ESSAY
(REPRINT)

TOWARD A DEFINITION OF INTERNATIONAL LITERARY JOURNALISM[I]

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ABSTRACT – At the end of the nineteenth century, several countries were developing journalistic traditions similar to what we identify today as literary journalism or literary reportage. Throughout most of the twentieth century, however, and in particular after World War I, that tradition was overshadowed and even marginalized by the general perception among democratic states that journalism ought to be either "objective," as in the American tradition, or "polemical," as in the European one. Nonetheless, literary journalism would survive and at times even thrive. How and why is a story unique to each nation. The aim of this essay, which is the revised and updated introduction published in the book Literary Journalism across the Globe: journalistic traditions and transnational influences, co-edited with Bill Reynolds (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011), is to assess the extent to which literary journalism over the past century has influenced reporting in various nations – some of which have only recently known democracy, while others are still under full or partial state control– and how it might shape journalistic heuristics and literary aesthetics in the twenty-first century.
Key words: Journalism. International Literary Journalism. Reportage. Truth vs. fact. The democratic press.

RUMO A UMA DEFINIÇÃO DE JORNALISMO LITERÁRIO INTERNACIONAL

RESUMO - No final do século XIX, vários países estavam desenvolvendo tradições jornalísticas ao que identificamos atualmente como Jornalismo Literário ou reportagem literária. Contudo, ao longo da maior parte do século XX, e particularmente após a Primeira Guerra Mundial, essa tradição foi ofuscada e até mesmo marginalizada pela percepção geral entre os estados democráticos de que o jornalismo deveria ser ou "objetivo", como na tradição estadunidense, ou "polêmico", como na tradição europeia. No entanto, o Jornalismo Literário iria sobreviver e, às vezes, até mesmo prosperar. Como e por que é uma narrativa única para cada nação. Almejamos nesse ensaio, que se trata da introdução revista e atualizada publicada no livro Literary Journalism across the Globe: journalistic traditions and transnational influences, coeditado com Bill Reynolds (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011), avaliar até que ponto o Jornalismo Literário, ao longo do século passado, influenciou as reportagens em várias nações – algumas das quais só conheceram a democracia recentemente,

enquanto outras ainda estão parcial ou totalmente sob controle estatal – e como ele poderia moldar a heurística jornalística e a estética literária no século XXI.
Palavras-chave: Jornalismo. Jornalismo Literário internacional. Reportagem. Verdade versus fato. Imprensa democrática.

HACIA UNA DEFINICIÓN DE PERIODISMO LITERARIO INTERNACIONAL

RESUMEN - A finales del siglo XIX, en diversos países se estaba desarrollando en sus tradiciones periodísticas un fenómeno similar a lo que hoy conocemos como periodismo literario o reportaje literario. Sin embargo, durante la mayor parte del siglo XX, y en particular después de la Primera Guerra Mundial, esa tradición fue eclipsada e incluso marginada por la percepción general entre los estados democráticos de que el periodismo debía ser "objetivo," como en la tradición americana, o polémico, como en la europea. Sin embargo, el periodismo literario sobrevivió y con el tiempo incluso prosperó. El cómo y el por qué es un caso único de cada nación. En este ensayo, que se trata de la introducción revisada y actualizada publicada en el libro Literary Journalism across the Globe: journalistic traditions and transnational influences, coeditado con Bill Reynolds (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011), es el de evaluar hasta qué punto el periodismo literario durante el siglo pasado ha influido reportando lo que ocurría en diversos países – algunos de los cuales han conocido recientemente la democracia, mientras que otros están bajo el control total o parcial del estado – y cómo ha podido dar forma a la heurística periodística y la estética literaria en el siglo XXI.
Palabras clave: Periodismo. Periodismo Literario internacional. Reportaje. Verdad frente a hechos. Prensa democrática.

At the end of the nineteenth century, several countries were developing journalistic traditions similar to what we identify today as literary journalism or literary reportage. Throughout most of the twentieth century, however, and in particular after World War I, that tradition was overshadowed and even marginalized by the general perception among democratic states that journalism ought to be either "objective," as in the American tradition, or "polemical," as in the European one. Nonetheless, literary journalism would survive and at times even thrive. How and why is a story unique to each nation.

While many students, scholars, and practitioners of literary journalism have long acknowledged the form's Anglo-American roots, this book takes a broader approach to examining the ways literary journalism has been practiced and read throughout the world. From China to Brazil, Scotland to Australia, and Finland to New Zealand, international literary journalism has established itself

as one of the most significant and controversial forms of writing of the last century—significant because it often raises our sociopolitical awareness about a disenfranchised or underprivileged people; controversial because its emphasis on authorial voice jeopardizes our faith in its claims of accuracy. In the age of electronic news, however, when concerns about word count and article length have almost become a thing of the past, literary journalism seems poised to revolutionize the way we read journalism and appreciate literature. This book aims to assess the extent to which literary journalism over the past century has influenced reporting in various nations—some of which have only recently known democracy, while others are still under full or partial state control—and how it might shape journalistic heuristics and literary aesthetics in the twenty-first century.

Several essays in this collection proclaim that, among the many nations today, literary journalism has proved itself a responsible and respectable voice of print media, one that struggles daily with the problem of maintaining a foundational readership. And if scholars of international media find these nations opting more for literary journalistic stories to attract readers—narrative pieces that recount the factual news of the day in dramatic or emotive ways—literary aesthetes too are rediscovering the powerful and typically neglected form of literary journalism, which has earned its place among the traditional *belles lettres* of many nations. In short, there exists a rich international contingent of literary journalism and literary journalism scholars, and this book brings both together for the first time under one cover.

Sixteen essays from the world's leading scholars of literary journalism have been assembled here to exhibit how the form has been viewed, read, written and studied throughout the world. Because not all nations are alike in their journalistic traditions, we cannot expect their literary journalism to be precisely the same. This book offers a look at how and where literary journalism varies (or does not), whether it is written in English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Slovene, Finnish, Dutch, German, Polish, Russian, or Mandarin. These essays, divided into three parts whose topics range from the taxonomic to the historical to the critical, provide both a window onto the past and a looking glass into the future of print media in North and South America, in Europe, and in Australia and Asia.[2] They reexamine literary journalism's historical roots in England and in America, but more from transnational perspectives of how writers in both nations—men and women alike—have influenced journalists

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abroad or were themselves influenced. They also look at the role that literary journalism has played in the building of nationhood or in the establishment of a national canon. Above all, they reveal how literary journalism, no matter in which language it appears, has remained loyal to its commitment to inform the world accurately and honestly about the magical in the mundane, the great in the small, and above all, the us in the them.

1 *E Pluribus Veritas*

Literary journalism has a long and complex international history, one built on a combination of journalistic traditions and transnational influences. Recovering these two dimensions of literary journalism as it is practiced throughout the world is complicated by several factors that need clarification. These obstacles suggest that scholars of international literary journalism need to adopt a phenomenological view of the form. Accepting literary journalism as a legitimate global form is not enough; we also need to exercise intercultural sensitivity to accompany our interdisciplinary awareness.

If examples of an American-style New Journalism can be found in today's international dailies and magazines worldwide, the reasons for that imitative strain are hard to isolate. Given the various continents' and countries' vastly incongruent histories, societies, and cultures, how could we expect what is deemed literary journalism in, say, Japan to be similar, let alone identical, to that produced in Argentina?[3] Consequently, the permutations that international literary journalism has undergone over the past century have been exponential. Two world wars have created environments entirely inhospitable for the form to have evolved in Eastern Europe as it has in the West. While it is true, for example, that the late nineteenth century witnessed the near simultaneous birth of an Anglo-American literary journalism and a European literature reportage—whose similarities and differences this book attempts to account for—claims of a shared ancestry are readily countered by the marked differences between the two forms as they developed in response to those two wars. Literary journalism thus is and is not literary reportage. Emphasizing their differences is elementary; reclaiming their shared past, however, is much more challenging. This book is a response to that challenge.

Building on the few efforts that have promoted international literary journalism,[4] this collection attempts to define the form through a celebration of its ancestral roots. Such a task has remained the mission of the International Association for Literary Journalism Studies (IALJS) since its inception in July 2006, following its first annual congress in the eastern French city of Nancy. Since then, the IALJS has promoted the definition of international literary journalism as journalism as literature, as opposed to journalism about literature. This book maintains that distinction but also recognizes its limitations within a global context.

What happens, for instance, when what constitutes "literature" and "journalism" varies from one nation to the next, or when what passes for "truth" in the world press belies a universal understanding, let alone praxis? National tastes in literature can blur the fact-fiction divide so much that literary journalism has been squeezed out by factographic fiction, a point Maria Lassila-Merisalo makes in her essay on Finnish literary journalism; or, inversely, it has been accorded preferential status over fiction because it captures reality better, which is what Peiqin Chen explains in her essay on Chinese literary reportage. Even in terms of journalistic practices, while the inverted pyramid news structure has held sway in the dailies of most democratic countries since the opening decades of the twentieth century, not every nation has filled that pyramid with the same heuristics or the same degree of accuracy. Consequently, journalism is neither taught nor valued equally worldwide, and the ramifications of that truism reverberate loudly in the production of literary journalism. Without a comparable understanding of literature and a mutual respect for the goals and ethics of responsible journalism, how can we ever expect to have a "literary journalism" on an international scale? This question lies at the heart of every essay in this book.

Comparative literatures and comparative journalisms are further complicated by an even simpler problem: if we search the world media over, the journalistic standard of truth we repeatedly find is based more on iron pyrite than on gold. Facts and truths are the luxuries of democracies, or so we have been led to believe. But there are as many lies, intentional or arbitrated through political alignments, printed in the free press as there are truths, some even disguised, in the censored press. In the introductions to several books on American literary journalism published over the last two decades

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or more, a postmodern incredulity toward objective reality reigns. Thomas B. Connery (1992) refers to it as "patterns of reality"; John C. Hartsock (2000, p.15-17), "our phenomenal world"; Norman Sims (2007, p.11-12, 14-18), factual "triangulat[ion]"; Barbara Lounsberry (1990, p. XVI), "themes" of literature; Edd Applegate (1996, p. XV-XVI, "the kernel of traditional journalism"; and Richard Keeble (2007), a "rhetoric of factuality."

Even before postmodernism began challenging metanarratives and their questionable truth-values, claims of objectivity bothered many. As Hartsock (2000) points out in his essay for this collection, postrevolutionary Russia considered objective reality to be the product of bourgeois thinking, manufactured to give the masses a semblance of truth and thus the illusion of freedom. Though a convenient argument to justify the Cheka's iron-fisted control of the Bolshevik news agencies, its theoretical implications appealed to the American Communist Party in the 1930s and had resounding effects on the form's evolution at home.[5] Joseph North's (1935, p. 121) fellow travelers found their voices in pieces for *The New Masses* or *The Anvil*, and "three-dimensional reporting" had been given the Leninist flavor it was missing in the yellow journalism and muckraking journalism of previous decades. In what proved to be one of its most significant, though by no means first, transnational mutations, literary journalism temporarily fused with literary reportage. But a second world war soon divided the world, and American plutocracy denuded literary reportage of its Marxist agenda. Literary journalism would continue to fight against objective reality, but now without the political ideologies of its European sibling, which would soon migrate east to China, as Chen explains in her essay. As two ideologies clashed for nearly half a century for control over the hemispheres, so too would their literary journalisms compete for international recognition.

The problem in determining who respects truth the most, then, is not as simple as dismissing state-run journalism for manipulating facts or manufacturing truths in favor of a democratic press's crusade for worldwide journalistic transparency. Surely questions concerning who decides what truth is and how it is to be reported have long preoccupied journalism scholars, and dividing the world between democratic truths and autocratic half-truths serves little in our desire to define an international literary journalism. Yes, freedom of the press does matter, but it is not simply an "us and them" scenario, a West versus East dialectic. Even in democratic strongholds such

as Australia or France, where I write these words today, there is no constitutional right protecting the freedom of the press as there is in the United States or the Netherlands. Of course, French reporters are not gunned down in their apartment elevators for having revealed the secrets behind a dirty war, or hacked to death in their rented bungalows by a group of undisguised radicals for having defended the rights of that nation's women—only two of the countless atrocities committed against the world's journalists for reporting what they believe people should know and their governments have not told them. Then again, French reporters do know on which political side their baguette is ***beurrée*** when they publish a piece in *Le Monde* or *La Libération*. Perhaps critiquing state-controlled presses for squashing unsavory truths or spinning damning facts is to ignore the wider issue that, culturally speaking, we all just value truth and fact differently.

The friction caused in pursuing comparative international journalism is relieved to a certain extent in comparative international literary journalism. Take, for example, Edvaldo Pereira Lima's comment in his history of Brazilian literary journalism: "Freedom of expression and democracy are instrumental to literary journalism's prosperity." Though undoubtedly true, the statement's corollary that nations with state-controlled presses have had no literary journalism is not, as authors Peiqin Chen, Sonja Merljak Zdovc, and Soenke Zehle make clear in their essays for this book. If anything, literary journalism and literary reportage have both been equally productive during times of social and political crises that a given government did or did not want its body politic to know about. There are, for instance, striking examples of how journalists from various autocratic nations have circumvented state dictators, entrenched juntas, and armed warlords to produce pieces that are on a par with those by the literary journalists of freer nations.

In Chile, for instance, Gonzalo Saavedra Vergara describes how the Chilean press before and after the cruel regime of Augusto Pinochet used literary journalism as a salve to heal the nation's gaping political wounds:

> All TV channels and newspapers were under control. But there [were] a number of magazines that tried to investigate the other side of the official truth, and they suffered from censorship several times. In these magazines one often found the best written journalism available... Among the most important pieces of that period is Verdugo's *Los zarpazos del puma* [The Claws of the Puma], about the so-called Death Caravan, a group of army officials who traveled through the country on board a Puma

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> helicopter in the weeks that followed Pinochet's *coup d'état* on September 11, 1973, and executed more than 120 opponents of the regime. The book was published in 1989, and, for the first time, it told this story with its macabre details—sixteen years after it had occurred! In the years that followed Chile's return to democracy, journalists slowly began to do their job better. But it was a difficult task, because many of them were simply not used to asking the tough questions, and newspapers were still being written in the traditional inverted pyramid way.[6]

And in Romania, Cristian Lupsa explains how journalism suffered under the Nicolae Ceausescu regime, but its literary journalism provided the nation with a tradition already in place that post-regime journalists could build upon:

> Romanian literary journalism is largely traced back to Filip Brunea-Fox, a newspaper reporter with a knack for social observation, whose work in the 1920s and 1930s chronicled the life of the unseen: from pretend beggars to circus performers (such as the fattest man in Romania) to the inhabitants of a leper colony on the banks of the Danube. Dubbed "the prince of reportage," Fox infused his writing with calls for social justice. A contemporary of Fox, Geo Bogza, is well known for travel reportage. The communist years diluted Romanian literary journalism, and the media of the post-communist years emphasized melodrama and opinionating overreporting. More recently, some glossy magazines have taken the lead in executing more thoroughly reported narrative pieces, where storytelling takes precedence over the author's personal observations.[7]

Oppression has fueled the production of literary journalism as much as, if not more than, freedom has. The right to know and to tell something is arguably trumped by the need for both. Having been denied the freedom to express the truth, censored journalists simply experimented with literary techniques to couch the truth in subversive ways. One must surely feel impunity to ramble on like a Tom Wolfe or to bite the hand that reads you like a Norman Mailer. More subtle voices, those driven by understatement or allusion as opposed to self-aggrandizement, are the hallmarks of an international literary journalism, as many of the essays in this collection argue. One way for these literary journalists to tell their stories was to call fact "fiction," though many readers in the know understood the piece to be working on two levels of truth. As Merljak Zdovc writes, "analytical factographic reporting was not possible" in communist-controlled Slovenia, so journalists "had to adopt indirect ways of commenting on the current state of affairs, such as disguising them as stories." This type of indirect journalism/reportage is potentially more effective as a sociopolitical weapon than the adoption of more

traditional journalistic techniques, since it is precisely its literary quality that helps to deliver the truth while contributing a certain amount of beauty to the piece.

History has taught many war-torn nations to be wary of those promising to speak the truth, and centuries of civil wars, pogroms, and revolutions have made many European, African, South American, and Asian reporters more than a little gun-shy about truth-seeking and whistle-blowing. Perhaps we are all divided by history, past and recent, and that alone binds us and our efforts to produce a literary journalism which speaks as much to the New Zealander and it does to the Scot. Without a shared sense or value of truth and immersion reporting, though, how can we ever expect to agree on a set of rules or traits governing the body of international literary journalism? As I have tried to demonstrate here, the answer is less important than the question itself. Whatever that answer may be, one thing is certain: the question of international literary journalism cannot be formulated from one perspective alone.

2 Toward a Definition of International Literary Journalism

Nearly every book on literary journalism over the last twenty-five years at least has begun with an introduction that defines or characterizes "literary journalism." This book will not be any different, if only for the reason that international literary journalism still needs to establish its boundaries. Part I sets out to do just that: address several, and solve some, of the problems associated with defining a form that is more culturally bound than literature and more politically sensitive than journalism, and continually evolving even as I write these words.

A first concern involves determining what constitutes international literary journalism and what does not. If scholars of Anglo-American literary journalism have struggled with this problem for decades and have still not reached a consensus, we are logically a long way from determining what makes a literary journalism in the Netherlands negotiable to the form's Spanish or Portuguese heritage. And this book makes no promises about providing the definitive answer to that query. Whatever answer scholars of international literary journalism finally come to accept, we can be certain that it will only loosely resemble an Anglo-American version of the form.

One reason for this inevitable difference is that Anglo-

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American literary journalism makes clear distinctions among creative nonfiction, literary reportage, and feature writing, just as the English language distinguishes among the various hues of the color yellow, such as amber and gold. The international literary journalism represented in this book does not make such precise distinctions for the simple reason that many nations have not enjoyed a journalistic heritage that contains side-by-side examples of literary reportage, narrative journalism, creative nonfiction, and New Journalism, or the various media in which to publish them. What American scholars of the form deem a feature story, then, may appear in the international press as literary journalism, since it too upends the inverted pyramid and supplies a narrative voice. Within an international context, those who would define literary journalism cannot be persnickety.

With this in mind, Part I of this book is devoted to defining international literary journalism broadly, and does so from various interdisciplinary angles: historical, pedagogical, geographical, theoretical, and speculative. John C. Hartsock's (2000) essay on transnational and cross-cultural fertilization of literary journalism opens the debate. Providing a history of Russian literary reportage and literary journalism through German, Chinese, and post–World War I American sources, Hartsock sets up the problem facing all of the authors in this book: namely, literary reportage and literary journalism are defined today more by how they have evolved and interacted transnationally than by how they were initially perceived. This "elasticity" of form has made tracing the roots of literary journalism difficult to say the least. As Hartsock (2000) writes, "there can be a polemical literary reportage discursive in nature, a narra-descriptive literary reportage frozen in the tendentiousness of the distanced image of the absolute past, and a narra-descriptive literary reportage, much like American literary journalism, which embraces the inconclusive present of a fluid phenomenal world that grants free interpretive possibilities to the author and reader." Can one, then, use the terms "literary reportage" and "literary journalism" interchangeably? Yes and no. Hartsock adds that "[European] [l]iterary reportage and [American] literary journalism are much the same when they both emphasize narrative and descriptive modalities and eschew discursive polemic." Beyond these two cases, literary reportage and literary journalism differ historically for political reasons that cannot reconcile indefinitely the twins' ancestral parents.

If Hartsock (2000) shows how European reportage and

American literary journalism have lived separate lives despite their comparable, though not exactly identical, DNA, Jenny McKay questions whether one is not the other's offspring. Like many unwanted children who emigrate and develop a new identity in the host environment, English literary reportage shed part of its polemical past and became literary journalism. It flourished because the foreign environment nourished it along. Reportage in the United Kingdom, however, has subsequently withered and nearly dried up. McKay examines some of the evidence for this neglect, which includes the difficulty writers have had in finding a market for their reportage, the problems publishers have had in categorizing it, and as a consequence, the difficulty potential readers have had in even locating it on the shelves of public or university libraries or bookstores. McKay's discussion touches on aspects of literary canon formation and the status of journalism as vocational training and an object of academic study in the U.K.'s system of higher education. Despite the grim descriptions, the essay concludes on the optimistic note that leading British journalists believe literary reportage can develop an understanding and communication between people of different societies and nations, which may ensure its future in an increasingly heterogeneous Great Britain.

While McKay explores the sorry state of affairs of literary journalism in the U.K., Bill Reynolds looks at how geographical elitism continues to control the definition, creation, and execution of literary journalism in Canada. Recent work from the nation's West Coast, and in particular by four writers and one editor from Vancouver, stands out in contrast to established norms in Toronto, epicenter of the Canadian magazine industry. Distance reinforces this starkly different outlook on what constitutes literary journalism—in the formulation of story ideas, the development of themes, and the points of view. Vancouver, far from the corridors of national power, with its confluence of "sea, sky, and mountains," creates a variegated mindset in its writers. Stories emphasize travel, foreign languages, a sense of looking outward, and a struggle to understand the human condition. Rather than deliver a play-by-play analysis of who has gained and—stoking the reader's schadenfreude—lost money or power, West Coast literary journalists see themselves as part of a continuum that happily places Ryszard Kapuciski alongside *The Jungle*, Charles Bowden alongside *Don Quixote*.

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David Abrahamson's essay moves the book out of the taxonomic and into the theoretical to establish a methodology in defining international literary journalism. Viewing literary journalism in a worldwide context, his essay appropriates, as Reynolds's does, a geophysical construct but, for purely heuristic purposes, employs it to describe a global phenomenon in literary journalism. Positing the existence of an imaginary "Counter-Coriolis Effect," Abrahamson argues that in general, much of what is celebrated as literary journalism or narrative nonfiction from the North (or the developed, industrialized West) tends to be written from a perspective that can be characterized as progressive, secular, and reformist, while the efforts of many writers of similar nonfiction from the South (or the developing world) are often conservative and traditionalist. The essay speculates on possible explanations for this proposed phenomenon and claims that, in an increasingly interconnected world, it is both likely and laudable that the effect will diminish.

Like Abrahamson, Norman Sims (2007) looks speculatively at the global trends in literary journalism by examining the specific challenges facing literary journalism in the United States today that could have ramifications on the form's future abroad. Sims believes that we are at a new turning point in the history of the form, at least in American literary journalism. The challenges may be more economic than literary, however. While some newspapers, American and international alike, have adopted narrative approaches to news, they are still severely limited in time and space, and the magazines that have been a traditional home for literary journalism have grown more interested in policy analysis. Although author advances have shrunk, books remain a haven for literary journalism. The Internet has not yet overcome its problems with length and with the lack of financial remuneration for literary journalists. Despite these difficulties, Sims optimistically concludes, the position of literary journalism in history seems as secure as ever, and it may even be expanding in Europe and Asia. Literary journalism has continued and will continue to provide the intimacy, subtlety, and artistry we need to understand the world and our times.

Together these five essays represent historical, pragmatic, and theoretical efforts to establish what it is that unites international literary journalism despite its seemingly irreconcilable differences. Arguably, what brings international forms of literary journalism closer together remains more on the theoretical than on the pragmatic level for now, but these essays are proof that any

definition of international literary journalism must be elastic enough to account for its cultural variances. Comparisons using American standards or definitions alone limit our perspective on how nations have acquired literary journalism and how their environments have shaped its production and reception over the course of time. Part II takes up this issue and examines in more detail these nations' traditions in literary journalism.

3 Journalistic Traditions

Half of this book's subtitle, *Journalistic Traditions,* is aimed at tracing global literary histories and finding common journalistic ground. Since journalism in America and in Europe evolved from different traditions, it is only natural that their literary journalism should have done so as well. But the picture of a U.S.-led literary journalism and a European-produced literary reportage is not as clearly demarcated as one would think or hope. As noted earlier, the two world wars forced European cultures to evolve in a world divided between American and Soviet superpowers. Certain journalistic traditions in Europe that evolved before 1914 or 1939 were consequently altered, and western European presses leaned chauvinistically, if not propagandistically, toward the United States, while eastern European nations were forced to accept the state-controlled *pravda* (truth) of the Soviet-influenced press. The result has been that the forms of literary journalism of various nations evolved in vastly different ways in the twentieth century than if the wars and the divided world had not forced them to do so. How they evolved is as interesting as where.

Research in the field of literary journalism has informed us that since the breakup of the Soviet bloc, more and more nations discovering or rediscovering a certain freedom of the press swallowed the New Journalistic pill and, logorrhea-like, spat out one story after another that, historical references aside, seem as if they were all written in the 1960s. American-style counterculture with its icons in music, literature, and literary journalism seemed an appropriate antidote to their stolid and controlled lives. But this reverence for the irreverent is not simply the case of an international equivalent to the American undergraduate who, on discovering the anarchic pleasures of a Hunter S. Thomson, expresses, willy-nilly,

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his or her invectives against the powers that be. For these nations only seemed young, given that communist rule had anaesthetized them for fifty years or more. Yet these nations had had a literary journalistic tradition dating back to the nineteenth century or the early decades of the twentieth, a tradition influenced more directly by European journalists than by American ones. As several of the essays in this part of the book posit, many nations looked to the United States for journalistic inspiration following the political thaw if only because they now could.

The six essays in Part II thus provide a panorama of literary journalism as it evolved on three continents over the past hundred-plus years. In the first essay, Clazina Dingemanse and Rutger de Graaf discuss the European pamphlet as a proto-literary journalism that had direct influence on later European-style literary reportage. Since the Renaissance, the pamphlet had served as the primary mass medium for political debate and local news in most European countries. They write, "Although there were papers that advocated political neutrality, many newspapers became involved with a political party or ideology, serving not so much as an objective news platform but more as a political signpost, telling readers what to think of current events and putting the news in a larger ideological perspective." Pamphleteers used a wide variety of literary genres and devices to get their political messages across. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, the prominence of the pamphlet had been taken over by the flourishing newspaper. Many of the century-old pamphleteering techniques and genres found their way into the columns of the changing newspaper, while the use of literary techniques and inventive genres in pamphlets decreased. This reinvention of century-old journalistic practices, referred to today as "remediation," supplies the basic theory for this essay, which explores the remediation of literary pamphlet genres into the newspaper in order to shed light on the historical evolution of literary journalism.

Like the Dutch pamphlet in the nineteenth century, Portuguese newspapers in these early days of reporting underwent a remediation that "ranged from the astounding increase in the number of periodicals in circulation to the varied topics being covered by journalists: political debates, sports events, international affairs, and so on." In the closing decades of the nineteenth century, four Portuguese journalists—Eça de Queirós, Batalha Reis, Ramalho Ortigão, and Oliveira Martins—

participated in this remediation by importing the "new" journalism made popular by W. T. Stead and Henry Mayhew for a Portuguese-speaking public on both sides of the Atlantic. Their visions of London depicted images and concerns similar to those portrayed by England's pioneering literary journalists. London was a city of social horrors and darkness, of contrasts, an immense "modern Babylon," to quote Stead in the pages of the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Isabel Soares makes a strong case for the argument that journalistic change in Portugal was already in progress before contact with England's fin-de-siècle "new" journalism was made. Yet she also emphasizes the importance of a transnational influence at work on these Portuguese writers as they learned how to bring about change more fully through their having read the British journalists.

Like its neighbor Portugal, which also saw its free press stymied by a totalitarian regime in the first half of the twentieth century, Spain in the early days of reporting rarely printed evidence of hard news in its papers, which were filled mostly with literary pieces. Sonia Parratt explores how journalism and literature in Spain remained close allies for years, as many Spanish poets and novelists made their living working at dailies and later on as journalists publishing nonfiction. Franco's dictatorship, however, destroyed Spain's economy in the 1930s, and publishing possibilities became scarce. By the 1960s, America's New Journalism injected renewed life into the Spanish press, and today, literary journalism in Spain has not simply evolved but flourished. It has even extended its influence to more traditional methods of news writing, and it is common today to read breaking news being reported in the Spanish press in a style that used to be reserved for longer interpretative stories. Thanks to this literary news writing, or *"reportagization,"* in Spanish newspapers, readers are finding stories that contain deeper insights and more detailed background than either television or the Internet mass media can report.

Just as it took a civil war in Spain to spark an interest in literary journalism, the Second Sino-Japanese War in China reignited a politically conscious literary reportage in China. Although Chinese literary reportage, *baogao wenxue,* has its roots in the nineteenth century, the war effectively elevated the literary form in the 1930s, when it was seen as a means to expose social evils in the country and to incite people to take action against

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them. Peiqin Chen's essay explores the evolution of literary reportage in China from the Reform Movement of 1898 to the new Enlightenment Movement of the 1980s. By situating the major classics of literary reportage within their social backgrounds, Chen argues that the development of Chinese literary reportage has flourished at moments of sharp social conflicts. She points out how Chinese literary reportage first had German roots, then later American influences drawn from Upton Sinclair and Edgar Snow. Reportage in China had to have a social edge to it, she writes—a sword cutting through the ills of society—because Chinese fiction lacked the punch of reality to accomplish the feat on its own. After a period of decline, Chinese reportage has once again found its soul and is poised to regain its place among the most respected examples of Chinese letters.

Civil wars and periods of social disruption have had an immense impact on the development of literary journalism in Europe, just as it had in America, and in the case of Brazil the situation is not much different. Edvaldo Pereira Lima examines how Brazil's bloody civil war at the end of the nineteenth century precipitated the nation's first piece of literary journalism. Writing as a war correspondent for *O Estado de S. Paulo*, Euclides da Cunha captured a voice and a literary style that two decades later would influence the writer João do Rio, who elevated the Brazilian *crônica*, a local genre that mixed literary and journalistic forms, to higher levels. Literary journalism, however, never knew a constant growth in the country, owing in part to the nation's illiteracy and totalitarian regimes. As the counterculture stormed the United States in the 1960s, the same years brought a flurry of nonfiction in Brazil. Between 1955 and 1960, under the administration of President Juscelino Kubitscheck de Oliveira, Brazil experienced its first full period of widespread democracy, which contributed in a meaningful way to several innovative advances in literary journalism. That freedom was short-lived, however, as a military junta recaptured power in 1966. Literary journalism again struggled, but the efforts of the magazine *Realidade*, influenced by America's New Journalism, sparked a golden age of Brazilian literary journalism that the country is now trying to recover.

If American influences can be detected in Brazilian literary journalism of the 1960s, it can also be found in Finnish literary journalism of the same era. As Maria Lassila-Merisalo

points out, Finnish journalists borrowed literary techniques from fiction through the ages but did so, if not unconsciously, at least unsystematically. Her essay distinguishes three phases in the development of Finnish literary journalism over the past century. In the first phase, journalism became professionalized, and reportage was a genre that allowed for the strong presence of a narrator and the use of fictional techniques. The second phase, midway through the twentieth century, was the time for new heroes, antiheroes, and storytellers. In the 1980s a third phase took place when urban city culture and gonzo journalism arrived in Finland and inspired Finnish journalists to express themselves freely. If literary journalism in Finland today has not released its potential, this is due mostly to the lack of formal training that writers are given in the production of literary journalism, which in Finland would be acceptable, given the country's tradition of the realist novel. But Lassila-Merisalo argues that the opposite has proved to be true: because Finnish fiction is so fact-based, there has been little room for literary journalism to grow.

Together these six essays sketch out the landscape of literary journalism and literary reportage as they developed in parts of Europe, in China, and in Brazil. The emerging portrait of an international literary journalism shows that journalists most often turn literary when their nations are at war, be it with others or with themselves. Like a balm, the literary quality of the writing soothes the pain inflicted by the journalistic facts delivered in the piece or the dispatch, with literary journalism emerging as the byproduct. Another key notion apparent in these essays is the importance of transnational journalistic and literary borrowings. No nation's literary journalism or literary reportage (and I would argue that this includes America as well) fully blossomed independently; while many nations had developed a form of literary journalism concurrent with America or England, the form in each of these nations evolved essentially through a process of cross-cultural pollination. Part III looks more specifically at individual literary journalists across the globe in order to study how their reporting was influenced by journalistic traditions outside their own.

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4 Transnational Influences

Part III contains five case studies of literary journalists (three male and two female) from varying nations during three different decades of the twentieth century. The different climes and times alone are ample proof of literary journalism's extended reach in the world of letters, but they also demonstrate the influence that immersion reporting has had over the last century on exposing and, ideally, correcting certain social ills. Each of these essays looks closely at the notion of transnational influence explored more holistically in the book's previous section on the literary journalistic traditions of select nations over the last century. Individually they tell stories of writers obsessed with the truth and frustrated with the "house style" in which they were supposed to relate it. Together they chronicle the necessary transnational influence that literary journalism has exerted from one nation to the next as journalists became increasingly aware of their shared destinies in a world growing smaller and in a discipline facing challenges from more dominant styles of journalism.

Nikki Hessell opens Part III by describing how Robin Hyde became one of New Zealand's most significant literary figures in the 1930s, the formative decade of that nation's literary canon. Hyde's career as a journalist brought her into contact with the works of some of the major figures in literary journalism, including Upton Sinclair and George Orwell, whose concern for the interests of the dispossessed infused her own writing. Among her many journalistic pieces, Hyde produced feature articles, often about the aboriginal Māori people, for the *New Zealand Railways Magazine* between 1935 and 1937, traveling the country and reporting on her experiences. Like other seminal literary texts from the late 1930s, such as Allen Curnow's volume of poems *Not in Narrow Seas* (1939) and John Mulgan's novel *Man Alone* (1939), Hyde's stories responded to the mounting call for a coherent national identity and a distinct national literature. Her literary journalism from different locations around New Zealand aimed to remind readers of the distinctive qualities of their country's landscape, people, and culture, qualities that were reinforced and enhanced by her use of a distinctively local voice and register. Hessell argues that Hyde contributed to the emerging form of New Zealand literary

journalism and to the emerging discourse about what it meant to be a New Zealander.

Hyde's Marxist leanings were not uncommon for literary journalists of the 1930s, even for those writing in the Southern Hemisphere, as David Abrahamson argues in his essay in Part I. James Agee, whose *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941) made him a canonical figure in American literary journalism, was also keenly influenced by Marxist thought. William Dow explores how these political leanings gave shape to Agee's vision and voice as expressed in two of his short pieces for Fortune magazine, "Saratoga Springs" (1935) and "Havana Cruise" (1937)—published during the same years as Hyde's railway pieces. Dow signals the importance of seeing Agee as an intellectual consciously attempting to preserve a role as cultural critic against the growing power of mass culture in 1930s America. Considering himself to be an intellectual first and a journalist second, Agee pioneered new forms of literary journalism that relied on an observer-narrator perspective, a complex reader-narrator relation, and explorations of the nature of social class as a cultural indicator. Dow suggests that Agee's compassion for social suffering and injustice emerged from the sovereignty of his own will and understanding within the peculiar politicization of the 1930s.

If both Hyde and Agee were literary journalists who chose to be influenced transnationally by Marxist ideology, in communist Slovenia, Željko Kozinc was given little choice but to profess it in his writings. Sonja Merljak Zdovc examines how Kozinc, writing in the 1960s and 1970s, might have been influenced by America's New Journalists had they been translated and made available to the public, but given the nation's political policies against the West, Kozinc had to look to eastern European writers for influence. He discovered the Prague-born journalist Egon Erwin Kisch. Journalistic pieces experimenting with the narrative techniques of realistic fiction began appearing in the late 1960s in Slovenia, a time when journalism itself started to become more democratic in the country. Nevertheless, for a long time journalists like Kozinc could address the country's state of affairs only indirectly, and some of the more innovative journalists couched their criticism and their opinion of the political system in stories. With the aid of narrative techniques, they told their readers about the system's injustices or anomalies that they had witnessed; and despite

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the media's ties to politics, Kozinc was able to provide quality journalism to his readers while avoiding censorship. Neither before nor after that period, however, has the Slovene press published so much outstanding journalistic writing. Accordingly, Merljak Zdovc proposes that literary journalism might well be a way for Slovenia to regain its journalistic bearings.

If Kozinc figuratively looked "east" for his influences, Australian writer Helen Garner looked "west" to the *New Yorker*, in particular to Janet Malcolm and to U.S. authors such as Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Raymond Carver. But the transnational influence she drew from Malcolm did not prepare her for the problems she faced in writing long-form nonfiction when subjects refused to open themselves up to immersion reporting. As Willa McDonald demonstrates in her essay, Garner's nonfiction, *The First Stone: Some Questions about Sex and Power* (1995) and *Joe Cinque's Consolation: A True Story of Death, Grief and the Law* (2004), caused a furor because Garner applied fictional techniques to the nonfictional subject matter in both. McDonald examines the reactions of academic critics to Garner's literary journalism and proposes that Garner, despite the occasional flaws in her approach, has a unique and valid voice in nonfiction. McDonald argues that had Garner been properly trained to write literary journalism and to understand the ethics behind immersion reporting, she would not have had so much bad press.

Helen Garner is, of course, not alone in embellishing her nonfiction with imaginative details—a point so contentious among scholars of the form that it alone could threaten the future of international literary journalism. Perhaps for that very reason, literary journalism has often been marginalized as the bastard child of literature and journalism. Soenke Zehle examines another celebrated literary journalist, Ryszard Kapuciski, and his frustration with the limits of factology where the border between journalistic reportage and literary expression is as vague as the fronts between countries at war. Kapuciski's obsession with borders and their transgression becomes Zehle's focus in this philosophical piece on the Polish journalist, a reporter who witnessed civil wars and revolutions and traveled freely about the land to cover the story. It is "a threshold between different forms of experience" that has made Kapuciski as much a lightning rod of contemporary journalistic criticism as Tom Wolfe and Hunter S. Thompson were in the 1960s and

1970s. Whether revered or despised by his colleagues, Kapuściński, a polemical and controversial writer, nonetheless remains for many Western readers one of the best literary journalists writing in the second half of the twentieth century.

Five essays, five literary journalists, five distinct and often incongruous journalistic traditions. Attempts to situate them collectively under the same rubric seem pointless, as their differences far outweigh their similarities. And yet they do demonstrate the importance of the form's evolution over the last century and help account for the spread of literary and journalistic traditions throughout the world. Just when it appears that the authorities have succeeded in trampling it out of existence in one culture, it goes underground, metamorphoses, and takes root in another. What grows in the different soil, and amid the new microclimatic changes, can never be exactly the same as it was prior to dislocation. But that it continues to reproduce elsewhere provides hope enough that international literary journalism, no matter how or where it blossoms, will ensure its longevity for the century to come.

5 The Future of International Literary Journalism Studies

The sixteen essays collected in this book—written by many of the leading men and women working in the field of literary journalism studies about many of the leading men and women writing literary journalism the world over—are by no means heterogeneous, either in their adoption of one transcendental literary journalism or in their depiction of how literary journalism arrived on their native soil. To be honest, there cannot be such a book written today. And that is not a bad thing. To define international literary journalism in strict terms would be to transform what is essentially an organic process, one that is in constant flux, into a packaged product. For this reason, debates about international standards of truth, concepts of the literary mode, access to the facts, and objective versus phenomenological journalism risk forever miring international literary journalism, and its corresponding field of academic studies, in institutional quibbles unless a certain number of covenants are established, of which I humbly offer three.

First, we should not treat New Journalism like the Ten

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Commandments of literary journalism and hold up the world's production of the form in comparison, since many international forms predate it. If anything, we should pit international literary journalists against Wolfe's manifesto at times, if only to demonstrate that a European, African, or Asian literary journalism is not like an American literary journalism but that it nonetheless advances our understanding and appreciation of the form.

Second, we should stop referring to literary journalism as a genre (Connery, 1992), or even as a form (Sims, 2007; Hartsock, 2000), and start calling it what it is: a discipline. Doing so would move us beyond Ben Yagoda's (1997, p. 13) view of literary journalism as a "profoundly fuzzy term" and help situate it alongside literature and journalism and their respective fields of inquiry. As Sonia Parratt points out, the very notion of literary journalism is impossible to separate, since both literature and journalism evolved out of the same political principle of informing the public. Continually calling it a genre locks literary journalism into a subcategory of literature, alongside poetry and drama. Referring to it as a journalistic form sandwiches it somewhere between fiction and journalism. Suggesting that it is a subcategory of nonfiction dangerously sets it on even ground with biography, travelogues, policy analysis, history, cultural studies, and memoirs, some of which can be literary journalism but are not by definition that alone. Raising literary journalism to the level of a discipline would institute a moratorium on the barrage of definitions and defenses that have hindered the advancement of literary journalism studies and allow international scholars to work together on equal footing to promote their discipline, as literature professors and journalism professors frequently do at congresses such as the Modern Language Association (MLA) and the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) in America, or the European Society for the Study of English (ESSE) in Europe. The IALJS and its many sibling learned societies worldwide, academic or professional alike, have made considerable progress toward accomplishing this goal, but we are a long way still from finding disciplinary programs of literary journalism studies of the kind offered at the University of California–Irvine under the direction of Barry Siegel. Achieving disciplinary status would certainly reduce the pedagogical problems facing international literary journalism,

as underlined here by McKay, Parratt, Lassila-Merisalo, and Merljak Zdovc.

Finally, we should stop fretting over the publishing industry's or the academy's legitimation of literary journalism or literary journalism studies. Continued research into the history and practice of literary journalism across the globe will serve to create that legitimation, as well as the market that literary journalism and literary journalism studies sorely need. Books about sexuality were traditionally lost among the many titles catalogued under sociology or anthropology, but once gender studies flexed its academic muscle, GLBT studies found shelf space of its own. The steady production of strong criticism, theory, and pedagogy will eventually coalesce the literary journalism that is out there now and create the discipline's niche at Waterstone's or Barnes & Noble. In sum, we have to stop writing definitional manifestos that show by default that literary journalism lacks cohesion, take charge of the discipline ourselves, conduct the research that needs to be conducted, and wait for the rest to catch up with us. They will, eventually. This book is betting on that.

NOTES

1 This essay, now revised, was originally published as an introduction to the book *Literary Journalism across the Globe: Journalistic Traditions and Transnational Influences*, co-edited with Bill Reynolds (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011).

2 The discussion of literary journalism in Africa, which does not figure in this collection, is rich in possibilities and offers an adventurous scholar an abundance of material from which to work.

3 Matthew Stretcher contends that Japanese literary journalists emerged in Japan in the 1980s and 1990s as an "opposition press" to the Japanese media, which colluded to engineer and maintain the metanarrative of Japan as a "peaceful, stable, and prosperous society," and which "support[ed], rather than critique[d], society's status quo." Matthew C. Stretcher, "Who's Afraid of Takahashi O-Den? 'Poison Woman' Stories

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and Literary Journalism in Early Meiji Japan," *Japanese Language and Literature* 38 (2004): 26. If the Japanese usage of the term "literary journalism" follows the definition of the International Association for Literary Journalism Studies (IALJS), the Argentines retain the British understanding of literary journalism as a critical discourse about literature published in journals (what is commonly referred to as literary criticism). See, in addition to Stretcher, Francine Masiello, "Argentine Literary Journalism: The Production of a Critical Discourse," *Latin American Research Review* 20.1 (1985): 27–60.

4 No scholarly work as yet written in English addresses literary journalism as it is practiced, taught, and studied throughout the world. A few books, however, have dealt with literary journalism (its history, its practitioners, and its study) beyond the Anglo-American phenomena. One collection of essays on literary journalism outside of a strict U.S. context is *The Journalistic Imagination,* ed. Richard Keeble and Sharon Wheeler (2007), but it too examines almost exclusively British authors (one chapter is devoted to America's New Journalism) and adheres to the British usage of literary journalism as "journalism about literature." Charles Laughlin (2002),is one example of an extended study of literary journalism in an international context. And Ian Jack (2006), has been proactive in publishing international literary journalism, just as the Lettre Ulysses Award was (and perhaps one day will again be) instrumental in rewarding international literary journalism of the highest caliber.

5 Here, and elsewhere throughout this book, key foreign terms—as well as book, journal, newspaper, essay, and story titles—are reproduced in their original languages. The reasons for this editorial decision are twofold: first, because many foreign works translated into English could be easily confused with existing titles in English; and second, because a polyglottal edition demonstrates this book's commitment to practice cultural sensitivity and reach out to an international audience. As the book's chosen lingua franca, English best allows for scholars from all over the world to access the rich literary journalistic traditions examined in the following pages. While an argument could be made for the use of English titles when they were made available in translation, such a practice was decided against lest the visual and oral aesthetics of the native language be sacrificed for semantics alone. Transla-

tions of foreign titles are provided, however, in subsequent references when a published translation in English exists (except in the case of newspaper names, which are considered here as proper nouns).

6 Gonzalo Saavedra Vergara, personal e-mail, November 11, 2008.

7 Cristian Lupsa, personal e-mail, January 8, 2009.

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