

# Latin American Dialogues during the Cold War: The magazines *Cadernos Brasileiros* and *Mundo Nuevo*

THAYSE LIMA  
*University of Maryland*

---

**Abstract:** This article examines the relationship between the magazines *Cadernos Brasileiros* (1959 - 1970) and *Mundo Nuevo* (1967 - 1971) in the 1960s and 70s. During this time, they formed a system of cooperation involving the exchange of articles and information, and the elaboration of joint issues. These collaborations were facilitated by their affiliation to the ILARI (Instituto Latinoamericano de Relaciones Internacionales), a cultural institution secretly financed by the CIA and created to support the spread of US values during the Cold War. In this piece, I discuss processes of South-South exchange by examining the triangulation of Brazilian and Spanish American cultural relations, which in the case studied, relied on material and logistical support of the United States. I demonstrate that, if on the one hand this support undermined the credibility of these magazines in an ideologically polarized world, on the other hand, their editors and writers used the opportunities created by the cultural battle waged during the Cold War to advance their own agenda of literary internationalization and Latin America cultural unification.

**Keywords:** circulation, Latin American integration, Cold War, *Mundo Nuevo*, *Cadernos Brasileiros*

---

Although there has been a lot of contentious discussion about what exactly world literature is, most scholars agree that international circulation is a defining

characteristic of the field. Dissemination of texts beyond their original geographical and cultural space is considered the primary condition for their admission into a global canon and, consequently, into the scholarship of world literature (Casanova, Moretti, and Damrosch). Still, some critics have argued that the premise of international circulation ignores works that resist translation (Apter). Others have pointed out the narrow scope of the international field itself, usually restricted to the world centers (i.e., Europe and North America). Nevertheless, circulation has proven to be a particularly fertile subfield, leading to a myriad of critical interrogations about the international lives of literature. What are some of the mechanisms that prompt the global circulation of texts outside their original contexts? Who are the gatekeepers? What role (if any) do politics play in transmission?

How literature comes to be read, critiqued, and consumed beyond its geographical and linguistic cradle is an especially relevant question for postcolonial literary cultures, which have been deeply interwoven with metropolitan traditions since their inception. Recent scholarship has paid particular attention to processes of translation, distribution, and reception, as well as the role of cultural institutions (such as libraries, universities, collections), while also accounting for the disparities created by an unequal distribution of opportunities and resources in the world literary field. Given the surge of interest in the topic of circulation, however, it is surprising that only a few scholars have devoted the same attention to a particular, yet essential, element in international dissemination and reception of literature: literary and cultural magazines.<sup>1</sup>

Literary magazines and other forms of cultural publication are undoubtedly vital to the process of dissemination, interpretation, and, less obviously, the legitimation of authors and their work. They carry the authoritative voices of critics, scholars, editors, and writers who can determine what should be read and how. International magazines in particular contribute to shaping a cosmopolitan literary order through translations, interviews, and critical essays that bring attention to foreign authors and their work. In this sense, they can assume a “world form” (Bulson 4), converging distant cultural and linguistic zones in a transnational circuit that connects foreign texts and their mediators to a culturally diverse reading public. All of these characteristics make this medium a critical component of current debates on world literature.

---

<sup>1</sup> For one example of a study on the world-making potential of little magazines see Bulson.

In this article, I address the gap in the scholarship of cultural magazines, while also exploring the influence of politics in the international circulation of literature. I focus on the magazines *Cadernos Brasileiros* and *Mundo Nuevo*, published between the 1960s and 1970s, and in their collaborations, which, I argue, put into place (albeit temporarily) a transnational circuit of cultural and literary criticism. Both publications received financial assistance from cultural institutions, such as the Congress for Cultural Freedom and the ILARI (Instituto Latinoamericano de Relaciones Internacionales), established during the Cold War to advance American ideological principles abroad. This sponsorship created a conflict between local ideological allegiances and international interests, leaving an indelible mark on the magazines' reputation, and eventually leading, in the case of *Mundo Nuevo*, to its demise.

The cultural, political, and ideological context of the region also explains the significance of the collaborations between the two magazines and the polemics surrounding their relationship to US institutions. The idea of Latin American integration, first proposed by Simón Bolívar during Spanish American independence movements of the nineteenth century, gained momentum in the 1960s following the Cuban Revolution, which inspired a feeling of regional solidarity.<sup>2</sup> Most intellectuals who supported the Cuban Revolution were largely critical of US imperialism and regarded South-South integration as a path towards regional autonomy. In fact, there was a significant expansion in dialogues and cultural exchanges amongst Latin American writers and cultural producers at the time. Some examples are the creation of the Biblioteca Ayacucho in Venezuela and Casa de las Américas in Cuba; the intellectual networks between Brazilian and Spanish American intellectuals such as Darcy Ribeiro, Antonio Candido, and Ángel Rama; and the collaborations between Brazilian scholars in exile such as Theotonio dos Santos and Fernando Henrique Cardoso with Chilean Enzo Faletto and others, which gave rise to dependency theory. These dialogues were part of concerted efforts to change the historical disconnection between Latin American nations.

Given the predominantly Marxist, pro-Cuba orientation of the intellectual field at the time, Latin American unification has been regarded as a left-wing and

---

<sup>2</sup> See Newcomb for a history of Latin American integration centered on Spanish American and Brazilian essayists from the early nineteenth century to the 1930s to unify the region. My forthcoming book traces the efforts of literary critics to integrate Brazil into the Latin American paradigm from the 1960s to the 1980s.

anti-imperialist cultural agenda. Contrary to this assumption, recent scholarship has shown that cultural organizations created by the United States to combat the influence of soviet ideology during the Cold War also helped to promote Latin American art, literature, and culture.<sup>3</sup> Institutions such as the Congress for Freedom of Culture, the IACF (International Association of Cultural Freedom), and the ILARI acted as arms of US cultural diplomacy in the region. They encouraged the circulation of texts in their sponsored magazines to help disseminate American-friendly ideas. Although the main objective of this editorial policy was to unify the US-sponsored cultural field, it ended up benefitting the interests of Latin American intellectuals in strengthening regional integration. To lure Latin American scholars, US cultural institutions supported translations, publication of books and magazines, and international meetings, through which they facilitated contact among writers, critics, and publishers, incidentally, aiding the formation of intellectual networks.

In the following pages, I first chart the ideological and intellectual context in which *Mundo Nuevo* and *Cadernos Brasileiros* emerged. I show that political pressures in Latin American and abroad shaped the magazines' editorial discourse and their content, which led to their rejection within the region's intellectual circles. Next, by focusing on exchanges between the two magazines, I explore how *Mundo Nuevo*'s collaborations with Brazilian intellectuals helped to bring Brazilian culture into the Latin American paradigm that the magazine promoted. I also discuss the ideological underpinnings of the magazine's brand of Latin Americanism and how it complicated their discourse of political and ideological neutrality. This study highlights the complexity of the ideological and intellectual manifestations of Latin American discourses of integration. The relationship between *Cadernos Brasileiros* and *Mundo Nuevo* illustrates the complex interplay between aspirations of South-South cooperation and Cold War cultural diplomacy. In this sense, it casts a new light on the influence of politics in the process of transnational circulation and promotion of literature and culture, revealing, too, the limits and paradoxes of this influence.

---

<sup>3</sup> For more on US cultural diplomacy in Latin America during the Cold War, see Franco, Cohn, and Cancelli's "*O Brasil e os outros*".

### **The Rise and Fall of *Mundo Nuevo***

Founded in 1967, *Mundo Nuevo* was first directed by Uruguayan literary critic Emir Rodríguez Monegal. A renowned scholar, he helped to establish the canon of the Latin American literary Boom and is credited with disseminating it abroad.<sup>4</sup> With a focus on Latin American literature and culture, *Mundo Nuevo* played an important role in this process. The magazine's content encompassed critical essays, interviews, and excerpts of literary works, as well as information about translations, prizes, and the successful reception of Boom writers abroad. In the magazine's early years, the support of writers such as Jorge Luis Borges, Carlos Fuentes, and Gabriel García Márquez (who first published excerpts from *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in the magazine) gave the publication prestige among the Latin American intelligentsia.

As its name suggests, *Mundo Nuevo* had a cosmopolitan ambition that was apparent in its international distribution and its editorial agenda. In its first issue, Rodríguez Monegal made clear his intention to bring Latin American literature onto a world stage: "Al diálogo realmente internacional que tiene a París como centro, *Mundo Nuevo* aspira aportar um acento latinoamericano" ("Presentación" 4). Published in Paris, written in Spanish, and circulated mainly in Spanish America and Spain, the magazine served as an important outlet for the Boom writers to publicize their work to a wider transnational readership. In addition to its cosmopolitan ambition, the magazine was also dedicated to conveying a broad view of Latin American literatures. The plan was "escuchar las voces casi siempre inaudibles o dispersas de todo un continente" (4), thus revealing the region's literary production to itself and to the world. Indeed, during the years he directed the magazine, Monegal dedicated several special issues to the national cultural production of Argentina, Colombia, Brazil, and other countries. The magazine also allotted space to reviewing the latest developments in the literary and cultural life of Latin American capitals. To compile this wide range of information, Monegal recruited scholars and writers to act as local correspondents and to eventually contribute articles and other smaller pieces to the magazine.

---

<sup>4</sup> He also worked as a literary critic, a professor at Yale, and a consultant to many US institutions and publishers, including the ILARI, the American Association of University Presses' Latin American Translation Program, and Knopf Press. For more on Monegal's influence on the Boom, consult Mudrovic.

In many of his editorial pieces, Monegal emphasized that the magazine would be primarily dedicated to literary and aesthetic issues, which, he claimed, would receive preference over political or ideological themes. While this decision reflects his own personal preference for close reading in order to highlight the internal quality of the works, it was also an attempt (which ultimately failed) to avoid the polarizing political debates within intellectual circles at the time. The magazine thus adopted a discourse of neutrality, pitting political against aesthetic commitment and advocating for an approach based on critical judgment of literary value. In doing so, Monegal tried to set *Mundo Nuevo* apart from other publications that were more politically engaged—for example, its rival, the magazine *Casa de las Américas*—by emphasizing its role as strictly literary. Under his direction the magazine would be a channel for the analysis and international dissemination of what he assumed to be “lo más creador que entrega América Latina al mundo” (4). Emphasizing the critical and supposedly impartial nature of the publication was a way of circumventing the pressure of taking a political position, as intellectuals were expected to do in that period. Most importantly, it was also a way to respond to the attacks and criticism the magazine received from the intellectual left. This apolitical stance, however, was in itself an ideological position. In defending the aesthetic as separated and beyond the political, the magazine echoed the values upheld by North American cultural institutions and tried to eschew the discussion about its own implication in the cultural war.

*Mundo Nuevo* was affiliated with the ILARI, which had been inaugurated in 1966 by the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) to serve Latin America, specifically. The ILARI ultimately replaced the CCF after the latter was dissolved. Both institutions aimed to promote the values of liberal democracy and combat the influence of the Soviet Union in the region. In the arts, the ILARI embraced the promotion of freedom of expression and artistic autonomy against the imposition of ideological or political agendas. In practice, this meant a preference for the abstract and avant-garde over realist art. As Jean Franco points out, an ideological subtext permeated this aesthetic preference. The defense of art forms considered autonomous in relation to social and political life did not merely challenge the social realism defended by Soviet propaganda, but also implicitly discouraged art that was politically motivated and critical of US interests.

The relationship between *Mundo Nuevo* and North American cultural institutions was, however, not well received by Latin American intelligentsia. During most of his tenure as the magazine's director, Monegal found himself defending its reputation from attacks and from dissidence by Latin American writers and intellectuals. *Mundo Nuevo*'s affiliation with the ILARI and, by extension, the CCF, generated controversy even before the first issue began circulating. In 1965, Roberto Fernández Retamar, who was in charge of *Revista Casa de las Américas*, wrote Monegal a letter disapproving of *Mundo Nuevo*'s relationship to the ILARI, which he understood to be an organ of the CCF and, therefore, of the US ideological machine. In his letter, Retamar communicated the decision of himself and other members of *Casa de las Américas* not to collaborate with the magazine ("Letter to Rodríguez Monegal"). Making matters worse, between 1966 and 1967, the *New York Times* published a series of articles connecting, among others, the CCF and the ILARI, to the CIA, which had been secretly supporting the Ford Foundation and international institutions with the purpose of exerting influence over cultural producers in Latin America and the rest of the world. This disclosure further undermined *Mundo Nuevo*'s credibility as an independent publication. In spite of Monegal's insistence that neither he nor the ILARI coordinators were aware of such a connection and that, regardless, he had complete editorial freedom, several famous collaborators, including García Márquez and Julio Cortázar, decided to sever ties with the magazine. With his own reputation at risk of being contaminated by the news, Monegal left the magazine in 1968.

Under the direction of sociologist Horacio Daniel Rodríguez, *Mundo Nuevo* started a new phase that would be short lived. One of the first changes after this transition was its move from Paris to Argentina, with the stated intention of getting the magazine closer to its target Latin American public. In Issue 26-27, the new director reiterated the magazine's existing commitment to furthering dialogue among Latin American intellectuals and maintaining the quality of published texts. At the same time, he also announced a change in its thematic scope, with more space being given to sociological topics. Expanding beyond the literary realm was also a way to compensate for the flight of prestigious writers and critics who stopped submitting pieces following the CIA funding scandal and Monegal's departure. In his editorial comment, Rodríguez argued that, rather than being sustained by the renown of its collaborators, *Mundo Nuevo* would pursue "horizontes más amplios y objetivos más dilatados, todos ellos en

viculación con los problemas culturales y sociales del continente ... Importará la calidad y eficacia de los textos antes que la prospección sobre la base de famas o antecedentes” (“Una Nueva Etapa”).

Horácio Rodríguez managed to continue to collaborate with Brazilian intellectuals, such as Coutinho and Waldir Ayala, as he also reaffirmed the magazine’s commitment to Latin American cultural integration. He even addressed the topic directly and invited perspectives of intellectuals from different countries in the region in Issues 36, 37, and 38. However, without the critical authority that Monegal lent the publication and without the privileged relationship with more influential Latin American intellectuals, *Mundo Nuevo* gradually lost its initial prestige and, finally, the ILARI’s support, permanently ceasing activity in 1971. During its meteoric rise and fall, *Mundo Nuevo* became a significant reference for the literary phenomenon of the Boom. It contributed to disseminating fictional production broadly and to establishing Latin American literature as transnational in scope. As it catalogued and publicized the international circulation of authors and books, the magazine also helped define the Boom as a cosmopolitan phenomenon synonymous with the successful admission of Latin America into world literature.

### ***Cadernos Brasileiros*: National Scope, International Ties**

The magazine *Cadernos Brasileiros* was created in 1959, one year after the inauguration of the Associação Brasileira do Congresso pela Liberdade de Cultura, the CCF’s arm in Brazil. The magazine had bimonthly circulation and published articles, book reviews, fiction, and studies on political and cultural issues, with an emphasis on the latter. Critic Afrânio Coutinho and Romanian journalist Stefan Baciu, who was exiled in Brazil, were appointed as the magazine’s directors. Both were supportive of the CCF’s general ideological project and anti-communist agenda. *Cadernos Brasileiros*’ trajectory was marked both by Cold War ideological tensions in the international context and by the military’s rise to power in Brazil. The magazine’s history can be divided into two stages: an anti-communist phase lasting from its inauguration until 1962 and a transitional phase that begins around 1962 but takes on a more explicit form after the 1964 coup, characterized by an opening for left-wing contributors.

In its early years, and in line with the CCF’s ideological agenda, *Cadernos Brasileiros* was critical of the left and a defender of liberal values. Similar to

other CCF-sponsored publications like *Cuadernos del Congreso por la Libertad de la Cultura* and *Examen*, *Cadernos Brasileiros* adopted an anti-totalitarian, pro-democratic discourse that sought to counter the influence of communism within the intellectual field. However, its support of a liberal agenda along with its connection to US institutions raised suspicion in Latin America, where the left dominated the cultural environment. Although they were able to attract well-known figures to their editorial council, these magazines were perceived as instruments of U.S. ideological propaganda<sup>5</sup> *Cuadernos*, one of the CCF's better-known Latin American publications, was closed in 1963 after years suffering attacks, rejection, and criticism for its ties to American interests.<sup>6</sup> In order to avoid succumbing to the same fate of its Spanish American counterpart, *Cadernos Brasileiros* would have to tread a fine line between rejecting leftist ideology and receiving needed support from leftist intellectuals.

The pressure for these magazines to change course, however, came from the CCF as it realized that it would not be able to achieve meaningful cultural impact in the region if its publications were not able to engage their target public of mainly Latin American intellectuals. In 1962, a new directive asked the magazines to mitigate anti-communist discourse and invest in a closer relationship with left-wing intellectuals. This change in direction was not well received by the leaders of *Cadernos Brasileiros*, especially Stefan Baciu, who was a staunch critic of the left and of Brazilian intellectuals' predilection for communist-leaning ideology (Ridenti 355). In protest of the CCF's push for a dialogue with the left, Baciu resigned as editor in 1962 and was replaced by Vicente Barretto.

With Baciu's departure, the magazine's leaders gave in to the CCF's direction, but under protest and only superficially, without completely submitting to the new guidelines. A veiled attack on communism and left-wing ideology continued, albeit indirectly, to inform the magazine's content. As Kristine Vanden Berghe observes, articles with political content adopted a codified language that equated socialism to communism and revolution to political and social unrest (171-72). They were proponents of a liberal-conservative reformist approach to the problems facing Latin American societies and rejected radical

---

<sup>5</sup>*Cuadernos* had the support of Rômulo Gallegos, Emilio Frugoni, and Eduardo dos Santos; *Cadernos Brasileiros* congregated Anísio Teixeira, Manuel Bandeira, and Gilberto Freyre.

<sup>6</sup> See Galvete for more on the rise and fall of *Cuadernos del Congreso por la Libertad de la Cultura*.

solutions that could lead to a deep alteration of their socio-political structures. On the cultural front, this liberal-conservatism showed its limitations. The magazine was invested in the idea of art's independence from political commitment and critical of artistic forms devoted to social and political denunciation. However, contrary to the trend pushed by the CCF, *Cadernos Brasileiros*, under Coutinho's direction, rejected non-figurative and other experimental forms of expression, including avant-garde aesthetics that proposed a radical break with reality.

The 1964 military coup put the magazine in an ideologically difficult position. In order to continue pursuing the democratic values defended by the CCF, it would be necessary to abandon the discourse of neutrality and political non-alignment touted in its editorials and to take a clear stance on the censorship and the persecution of intellectuals and artists perpetrated by the regime. As Ridenti has shown, the CCF began to demand a more explicit position from the editors of *Cadernos Brasileiros* for fearing that the magazine's reticence could be seen as a form of support for the military dictatorship (357). However, Barretto and, especially, Coutinho once more refused to follow the CCF guidelines. In fact, Coutinho became close enough to the military to be considered for a position with the Federal Council of Culture (360). Barretto, in a letter to Luis Mercier Vega, director of the ILARI, went so far as to defend the thesis that the military coup had in fact been a popular revolution, and that the international press had distorted the facts (354). As pressures from the CCF and the political context continued to mount, the magazine's directors decided to take a third path: to give space both to left-wing intellectuals as well as to representatives of the regime itself. Doubling down on a discourse of scientific objectivity and neutrality that it had used since the beginning to justify its reticent political position, the magazine portrayed itself as an impartial interpreter of Brazilian society.

This conciliatory route made itself clear in a special issue dedicated to the analysis of militarism published in 1966. In this dossier, *Cadernos Brasileiros* featured interviews and texts expressing points of view of military representatives, among them General Umberto Peregrino and Admiral Paulo de Castro Moreira da Silva, alongside analysis of the military government by non-military intellectuals. The editors justified incorporating what, in principle, could be deemed dissonant voices as a way of maintaining the sense of balance that had defined the publication's editorial outlook since its inception. However, the

analytical style and neutral tone adopted in the articles were a poor disguise for the magazine's acquiescence to the regime and its reluctance to criticize it. Vanden Berghe rightly points out that some texts analyzed the rise of militarism in socio-psychological terms, attributing the authoritarianism and truculence of the military to a rigorous and somewhat idealistic training that fomented a romantic view of the nation. In her opinion, this analytical angle was, at best, misleading: "implica un relativo silencio sobre el ejercicio militar del poder: prestan más atención al origen de la acción militar que a los efectos concretos de tal acción" (Vanden Berghe 217). The magazine not only avoided raising questions about the military's abuse of power, but it in fact gave voice and space to military personnel. Refraining from criticizing the dictatorship was the only possible path for any publication to continue to exist and to avoid censorship. In the case of *Cadernos Brasileiros*, this silence was also reflective of the political alliances and ideological inclinations of its directors.<sup>7</sup>

Given the magazine's ambivalent ideological position and anti-communist inclination, it is curious that it managed to survive the scandal that erupted following revelations by the *New York Times* of CCF's ties to the CIA. One way to explain it, according to Ridenti, would be the relatively insignificant position that the magazine occupied within the Brazilian cultural scene. That is, *Cadernos Brasileiros* was not a very popular publication amongst its target reading public, therefore the revelations of its possible ties with US spy agency did not raise much attention in the country. Another reason may be that the strategic opening for contributions from leftist scholars must also have worked to the magazine's advantage, shielding it from harsher criticism and rejection in the Brazilian intellectual circles (Ridenti 367). Whereas *Mundo Nuevo*'s end can be directly linked to the CIA's funding controversy, *Cadernos Brasileiros*' closing in 1970 was due to the cessation of financial support to cultural magazines by the IACF, the agency that replaced the CCF.

The self-professed neutrality of *Cadernos Brasileiros* proved to be a double-edged sword. Unlike its Spanish America counterpart *Cuadernos*, the Brazilian publication managed to avoid attacks and to continue to enjoy, if not the support, at least the acquiescence of the intellectual community, which turned a blind eye

---

<sup>7</sup> In 1969, the magazine was investigated by the DOPS (Department of Political and Social Order) after being denounced for publishing subversive material (Cancelli, "O ILARI" 208). Despite this intervention, *Cadernos Brasileiros* did not suffer the direct censorship that many other publications in Brazil did.

to the magazine's allegiances to the regime. However, *Cadernos Brasileiros* was never able to secure the reception and the status that other more progressive publications, such as *Revista Civilização Brasileira*, enjoyed within the Brazilian intellectual sphere (Ridenti 362). Despite its controversial position, *Cadernos Brasileiros* was able to forge a network of intellectual cooperation with other international magazines, and to participate in the transnational effort of Latin American cultural integration, which makes it relevant to the history of South-South intellectual relations, particularly the increased access to Brazilian cultural production that cooperation between *Cadernos Brasileiros* and *Mundo Nuevo* offered.

### **The Relationship between *Mundo Nuevo* and *Cadernos Brasileiros***

Both the CCF and the ILARI had as their core policy to incentivize the cooperation and exchange between their magazines and the intellectuals involved with them. Therefore, it was common to find articles from the French magazine *Preuves* reproduced in *Mundo Nuevo*, or from the British *Encounter* in *Cadernos Brasileiros*. These exchanges enabled ideas sanctioned by US institutions to be disseminated on a worldwide scale, resulting in a certain ideological coherence among their magazines. This push for collaboration was also a major incentive for intellectuals looking for an international stage, which thus facilitated contacts between Latin American intellectuals and the formation of networks within the region.

In its early years, *Cadernos Brasileiros* made use of the exchange system implemented by CCF to fill in its pages with articles previously published in foreign magazines. Between 1960 and 1962, at least one third of its articles had originally been published by other of the Congress's magazines (Vanden Berghe 49), most of them European and North American publications. These numbers indicate that initially there was an interest in engaging in a dialogue with world centers rather than specifically with Spanish America or other so-called peripheries. In its very first issue, the editor states that the magazine would pursue a Pan-Americanist dialogue, clearly signaling an alliance with the United States: "Esta publicação pretende desenvolver e dar curso entre nós ao espírito de cooperação Pan-Americana no intuito de contribuir para apagar as barreiras de desconhecimento e incompreensão, de corrigir o isolamento que existe entre os diversos países que compõem a comunidade americana" (Coutinho,

“Explicação” 3). By adopting a Pan-American framework instead of a Latin American one, the magazine was, in fact, echoing the discourse of the CCF and other North American institutions, which were determined to strengthen bonds with Latin American intellectuals and to foster a positive view of the United States worldwide.<sup>8</sup>

While *Cadernos Brasileiros* promoted a “Pan-American spirit,” *Mundo Nuevo* was committed to a Latin Americanist project. Articles by Brazilian authors and literary critics were constantly featured at *Mundo Nuevo*, due to its director’s persistence in bringing together Spanish American and Brazilian cultures. Many of the pieces about Brazil published in *Mundo Nuevo* had previously appeared in *Cadernos Brasileiros*, which, in turn, published some articles from *Mundo Nuevo*, albeit in fewer numbers. This disproportionate relation could be explained by the fact that *Mundo Nuevo*’s driving ambition was to assert itself as one of the main literary publications in Latin America, and one of the few to encompass the production of the entire subcontinent. Its publication in Paris and its distribution in Latin America, Spain and the United States is also revealing of its desire to reach a wider public. In comparison, *Cadernos Brasileiros*, as the title itself makes clear, was published in Portuguese in Brazil and targeted mostly a national reading public. Also important is the fact that after an initial period of dependence on texts published by other CCF’s magazines, *Cadernos Brasileiros* invested more firmly in covering national themes with articles written by local contributors.

Brazil became, in fact, of vital importance to *Mundo Nuevo*’s Latin American project. The rationale was that, by featuring the country, the magazine could bring readers a part of the continent that had been for years neglected within the continental framework. Thus, in a 1966 special edition dedicated to Brazilian literature, Monegal underlines the importance of bringing Brazil closer to Spanish America:

Aunque Brasil ocupa praticamente media América Latina, la literatura brasileña es casa desconocida en el resto del continente hispánico ... Brasil y América Latina se dan la espalda. En vez de estar unidos por los grandes ríos, por la selva, por esa tierra de nadie que es el corazón compartido de todo el continente, ambos grupos vecinos se

---

<sup>8</sup> For a recent analysis of the Pan-American concept in relation to US cultural institutions dedicated to Latin American art, consult Fox.

desconocen y miran obsesivamente a las metrópolis culturales del hemisferio norte. Por eso, y para remediar en una parte pequeña tal suicida aislamiento, *Mundo Nuevo*, que ha buscado siempre incorporar temas brasileños a sus páginas, presenta hoy un breve panorama de la narrativa del Brasil actual. (“La Otra Mitad” 4)

Not being able to find many Brazilian specialists in the Hispanic world, Monegal relied heavily on contributions from the one ILARI-supported magazine dedicated to Brazil. Monegal not only reproduced articles published in *Cadernos Brasileiros*, as was common among ILARI’s publications, but he also engaged more directly with the magazine’s inner intellectual circle. Through Mercier Vega, Monegal first established contact with Coutinho and Barretto, with whom he kept a frequent dialogue and planned special issues and other forms of exchange. Later he was introduced to writer Nélica Piñon, a contributor to *Cadernos Brasileiros* and eventually also to *Mundo Nuevo*.

In 1965 the ILARI invited Piñon to visit New York with the objective of establishing contact with Latin Americanists, translators, and editors (Cancelli, “O ILARI” 210). Part of ILARI’s mission was to bring Latin American writers and scholars to a world literary scene and to connect them to its key players. In New York, Piñon was introduced to Monegal with whom she would maintain an intense correspondence. By the following year, he would formally invite her to be an official collaborator with *Mundo Nuevo*. Monegal was planning to publish a special issue dedicated to introducing Brazilian literature to Hispanic readers. One of Piñon’s first assignments was to convince authors Guimarães Rosa and Clarice Lispector, two writers whom Monegal held in high regard, to be interviewed for the magazine.<sup>9</sup> It was a difficult task given that these writers were notoriously averse to public engagements. As expected, both declined the request. Nevertheless, *Mundo Nuevo*’s special edition on Brazilian literature highlighted their work prominently on its cover, featuring the Spanish translation of Guimarães Rosa’s short story “Às Margens da Alegria” and Lispector’s “O Ovo e a Galinha,” along with “Cantata” by Piñon herself.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> In a letter to Monegal, Piñon explains that Guimarães Rosa turned down interviews because he felt they could interfere with his work in Brazilian diplomacy (Letter to Monegal [Feb. 15]).

<sup>10</sup> *Mundo Nuevo* rarely credited its translators, making it difficult to know who translated these stories.

The coverage of Brazilian literature beyond contemporary works at *Mundo Nuevo* was largely due to Piñon's intervention as she convinced Monegal to review works by previous generations of Brazilian writers. In one of her first letters to him, she recommended articles on Machado de Assis and Graciliano Ramos as a way to introduce the country's literary tradition to the magazine's public. To defend the idiosyncratic choice of two non-contemporary authors for a magazine dedicated to the present, Piñon drew attention to the renewed interest of Brazilian literary critics on Ramos's works and highlighted "a rara qualidade universal" of his books (Letter [Apr.15]). Monegal, who already knew and admired his work, promptly accepted the suggestion and published, in the section "Valoraciones" of issue 9 (March 1967), the article "Graciliano Ramos, Un Clásico" by Eliane Zagury, who had also been recommended by Piñon.

Piñon's involvement with *Mundo Nuevo* was vital to ensure that Brazilian authors were regularly featured in it, and also went beyond the role of a mere local informant. Perhaps one of her greatest contributions was to bring a feminist perspective that was generally lacking in the magazine and in the Latin American literary canon it promoted. There was a stark absence of women authors in the Boom's literature, as well as in the critical field, which had never been questioned by *Mundo Nuevo* or its collaborators. Piñon made sure to recommend several pieces by Brazilian women, eventually suggesting that the magazine address "o papel da mulher na sociedade latino-americana" (Letter [ April 15]).<sup>11</sup> Despite not directly addressing the glaring predominance of male authors in the Latin American canon, her suggestions make evident her effort to carve out a space for Brazilian women in the transnational literary arena presented by *Mundo Nuevo*.

While Piñon covered Brazilian literature, Barretto handled political and social topics. One of his first tasks was to collaborate on a dossier dedicated to a historical analysis of the left's influence in Latin America. His piece about Brazil would complement Monegal's work on the Spanish American front. The request to publish this special issue apparently came from the ILARI itself. In December 1966, Monegal contacted Barretto asking for his collaboration on this dossier, which *Mundo Nuevo* and *Cadernos Brasileiros* would publish jointly. Monegal outlined his idea as follows:

---

<sup>11</sup> Piñon suggests Carmem da Silva to write an article on this subject. Da Silva had recently published "A arte de ser mulher," which, per Piñon, had made a considerable impact in Brazil (Letter [22 April]).

De acuerdo con el plan general el número estaría dividido en tres rubros principales: a) la composición social de las izquierdas; b) el contenido ideológico y; c) eficiencia de las izquierdas en la acción política. Eso nos deja a nosotros mucho campo libre para poder entrar nuestro número especial con una amplitud mayor y al mismo tiempo con un enfoque principalmente cultural, (“Letter to Vicente Barreto [Dec.1]”)

Despite his reassurance about maintaining a cultural focus, Monegal insinuates that the special issue would have a political subtext and advised Barretto on the desire approach: "te recuerdo que nuestro interés es mostrar sobre todo, la enajenación de los intelectuales latinoamericanos y el problema de la dependencia de centros culturales e ideológicos extranjeros" (Letter to Barretto [Dec. 1]). It is curious that Monegal meant to criticize Latin American leftists for their association with “foreign centers” (referring to the Soviet Union) when his own magazine was tied to a North American institution. In assuming opposition to the left, the two magazines directly served the interests of the United States in opposing the influence of leftist ideas among intellectuals in the region. This episode demonstrates the limits to the claims of political non-alignment, which, in fact, the editors were unable or unwilling to maintain.

The plan to publish a special issue critical of the Latin American left was halted when connections between the CIA and the cultural institutions that supported these magazines came to the fore. Such an attack in that context could be taken as explicit support of US interests, undermining even more the magazine’s standing in the region. Monegal wisely understood that such an initiative could further damage *Mundo Nuevo*’s reputation, stoking the wrath of Latin American intellectuals and writers who were already suspicious of US cultural institutions and their affiliated magazines. In a letter to Barretto, Monegal describes the difficulty of his position:

Esto [el escándalo de la CIA] ha creado una situación enormemente incómoda para mí en América Latina ... Por eso creo que en estos momentos el proyecto de sacar un número sobre la izquierda podría ser considerado como una prueba precisamente de esa infiltración norteamericana que nos quieren hacer representar a nosotros. (Letter to Vicente Barretto [Apr. 5])

Instead of publishing an issue critical of the left, Monegal took a conciliatory path. The September 1967 issue featured a series of articles that focused on the rise of the military in Brazil. The dossier was not, as originally planned, a joint issue. However, the featured articles had been previously published in *Cadernos Brasileiros*, and the majority were signed by Brazilian intellectuals affiliated with the Brazilian magazine. By shifting gears, Monegal signaled a critical stance towards the rise of authoritarianism in Latin America and, as such, reaffirmed *Mundo Nuevo's* commitment to democratic ideas while maintaining its libertarian, and allegedly impartial approach.<sup>12</sup>

In spite of the project to publish a political dossier, most collaborations between *Mundo Nuevo* and *Cadernos Brasileiros* were restricted to the literary field. In addition to the special 1966 issue on Brazilian literature, *Mundo Nuevo* frequently covered Brazilian literature by reporting on translations, new magazines, and international awards, as well as revisiting the work of Brazilian writers such as Guimarães Rosa, Ramos, and Lispector. *Mundo Nuevo* gave special attention to Guimarães Rosa, one of Monegal's favorite Brazilian novelists. In 1967 the publication of *Grande Sertão: Veredas* in Spanish was announced on the cover of the magazine, which featured excerpts from the translation. A year later, the twentieth issue honored Guimarães Rosa's death by publishing the short story "Nenhum, Nenhuma" and a long, personal essay by Monegal. He recounted his relationship with the writer who, in his opinion, was one of the biggest names in Brazilian literature and, therefore, should be made known outside the country (Monegal, "En Busca de" 5).

Even after Monegal left *Mundo Nuevo*, the magazine continued to cover Brazil and its literature. In 1968, under Rodríguez's direction, *Mundo Nuevo* published a special dossier on new Brazilian poetry organized by Waldir Ayala. An essay by Coutinho featured in the same issue debated the distinct national traits of Brazilian literature, a topic that probably would have been rejected by Monegal, who was more interested in upholding the universal value of Latin American literature. Significantly, issue 28, in which the dossier was published, would be one of the magazine's last ones.

---

<sup>12</sup> The articles published in issue 39 of *Cadernos Brasileiros* edited by Afrânio Coutinho were: Vicente Barreto's "A Presença Militarista"; Mario Afonso Carneiro's "A Opinião Militar" and Wanderley Guilherme dos Santos's "Uma Revisão da Crise Brasileira". *Mundo Nuevo* also published Elena de la Souchère's "Los Militares en el Brasil", which served as a sort of introduction to the issue on militarism in Brazil (*Mundo Nuevo*, 1967). It also featured "Un Punto de Vista Extranjero" by Jean-Jacques Faust, who had already written on the subject for *Mundo Nuevo*.

The influence of *Mundo Nuevo* on *Cadernos Brasileiros*, although less pronounced given the significant imbalance in articles exchanged between the two magazines, was still felt. Not only were Brazilian editors and authors compelled to collaborate with a regionally focused publication; they also turned their attention to the literary and cultural production of their Hispanic American neighbors. One such example is the organization in Issue 42 (1967) of a dossier with translations of Hispanic American writers such as Julio Cortázar, Juan Carlos Onetti, and Augusto Roa Bastos. Such initiatives helped to mitigate the initial focus of the magazine exclusively on the literary centers.

The rapport between *Cadernos Brasileiros* and *Mundo Nuevo* demonstrates how US institutions of the Cold War era shaped the creation of a regional field of intellectual circulation in Latin America, even as its capacity to elicit support from Latin American artists and intellectuals was limited. These magazines tried to set out a competing project to the leftist endeavor of Latin American unification, claiming an objective, neutral, and anti-ideological approach to cultural production. However, when faced with a Marxist-dominated field, suspicious of any US-sponsored projects, these magazines' directors occupied an ambiguous position. They tried to win over left-leaning intellectuals, without whom it would be impossible to achieve legitimacy in the cultural field, while plotting an anti-communist agenda aligned with interests of US agencies. The attempt to reconcile a Latin Americanist unification project with a US-sponsored project for the region, ultimately proved to be unsustainable as the eventual demises of these magazines attest.

## **Conclusion**

The relationships among Latin American magazines financed by US cultural agencies during the Cold War bring to light a little-explored chapter in the history of cultural relations between Brazil and Spanish America. This history has, so far, been intrinsically associated with the efforts of left-wing intellectuals, governments, and institutions to promote associations between Latin American countries as a way to resist both US influence and the rise of authoritarian regimes. However, the collaboration between various magazines affiliated with the Congress for Cultural Freedom demonstrates the existence of more than one Latin Americanist agenda in the cultural field. On the one hand, intellectuals who identified with the left were invested on a utopian vision of continental solidarity,

influenced by the Cuban Revolution, which valued art as a means for societal change. On the other hand, CCF-led projects sought to bestow a universal and cosmopolitan status to Latin American literature based on the separation between politics and art.

Collaborations between *Mundo Nuevo* and *Cadernos Brasileiros* helped boost efforts of regional unification by bringing together Brazilian and Spanish American intellectuals and inserting Brazil's literary production into a publication that would become a key representative of Latin American literature and culture abroad. Articles on politics, literature, and culture that had been reproduced by *Mundo Nuevo* provided a broader and more complex dimension of Brazilian society to Spanish American readers. These collaborations also provided an opportunity for Brazilian intellectuals, normally alienated from their neighbors, to make meaningful contributions to a Latin Americanist agenda.

However, the triangular connection established between these magazines and US institutions also point out the limits of South-South circulation projects. In this case, the exchanges mediated by the United States complicate the assumption of peripheral interdependence as an antidote to domination by literary centers of production. Despite the fact that the magazines enjoyed a certain degree of independence, they abided and helped to promote ideological and aesthetic values, such as cosmopolitanism, political non-alignment, and separation between the literary and the socio-political, that were in accordance with their sponsoring agencies' interests in promoting a liberal agenda during the Cold War.

More broadly, these two magazines demonstrate that the influence of cultural diplomacy, specifically Cold War diplomacy, was able to ignite the transnational circulation of literature in the region, but not to determine the terms in which literature and culture travelled, or how it was interpreted and portrayed. The efforts to keep at bay political persuasions of Latin American intellectuals in these magazines proved unsustainable. Not only did these publications have to accommodate the left-wing hegemony of the Latin American critical field, but, in fact, their connections to the oppositional political camp of the CIA led to their ultimate demise and, consequently, to the downfall of their project to read literature from an arguably ideologically neutral standpoint, disconnected from the contextual pressures of their places of production and reception.

### Works Cited

- Apter, Emily S. *Against World Literature: On the Politics of Untranslatability*. Verso, 2013.
- Bulson, Eric Jon. *Little Magazine, World Form*. Columbia UP, 2016.
- Cancelli, Elizabeth. *O Brasil e os outros: o poder das ideias*. Edipucrs, 2012.
- . “O Ilari e a guerra cultural: a construção de agendas intelectuais na América Latina.” *Artcultura* 17, no. 30, 2015, pp. 199-212.
- Casanova, Pascale. *The World Republic of Letters*. Translated by Malcom DeBevoise, Harvard UP, 2004.
- Cohn, Deborah N. *The Latin American Literary Boom and U.S. Nationalism during the Cold War*. Vanderbilt UP, 2012.
- Coutinho, Afrânio. “Espíritu nacional en la crítica brasileña.” *Mundo Nuevo*, no. 28, 1968, p. 54.
- . “Explicação preliminar.” *Cadernos Brasileiros*, no. 1, 1959, p. 3.
- Damrosch, David. *What Is World Literature?* Princeton UP, 2003.
- Fox, Claire F. *Making Art Panamerican: Cultural Policy and the Cold War*. U of Minnesota P, 2013.
- Franco, Jean. *The Decline and Fall of the Lettered City*. Harvard UP, 2002.
- Galvete, Marta Ruiz. “Cuadernos del Congreso por la Libertad de la Cultura : anticomunismo y guerra fría en América Latina.” *El Argonauta español. Revue bilingue, franco-espagnole, d’histoire moderne et contemporaine consacrée à l’étude de la presse espagnole de ses origines à nos jours (XVIIe-XXIe siècles)*, no. 3, 2006.
- Monegal, Emir Rodríguez. “La otra mitad.” *Mundo Nuevo*, no. 6, 1966, p. 4.
- . “En busca de Guimarães Rosa.” *Mundo Nuevo*, no. 20, 1968, pp. 4–16.
- . “La novela brasileña.” *Mundo Nuevo*, no. 6, 1966, pp. 5–14.
- . “Letter to Vicente Barretto,” December 1, 1966. Box 4, Folder 6. Emir Rodríguez Monegal Papers, 1941-1985, Manuscripts Division, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton U Library.
- . “Letter to Vicente Barretto,” April 5, 1967. Box 4, Folder 6. Emir Rodríguez Monegal Papers, 1941-1985, Manuscripts Division, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton U Library.
- . “Presentación.” *Mundo Nuevo*, no. 1, 1966, p. 4.
- Moretti, Franco. *Distant Reading*. Verso Books, 2013.

- Mudrovic, María Eugenia. *Mundo Nuevo: Cultura y Guerra Fria en la Década del 60*. Beatriz Viterbo Editora, 1997.
- Newcomb, Robert Patrick. *Nossa and Nuestra América: Inter-American Dialogues*. Purdue UP, 2012
- Piñon, Nélide. "Letter to Emir Rodríguez Monegal," Apr. 1966. Box 12, Folder 15. Emir Rodríguez Monegal Papers (C0652); Manuscripts Division, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton U Library.
- . "Letter to Emir Rodríguez Monegal," February 15, 1966. Box 12, Folder 15. Emir Rodríguez Monegal Papers (C0652); Manuscripts Division, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton U Library.
- Retamar, Roberto Fernández. "Letter to Emir Rodríguez Monegal," Apr. 15, 1966. Box 7, Folder 6. Emir Rodríguez Monegal Papers (C0652); Manuscripts Division, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton U Library.
- Ridenti, Marcelo. "The Journal *Cadernos Brasileiros* and the Congress for Cultural Freedom, 1959-1970." *Sociologia & Antropologia*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2018, pp. 351–73.
- Rodríguez, Horácio Daniel. "Una Nueva Etapa." *Mundo Nuevo*, no. 26–27, 1968, np.
- Vanden Berghe, Kristine. *Intelectuales y anticomunismo: la revista "Cuadernos brasileiros" (1959-1970)*. Leuven UP, 1997.