāen* 125).

As in other parts of the world, the Hindi literary world in the 1950s and 1960s was marked by ideological-aesthetic struggles on the aesthetics and function of literature. The debate, hinging on ideas of aesthetic freedom versus social usefulness, had been going on since the late 1930s, and in the 1950s it morphed into a bitter dispute between Progressives and Experimentalists. Experimentalists accused the Progressives of turning literature into political propaganda and the Communist Party of having a stranglehold over writers. Progressives accused Experimentalists of wallowing in individualist and formal concerns, turning their backs on the urgent problems facing the country and society.<sup>9</sup>

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that I knew what air hostesses are like from their pictures. This was necessary to be modern at no expense. It what I wanted for my wife, too. That is, modern comforts were something one needed to know about,” says Santu Babu, the young clerk who is the protagonist of Vinod Kumar Shukla’s novel, *Naukar kī kamīz* (Shukla 17). All translations are mine unless indicated. Aakriti Mandhwani (“*Sarītā*” 1798) argues that, “the post-1947 commercial magazine marks the emergence of the reader as a burgeoning consumer;” see also Orsini “A Magazine for Everyone.”

8 Figures from the Audit Bureau of Circulations (a voluntary body publishers’ body formed in 1948) are very hard to come by: in 1960 the middlebrow Hindi magazine *Sarītā* had almost 30,000 subscribers and the Times of India Group’s Hindi weekly *Dharmayug* 60,000, which grew to 107,000 in 1964; in the same year, the Times of India’s *Illustrated Weekly of India* had 100,000 subscribers; Mandhwani *Everyday Reading* 117.

9 See Schomer for a brief account of these debates in English.

Inevitably, the dispute took on Cold War overtones: the foremost Hindi Experimentalist, Agyeya, was for a while closely involved in the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom (ICCF), whose magazine *Quest* championed Hindi Experimentalists.<sup>10</sup> In turn, Hindi Progressives scoffed at the ICCF's call for cultural freedom for its "infatuation with capitalist values" and denounced US cultural imperialism.<sup>11</sup>

At the same time, another struggle was going on within the progressive camp between hardliners within the Communist Party of India and those, like Kamleshwar, who supported a broader United Front (*samyukt morchā* in Hindi) of democratic forces.<sup>12</sup> As one of the main proponents of the New Short Story (Nāi Kahānī), which forged a subtle realism that sought to grasp the "new conditions" (*nāi paristhityān*) and contradictions of postcolonial Indian society through a truthful and uncompromising depiction of the inner motions of individuals and relationships, Kamleshwar chafed at the attempts of both modernist and progressive critics to claim the New Short Story for their camp (*Ādhārshilāen* 80, 106–112). He rejected the identification of progressive literature with a particular milieu or set of characters. Rather, he spoke of the "struggle" (*saṅgharsh*) individuals faced, whether they were workers, impoverished intellectuals, young women, or the middle- or lower-middle class. He did not reject social realism but identified it with the older generation of writers like Premchand, and he believed that the complexity of the postcolonial condition required a subtler touch. At the same time, he rejected purely modernist experimentations with form, but also the criticism that the highly introverted Nāi Kahānī stories were disconnected from social reality. As we shall see, this calibration of aesthetics and ideology came into play in Kamleshwar's selection of world stories and his narrative of the trajectory of the story in other postcolonial countries.

10 It was he who organized its first conference in India in 1951 and edited the weekly *Thought*; see Zecchini.

11 Rai 75; "We are in favour of the writer's freedom-relative-to-society [*samāj-sāpeksh svād-hīntā*] and consider any kind of socially unrelated solitary freedom a synonym of derangement [*ucchrinkhaltā*]" (76).

12 Kamleshwar, who declared himself a lifelong Marxist, had come to politics in the 1940s through the Revolutionary Socialist Party, a group that supported violent action against colonial rule and later merged into the left wing of the Congress Socialist Party; though a Progressive, he did not belong to the Communist Party (*Ādhārshilāen*).

## 2 Hindi Magazines and World Literature

Almost all Hindi and English magazines in these highly internationalist decades, when “news of Africa and Latin America were available like the local news of your street or neighbourhood” (Kamleshwar *Ādhārshilāen* 94), tried to do world literature in some way, with whatever resources they had, playing out different meanings (and axes) of world literature, often at the same time: world literature as the classics; the best of (a particular genre); the latest or contemporary; the politically like-minded. Some magazines tried to be systematic about covering world literature but then filled a country’s slot with random pieces, like the “Stories from around the World” in *Caravan*. Other magazines published critical articles, and book reviews but no translations.<sup>13</sup> *Quest*, the journal of the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom, carefully calibrated geopolitics and world literary time by combining reviews of Chinese classics and of recent books by non-Communist Russian and eastern European writers with articles on American and Western European authors and letters bringing the latest news from Paris, Rome, Bombay, and so on. The literary and art magazine *Kalpanā* (Imagination, 1949) tried to telescope the distance between Hindi readers and world literature by translating the lengthy and detailed surveys of “recent” foreign literatures published by the American magazine *Books Abroad*, with long lists of literary movements and writers’ names (often garbled in transliteration) – what did Hindi readers make of them without any contact with their works, I wonder? By contrast, story magazines like *Kahānī* and *Sārikā* did world literature through direct and regular “textual presence,” usually translating one foreign story per issue (Orsini “Literary Activism”). By comparison, the spectacular special issues of *Nāī Kahānīyān* and *Sārikā* on the world story must have required an extraordinary amount of effort and care.<sup>14</sup> Here I consider four, and in each case I will reflect on the geographical and temporal selection of the stories, their topics, and the relationship between aesthetics and ideology in the editorials and the stories.

13 The monthly *Yugchetnā* (Consciousness of the Age, 1955), which defined its mission as “introducing Hindi writers and readers to world literature of a developed level,” included articles ranging from Henry James to ancient Greek theatre, Sappho to modern Chinese poetry, Dante, Disraeli, Benjamin Constant, E.M. Forster on the novel, Existentialism, Herbert Read, T.S. Eliot, Andre Gide, while the editorials quoted Toynbee and Spengler. Its preference for classical traditions and English literature betrays its academic roots.

14 Unfortunately, Kamleshwar says nothing about them in his otherwise gossipy memoirs (*Ādhārshilāen* and *Yādom ke chīrāgh*).

### 3 Spectacular Special Issues

*Nāi Kahāniyān* was well-known in Hindi as a Progressive magazine, and before Kamleshwar took over as editor in 1963 the foreign stories it had published had been mostly by European leftist writers.<sup>15</sup> The special issue on the “Foreign Story” (May 1964) brought out by Kamleshwar to mark the beginning of the magazine’s fifth year shows a distinct widening of horizons (Table 1).<sup>16</sup> It included both Western (French, Canadian, Irish) and Eastern European (Bulgarian, Polish) authors, but a larger proportion of authors came from Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East – indeed, an unprecedented range for Hindi readers. As is often the case, coverage sought to fill a knowledge gap, since these were stories from countries “about which we get few or no opportunities to learn” (Kamleshwar Kuch bāten np).

Though Kamleshwar was a self-avowed Marxist, the stories he chose were not only written by writers connected to Left internationalism. Thematically, some dealt with abject poverty (Kudret, Haqqi, Smith), others with youthful characters at a crossroad in their lives (Stanev). Stylistically, some were humorous stories told by an ironic first-person narrator. Marcel Pagnol’s opening story, told by a child narrator, deals with his grandfather, a master mason, and the life-long interrogation his wife carries out about a distant infidelity, lightly weaving in the 1870s Commune, the dignity of manual labour, and love between elderly people.<sup>17</sup> Horacio Quiroga’s humorous story about a young working woman half-complaining to the narrator, a writer, about unwanted sexual attentions carries a twist at the end, and it could have been written by Hindi *Nāi Kahāni* writer Mannu Bhandari. German-Mexican writer B. Traven’s famous story “Burro Trading” (1962) makes fun of the gullibility of newcomers to the crafty tricks of local people. Other stories resemble oral tales about fantastic life journeys or encounters with supernatural beings (Pak Chiwōn, Efwā Sutherland). Julian Kawalec’s parable is a tense internal monologue by a young

15 In 1960, for example, it published stories by the radical Norwegian writer John Borgen and William Saroyan, among others.

16 By the time he joined the magazine as editor in 1963, Kamleshwar was already a prominent story writer, had worked as translator for the story magazine *Kahāni*, as assistant editor on the landmark “magazine-book” (*patra-pustak*) *Saṅket* (Sign, ed. U. Ashk, 1955?) that brought together the best contemporary Hindi writing across genres, and as feature writer for the fledgling Indian state TV (Doordarshan) in Delhi (*Yādon ke Chirāg*). He mentions that his office at Link House in central Delhi became a convivial meeting point for many writers in Hindi and in other Indian languages, and “one got information about the most modern world writing [*sansār kā ādhunikam lekhan*]” (*Ādhārshilāen* 208).

17 “Jirah” (Pagnol). I have been unable to identify the original text and source.



TABLE 1 Contents of special issue on the Foreign Story, *Naī Kahāniyān*, May 1964

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“Jirah” (Cross-examination), Marcel Pagnol (France)  
 “Pahlī nazar ka prem” (Love at first sight), Emilian Stanev (Bulgaria)  
 “Agar razāiyān bol saktīn” (If quilts could talk), \*Hideyo Sachiko (Japan)  
 “Prit kā gīt” (Love song), Avinash Sarmandal (Tibet)  
 “Mritak bhoj” (Feast of the Dead), Cevdet Kudret (Turkey)  
 “Mistar Wang kā ākhirī dālar” (Mr Wang’s last Dollar), C. W. Lee (Hong Kong)  
 “Mādare badnasīb kī mazār” (The Shrine of the Mother of the Out of Lucks),  
 Yahya Haqqi (Egypt)  
 “Varshā kī gavāhī” (Rain in the First Lunar Month), Vetal (Thailand)  
 “Rāt” (Night), Hugh Hood (Canada)  
 “Tin patr” (Three letters), Horacio Quiroga (Uruguay)  
 “Hoseng”, Pak Chiwön (Korea)  
 “Main akelā” (I Kill Myself), Julian Kawalec (Poland)  
 “Van-parī” (Forest Fairy), Efwa Sunderland (Ghana)  
 “Paristhitiyon kā jhūṭh” (Emma Zunz), Jorge Luis Borges (Argentina)  
 “Annie”, Paul Smith (Ireland)  
 “Gadhe kā vyāpārī” (Burro Trading), B. Traven (Mexico)

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scientist who vows to destroy the earth-shattering bomb that he has helped devise before being lured by the power that having the bomb promises. Jorge Luis Borges’ tale of female revenge, “Emma Zunz” (1948), written when Borges was well known in Argentina and already on his way to becoming internationally acclaimed, seems to have been chosen as a realistic – if psychologically twisted – story.

The form of the magazine affords tampering with the stories’ temporality. Although about a third of them (e.g. Quiroga, Borges, Traven) were in fact several decades old, Kamleshwar in his introduction stressed their “contemporary sensibility,” and wrote that he wanted to “offer a selection of contemporary stories from nearby and distant countries that could present [readers] with an emotive picture [*bhāvātmak tasvīr*] of today’s new world”:

Most of the stories in this issue are from this decade – they embrace the contemporary sensibility, the sensibility of today’s new world which is showing itself most forcefully through the medium of the short story. In every country something is dying quickly, and something is emerging. To recognize the right values in this fast transition and to make them part of one’s art is not easy.

KAMLESHWAR Kuch bāten np

These were specially commissioned translations, the editor stressed, sourced from “American and other magazines” (Ibid.). Let us pause on the question of provenance for a moment. I have been able to trace the likely source of only a few: “Burro Trading” and “Emma Zunz” feature in the fifth issue of the US monthly short-story digest *Short Story International* (March 1963), while “Feast of the Dead” appears in Daniel L. Milton and William Clifford’s anthology *A Treasury of Modern Asian Stories*, and Vetal’s “Rain in the First Lunar Month” in a P.E.N. anthology of Thai stories.<sup>18</sup> *Short Story International* – which advertised itself on the cover as “The best short stories of today ... reprinted unabridged” – is an interesting source because it positioned itself between literary and commercial magazines, a kind of literary equivalent of the *Reader’s Digest*, priced at 50¢ per issue. While *Short Story International* worked hard to source stories from foreign magazines and book collections, it presented them as “interesting” and “intriguing” reads, not as the literary cutting edge.<sup>19</sup> Endorsements came from the director of the Peace Corps, the president of the Federation of Women’s Clubs, and foreign language teachers, while the editor boasted of having subscribers from all over the world.<sup>20</sup> The editors’ brief introduction to the *Treasury of Modern Asian Stories* also foregrounded the human interest in the stories, urging US readers to forget cultural differences and forget that these were translations and appreciate these “great stories about human experience.” As for the history of the genre, the editors posited that “Storytelling may have originated in Asia,” but modern Asian stories were a result of “Western influence.”<sup>21</sup> “We have said nothing here about the many aspects of Asian life, about the common experience in modern times of colonialism and nationalism ...,” they added (Milton and Clifford xii, xiii) – by contrast, these were the very aspects that Kamleshwar would foreground (see below). In other words, the same stories that were framed as “interesting reads” and the result of West-

18 Incomplete tables of contents for *Short Story International* are available at the *Fiction MagsIndex*. Two of the Polish stories in the March 1963 issue were drawn from Maria Kuncewicz’s anthology *The Modern Polish Mind* (1962), where Kawalec’s “I Kill Myself” also appears (416–422).

19 “These are intriguing stories – to involve you in corners of the world that you’ve never seen,” back publicity to *Short Story International* (June 1964), np. See Kampel.

20 See Foreword and inside front cover, *Short Story International* (March 1963, June 1964); and the review by Turich.

21 “Virtually every story in this book shows Western influences” (Milton and Clifford xii). The publisher’s blurb was more sensationalist: “East Meets West. Turkey, where starvation steals from death in a poor household ... Japan, where a knife-thrower kills his wife and partner and a judge must decide whether her death was an accident or a murder ... [...] Iran, where twin brothers undergo “trial by cobra,” to determine which will win the beautiful temple dancer ...” (*Treasury of Modern Asian Stories* inside cover).

ern influence in US publications became, in the Hindi magazine, witnesses to the fast transition of the post-war decolonizing world.

Moreover, if we compare the *Nai Kahānīyān* special issue with the March 1963 issue of *Short Story International*, only two out of fourteen stories in the latter were from beyond Europe and North America, whereas the ratio is almost reversed in the Hindi magazine, with only two stories out of fourteen hailing from Western Europe and North America (and by Irish and Canadian, rather than British or US, writers). Selection, as always, implies both a choice and a rejection, and Kamleshwar seems to have rejected the English stories that constituted a large proportion of *Short Story International* or featured in other contemporary magazines like *Encounter*.

Special issues on the world story became even more spectacular when Kamleshwar joined the Times of India story magazine *Sārikā*.<sup>22</sup> Here I consider three, but in fact *Sārikā* brought out several special issues per year on Hindi, Indian, and world writing. Thanks to the editorial and financial support of the Times of India group, Kamleshwar was able to make the magazine not just a platform for new Hindi writing, but also a kind of periodical anthology that blurred the boundaries between ephemeral publication and “stable literature.” While the magazine tried out different possible configurations of world literature, what is remarkable is that it made some of the key stories of contemporary and postcolonial literature available to ordinary Hindi readers of a mainstream commercial magazine.<sup>23</sup>

Only four out of twenty-four stories of *Sārikā*'s International special issue of January 1969 (see Table 2) are by contemporary West European writers (including Heinrich Böll and Alain Robbe-Grillet) and North America (Henry Slazer); two each are by writers from the Soviet Union (Viktor Kutetski and the Nivkhi writer Vladimir Sangi from Sakhalin) and Eastern Europe (Milovan Djilas and Judith Fenekal). All the other sixteen stories are by writers from Asia, Africa, the

22 In his memoirs, Kamleshwar writes that in 1963 he was offered the editorship of *Sārikā* but chose *Nai Kahānīyān* because it was a Progressive magazine. In 1967 Kamleshwar left *Nai Kahānīyān* after disagreements with the manager, and by 1969 he moved to Bombay to edit *Sārikā*. In Bombay he also worked for the Film Censor Board and started writing screenplays for, first parallel, art cinema and then commercial films (*Ādhārshilāen* 166 ff., *Yādon*).

23 From my incomplete sampling: International short story (Jan. 1969); In search of the world story (Jan. 1970); War stories (March 1970); India in world literature (Jan. 1971); Third world literature (Jan. 1973); Stories from neighbouring countries (Aug. 1973); The world “short short” story [*laghukathā*] (Oct. 1973); The courtesan in world literature (Nov. 1973); African literature (Jan. 1975); Parallel Literature (Marathi) (March 1975); Palestinian Resistance Literature (March 1977).

Middle East and Latin America, including stalwarts like Joaõ Guimaraes Rosa, Mario Benedetti, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (then James Ngugi), Mohammad Hejazi, Mochtar Lubis, Abioseh Nicol, and Mahmud Taymur. In addition, eleven were *laghukathāen* (very short stories), usually parables or sketches but here also clearly drastic abridgements of longer stories. Some of the stories are modern classics, like Guimarães Rosa's "Third Bank of the River" (*Nadī kā tīsrā kinārā*, *A Terceira Margem do Rio*, 1962), Ngũgĩ's sombre "The Martyr" (translated as *Deshbhakt or patriot*), or Alain Robbe-Grillet's "La Plage" (*Samudr-ṭaṭ*, 1958). That as early as 1969 Hindi magazine readers could sample them *together* as world literature remains for me a remarkable achievement.

Once again, the emphasis lay on making the non-Western literary world visible and on the story as a universal language able to express contemporary sensibility and human "experiences and desires" in the current "terrible" turn in history, even though some of the stories, like those by Mario Benedetti and by the Japanese proletarian author Hayama Yoshiki (1894–1945), were several decades old.<sup>24</sup>

Paratexts introduce each writer, producing not just visibility but a degree of contextualization. Faintly outlined maps help locate the stories, while the magazine's art department literally frame the pages with an array of photographs, sketches, and collages matching the visual image of a particular country – whenever possible.<sup>25</sup> Short blurbs introduce Fouad Tikerly as a judge living in Baghdad and one of the new generation of story writers in Iraq (*Sārikā* 1969 85). Uruguay is described as a democracy in Latin America whose literary language is Spanish, and Mario Benedetti as a versatile author of novels, plays, poems, criticism, and an influential book on twentieth-century Uruguayan literature; his favourite themes include "the tragedy of ordinary individuals trapped in the family and office" (*Sārikā* 1969 53). Indeed, "The Budget," his story of delayed expectations, rumours, and gossip in a government office, would have resonated with contemporary Hindi readers and writers. Ngũgĩ is introduced as "someone whose name is a symbol of renaissance (*punarjāgaran*) and struggle in African literature. [...] James is not an agitator (*āndolankārī*), but he definitely carries the resentment [*ākrosh*] of the African nation." In this and other cases, the paratext also provides a key to the story: "The story given here, 'Patriot

24 Kamleshwar "Donon ṭaṭon se ūbkar" 7.

25 A photo of Latin looking men accompanied Benedetti's office story; a simple woodcut with two heads and a gun, Ngũgĩ's story; a collage image with the repeated silhouette of a man with his mouth wide open and a cabaret dancer in a sexy costume, Mahmud Taimur's first-person confession of a murderer looking for fame; a Cubist cock an abridged Spanish story by Leopoldo Alas (1852–1901), "After Socrates," *Sārikā* 1979 52–53, 20, 61–62, 11.

TABLE 2 Contents of International issue, *Sārikā*, January 1969

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Brazil: João Guimarães Rosa	Thailand: Dhep Mahapaurya
Germany: Heinrich Böll	Uruguay: Mario Benedetti
Russia: Vladimir Sangi	Mauritius: Abhimanyu Unnath
Russia: *Viktor Kutetski	Egypt: Mahmud Taimur
Ghana: Efwā Sunderland	America: Henry Slazer
Iran: Mohammad Hejazi	Singapore: S. Rajaratna
Pakistan: A. Hamid	Sierra Leone: Abioseh Nicol
England: *Eon Weskew <sup>26</sup>	N. Vietnam: Nguyen Vien Thong
Japan: Hayama Yoshiki	Iraq: Fouad al-Tikerly
Indonesia: Mukhtar Lubis	Syria: Abdul-Salam Ojeili
Yugoslavia: Milovan Djilas	France: Alain Robbe-Grillet
Hungary: Judith Fenekal	

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[The Martyr]’, is unique among African stories today. It is an unparalleled work reflecting the sense of humiliation which African people are burning with, and the human consciousness held in their breasts at the same time” (*Sārikā* 1969 24). Guimarães Rosa’s “novels and stories – originally written in Portuguese – are a kind of allegory. In this story a man suddenly abandons all responsibilities to go and live in the middle of the river. There he becomes immersed in a spiritual dimension – looking for the third bank of the river. The accompanying sketch (drawn by the writer himself) shows that the man has risen above worldly existence and wants to move to a state of transcendence” (*Sārikā* 1969 10). While readers will differ on the virtue of blurbs and introductions framing literary texts, some preferring a direct encounter with the bare text (Morgan), paratexts undoubtedly produce familiarity and, in this case, reveal the ambition of the special issue to be more than a collection of stories, a kind of orientation to world literature.

If we bear in mind the ideological and formal fault lines within the Hindi and Cold War literary worlds, Kamleshwar’s short editorial, “Tired of both shores” (Donon taṭon se ūbkar) and his selection of stories tread an interestingly fine line. “This issue carries the voice of almost three fourths of the world,” the editorial begins, before distinguishing between the experiences of the undeveloped and semi-developed countries (the “southern half of the globe” or “*dakṣiṇ golārdh*”) from those of developed ones, and zooming in on the lat-

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26 I cannot find out who Eon/Ian Weskew (इओन वेस्क्यू) is!

ter: “People<sup>27</sup> in these countries now yearning for economic freedom have become prey to disintegration (*vighaṭan*), despondency (*badhavāsī*), lack of values (*mūlyahīntā*), and cold cruelty. They are smoldering in the fire of history (which has been given to them by others) and aspire to the opportunity to be able to start everything afresh.” As for those in the countries of the great powers, “they are despondent and alone after the demands of the horrors of war” (Kamleshwar Donon taṭon 7). In the special issue expressly dedicated to the “Third World: ordinary people and writers as fellow travellers’ (January 1973), Kamleshwar embraces the term Third World as defined by the postcolonial condition of underdevelopment after centuries of colonial exploitation, a condition shared by the “ordinary people” of Africa, Latin America, and South- and South-East Asia.<sup>28</sup> The postcolonial subject – including toiling worker, lower-middle class clerk, and alienated intellectual – is shaking off a yoke that is political and economic but also intellectual and creative. But Kamleshwar ends his 1969 editorial with a twist: these are after all “superficial and bi-dimensional matters.” There is “a third dimension, extremely delicate and abstract. And very concrete and deep, like the “third bank of the river” of Rosa’s story in this issue. This is the common fundamental voice of all the stories. The voice of the fate of living midstream, tired of both shores” (Kamleshwar “Donon taṭon” 7). Despite this Marxist analytical language, which echoes that of the Afro-Asian Writers’ Association magazine *Lotus*, Kamleshwar’s aesthetic credo does not align with Leftist internationalism, and his choice of stories is broader.<sup>29</sup> Rather, Kam-

27 Kamleshwar uses the male singular “man,” as was the norm then; I have chosen the plural, unmarked by gender.

28 “From a political viewpoint, the ‘Third World’ is the grouping of geographical units that have gathered on a single platform and accepted that name. But if we move away from that viewpoint and look and connect ourselves to the ordinary people [*jan-sāmānya*] dwelling in those different parts of the world we shall see that most of the Third World lives in Africa, Latin America and Southeast Asia. In a way, the southern part of the globe is the Third World. Human beings from this world have been confronting similar inhuman conditions for centuries. Slavery, mistreatment [*anāchār*], exploitation, poverty, inhuman repression have been piled onto them, and this has been held to be their destiny [*nīyattī*]. The so-called civilized and educated world has done nothing beside milking it like a milch cow. What has been given in the name of spreading the light of civilization has been a mongrel [*doglī*] culture, the killing of the economic system and strangling of political institutions. Today, though, people in the Third World are throwing the many lice off his collar and are taking the right [*adhikār*] of deciding their destiny in their own hands” (Kamleshwar Editorial 6). Kamleshwar viewed this special issue as a direct continuation of two earlier issues dedicated to Indian stories about the inner and mental world of ordinary Indians (Ibid.).

29 In his recollections, Kamleshwar mentions *Lotus*, the magazine of the leftist Afro-Asian Writers’ Bureau, and it was possibly one of his sources (*Yādōṃ ke cirāgh* 8).

leshwar combines a postcolonial reading of the Cold War and the Third World with a vindication of the autonomy and literature and its critical insights. Readers responded enthusiastically, praising the issue as “the best among *Sārikā*’s special issues to date,” and Guimarães Rosa’s story as a “masterpiece of world literature” (*Sārikā* 1969 6).

A similar postcolonial framing combined with a broad church aesthetic and political inclusivity is also visible in *Sārikā*’s equally remarkable “Third World special issue” (*Tisrī duniyā vīśeṣāṅk*) of January 1973, with as many of 46 stories from some of the best known writers from Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America (Table 3). Some were excerpts of novels – Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart*, Asturias’s *The Cyclone* – which, to my knowledge, have never been translated into Hindi.

Once again, I have unfortunately been able to identify only some of the stories and their provenance. Twelve of the African stories are from Ellis Ayitey Komey and Ezekiel (Es’kia) Mphahlele’s collection *Modern African Stories*, published in London by Faber in 1964, and three of the Latin American stories are from J. M. Cohen’s *Latin American Writing Today*, published by Penguin in 1967. The first is hailed as a landmark collection; the second was part of the Penguin series *X Writing Today*, which consciously sought to de-provincialise English readers (an unfinished project).<sup>30</sup>

This relay of texts from book anthologies into magazine issues is not unique, perhaps not even unusual, for where else would editors find material? But the question is, what affordances and effects does the form of special issue produce? (Levine). First of all, it produces an effect of plenitude, the opposite of tokenism. While the geographical tags might suggest that each writer stands in for a country, in fact there are just too many of them, arranged not by country, continent, or language, but rather alternating according to the premium the magazine put on engaging readers rather than teaching them or scaring them off. This is a more contingent and eclectic canon than that of the anthology: writers as different as Ciro Alegria, James Matthews, and Layla Baalbaki do not so much define a literary Third World as expose its great variety. The special issue mixes texts up by language, geographical provenance, period, style, and –

30 As the series blurb on the back cover reads, “Foreigners still begin at Calais ... for most English-speaking readers. Air travel and telstar may have reduced distances but how many of us, despite the speed of modern communications, can name the dominant literary figures of contemporary European, African, or American countries? Or are familiar with what is being thought or written in these areas? We are isolated. And complacent. This new Penguin series is designed to break this sound-barrier of inertia, language, culture, and tradition” (Cohen).

TABLE 3 Contents of special issue on the Third World story, *Sārikā*, January 1973

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Alex LeGuma (South Africa), "For Coffee"
James Agree (South Africa), "Swan"
Mabel Segun (Nigeria), "Feast"
S. J. Agyon (Israel), "The Doctor's Divorce"
Can Themba (South Africa), "The Dube Train"
Rómulo Gallegos (Venezuela), "Valley Fish"
Mohammad Halim Abdullah (Saudi Arabia), "Echo"
James Matthews (South Africa), "Park"
Cyprian Ekwensi (Nigeria), "A Stranger from Lagos"
Calvert Casey (Cuba), "Sentence"
Ahmed Abdel Wali (Yemen), "The Colour of Rain"
Harun Rashid (Pakistan), "Column"
David Owoyele (Nigeria), "The Will of Allah"
James Ngugi (Kenya), "Meeting in the Dark"
José Donoso (Chile), "Anna Maria"
Miguel Angel Asturias (Guatemala), "Employment"
Nguyen Vien Thong (North Vietnam), "Song"
Juan Bosch (Dominican Republic), "Don Damian" [The Beautiful Soul of Don Damian]
Chinua Achebe (Nigeria), "Death of a Boy"
Abd Al-Malik Nuri (Iraq), "Fatuma"
Yasher Kemal (Turkey), "Green Onion"
Armando Arias (Chile), "Pilgrimage"
Gabriel García Márquez (Colombia), "Siesta" [Siesta de Marte]
Mario Benedetti (Uruguay), "Miss Iriarte" [Los Iriartes]
Horacio Quiroga (Uruguay), "Son"
Hwang Sun Chon [Hong Sung-won?] (Korea), "Rain"
Layla Baalbaki (Syria), "Come, let's go to the Moon"
Casey Motsisi (South Africa), "If a Bedbug ..."
Abiyoseh Nicol (Sierra Leon), "The Judge's Son"
Pramoedya Ananta Toer (Indonesia), "Inem"
Eldred Durosimi Jones (Sierra Leone), "Effort" [A Man Can Try]
Juan Rulfo (Mexico), "Hill" [They Gave us the Land]
Roy Henry (West Indies), "Fig Tree"
Ellis Komey (Ghana), "I Can Face You"
Ciro Alegria (Peru), "Iron Cross"
Mohan Rakesh (India), "Slump"
Chu Yusup (Malaysia), "My New Uncle"



TABLE 3 Contents of special issue on the Third World story, *Sārikā*, January 1973 (cont.)

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Adelaide Casely-Hayford, "Mista Courifer"  
 Kim Lan (North Vietnam), "The First to Arrive"  
 Tayeb Salih (Sudan), "Handful of Dates"

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particularly relevant in this Cold War context – political affiliation. Juan Rulfo's writing was supported in Mexico by the Rockefeller Foundation (Iber 187), but here he appears together with Gabriel García Márquez, and with Calvert Casey who moved to Cuba after the Revolution but then left as a renegade.<sup>31</sup> New echoes arise – as between the protagonist of Pramoedya [Pramudya] Ananta Toer's "Inem," a young girl working as a servant who imagines how much more fun it would be to get married, and José Donoso's "Anna Maria," a young girl who lives neglected in a secret park. As I suggested earlier, it is as interesting to see what Kamleshwar rejected as what he selected, and it is interesting that he did not include other books in the Penguin series, such as *The Penguin Book of Modern European Stories* (1969), the probable source of Robbe-Grillet's story.<sup>32</sup>

Other special issues of *Sārikā* do not have such explicit political framing. They lay out broad, non-Eurocentric visions of world literature through themes such as love, war, the courtesan, and so on.<sup>33</sup> Interestingly, the historical issue "In search of the world story" ("Viśvakahānī kī khoj," *Sārikā* Jan 1970) provides a bold panoramic synthesis using the broader rubric of "*kathā*" or tale that includes story-telling in verse and prose, drama and parable, as well as the modern short story; several of the pieces are clearly abridgements. The Table of contents and Kamleshwar's substantial historical essay start with Mesopotamia, Egypt, India and China (all *kathāpīṭh* or "seats" of the story), take in Greek and Latin, Sei Shonagon and Sa'di, the *Arabian Nights*, Chaucer, Boccaccio and Poggio Bracciolini, an anonymous Chinese tale from the fifteenth century, Cervantes and Voltaire, before coming to modern story writers. Perhaps because the issue is so historical and invested in building a connected narrative, there is greater variety in the early period than in the later one, where the selection

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31 The Rockefeller fellowship was awarded to Rulfo between 1952–54, before the events in Cuba. Initially, Rulfo was pro-revolution but distanced himself from the regime after the Padilla affair. I thank Patricia Novillo-Corvalan for the clarification.

32 Though Bruce Morrissette's translation had appeared in the *London Magazine*, April 1958, 14–17.

33 See fn. 23.

becomes more canonical, including Edgar Allan Poe, Maupassant, Turgenev, Chekhov, O. Henry, Gorky, Hemingway, and so on. It is the only issue of *Sārikā* to translate stories by Franz Kafka (My Neighbour) and James Joyce (Earth) (*Sārikā* 1973).<sup>34</sup>

If, as I have suggested, these spectacular special issues made world literature visible and accessible to ordinary Hindi readers thanks to the supple and familiar form of the story and the cheap, reader-friendly and agile format of the mainstream magazine, the format had its weaknesses, too. One was translation. Translations are almost exclusively indirect translations. But this is not the problem. The translations are correct, but delivered in a monotonous formal register of Hindi with seemingly no attention to tone, mood, variety, or liveliness.<sup>35</sup> There is a likely historical explanation for this, which has to do with the imposition of formal or “pure” (*shuddh*) Hindi in the education system and the low status of translation as poorly paid work. There are exceptions: Hindi writer Dharmavir Bharati’s translation of Guimarães Rosa’s story “A Terceira Margem do Rio” is evocative and subtle; Udaynarayan Tiwari’s of Pagnol’s “Interrogation” is lively and full of colloquial expressions. The other weak point is the tendency to tamper with the texts, abridging stories into one-column *laghukathā* or “flash stories.”<sup>36</sup> In other words, the spectacular tables of contents came at the expense of textual care.

34 The issue includes as many as 86 stories and very short stories (*laghukathās*), and Kamleshwar’s essay “Viśvakahānī kī yātrā: jal pralay se aṇu pralay tak” (The Journey of the World Story: From the Deluge to the Atom Bomb).

35 E.g. from Ngūgī’s “Deshbhakt:” “Deshbhakt:” “श्री और श्रीमती गार्स्टन की अपने निवास स्थान पर किसी अज्ञात दल द्वारा हत्या के समाचार को ले कर चारों ओर तरह-तरह की टीका-टिप्पणियाँ होने लगीं. इस घटना का सविस्तर वर्णन सभी समाचारपत्रों के मुखपृष्ठों पर छपा और रेडियो पर विशेष रूप से प्रसारित हुआ. कदाचित इस घटना को इतना अधिक महत्त्व देने का कारण यह था कि हिंसा की उस बढ़ती हुई लहर में, जो धीरे-धीरे सम्पूर्ण देश में फैलती जा रही थी, मारे जाने वाले यह पहले यूरोपीय विस्थापित थे” (“When Mr and Mrs Garstone were murdered in their home by unknown gangsters, there was a lot of talk about it. It was on all the front pages of the daily papers and figured importantly in the Radio Newsreel. Perhaps this was because they were the first European settlers to be killed in the increased wave of violence that had spread all over the country”). Note the consistent use of Sanskritized *tatsama* vocabulary, including *nivās sthān* for “home;” *ajñāt dal* (unknown party) for “unknown gangsters;” *savistār varṇan* (extensive description) for “it was all over;” *kadāchit* for “Perhaps;” and, more dubiously, *viśthāpit* (displaced) for “settlers” (Chaudhri 20).

36 Among many others, Leopoldo Alas’s “After Socrates” (Sukrāt ke bād) and O. Henry’s “Twenty Years Later” (Bīs sāl bād) are reduced to one column *laghukathās* (*Sārikā* Jan 1969 11, 15).

#### 4 Conclusions

This essay has focused on Hindi magazines that were literary *and* commercial, or that at least tried to reach the largest number of ordinary readers while providing a platform for new writing and for Indian and world literature. Broadening our focus beyond the “little magazines” brings into focus conceptions of literature, of circulation, translation, curation that are quite different from the notion of literariness as synonymous with artistic autonomy and avantgarde that little magazines often embody.

Magazines can do world literature in quite different ways, through thin and thick coverage, direct or indirect textual presence, and different geographical, temporal, aesthetic and thematic configurations. In most cases, a significant degree of literary activism is required to source and translate pieces, with the short and portable genre of the story a crucial unit in the enterprise (Pravin-chandra). This essay has focused on the special issue in middle-to-large commercial magazines as a form that afforded, and stressed, the visibility and expanse of world literature to the highest degree possible in a magazine. As we have seen, such special issues were able to substantially re-orient visions of world literature during decades in which decolonization and the Cold War attracted attention to Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Though these magazines were not directly connected to Cold War internationalist networks, their translation activism would have been impossible without them.

In fact, one thing these decades show very powerfully is just how much political interest was – and arguably often is – crucial to the translation and circulation of world literature, whether it is books published by propaganda or information programmes or editors and readers curious to read texts from the decolonizing parts of the post-war world. Neelam Srivastava has recently shown how such political passion for decolonization and the Third World animated Italian publishers like Einaudi and Feltrinelli (Giangiacomo Feltrinelli financed and published the *Tricontinental* periodicals). Only, crucially, literary standards that we can only call Eurocentric stopped them from publishing any Third World *literature*. Srivastava gives the example of Laura Gonzalez, Italian translator of Frantz Fanon and editor of Che Guevara’s writings, who dismissed Sembène Ousmane’s novel *L’Harmattan* for Einaudi because “very far from my own interests and tastes, he’s a sort of Senegalese Sciascia, if you see what I mean. The African pays his own tribute to realism.”<sup>37</sup> As Srivastava notes, “Gonzalez’s

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37 The longer document, from the Einaudi archives, appears in Srivastava 173 and is well worth reading.

misreading of [...] Senegalese realisms seems due to her confusing ‘our’ (European) forms of realism with ‘theirs’, and with the radically different valences in terms of context and reception” (173). By contrast, Kamleshwar commissioned abundant translations of Asian, Middle Eastern, African, and Latin American stories for his magazine special issues and placed them at the centre of his vision of contemporary world literature. If the unprecedented availability of contemporary literature from the global South was a direct consequence of decolonization and Cold War internationalisms, it was Kamleshwar’s curatorial activism that selected these particular stories from English-language anthologies and magazines, in which they formed a much smaller percentage of what was offered, and rejected the greater profusion of writings by English and American authors. And if Cold War literary fronts pitted modernism vs social(ist) realism as ideological and formal alternatives, Kamleshwar put forward a kind of modernist realism (or realist modernism) that included authors from both sides. Unlike Gonzalez, he did not see realism as a Western gift or an outdated mode tied primarily to the formation of European middle class sensibility.<sup>38</sup>

The translations of foreign stories into Hindi required the stories to be already translated into English. This, I would argue, has not only been a more widespread practice than usually acknowledged (Orsini “From Eastern Love”), but without it such expansive and non-Eurocentric visions of world literature would not have been possible. At the same time, thinking about the translation activism of these magazine special issues through the notion of relay, rather than network, allows us to stress the local re-articulation and remix of literary worldmaking. I am still impressed that Hindi readers could read Ngũgi and Pramodya Ananta Toer and so many other world writers before we Italian readers did.

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38 Interestingly, his introduction to the New Short Story has recently been included in an anthology of global Modernism (Moody and Ross).

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