

# World against Globe: Toward a Normative Conception of World Literature

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**T**HIS ESSAY OFFERS A critical analysis of the limitations of the recent revival of world literature. It outlines an alternative temporal understanding of the world as the normative basis for a radical rethinking of what “world literature” signifies. We commonly think of the world as a spatial category, as an objective container of the greatest possible extension for human beings and things. But *world*, I argue, is originally a temporal category. Before the world can appear as an object, it must first *be*. A world’s unity and permanence is premised on the persistence of time. We are only in a world, we are only worldly beings, if there is already time. Because it opens a world, temporalization is a force of worlding. Recent attempts to revive world literature have obscured its normative dimension because they have only understood the world in terms of spatial circulation, the paradigmatic case of which is global capitalist market exchange. I seek to develop an alternative notion of world literature as an active power of world making that contests the world made by capitalist globalization: that is, world literature is reconceived as a site of processes of worlding and as an agent that participates and intervenes in these processes.

## World Literature Then and Now

The intensification of globalization in the past two decades has led to debates within literary studies about reinventing the discipline of comparative literature and the subfield of world literature in a manner that is ethically sensitive to the cultural differences and geopolitical complexities of the contemporary age. As illustrated by the volume published in response to the 1993 Bernheimer report to the American Comparative Literature Association, *Comparative Literature in the Age of Multiculturalism* (1995), its successor volume, *Comparative Literature in an Age of Globalization* (2006), and other discussions in their wake, the debate within comparative literature has focused on wrenching the

comparative enterprise away from its Eurocentric home in the transatlantic fraternity of English, German, and French national literatures.<sup>1</sup> It has been suggested that the history of colonialism and contemporary globalization has brought many different cultures into jarring proximity, so that the comparative enterprise has become necessary and also more anxiety ridden. For example, one must examine the global production of Western cultures and literatures, particularly from the perspectives of empire and postcoloniality, and include the literatures of formerly colonized regions written in European languages. The comparative enterprise should also take into account postcolonial literatures or orature in non-European vernacular languages in a study of transcolonialism. It has also been argued that contemporary globalization has created a genuinely transcultural zone that undermines the territorial borders of cultural and literary production, thereby leading to the emergence of a global consciousness.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, the units of comparison can no longer be merely national. One must also consider how the local both enters into and is traversed by the global.

The comparative study of literature is generally distinguished from the study of world literature on the grounds that the former requires deep knowledge of various languages, whereas world literature is merely literature in translation and is usually studied only in English.<sup>3</sup> Such a distinction, however, overlooks the close connections between the two forms of literary study. In the first place, world literature presupposes a prior comparative moment, since the availability of something in translation requires a comparative judgment of the value of the original so that it can be translated. Second, comparative literature also presupposes translation in a very pragmatic sense. Since comparative studies of literature are written in one language, they generally involve the translation of quotations from the studied literatures into the language of the scholarly text so that the study is intelligible to a readership that may not possess all the languages the comparatist has. In this regard, comparative literary studies are also part of the enterprise of world literature, which in addition to translating foreign literatures, also includes the study and criticism of these foreign literatures. But third and most importantly, the internal link between comparative literature and world literature is seen in the fact that comparative activity and the injunction to rethink comparative literature has become more urgent precisely because the multiplication of global connections integrates all of us into a shared world. Comparative activity would make no sense unless we are part of a common world. The world is therefore both the substrate and the end of comparison. Hence, an exploration of what constitutes a world should be prolegomenal to rethinking the agenda of both comparative and world literature.

What exactly is “the world” in recent attempts to rethink world literature in the North Atlantic academy? The primary way of asserting literature’s worldliness today is to treat it as an object of circulation in a global market of print commodities or as the product of a global system of production, either literally or by analogy. There is the obligatory nod to Goethe’s historical lead in his use of the market analogy in his brief comments on *Weltliteratur*, but one mainly senses the shadow of Marx, particularly in the incorporation of the vocabulary of center and periphery from world-systems theory to describe literary phenomena.

When one compares the recent revival of world literature to earlier attempts to selectively appropriate and transform Goethe’s idea of *Weltliteratur* in the post-Second World War era, such as Erich Auerbach’s exemplary essay “Philology and *Weltliteratur*” (1952), what is especially striking is the hollowing out of the humanist ethos that had been world literature’s traditional heart and core.<sup>4</sup> Auerbach emphasized that *Weltliteratur* was governed by two principles. First, it presupposed the idea of humanity as its rational kernel. Humanity, however, was not something naturally given, but a telos to be achieved through intercourse across the existential plurality and diversity of human traditions and cultures whose individuality must be maintained and whose unique historical development must be respected. “*Weltliteratur* does not merely refer to what is generically common and human; rather it considers humanity to be the product of the cross-fertilization of the manifold [*als wechselseitige Befruchtung des Mannigfaltigen*]. The presupposition of *Weltliteratur* is a *felix culpa*: mankind’s division into many cultures” (2; 39, translation modified). World-literary intercourse enables the fabrication of humanity because the philological study of the unique development of specific linguistic traditions as manifested in the world’s different literary cultures can help us compose a universal history of the human spirit that underlies these literatures.

Second, *Weltliteratur* has an irreducible temporal dimension. According to Auerbach, Goethe related *Weltliteratur* to “the past and to the future,” to world history. The humanism of *Weltliteratur* is “historicist,” Auerbach stressed. Its concern “was not only the overt discovery of materials and the development of methods of research, but beyond that their penetration and evaluation so that an inner history of mankind—which thereby created a conception of man unified in his multiplicity [*in ihrer Vielfalt einheitlichen Vorstellung vom Menschen*]—could be written” (4; 40). The universal history of the human spirit facilitates the making of humanity by serving as a specular structure, a mirror in which each human individual can recognize, become conscious of, and contemplate his or her humanity and its potential, because it gives us a spectacular vision

of the achievements of the human species organized into a narrative of universal progress. Hence,

within worldly actuality [*Weltwirklichkeit*], history affects us most immediately, stirs us most deeply and compels us most forcibly to a consciousness of ourselves. It is the only object in which human beings can step before us in their wholeness. Under the object of history one is to understand not only the past, but the progression of events in general; history therefore includes the present. The inner history of the last thousand years is the history of mankind achieving self-expression: this is what philology, a historicist discipline, treats. This history contains the records of man's mighty, adventurous advance to a consciousness of his human condition and to the actualization of his given potential [*Möglichkeiten*]; and this advance, whose final goal . . . was barely imaginable for a long time, still seems to have proceeded as if according to a plan, in spite of its twisted course. All the rich tensions of which our being is capable are contained within this course. A drama [*Schauspiel*] unfolds whose scope and depth sets in motion all the spectator's powers [*Kräfte*], enabling him at the same time to find peace in his given potential by the enrichment he gains from having witnessed the drama. (4–5; 41, translation modified)

In Auerbach's view, the temporal dimension of *world* literature and its connection to world history gives it a normative force. To use an Aristotelian but also a Kantian word, this force is a type of *causality*, a form of action that actualizes or brings something into actuality. This causality is not efficient in character. The history in question is "an inner history," and it stimulates and forms consciousness and the spiritual dimension of human existence. It compels us to see our humanity, and what it shows us moves us to action because it allows us to see that we can actualize our potentialities. This normative force is the vocation of world literature. Only the study of literary traditions governed by it deserves to be called *Weltliteratur*.

If we compare Auerbach's account of world literature to the more prominent theories of world literature today, the causality of literature that is at stake in the contemporary reinvention of world literature is necessarily a much weaker force. In these new theories, the world has been almost completely emptied of its normative vocation. World literature has lost its temporal dimension by being sundered from what is regarded as an effete, idealist, humanist philosophy of world history. As we will see, the defining characteristic of the world in recent accounts of world literature is spatial extension. It refers to the extensive scope and scale of the production, circulation, consumption, and evaluation of literature. Simply put, "world" is extension on a global scale, where world literature is conceived through an analogy with a world market's

global reach. What is worldly about literature is its locomotion or movement in Mercatorian space according to the mathematical coordinates of Euclidean geometry. Where literary history is broached, time is viewed in similarly spatial terms. Accordingly as a form of intercourse, world literature is now restricted to a purely spatial dimension. It is the exchange or circulation of an object between subjects, the object's movement across flat spatial distance in time conceived spatially. It no longer opens up the temporal horizon that Auerbach calls "the inner history of mankind."

Consequently, the normative content remaining in the concept of the world is minimal. It consists of the erosion of the limitations imposed by national boundaries on the production, circulation, reception, and evaluation of literature as a result of globalization. Auerbach had also written of the "decaying" of "the inner bases of national existence," but he regarded globalization as a process of leveling and standardization that destroyed diversity and individuality (2; 39). In a vicious irony, globalization would bring about the unity required for a world literature even as it eradicated the plurality equally requisite to a world literature: "Man will have to accustom himself to existence in a uniformly organized earth, to a single literary culture, in an equally short time, to only a few literary languages, and perhaps even a single literary language. And herewith the thought of *Weltliteratur* would be at once actualized [*verwirklicht*] and destroyed" (3; 39, translation modified). In contradistinction, recent theorists of world literature are more sanguine that the globalization of literary production and consumption has led to the proliferation of differences and struggles against homogenization.<sup>5</sup>

One can speculate that the ascendance of a spatial conception of the world in literary studies is part of a broader attempt to reckon with the implications of globalization for the study of literature. These new theories of world literature arise in a time of the delegitimation of the humanities in universities and public consciousness in the North Atlantic, and this necessarily creates pressure on literary studies to justify the value of literature as an object of study, especially its efficaciousness in the production of value, material or spiritual.<sup>6</sup> While the work of a corporate lawyer, accountant, or software engineer has practical utility and economic value because it is directly part of the process of economic production, literary criticism's role in the production process is unclear other than the part it may play in the generation of cultural capital, and more indirectly, in social reproduction and the augmentation of human capital. Exploring how a global approach can transform the parameters and the very object of literary studies (for example, the style and formal features of literary works), as well as the bearing of globalization on the

normative consequences of literary studies (for example, exposing the ethical limitations of national literary traditions), may be a fruitful way of bringing out literature's place in and causal relation to our contemporary global existence and, which is not quite the same thing, the worldly aspect of literature. The causality of literature is also at stake here, but in a very different way from what Auerbach had in mind. For theorists of the new world literature, it is a matter of how literature operates as a real object of exchange and circulation in the world and constitutes a world of its own that transcends national boundaries and operates with its specific laws and logic.

However, instead of affirming the causal power of literature, the analogy between world literature and the circulation of commodities in a global market unwittingly has the opposite effect of diminishing literature's worldly force and, therefore, its causality in relation to the world globalization creates. For what can the logical consequence of such an analogy be other than to make world literature a transmitter of global social forces? To think of the dynamics of world literature in terms of those of a global market is precisely to think of world literature as mimicking these global forces, of being a displaced and delayed communication of socioeconomic forces at work in the real world. In the final analysis, literature's worldliness would derive from its being a passive reflection of the forces at work in a global market in the specificity of its own sphere.

### Literature's Worldliness: The Allure of the Market Metaphor and the Force of Globalization

Let us examine more closely the consequences of viewing world literature by analogy with circulation and market exchange. The primary allure of metaphors of circulation and commerce for understanding literature's worldliness is the promise of negative freedom: the liberation from a national framework's stifling strictures on appreciating and studying literature and the reductive aesthetic and evaluative criteria imposed by ossified national literary traditions on writers and the public criticism of literature. Just as contemporary global markets and the liberalization of trade and financial flows have brought about the erosion of nationally regulated economies and the thorough privatization of the means of production and the revolution in technology and communications has undermined state control over information and knowledge, thereby leading to genuinely global economic interdependence as opposed to the independent sovereignty of national economies, so too, the

globalization of literary exchange and production is said to lead to the emergence of world literature, a form of literature that has rendered merely national literature obsolete and illusory.<sup>7</sup> The “world” is thus an adjective attached to qualify the noun “literature.” It contrasts “world literature” with merely national literature. The main consequence of this approach is that it takes the world for granted. It conflates the world with the globe and reduces the world to a spatial object produced by the material processes of global circulation as exemplified by contemporary globalization.

For example, in David Damrosch’s pragmatic definition of world literature as “all literary works that circulate beyond their culture of origin, either in translation or in their original language,” the world is regarded as a spatio-geographical category, a container within which literature has to circulate, the terrain in which it has to make its way, if it is to be worldly.<sup>8</sup> In Damrosch’s view, “a work enters *into* world literature by a double process: first, by being read *as* literature; second by circulating out *into* a broader world beyond its linguistic and cultural point of origin” (6, emphasis added). The two prepositions I have emphasized are especially significant because they indicate literature’s passage into a larger horizon, namely, a world. A literary work is therefore like a traveler, even a protagonist of a bildungsroman. It enters into a horizon wider than its immediate home. It evolves and grows as it makes its way across the world just as the protagonist gains enlightenment in a developmental process of maturation. Through an implied analogy between literary semiosis and capitalization, Damrosch regards circulation as a process in the augmentation of a literary object’s value. Because literary language is not merely denotative, a literary work gains in depth and meaning through circulation, especially when it involves translation and undergoes a process of transculturation. A literary work’s passage into a wider space is simultaneously a changing of its form. By being transported into another horizon, a larger sphere of being, the work of literature itself is transfigured. It is lifted up and attains a higher, more complex form. Hence, the circulated work does not only enter into the larger space of world literature. It *becomes* world literature. As Damrosch puts it, “literature stays within its national or regional tradition when it usually loses in translation, whereas works become world literature when they gain on balance in translation, stylistic losses offset by an expansion in depth as they increase their range” (289). “In its most expansive sense, world literature could include any work that has ever reached beyond its home base . . . a work only has an *effective* life as world literature whenever, and wherever, it is actively present within a literary system beyond that of its original culture” (4).

It is important to note that for Damrosch, unlike the sociological approaches to world literature I will discuss later, the main agency for this potentially infinite capitalization of or exponential increase in literary meaning is the act of reading. A literary work's circulation beyond its national origin transports it to different locations and to different readers. It changes the framing conditions and cultural contexts of a work's reception and interpretation. In their encounter and interplay with a foreign work, these new readers can revitalize the work. Because they see it in a different imaginative light, they can elicit new meanings from it (298). That circulation is the fundamental material condition that enables the hypertrophy of literary meaning clearly attests to Damrosch's identification of worldliness with global circulation in different historical periods. In the current conjuncture, this easily leads to the determination of contemporary literature's worldliness in terms of the circuits and processes of capitalist globalization. This identification is succinctly expressed in Damrosch's claim that "the dramatic acceleration of globalization since [the era of Goethe, Marx, and Engels], however, has greatly complicated the idea of a world literature" (4). Franco Moretti is of the same persuasion. In his view, "the world literary system," his name for the formation of world literature that comes into being from the eighteenth century onwards, "is the product of a unified market."<sup>9</sup>

There is a similar conflation of globalization and worldliness in an essay by John Pizer on world literature published at the beginning of the twenty-first century in *Comparative Literature*, the official journal of the American Comparative Literature Association. "Literature is becoming *immanently* global, that is, that individual works are increasingly informed and constituted by social, political, and even linguistic trends that are not limited to a single nation or region. Thus, it has become increasingly difficult to regard contemporary texts as simply the products of, for example, German, Nigerian, or Chinese writers, or even of European, African, and Asian authors. With the globalization of the world economy, a true world literature, which is to say a *global* literature, is being created."<sup>10</sup> Here too, we see a patent conflation of the globe, a bounded object in Mercatorian space, with the world, a form of belonging or community. This understanding of worldliness in terms of the material processes of globalization leads to a deficient understanding of the normativity of world literature in two respects. On the one hand, because the relation between world literature and global culture is not elaborated, the vulnerability of world literature to the techniques of the global culture industry remains unacknowledged. Insofar as the emergence of world literature is bound to a globalized print-culture industry, it is vulnerable to the negative cultural consequences of what David Harvey calls



space-time compression—the manipulative constitution of taste, desire, and opinion by the global commodity circuits of image production.<sup>11</sup> Since postindustrial techniques of marketing, advertising, and value adjudication form a seamless web in the production, reception, interpretation, and criticism (academic or otherwise) of any given work of world literature, these techniques necessarily shape that work's form and ideational content and the kind of world it enables us to imagine. On the other hand, collapsing the world into a vast geographical entity is tacitly premised on the reduction of literature to an epiphenomenon of a material base. It is assumed that literature mirrors political-economic forces and relations in a straightforward manner: a globalized economy gives rise to a global culture and a literary transnationalism or world literature. World literature in this sense cannot be autonomous, since it reflects and is conditioned by the global character of political economy.

Despite the new openings created by locomotion beyond national and regional borders, what is closed off is precisely the opening of a normative horizon that transcends present reality, such as the connection to world history that Auerbach regarded as world literature's defining feature. This normative deficit becomes even more pronounced in Pascale Casanova's and Franco Moretti's sociological accounts of world literature, which are influenced by theories of social force respectively derived from Pierre Bourdieu and Marx. Casanova and Moretti seek to explain how literature functions as a social force. However, the lack of a normative dimension in their conceptualization of world literature has problematic consequences.

In *The World Republic of Letters* and subsequent work, Casanova emphasizes that her object of study is not a collection of literary works called world literature, but a transnational web of relations that exceeds nation-state boundaries. Texts are produced by authors as part of this dynamic global landscape and have literary value attributed to them according to a complex set of discursive rules.<sup>12</sup> Hence, it is not a matter of "analysing literature on a world scale," but of clarifying "the conceptual means for thinking literature *as* a world."<sup>13</sup> To elucidate the worldliness specific to literature, Casanova borrows the commercial metaphors Goethe employed to describe *Weltliteratur*. The usefulness of these metaphors, she observes, lies in their emphasis on the market as a terrain of competitive strife. They show us that the global circuit of symbolic production where the recognition of literary value and the attribution of aesthetic-cultural capital take place is thoroughly permeated by power relations. Just as the existing system of global political economy is characterized by an uneven distribution of capital and power between core and peripheries, so the transnational economy of literary value is also characterized by an

unequal and hierarchical distribution of literary capital and the power to adjudicate on the standards of literary value. Hence, the production of literature involves *struggles* for recognition and over literary standards by individual writers, readers, researchers, critics, publishers, etc.

The specificity of literature's worldly dimension means that the world republic of letters is an autonomous sphere. But its autonomy is of a peculiar kind. Because transnational literary relations are relations of power and domination, their autonomy is clearly not that of an enchanted and peaceful world of pure aesthetic creation, the conventional caricature of Kant's account of the disinterested character of aesthetic judgment. Their history "is one of incessant struggle and competition over the very nature of literature itself—an endless succession of literary manifestos, movements, assaults, and revolutions."<sup>14</sup> However, literary power relations, Casanova insists, also do not have an immediate link to political rivalries or national-cultural prejudices. Transnational literary space is autonomous in the sense that it is not a mere superstructure of geopolitics. Accordingly, Casanova also distinguishes the agonistic space of literature as a world from the homogenizing processes of cultural globalization. "The internationalization that I propose to describe here therefore signifies more or less the opposite of what is ordinarily understood by the neutralizing term 'globalization,' which suggests that the world political and economic system can be conceived as the generalization of a single and universally applicable model. In the literary world, by contrast, it is the competition among its members that defines and unifies the system while at the same time marking its limits."<sup>15</sup>

Yet, notwithstanding Casanova's emphasis on the complex autonomy and the agonistic character of transnational literary space, its worldly force is severely limited by the governing concept of relative autonomy. Transnational literary space, she argues, is "another world . . . with its own laws, its own history, its specific revolts and revolutions; a market where non-market values are traded, within a non-economic economy; and measured . . . by an aesthetic scale of time."<sup>16</sup> Its struggles obey an autonomous literary logic, which is registered in changes to literary form and cannot be reduced to an ideological reflection of economic or political power.<sup>17</sup> In Casanova's view, the central shortcoming of postcolonial theory is that it does not elucidate literature's proper worldliness. It seeks to overcome the postulate of literature's autonomy by reductively linking literature to the real world. This reduces transnational literary struggles to real world political struggles and sacrifices literature's specificity. "Post-colonialism posits a direct link between literature and history, one that is exclusively political. From this, it moves to an *external* criticism that runs the risk of reducing the literary to the political, impos-

ing a series of annexations or short-circuits, and often passing in silence over the actual aesthetic, formal or stylistic characteristics that actually 'make' literature."<sup>18</sup> It is important to emphasize that the autonomy of transnational literary space is merely relative. When Casanova discusses the production of postcolonial literature, she also refers international forms of literary dependency back to the structures of international political domination. In her words, "because the newest nations are also the ones that are the most vulnerable to political and economic domination, and because literary space is dependent to one degree or another on political structures, international forms of literary dependency are to some extent correlated with the structures of international political domination."<sup>19</sup> For Casanova, postcolonial theory's error is that the link it posits between literature and the real world is *too* immediate and direct.

The concept of relative autonomy leads to a twofold inefficacy of literature as a force. On the one hand, the world republic of letters' relative autonomy from political and economic forces means that it is only a weak force with a highly circumscribed role in the making of the world. It is so weak that it falls into a position of abject vulnerability in relation to the commercial type of world literature generated by the global culture industry. In Casanova's view, "a world literature does indeed exist today, new in its form and its effects, that circulates easily and rapidly through virtually simultaneous translations and whose extraordinary success is due to the fact that its denationalized content can be absorbed without any risk of misunderstanding. But under these circumstances a genuine literary transnationalism is no longer possible, having been swept away by the tides of international business."<sup>20</sup> Hence, despite her rejection of literature as a realm of pure art, she ironically ends up nostalgically yearning for a literary transnationalism that remains uncontaminated by market forces, a pristine space remarkably similar to that of pure art.

On the other hand, because transnational literary space is to a degree dependent on political and economic structures and its relations are referred back to geopolitical rivalries in the last instance, its dynamics derive from and repeat in a refracted form the dynamics of real political struggles.<sup>21</sup> Transnational literary space is therefore a secondary manifestation of more fundamental forces, which are the site of a struggle that is more real. Its agonistic relations are merely a quasi-Bloomian struggle over literary standards, recognition, and influence, where the positions of father and ephebe are occupied by writers from the world republic of letters' center and peripheries. What cannot be entertained within this conceptual framework is an agonistic relation between an ethico-politically committed world literature and one produced by the commercial market, where both compete as alternative attempts in the ongoing making of the real world.

The examples of recent theories of world literature I have discussed use market exchange as a paradigm for understanding the worldliness of literature. The market is, however, merely a metaphor for the circulation and production of literature. Franco Moretti's contribution to this debate is striking because he literalizes the market metaphor. In contrast to Casanova's focus on the psychological agonistics of influence and recognition between central and peripheral writers, he examines how market forces such as printing presses, readers as paying consumers, libraries, channels of circulation, etc., create the concrete material conditions of literary production. Literary intercourse and production are not merely analogous to market processes. They require market forces in order to take place. By the same token, the generation of literary meaning and cultural value is not only similar to the processes of commodification and capitalization. Literary works are literally made as goods for exchange in a mass market for pecuniary profits. Accordingly, whereas Casanova remained fixated on literature as high art, Moretti extends world literature's scope to include middle- and low-brow books. He also pays greater attention to form, which he understands through an analogy with the biological forms or morphological arrangements studied by evolutionary science. One would logically expect world literature to possess a greater force in this view. But Moretti's account diminishes its force even further because, by literalizing the market metaphor, he reduces the force of literature to a refraction of social forces.

Moretti's account of literature's worldly force is deeply entrenched in a Marxist base-superstructure model. The model's influence is condensed in his provocative claim (via an aphorism from biological science) that "form [is] a diagram of forces," and "perhaps, even, [is] *nothing but force*."<sup>22</sup> This is, in his view, "*a materialist conception of form. . . . [F]orm as the most profoundly social aspect of literature: form as force.*"<sup>23</sup> The form of literature refers primarily to genre. Moretti is interested in the popularity of certain genres, the historical fact of their survival, and therefore their victory or hegemony over other genres in competitive market relations. The measure of the force of a literary genre is not aesthetic value but the quantity of books published. Such an approach to world literature, understood as the study of the spread of literary genres throughout the world, has the benefit, Moretti suggests, of constructing a more nuanced, empirically based picture of the complex flows of influence and adaptation that is attentive to the specific details of geographical location. It enables us to see that world literature is an unequal and uneven world system of cultural dependency where literary influence flows from Western European core cultures to peripheral cultures, but in a variegated manner such that the development of liter-

ary forms elsewhere does not follow that of a prototypical or modular Western European path of development.<sup>24</sup>

In Moretti's view, the survival of literary form can be explained through an account of form as an "abstract of social relationships."<sup>25</sup> Literary forms are a schematic distillation or structural reduction of social forces, which they express and represent in a symbolic medium. This, then, is a social psychology of the reader as a consumer of texts. The success of these forms in their circulation as commodities in the print market of publishers and readers, sellers and consumers, is measured in terms of the loyalty, size, and reach of a reading public. It hinges on the fit or adequacy of the form to the specific problems raised by social relationships in a market area in a given period. Here we need to distinguish between three different levels of sociality. Literary forms are symbolic representations of social relations. But as commodities, they belong to the social intercourse of print market relations. Finally, these markets are embedded in a larger set of social relations with their specific problems. The survival of a literary form depends on the congruence between these different levels of sociality. Moretti calls this congruence "artistic usefulness," a term borrowed from Viktor Shklovsky.<sup>26</sup> It designates literature's functionality or utility for a social subject who takes pleasure in a work because its forms and devices resolve at an imaginary level a fundamental contradiction structural to the social dynamics that organize his existence.<sup>27</sup> In Moretti's words, "literary genres are problem-solving devices, which address a contradiction of their environment, offering an imaginary resolution by means of their formal organization. The pleasure provided by that formal organization is therefore more than just pleasure—it is the vehicle through which a larger symbolic statement is shaped and assimilated. . . . [T]he structure provided [by the devices] . . . makes [readers] feel that the world is fully understandable."<sup>28</sup>

But this means that literature's force—a literary form's capacity to survive, its *conatus*, if you will—is entirely derivative. Literary form has no force of its own. As a symbolic expression of social relations, it is merely a relay of social forces, a medium for refracting them. Moreover, a representation's effectiveness in arousing pleasure depends on its fit with the social context of the reading public. Hence, the primary ground of literature's force is the play of social forces at work in the constitution of readers, or more precisely, the contradictions of their social environment and the existential problems they generate. Literary form is merely a tool or instrument for expressing social relations, which are its deeper kernel or inner truth. These relations explain why a form survives and the survival of a form in turn confirms the primacy of social forces. Moretti's emphasis on literature's symbolic function is

significant here. The natural motivation between the symbol and what it represents supports the view that literary forms are mere tools for the imaginary resolution of social contradictions.

What then of the agency of the reader's imagination or interpretive powers? It turns out that the reader is no better off than literary form. Both the literary text and the reader are simply dummies through which social forces are ventriloquized. Since the reader's pleasure in literature is that of a consumer, it is merely a social pleasure and desire. Because the reader-consumer is merely a cipher for the transmission of social forces, his desire is reactive in the Nietzschean sense.<sup>29</sup>

Hence, although Moretti posits a direct causal link between literature and the world of social forces, as in Casanova's account, world literature also has no transformative agency in the world. A work of world literature merely acts by reflecting and refracting the stronger primary social forces operative within it and to which its form corresponds via a natural symbolic relation. This is why, in his polemical disagreement with Damrosch, Moretti favors distant reading and explanation over close reading and interpretation. The former approach is governed by the premise of the derivative character of literary representations and it explores how their reception and consumption is determined by social forces. In contradistinction, the latter approach requires attention to literature's force of signification, how it moves readers in singular experiences of reading that point to the opening of other worlds.

Perhaps all sociological accounts of world literature necessarily attenuate the worldly force of literature by reducing its worldliness to social forces as exemplified by market processes. Where a sociological approach is combined with the Marxist position that social forces and their economic basis constitute the most fundamental infrastructure of human existence, the reactive character of literature becomes even more pronounced. In this regard, however, it is important to note that critical Marxist geographers influenced by Henri Lefebvre's understanding of representational space (space lived through images and symbols) have suggested that literary forms have a more active causal power in the world than Moretti allows because of the role of images and the imagination in social intercourse, not only in maintaining and facilitating existing modes of sociality, but in instituting emergent forms of social experience through revolution.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, Marx did not identify the world as such with the world market but pointed instead to a higher, nonalienated sociality beyond the commodity relations of bourgeois civil society, namely, a world different from the capitalist world of space-time compression.

We can say in summary that recent accounts of world literature have failed to attend to two related issues: first, the question of "what

is a world?” or more precisely, whether the world is a normative or a merely descriptive category, and, second, literature’s causality in relation to the world. Indeed, they show the most stubborn resistance to thinking through these problems. Moretti explicitly dismisses normative approaches to world literature on the grounds that they “are more concerned with value judgments than with actual knowledge.”<sup>31</sup> Yet, unless world literature’s normative dimension is broached, it can only be a very weak causal force in the world. As we have seen, its causality is variously the force of circulation that moves literature around the world, thereby generating new meanings (Damrosch), the struggles over criteria that govern the production and recognition of literary value as cultural capital (Casanova), or the social forces that determine a given genre’s ability to elicit pleasure from and attract a reading public, that is, the power of a symbolic form over a reader-consumer’s imagination (Moretti).

The neat conflation of the world with market processes of global extensiveness (exemplified by the globe made by economic globalization) conveniently hides the need to address these issues because it makes the meaning of “world” self-evident. But does the market create a world and, if so, how exactly? If we assume that the freeing of trade beyond national borders creates a sense of membership in a world, then is the world merely a form of intercourse or sociality that exceeds the boundaries of the territorial state? Or does “world” have a normative meaning? Is market exchange the sole paradigm and privileged model of worldliness, or is it only a specific type of worldliness? In what way is literature, whether we understand it as a mode of communication or a process of signification, related to the opening and making of a world? These questions are crucial to any rethinking of world literature because, unless they are broached, world literature is only *of* the world in a limited sense. It is affected by worldly forces, but it cannot be a force in the ongoing cartography and creation of the world by negotiating with and contesting the world brought into being by commercial intercourse, monetary transactions, and flows of global mass culture.

### Temporalizing the World: Teleological Time and Worlding

In a related essay, I suggested that Goethe’s reflections on Weltliteratur addressed many of the questions foreclosed in the contemporary revival of the idea because he understood its vocation in terms of the ability to forge spiritual connections, so much so that world literature is a constitutive modality of cosmopolitanism.<sup>32</sup> The theories of world literature discussed above fixate on Goethe’s use of metaphors of mercantile

activity and commercial exchange. What they gloss over is the fact that Goethe saw world-literary intercourse as having the normative end of revealing universal humanity across particular differences, even as such differences are valued. The particular literary forms of different nations are bearers of universal human values. Through historical progress, we will attain full knowledge of humanity's essential features and actualize humanity. Mutual understanding and tolerance among cultures and nations are valuable ethical and political consequences of the explication of universal humanity. Accordingly, Goethe combined the market metaphor with that of evangelical activity. The merchant-translator is also a holy prophet who mediates between the divine and the mundane and spreads the word of God to the people through vernacularization. Like Luther, the translator conveys and makes visible to the masses what is eternally human in foreign literatures.

And thus every translator is to be regarded as a middle-man [*Vermittler*] in this universal spiritual commerce [*allgemein geistigen Handels*], and as making it his business to promote/further this exchange [*Wechseltausch*]: for say what we may of the insufficiency of translation, yet the work is and will always be one of the weightiest and worthiest matters in the general concerns of the world.

The Koran says: "God has given to each people a prophet in its own tongue!" Thus each translator is a prophet to his people. Luther's translation of the Bible has produced the greatest results, though criticism gives it qualified praise, and picks faults in it, even to the present day. What indeed is the whole enormous business of the Bible Society, but the evangelization to all people in their own tongue?<sup>33</sup>

The analogy with the transmission of the sacred word suggests that world literature has a normative dimension that cannot be reduced to the greater facility of global communications and the increased range of spatial circulation. "Increasing communication between the nations" or "the increasing speed of intercourse" are undoubtedly a means for bringing about world literature.<sup>34</sup> However, Goethe's sacralization of world literature suggests that the world transcends mere geography. Indeed, he distinguishes between two different senses of "world": the world as an object of great physical-spatial extensiveness, such as the expansion of the mundane or the diffusion of what is pleasing to the crowd (*Menge*), and the world as a normative phenomenon, a higher intellectual community concerned with "the truth and progress of humanity."<sup>35</sup> This higher spiritual world has a temporal-historical dimension: it opens up a new universal horizon by pointing to humanity's spiritual unity.

Goethe's distinction between two different senses of the world cautions us from hastily obscuring the normative dimension of worldhood by



conflating worldliness with global circulation. The world in the higher sense is spiritual intercourse, transaction, and exchange aimed at bringing out universal humanity. This is its normative force. The world is thus a form of relating, belonging, or being-with. In contradistinction, the globe is a bounded object in Mercatorian space. We commonly say “map of the world,” when we really mean “map of the globe.” This distinction between global connectedness through the spatial diffusion and extensiveness achieved through media and market processes and belonging to a shared world corresponds to the fundamental contradiction between globalization and cosmopolitanism: although globalization creates the material conditions for a community of the greatest extension possible, capitalism radically undermines the achievement of a genuinely human world. The globe is not a world. This is a necessary premise if the cosmopolitan vocation of world literature can be meaningful today.

Several voices in contemporary philosophy and critical theory have distinguished between the world and the globe. In his work on world democracy, Jürgen Habermas distinguished between economic globalization, which is driven by particularistic system imperatives, and deliberative democratic procedures based on a world community of shared risks that can regulate the former.<sup>36</sup> In a different vein, the final Derrida distinguished *mondialisation*, the becoming-world of the world, from globalization by pointing to the former’s deterritorializing, expropriating, and universalizing exigency. He coined the word *altermondialisation* to describe a worldwide-ization that is other to hegemonic globalization.<sup>37</sup> Goethe’s spiritualist model of world literature insists on a similar distinction and characterizes the world’s normativity in temporal terms. Because it reveals an ideal humanity, the world generated by literary exchange is a spiritual formation that transcends the material connections that initially enabled wider human intercourse. Hence, the world is an ongoing dynamic process of becoming, something that is continually being made and remade because it possesses a historical-temporal dimension. Accordingly, as we see from the example of Auerbach, since its inception the normative project of Weltliteratur has been frequently augmented by teleologies of history that saw the world as the horizon of the universal historical progress of humankind towards freedom.

Today, teleology is viewed as an outmoded and even pernicious way of thinking because it constrains history by prescribing a universal end. Strictly speaking, however, teleology is simply the doctrine that events in the world are animated by immanent ends. Any kind of rational human action—for example, means-ends relations and final causality—is teleological. A teleological world history understands the world’s normativity in terms of teleological time, the time of incarnation in which rational

ends are actualized in the empirical world.<sup>38</sup> As distinguished from the linear time of mechanical causality that governs nature, where cause and effect follow each other in an irreversible sequence of succession, teleological time is circular and self-returning. Final causality is the actualization of a rational end in existence. In a teleology of history, the end or final cause is not external but originally immanent to its effect or product. The latter is an unfolding of, a return to and completion of an immanent end. In a modern mechanistic worldview, where all ends are externally prescribed by human reason, the only possible example of final causality in nature is the temporal structure of a living organism's causality as a self-organizing being in which its very life is generated by a complete reciprocity between parts and whole such that they are both the cause and effect of each other. Because an organism's epigenetic processes resemble the final causality of human reason, the entire tradition of German idealist philosophy viewed the teleological time of organic life as an apposite analogue for human freedom and regarded this resemblance as grounds for the hope that we can actualize our moral ends in the world.<sup>39</sup> Accordingly, human cultural progress (*Bildung*) was understood in terms of teleological time. As evidenced by its teleological view of historical progress, Marxist materialism inherits this legacy.

As part of his materialist inversion of Hegelian spiritualist world history, Marx was fond of saying that world history only came into existence with the rise of the world market. "[Big industry] produced world history for the first time, insofar as it made all civilized nations and every individual member of them dependent for the satisfaction of their needs on the whole world, thus destroying the former natural exclusiveness of individual nations."<sup>40</sup> Marx's geographical determination of worldhood suggests that the defining motif of the materialist account of the world is spatialization. His reduction of the world to the space of market exchange is arguably the most fundamental source of the new world literature's understanding of worldliness in terms of spatial circulation and its ensuing normative deficit. Henceforth, world literature's normativity consists merely in the unquestioned assumption that the crossing of national boundaries and the erosion of territorial borders by the circulation of literary works is good because wider circulation attests to the strength of a literary genre or adds value and significance to a literary work.

But, as with their use of Goethe, recent theories of world literature appear to have relied on a very partial interpretation of Marx's account of the world. Despite initial appearances, global capitalism's power to make a world is primarily temporal in character. Capital's universalizing power is not merely the erosion of spatial barriers by the world market but a global mode of production that *destroys space with time*, where

the time taken to traverse the space opened up by the world market's breaching of territorial barriers must be reduced to nothing. It is the ability to remove temporal barriers to capital's own endless circulation and self-actualization. As the condition of the universal development of productive forces, capital's power to control and appropriate time is nothing other than the capacity to create a world and endlessly actualize itself in the world. This is capital's "normativity," so to speak.<sup>41</sup> This liberation of production is also a process that demystifies the external world, and, thus, a process of humanization that transforms the whole world according to human ends at the same time that the human being is cultivated so that new needs and pleasures can be created to foster the consumption of new products. Marx emphasizes that the enhancement of the physical and spiritual capacities of humanity, the domination of nature, and the creation of a borderless cosmopolitan world are moments in the same process of capital's liberation of production.<sup>42</sup>

More importantly, Marx's definition of the world as a system for the universal satisfaction of needs leads to a distinction between true and alienated forms of human production. Because the world market is the field of the production of commodities for profitable exchange instead of the direct satisfaction of needs, it is not a true world but merely an alienated world, the monstrous antithesis of genuine human community that must be transcended. The cosmopolitan humanity and the world it makes are an alienated subject and an inverted world mystified by the sheen of bourgeois ideology. The contradiction between the universalizing tendency that drives capital and the restrictive barriers it erects then becomes an immanent force that leads to the overcoming of capital. This is Marx's version of the distinction between globe and world. Where the world (social relations) is no longer an external power that stands outside and restricts the production process but has become united with it, the world is no longer merely spatial. It becomes temporalized and alive. At the same time, the production process, which capitalism alienated from producers, no longer appears as something that stands outside the producers, but is recognized as amenable to their control in the same way that external nature is demystified and appropriated in productive activity. The becoming-world of the production process is also the self-actualization of the society of producers in and as the world. Because the reappropriation of the production process involves the appropriation of time and not merely space, what takes place is precisely the temporalization of the world.

If we simply convert Marx's descriptions of the world market into a methodological framework for studying world literature that privileges global circulation, we ignore what is innovative about his materialist

account of the world: the teleological temporal dimension that constitutes the normative force of world making and its identification with our productive activity. Marx situates world-literary relations in a field of forces that include productive forces and direct struggles against exploitation. However, the materialist understanding of the world also poses a serious obstacle to world literature. Although Marx gives human activity an unprecedented normative capacity because he equates the temporal force of world making with our control and appropriation of time in production, he denies literature any world-making capacity because he sees it as an ideological reflection of economic forces without worldly efficacy.

Here, the concept of worlding (*welten*) may offer a solution in connecting the normative force of the world to literature. Originating from Heideggerian phenomenology and its critique of what Heidegger scathingly called the vulgar concept of the world, that is, the world as the sum totality of objects in space and the world as something created by communication and discursive exchange among human subjects, worlding refers to how a world is held together and given unity by the force of time. By giving rise to existence, temporalization worlds a world. Accordingly, worldliness is the sheer force of opening that inheres in the giving and coming of time.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak introduced the term to postcolonial theory as shorthand to describe how European imperialist cultural representations constructed the geography of colonies. Referring to Heidegger's essay *The Origin of the Work of Art* as the source of the idea of "the 'worlding of a world' upon what must be assumed to be uninscribed earth," she suggested that these processes of imperialist discursive cartography, which include canonical literature, are a form of epistemic violence that shapes how colonized subjects see themselves and continue to play a role in the "worlding" of the Third World and its native inhabitants after decolonization.<sup>43</sup> However, for Heidegger, a world is precisely what cannot be represented on a map. Worlding is not a cartographical process that epistemologically constructs the world by means of discursive representations, but a process of temporalization. Cartography reduces the world to a spatial object. In contradistinction, worlding is a force that subtends and exceeds all human calculations that reduce the world as a temporal structure to the sum of objects in space. Imperialist cartography is such a calculation in the sphere of geopolitical economy. It constructs a world insofar as its discursive representations enable us to determine and shape the world that temporalization opens up. Processes of discursive construction are worldings in a derived sense. They imbue the objective world with value and significance. But they are also

processes of unworlding because, by reducing the world to something spatial, they obscure its worldliness.

The relation between teleological time and worlding is as follows: teleological time, which harmonizes with the final causality of human action, is the appropriation and calculation of time by human reason. It worlds in the narrow sense by spiritually and materially shaping and making the world through the prescription of normative ends. In the example of Marx, the proletarian revolution is a progressive force that intervenes in the existing world, reinscribing it through alternative discursive constructions in order to actualize a higher world. However, worlding in the derived sense presupposes worlding in the general sense, the prevailing of a world that follows from the sheer persistence of time. The world is linked to transcendence. But unlike teleological accounts, the world is not generated by the transcendence of finitude. Instead, time itself is the force of transcendence that opens a world. Better yet, temporalization constitutes the openness of a world, the opening that is world. In situations where progressive teleological cartographies are leveled off by capitalist globalization, this openness is an uneraseable normative resource for disrupting and resisting the calculations of globalization. It opens up new progressive teleological times.

What, then, is the connection between literature and the normative force of worlding, such that we can speak of world literature as literature that worlds a world? Here, the distinction between the two senses of worlding is crucial. Spiritualist and idealist accounts of the world (Goethe, Kant, Hegel) suggest that as an aesthetic and cultural process, literature creates a higher spiritual world. In contradistinction, Marx's materialist account of the world deprives literature of any worldly normative force because it views spiritual products as phantomatic superstructures that are devoid of efficacy in making the real world. Marxist critical theories of space and critical geography (Lefebvre and Harvey) go some way towards a materialist understanding of literature's power to shape the world through representational cartography because they offer a dynamic account of the making of space that gives an important role to cultural and aesthetic processes. However, in the final analysis, this shaping is directed at the world as something spatial. It is worlding in the narrow sense. In contradistinction, literature has a more fundamental relation to the world in phenomenological and postphenomenological accounts. The world's reality is neither objective nor subjective because it is a process grounded in the force of temporalization. Literature has a similarly curious ontological status: it is not something objective and so cannot be reduced to the subject's rational powers of determination and calculation. Its radical indeterminacy also means that it exceeds the

subject's powers of interpretation. Hence, literature does not merely map the spatialized world and give it value and meaning. Rather, its formal structures enact the opening of a world by the incalculable gift of time. We may therefore speak of the world as having a "literary" structure that is more fundamental, more infrastructural, to adopt Marx's language, than the material reality of economic production.

A brief concluding outline of Hannah Arendt's thoughts on this point may be illuminating. In her critical revision of Heidegger's concept of world, Arendt suggests that speech and action constitute a higher dimension of worldliness, a web of meaningful intersubjective relations that is more fundamental than the world of things because the activity of fabrication cannot take place without establishing relations among subjects. This activity requires the disclosure of human beings to each other as acting subjects through words and deeds. Because speech and action are the fundamental conditions of human practical activity, the meaningful world they create is more infrastructural than the material world of production and exchange.

[T]he physical, worldly in-between along with its interests is overlaid and, as it were, overgrown with an altogether different in-between which consists of deeds and words and owes its origin exclusively to men's acting and speaking directly *to* one another. This second, subjective in-between is not tangible, since there are no tangible objects into which it could solidify; the process of acting and speaking can leave behind no such results and end products. But for all its intangibility, this in-between is no less real than the world of things we visibly have in common. We call this reality the "web" of human relationships, indicating by the metaphor its somewhat intangible quality.<sup>44</sup>

Simply put, economic activity requires a subject who acts in relation to other subjects. Hence, it presupposes the prior disclosure of subjects in an intersubjective world of speech and action.

The central shortcoming of Marxist materialism is that it dismissed the effectivity of these nonmaterial processes by characterizing them as superstructural, whereas they have a fundamental reality of their own that is constitutive of the material world of production.

To be sure, this web is no less bound to the objective world of things than speech is to the existence of a living body, but the relationship is not like that of a façade or, in Marxian terminology, of an essentially superfluous superstructure affixed to the useful structure of the building itself. The basic error of all materialism in politics . . . is to overlook the inevitability with which men disclose themselves as subjects, as distinct and unique persons, even when they wholly concentrate upon reaching an altogether worldly, material object. . . . [T]o deny . . . that this disclosure is real and has consequences of its own is simply unrealistic. (183)

Despite its intangibility, the subjective in-between created by speech and action is indisputably real. Its appearance is grounded in the copresence of others who receive our speech and action, testify to their shared phenomenality, and repeat the initial experience in memory.

The world therefore has a narrative structure. It is formed by the telling of stories. The objective world marks the term of a particular finite life by the quantitative measurement of its temporal length. But because it is devoid of meaning, it cannot impart any significance to the lives it delimits. For a human life to be preserved and remembered by posterity for its achievements, the individual's coming and departing need to be given significance as a unique birth and death, a beginning and ending of a life that has meaning for others. By giving meaning to intersubjective relations, speech elevates the objective world into a genuinely human world. It enables us to transcend our finitude, to escape the indistinction of merely biological life.

Arendt's distinction between objective and intersubjective worlds follows the division of the world into a spatial-geographical category and a temporal-normative category in the philosophical accounts of the world discussed earlier. What is important here is that she makes heuristic use of the narrative form of the story to elucidate the world's temporal structure. Although Arendt is not primarily interested in stories as a literary form, her characterization of them as a world-making power sheds light on literature's worldly force. Stories are a source of meaningfulness that illuminates human existence (324). Telling stories is central to the linear movement of "life in its non-biological sense" as it unfolds against the backdrop of the destructive cycles of natural biological life (173). "The chief characteristic of this specifically human life," she writes, "whose appearance and disappearance constitute worldly events, is that it is itself always full of events which ultimately *can be told as a story, establish a biography*; it is of this life, *bios* as distinguished from mere *zōē*, that Aristotle said that it 'somehow is a kind of *praxis*'" (97, emphasis added).

We can sum up Arendt's understanding of literature as a power of world making as follows. The story form is the metaphorical template for understanding the meaningful world of speech and action. Moreover, because the literary work of art is a model of eternally meaningful objectivity, literary production imparts imperishable significance to the world. Compared to Arendt's understanding of literature as world-making activity, the recent theorizing of world literature as a statistical matter of circulation detaches it from the web of normative intersubjective relations. Because these accounts of world literature reduce worldliness to global processes of marketing, circulation, and distribution, they efface literature's temporal dimension, its world-making power as a structure

of address that announces a subject and a process that imparts meaning.

The various philosophical accounts of the world I have discussed in this essay are intended to give a richer understanding of what we mean by *world* and literature's worldliness. A later reconceptualization of the world does not invalidate prior accounts but critically supplements them. We should view a given work of world literature as the locus where different processes of worlding are played out in a historically specific field of forces and analyze the complex relations, antagonisms, and aporetic tensions between these processes. We can then understand world literature as literature that is *of* the world, not a body of timeless aesthetic objects or a commodity-like thing that circulates globally, but something that can play a fundamental role and be a force in the ongoing cartography and creation of the world.

The connections between world literature and cosmopolitanism have not been sufficiently explored because neither field of study has carefully examined the key concept common to them, the world. The world in a normative sense refers to the being-with of all peoples, groups and individuals. It is the original openness that gives us accessibility to others so that we can be together. Global capitalism, however, incorporates peoples and populations into the world system by tethering them to capitalist temporality (exemplified by Greenwich Mean Time) and Western modernity's unrelenting march of progress. It violently destroys other worlds and their temporalities. Attempts to characterize contemporary literature as cosmopolitan on the basis of the global character of literary production, circulation, and style only lead to a facile cosmopolitanism devoid of normative force. I have proposed a conceptually more rigorous way of understanding world literature's normativity as a modality of cosmopolitanism that is responsible and responsive to the need to remake the world as a hospitable place, that is, a place that is *open* to the emergence of peoples that globalization deprives of world.

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NOTES

1 Charles Bernheimer, ed., *Comparative Literature in the Age of Multiculturalism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1995), and Haun Saussy, ed., *Comparative Literature in an Age of Globalization* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2006).

2 See Mary Louise Pratt's contribution in the Bernheimer volume, "Comparative Literature and Global Citizenship," 58–65. Pratt argues for the importance of "new forms of cultural citizenship in a globalizing world" (62).

3 For a recent polemical statement of this critique of world literature in English translation, see Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Death of a Discipline* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2003).



4 Erich Auerbach, "Philology and *Wellliteratur*," trans. Marie and Edward Said, *The Centennial Review* 13, no. 1 (1969): 1–17; "Philologie der Weltliteratur," in *Wellliteratur. Festgabe für Fritz Strich zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Walter Muschg and Emil Staiger (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1952), 39–50. Translation modified where appropriate. Hereafter cited in text (translation followed by original page number).

5 In comparison, critical theories of world cinema and world music are more alert to the dangers of the commodification of difference and hold a less naïve view about the market metaphor. For an incisive critique of the relation between world cinema and industrialized global culture that draws an analogy between world cinema and world music, see Martin Roberts, "Baraka: World Cinema and the Global Culture Industry," *Cinema Journal* 37, no. 3 (1998): 62–82. On world music as a commercial marketing tool, see Steven Feld, "A Sweet Lullaby for World Music," *Public Culture* 12, no. 1 (2000): 145–71.

6 See Patricia Cohen, "In Tough Times, the Humanities Must Justify Their Worth," *New York Times*, February 25, 2009.

7 For a bourgeois-liberal account of globalization from the discipline of economics, see Robert Solomon, *The Transformation of the World Economy*, 2nd ed. (New York: St. Martin's, 1999) and *Money on the Move: The Revolution in International Finance since 1980* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1999). For a more tempered view that discusses the negative consequences of the globalization of money flows, see Barry Eichengreen, *Globalizing Capital: A History of the International Monetary System*, updated ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1998).

8 David Damrosch, *What Is World Literature?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 2003), 4 (hereafter cited in text).

9 Franco Moretti, "World-Systems Analysis, Evolutionary Theory, *Wellliteratur*," in *Immanuel Wallerstein and the Problem of the World: System, Scale, Culture*, ed. David Palumbo-Liu, Bruce Robbins, and Nirvana Tanoukhi (Durham, NC: Duke Univ. Press, 2011), 75.

10 John Pizer, "Goethe's 'World Literature' Paradigm and Contemporary Cultural Globalization," *Comparative Literature* 52, no. 3 (2000), 213.

11 See David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1990).

12 Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, trans. M. B. DeBevoise (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 2004), 3–4: "This space is not an abstract and theoretical construction, but an actual—albeit unseen—world made up by lands of literature; a world in which what is judged worthy of being considered literary is brought into existence; a world in which the ways and means of literary art are argued over and decided."

13 Casanova, "Literature as a World," *New Left Review* 31 (January/February 2005), 73.

14 Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, 12.

15 Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, 40. Casanova's understanding of globalization does not account for how it creates hierarchies and involves multidirectional struggles.

16 Casanova, "Literature as a World," 72.

17 Literature as a world is "a parallel territory, relatively autonomous from the political domain, and dedicated as a result to questions, debates, inventions of a specifically literary nature. Here, struggles of all sorts . . . come to be refracted, diluted, deformed or transformed according to a literary logic, and in literary forms." "Literature as a World," 72.

18 "Literature as a World," 71.

19 Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, 81.

20 Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, 172. Marketized world literature is "a short-term boost to publishers' profits in the most market-oriented and powerful centres through the marketing of products intended for rapid, 'de-nationalized' circulation" (74).

21 Although Casanova claims to be influenced by Bourdieu, the concept of relative autonomy is distinctly Althusserian. The world republic of letters is determined in the last

instance in the same way that Althusser spoke of “*the determination in the last instance by the economic.*” See Louis Althusser, “Contradiction and Overdetermination,” in *For Marx*, trans. Ben Brewster (London: Verso, 1990), 113. For Althusser, the superstructure has the weak effectivity of the “specification” of a contradiction and “overdetermines” the latter, using a term borrowed from Freud’s analysis of dreamwork.

22 Franco Moretti, “Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for Literary History—2,” *New Left Review* 26 (March/April 2004): 103 (quotation slightly modified). Moretti’s description of literary sociology is as follows: “Deducing from the *form* of an object the *forces* that have been at work: this is the most elegant definition ever of what literary sociology should be” (97).

23 Moretti, “Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for Literary History—3,” *New Left Review* 28 (July/August 2004): 63.

24 In the case of the novel, it shows, Moretti argues, that autonomous rise of the novel in European nations is a myth or at least an exception rather than the rule. See Moretti, “Conjectures on World Literature,” *New Left Review* 1 (January/February 2000): 58–61. Moretti’s model is one of qualified or mitigated Eurocentrism. On the one hand, the influence still flows from Western Europe and its genres are prototypes. On the other hand, the Western European path of the development of literary forms is no longer modular and that of peripheral cultures becomes so.

25 Moretti, “Conjectures on World Literature,” 64.

26 Moretti, “Graphs, Maps, Trees: Abstract Models for Literary History—1,” *New Left Review* 24 (November/December 2003): 77.

27 There is some terminological imprecision in Moretti’s characterization of social relations in terms of forces. Marx conceived of social relations as forms by which productive forces become regulated and harnessed. Moretti’s use of this vocabulary clearly illustrates the superstructural character of literary forms in his argument. For Marx, literary forms are the forms of forms, so to speak. For Moretti, they are the forms of forces.

28 Moretti, “The End of the Beginning: A Reply to Christopher Prendergast,” *New Left Review* 41 (September/October 2006): 73. In this vein, he suggests that the form of the Gothic novel was more useful than the amorous epistolary fiction to capture the traumas of the revolutionary years. Similarly, the rise of free indirect style is a refraction of the problem of modern socialization. It grants the individual some freedom while permeating it with the impersonal stance of the narrator, thereby transposing the objective into the subjective. The argument about the Gothic novel is made in “Graphs, Maps, Trees—1,” 82. The argument about free indirect style is in “Graphs, Maps, Trees—3,” 56.

29 This is a simplistic account of pleasure and desire that reduces desire to consumption for pleasure. It does not take into account the complexity of psychical forces and their link to signification, or the complex morphology of needs and their imaginary, where one might broach the question of an inhuman material force. On Nietzsche’s understanding of the reactive character of consciousness as a dominated force vis-à-vis the body’s superior force, see Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1983), 39–44. One can make the same argument about Marx’s base-superstructure model, which informs Moretti’s account of literature as an abstract of social forces.

30 See Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 39.

31 Moretti, “World-Systems Analysis, Evolutionary Theory, *Weltliteratur*,” 76.

32 For a more detailed discussion of Goethe, I refer the reader to Pheng Cheah, “What Is a World? On World Literature as World-Making Activity,” *Daedalus* 137, no. 3 (2008): 26–38. The following discussion draws on that material.

33 Johann Wolfgang Goethe to Thomas Carlyle, July 20, 1827, in *Sämtliche Werke, II. Abteilung: Briefe, Tagebücher, und Gespräche*, vol. 10 (37), *Die Letzten Jahre. Briefe, Tagebücher und Gespräche von 1823 bis zu Goethes Tod*, ed. Horst Fleig, pt. 1, *Von 1823 bis zum Tode Carl Augusts 1828* (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker, 1993), 498; Charles Eliot Norton, ed., *Correspondence between Goethe and Carlyle* (London: Macmillan, 1887), 26.

34 The quotes are respectively from Goethe, “Bezüge nach Aussen” [Relations to foreign countries], *Über Kunst und Altertum*, VI 2 (1828), and “Aus dem Faszikel zu Carlyles *Leben Schillers*,” both in *Sämtliche Werke, I. Abteilung*, vol. 22, *Ästhetische Schriften 1824–1832: Über Kunst und Altertum V–VI*, ed. Anne Bohnenkamp (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker, 1999), 427–28 and 866–67. Translations are taken from “Some Passages Pertaining to the Concept of World Literature,” in *Comparative Literature: The Early Years, An Anthology of Essays*, ed. Hans-Joachim Schulz and Phillip H. Rhein (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1973), 7–8; 10.

35 “Aus dem Faszikel zu Carlyles *Leben Schillers*,” 866; 10.

36 See Jürgen Habermas, *The Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory*, ed. Ciaran Cronin and Pablo De Greiff (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998), and *The Postnational Constellation: Political Essays*, trans. and ed. Max Pensky (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001). For Habermas, all system imperatives are regulated by the constitutive presupposition of communication, which is expressed as norms.

37 See Jacques Derrida, “Globalization, Peace and Cosmopolitanism,” in *Negotiations: Interventions and Interviews, 1971–2001*, ed. and trans. Elizabeth Rottenberg (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 2002), 371–86, and “Une Europe de l’espoir,” *Le Monde diplomatique*, November 2004, 3. <http://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/2004/11/DERRIDA/11677>.

38 I have adapted this phrase from Amihud Gilead’s provocative argument that Kant’s Third Critique establishes a systematic unity between time and teleology. See Amihud Gilead, “Teleological Time: A Variation on a Kantian Theme,” *Review of Metaphysics* 38, no. 3 (1985): 529–62.

39 I have discussed the extended analogy between organic life and freedom in greater detail in Pheng Cheah, *Spectral Nationality: Passages of Freedom from Kant to Postcolonial Literatures of Liberation* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2003).

40 Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology*, ed. C. J. Arthur (New York: International Publishers, 1970), 78; *Die Deutsche Ideologie*, in I. Abteilung, vol. 1 of *Marx/Engels Gesamtausgabe*, ed. Vladimir Adoratskij (Berlin: Marx-Engels Verlag, 1932), 49–50.

41 Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, trans. Martin Nicolaus (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), 539–40; *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie* (Berlin: Dietz, 1953), 438.

42 Marx, *Grundrisse*, 409–10; 312–13.

43 Spivak, “Three Women’s Texts and a Critique of Imperialism,” in “Identities,” ed. Kwame Appiah and Henry Louis Gates, Jr., special issue, *Critical Inquiry* 12, no. 1 (1985): 243–61, especially 243–45. The quote is from 260n1.

44 Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1958), 182–83 (hereafter cited in text).