Edited by **Pilar Somacarrera**

Made in Canada, Read in Spain: **Essays on the Translation and Circulation of English-Canadian Literature**

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three of them (Eva Darias-Beautell, Belén Martín-Lucas and Nieves Pascual) have also been recipients of Government of Canada Awards. I thank them for agreeing to participate in this project and for their valuable work.

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Last but not least, I dedicate this book to my husband Elías. Without his computing expertise and emotional support, neither this book, nor many other projects, would have come through.

Pilar Somacarrera
Madrid, 7 April, 2013.

Introduction: Reading CanLit in Spain

Pilar Somacarrera

Returning from a research stay in Canada in July 2010, I took a taxi at the Madrid-Barajas airport and the taxi driver asked me where I was coming back from. When I replied that I was returning from Toronto, he asked me if Toronto was in the United States, which surprised me as the city had hosted the G20 just a few days earlier. This simple anecdote is symptomatic of the lack of knowledge of the average Spanish citizen about Canada. And if most Spaniards cannot place Canada's cities on a map, they have even greater difficulties with mapping Canada's culture and, more specifically, its literature.

Starting from the premise that translation is an activity of vital importance in the context of the globalization of cultural markets, the genesis of this collection originated in two ideas about the new global role of CanLit and its local reception in my country of origin and residence, Spain. First, that the study of the relationship between translation of English-Canadian authors and ideological factors would be especially interesting in the case of Canada and Spain, given that these two countries are still relatively ignorant of each other. A factor which clearly influences Canada's "invisibility" in Spain is that Canadian cultural products still exist in the shadow of the United States, a much more visible country in the publishing and media industry (Somacarrera, 2009).

Secondly, CanLit has assumed a transnational and global currency (Kamboureli, 2007) and the Canadian Government is eager to capitalize on the popularity and economic success of Canadian literature abroad (Moss and Sugars, 2009). Furthermore, the complicated relationship between Canadian literature as circulated within Canada and Canadian literature as an international commodity depends upon the external validation of Canadian cultural products and the writers who produce them (Roberts, 2011). However, most books and journals about Canadian Literature focus on CanLit in Canada and not elsewhere

in the world. In addition, except for one or two exceptions (von Flotow and Nischik,2007) the academic production on CanLit contains no references to the translation of Canadian writing which is currently playing a vital role in its dissemination around the world.

The overall objective of the collection is to assess the transference, reception and promotion of CanLit in translation in Spain and to determine its impact on the Spanish reading public, dating principally from the inception of the Spanish Association for Canadian Studies in 1988, and gauging its evolution up to the present. To this end, we have consulted databases (the online catalogue of the Spanish National Library, the ISBN -The Spanish International Standard Book Number- and the *Index Translationum*), as well as a corpus of a selection of media texts about English-Canadian writers, ranging from paratextual material like cover blurbs, prefaces and introductions to Spanish editions of Canadian books to photographs, caricatures, reviews, interviews, newspaper articles, internet blogs and publishers' web pages. We have also interviewed and sent questionnaires to translators and relevant figures on the Spanish literary scene.

Three aspects of the cultural transfer of CanLit into Spain will be addressed: the selection, the translation and the reception of Canadian authors, all contextualized in the socio-political and cultural coordinates of the target country and its readership. The issue of the selection of Canadian texts and authors is examined in all the chapters of this collection, addressing why certain CanLit authors and texts have been selected for translation, promotion and/or teaching and why others have been excluded. We also try to unveil the sociological, aesthetic, economic and ideological considerations which have entered this selection process. In what concerns the choice of texts and authors, the absences are sometimes more significant than the presences. We inquire into why some genres (fiction) are preferred over others (poetry, non-fiction) and why some are still trying to make their way into the system (drama written in English).

Sometimes, albeit rarely, the factor which influences the decision of what to translate is the translator. The collection discusses the role of these often neglected agents, the Spanish-English translators, especially in what relates to their motivation and challenges in the process of translating the literature of a country that many Spaniards are not familiar with. The volume also deals with the factors that encourage or hinder the reading and promotion of Canadian literature in Spain. These include the role and influence of institutions (political and commercial), publishers and their marketing systems, literary critics, reviewers and academics, as well as the significance of new technologies and different types of media (print, electronic, official, social, personal) with regard to the success of particular genres and authors. In the context of the marketing of literature, special attention will be paid to literary prizes and their role in the dissemination of Canadian literature in Spain. Finally, stereotypical beliefs

and current images of Canada in Spain, the role of cultural branding and the interaction of the Canadian and Spanish literary systems also form part of the main arguments of the collection.

As I mentioned before, this work attempts to integrate the immediacy of information and sighting of trends and effects with a cohesive and encompassing use of a variety of classical and current theoretical frameworks. These include postcolonial literary theory, translation studies theory, sociological theory like Pierre Bourdieu's, reader response theory, cosmopolitanism as formulated by Emmanuel Lévinas and Siby K. George, studies on the marketing of literature, literary prizes and best-sellers, and recent studies on the new situation of CanLit as a discipline, like the projects initiated by Smaro Kamboureli and the TransCanada Institute at the University of Guelph.

Before going on to describe the structure of the collection, on, one aspect about its scope should be clarified. The literature of French-speaking Canada has been deliberately excluded from this volume for several reasons. First, the permanent comparison and identification in Spain of English-Canadian and US literature – which is understandable since the two literary traditions share the same language - is not a feature of the reception of the literature in French.[1] Secondly, the exclusion from this volume of literature written in French is also intentional because the conditions governing the translation and dissemination of this literature in Spain differ considerably from those at work for the English-Canadian. These conditions are related to the hegemonic position of English in the global cultural market, which determines what is and what is not "international" on the Spanish publishing scene, often at the cost of promoting national stereotypes (Magrinyà, 2010). Thirdly, the chosen comparative approach would have been very difficult to follow in dealing with three different cultures (Spain, English-Canada and Quebec).

The book is divided into four sections. The title of the first section, "Terra (In)cognita," was suggested by Bernd Dietz's description of Canadian culture as a "terra incognita" in his 1985 anthology of contemporary Anglo-Canadian poetry. As JoAnne Neff (1999) points out, the North and the Arctic - geographical locations which most Spaniards associate with Canada - are usually perceived as a "terra incognita," not only unknown, but also unknowable. This unknowability characterized the dissemination of CanLit in Spain at beginning of the period studied in this volume (1988-2010), but the situation is gradually changing, owing to the various factors analysed in this collection.

1 As will be analysed in several chapters of this collection, the influence of the US on Canada is inevitable due to the geographical proximity of the countries, their sharing of the same language and the cultural and economic power of the U.S.

The chapters of the first section, "Contextual and Institutional Coordinates of the Transference of Anglo-Canadian Literature into Spain" and "Cosmopolitans at Home: the Spanishness of Canadian Women Writers," deal with this lack of knowledge about Canada and its authors in Spain and the various techniques which publishers and reviewers have deployed to make Spanish readers familiar with it.

The second section, "Nation and Translation," which includes chapters "Translation, Nation Branding and the Indo-Chic: the Circulation and Reception of South Asian Canadian Fiction in Spain" and "Canadian into Catalan: the Translation of Anglo-Canadian Authors in Catalonia," addresses issues of nation branding and cultural nationalism. The first of these chapters discusses how South Asian Canadian writers are used for the branding of Canada as a multicultural nation, whereas the following one explores the co-existence of two languages and cultures (Catalan and Spanish) in Catalonia, and the extent to which - even if only indirectly - the solid relations of this autonomous community with Quebec have influenced the publication of Canadian authors. The third section of the volume ("Of Prizes and Passions"), including chapters "A Prince of Asturias Award for the Queen of Canadian Letters: Reading Margaret Atwood in Spain" and "A Spanish Passion for the Short Story: Reader Responses to Alice Munro in Web 2.0," deals with two writers (Atwood and Munro) who have obtained considerable symbolic capital in Spain thanks to the awards they have received and the various ways in which they have been perceived by the Spanish media and reading public. Finally, we look towards the future of CanLit in Spain in the last section of the volume ("Gen X: Culture and Pedagogy"), in which Chapter 7 addresses the dissemination of Douglas Coupland's works in print media and in various literary circles, and Chapter 8 deals with the development of CanLit as a field of study at the university level in Spain.

Chapter 1 ("Contextual and Institutional Coordinates of the Transference of Anglo-Canadian Literature into Spain") provides abundant information about the context of reception and the different institutional agents which have taken part in the process of transference. After some considerations about the importance of the Spanish language in global publishing, I offer, firstly, an overview of the social, political and economic coordinates of Spain since General Franco's death in 1975 until the present day. Secondly, I discuss some of the factors that hinder and/or promote the dissemination of Canadian works in Spain, such as the low reading rate of the Spanish population, publication in the three co-official languages (Catalan, Basque and Galician) and the important role of Spanish publishers and Spanish literary supplements and their reviewers. Against this background, the success of the strategies of Canadian government agencies (DFAIT, Canada Council, Spanish Association and Canadian Studies Foundation) is measured. The chapter ends with an overview of the most published authors and a discussion of how English-Canadian poetry has fared in Spain through the brief case studies of three relevant authors: Leonard Cohen, Margaret Atwood and Anne Carson.

Chapter 2 ("Cosmopolitans at Home: the Spanishness of Canadian Women Writers") by Nieves Pascual deals with the reception of Canadian women writers in Spain. The nineteen eighties saw an unprecedented proliferation of women writers in the Spanish literary system in spite of the late penetration of feminist theory (Prieto and Langa, 2007) which was followed by the transference of Canadian women writers through translation. The title of this chapter refers to the ways in which writers like Elizabeth Smart, Margaret Laurence, Mavis Gallant, Carol Shields, and Anne Michaels have been imported as icons of cosmopolitanism and later acculturated into the Spanish target literary system. This kind of cosmopolitanism is unchallenged by the foreign and affirms the ideology and values of the target culture, in this case the Spanish one. Nieves Pascual's analysis is preceded by an overview of translation studies theories (by Jacques Derrida, Lawrence Venuti and Carol Maier) which use metaphors of violence to refer to the abuse exerted both on the source and target texts during the process of translation. In order to explain how this violence can be avoided, Pascual draws on Emmanuel Lévinas's ideas about identity and their phenomenological rewriting by the Indian philosopher Siby K. George, who sees identity as something porous and transcendent. Thus, cultural proximities shape the notion of the self, which, following Lévinas's argument, must inevitably integrate the Other.

Pascual focuses on the paratexts that surround the translated texts of the Canadian women authors chosen for her study: firstly, the editorial policies of the Spanish publishers associated with these authors as they appear on the internet; secondly, reviews and blurbs by professional critics appearing in newspapers and in the invitation cards to a reading series by Canadian women writers which took place in Madrid at the turn of the twentieth century. In a lucid analysis which could be applied to almost all the writers studied in this volume, the author's conclusions are three-fold: (a) that the symbolic capital of a Canadian literary work in Spain depends on the accumulation of cosmopolitanism; (b) that Canada is translated by and into Spanish culture as a cosmopolitan culture; and (c) that it is through cosmopolitanism that the work's specificity is denied and ours is confirmed.

The first of the two chapters of the second section, "Translation, Nation Branding and the Indo-Chic," by Belén Martín-Lucas returns to the issue of translation as an important marker of status in the economic and cultural global systems, which plays a crucial role in nation branding and cultural diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy can be defined as a revolutionary approach to international relations consisting of achieving *soft power*, understood as "the ability to achieve desired outcomes in international affairs through attraction rather than coercion" (Gilboa, 2002) and especially intended to encourage foreign trade. This chapter provides a very articulate description of the machinery behind the selection and promotion of authors for translation. Despite the help of institutional programs,

the decisions on which texts and which authors get translated are now more than ever before in the hands of the big publishing corporations who often exchange their authors' rights with their sister branches in other countries. Since multiculturalism is one of the most valued characteristics of Canada, both by foreigners and by Canadians themselves, it is precisely in the promotion of qualities like "cosmopolitan" and "multicultural" that the interests of Canadian cultural diplomacy and private publishers' interests coincide.

Despite this fanfare of multiculturalism, in Spain there are few Canadian titles available in translation from racialized writers, and most of them can be identified as prize-winning authors of South Asian origin. The success of authors who are conveniently labelled as "diasporic", "multicultural", or "ethnic" is in great part due to the arduous work of promoting the visibility of subaltern cultural production. However, the commercial exploitation in the cultural market of this privileged group - as compared to other racialized literatures of Canada, such as writing by Aboriginals - has exposed the vigour of a renewed colonial desire for the exotic that some postcolonial theorists like Graham Huggan (2001) have commented on. In the light of these considerations, the main aim of Belén Martín-Lucas' study is to scrutinize the modes of marketing, circulating and reading South Asian fiction from Canada in Spain in order to evaluate how "Canadian" or how "Asian" they are perceived to be by their Spanish audience, and to what extent they participate in or resist the global phenomenon of the Indo-chic. Martín-Lucas critically concludes her chapter by stating that if Canada really intends to be branded as a multicultural nation abroad, greater financial aid should be devoted to the translation and promotion of some relevant authors from visible minority groups - like Black Canadian, Native Canadian and East Asian writers - who, despite their literary value, are still conspicuously absent from the Spanish literary system.

Continuing to draw on notions of nationalism and literature, the chapter "Canadian into Catalan" by Isabel Alonso-Breto and Marta Ortega-Sáez starts out with a comparison of Catalonia and Quebec in what concerns their political situations and socio-cultural realities, in particular in the area of language. This comparison is relevant even in a work which deals only with CanLit in English because of the minority language and distinct nation status of Catalonia and Quebec, two shared attributes which have generated multiple exchanges, including cultural ones. The Bureau du Québec in Barcelona, the only one in Spain, plays a crucial role in the promotion of Quebecois culture in Catalonia (and in the rest of Spain), where Quebecois performers like the Cirque du Soleil, Les Sept Doigts de La Main and Robert Lepage are now well-known. The exhaustive work carried out by the Bureau, described by its cultural officer in an interview with the authors of this chapter, has indirectly had an impact on the visibility of English-Canadian writers in Barcelona, a city which is a significant centre of publishing both in Spanish and in Catalan.

In the rest of the chapter Isabel Alonso-Breto and Marta Ortega-Sáez analyse trends in the publication of English-Canadian writers into Catalan, classifying the published translations into five groups: (1) literature for children and teenagers; (2) consecrated Canadian authors; (3) multicultural authors (especially South Asian Canadians); (4) Canadian best-sellers and (5) emerging Canadian authors. Anglo-Canadian authors (consecrated or emerging) have so far been translated into Catalan when there is some guarantee of success, especially if sales of their texts have already been tested in Spanish. The authors conclude that the corpus of Anglo-Canadian texts translated into Catalan not only deserves to be appreciated, but can expect to flourish in the coming years. The reasons for this optimism can be found not only in the cultural vitality of Catalonia and the favourable instititutional context, but also in the status of Catalan as a prestigious literarylanguage. Even Bourdieu in his article about the situation of publishing in France ackowledges this status by recounting how publisher Jacqueline Chambon had "discovered" Catalan literature: "I [Chambon] realized that there was a very interesting literature [...] an *independent* Catalan literature, in the Catalan language, in Catalonia" (Bourdieu, 1999). An established literary system like the Catalan one needs translations of works by prestigious writers to enrich their canon, and given that English-Canadian authors have a rising currency in Spain, the translations into Catalan will probably continue apace.

As its title suggests, Chapter 5 ("A Prince of Asturias Award for the Queen of Canadian Letters: Reading Margaret Atwood's Texts in Spain") by Pilar Somacarrera deals with the circumstances that surround the awarding of this prestigious Spanish literary prize to Atwood and with the way that her texts (her literary texts but also her celebrity "text") have been interpreted. First, I analyse the factors which have influenced the Spanish transference of her writing (titles, publishers and translators). Secondly, I consider the way in which what Richard Dyer calls the "star text" of her literary celebrity has been read in Spain through the study of reviews, articles, notes and interviews published in the press. Atwood was originally imported into Spain, not as a Canadian author, but because of her reputation as an internationally renowned writer. The title chosen for the transference in 1987 was *The Handmaid's Tale*, a novel of speculative fiction whose subversive depiction of an authoritarian regime found a warm reception in post-Franco Spain, as it responded to the readers' "horizon of expectations" (Jauss). A combination of elements intrinsic to the novel together with some factors related to the target culture guaranteed the success of the book, which opened the way for more Atwood novels to be imported into the Spanish literary system. After Atwood received the Booker Prize in 2000 and the inclusion of her novel *Surfacing* as one the canonical texts of Harold Bloom's *The Western Canon* (1994), the Spanish literary system started to promote Atwood more as a canonical writer than as an alternative one. A number of editorial

and institutional initiatives contributed to her integration in the Spanish literary system, which culminated in 2008 with the Prince of Asturias Award. This prize launched her as a public intellectual in Spain but did not raise the sales of her books, which remain modest and restricted to a group of devoted fans who, increasingly, express their opinions in blogs and websites.

Drawing on reader response theories, Chapter 6 ("A Spanish Passion for the Canadian Short Story"), which I have also authored, looks into the phenomenon of Munro's popularity in Spanish blogs and websites. Munro's success has paralleled a revival of the short story in the Spanish literary system, which has chosen the Canadian writer as a new cosmopolitan model for its novice practitioners. Prestigious members of the Spanish cultural elite like writers Elvira Lindo, Antonio Muñoz Molina and Javier Marías, critics like Professor Fernando Valls and cultural institutions like the Prince of Asturias Foundation have supported Munro by recommending her in literary workshops, reviews, websites and blogs and proposing her for awards, like the Reino de Redonda Award (Marías) or the Asturias Award that Atwood received in 2008. Three Spanish literary blogs specializing in the short story (*El sindrome Chejov*, *El tacto de un billete falso* and *La luz tenue*) have consistently supported Alice Munro and her works in the last five years. Because of the immediacy and accessibility of their medium, blogs have democratized expertise in reviewing, offering new possibilities for subjective and spontaneous interaction between readers. The blogs I have analysed in the chapter present a continuum of responses, from those that are close to professional reviewing to those that are plainly emotional reactions from fans. Responses from some of the bloggers who are professional writers can be read in the light of Hans-Robert Jauss's "horizon of expectations." They establish a relationship to familiar literary works by comparing Munro to a list of American and European masters of fiction or of the short story. Anonymous readers, on the other hand, often produce impressionistic and emotional responses coloured, as Wolfgang Iser observes, by their own experiences. Even if the phenomenon is tinged by unavoidable self-promotional and/or commercial interests, the Spanish passion for Munro's stories continued to grow following the publication of the translation of her latest short story collection *Too Much Happiness* in the fall of 2010. This has also been translated into the Catalan and Basque languages.

In the first chapter of the last section of the volume ("Gen X: Culture and Pedagogy"), Mercedes Díaz-Dueñas explores Douglas Coupland's Spanish reception. Coupland presents a special case within the study of CanLit in Spain not only because he has been relatively widely published and reviewed but, most importantly, because his works have helped to change the way in which literature and contemporary culture are perceived. The theoretical framework chosen for this chapter is that of polysystem theory, as it reflects the way in which literature is part of the social, cultural, literary and historical framework.

The context for publication of Coupland's internationally acclaimed first book is, indeed, crucial to an understanding of his reception in Spain. *Generation X* was translated in 1993 in the midst of much political and economic unrest. Echoes of this turmoil reached Spanish alternative magazines like *Ajoblanco*, which in 1994 published a famous article of the same title that clearly contributed to the long-standing popularity of Coupland and his book. In fact, *Generation X* has had a permanent influence on the way he has penetrated the Spanish literary system, as it is mentioned in every review of Coupland's work in the Spanish press.

In addition, the label *Generation X* was soon applied to a group of Spanish writers who were publishing their first novels in the nineties and broadly shared the thematic preoccupations and stylistic characteristics of the Canadian writer's works. The protagonists of these novels (both Coupland's and the Spanish writers') are groups of young people who feel alienated and dissatisfied with their lives, and their stories are told in a predominantly oral style, which also favours visual techniques. Spanish literary critics have variously accepted or rejected this label for this group of writers, but most tend to include the following names in the movement: José Ángel Mañas, Gabriela Bustelo, Cuca Canals, Lucía Etxebarria, Ismael Grasa, Ray Loriga, Pedro Maestre, José Machado, Care Santos and Roger Wolfe. Just as Coupland has been criticised or simply ignored by some members of the Canadian literary establishment, these Spanish authors have received harsh treatment at the hands of some Spanish literary critics. In *The Cambridge History of Canadian Literature*, only five lines of text are dedicated to Coupland in the chapter focusing on comic art and *bande dessinée* (Gabilliet, 2009). Crude criticism rather than deletion is the approach chosen to describe the Generation X group of Spanish writers in Santos Alonso's book about the Spanish novel of the turn of the century. He refers to their works as "stories that are written in the hope of being turned into films, and collections of pages evoking musical anthologies [which attempt] to convince the young public [...] that this is good literature, instead of the real literature which invites reflection and wisdom (Alonso, 2003).

In the final chapter of the collection ("Home Truths: Teaching Canadian Literatures in Spanish Universities"), Eva Darias-Beautell provides a critical overview of the teaching of Canadian literature in Spanish universities in the past fifteen years from the 1994 curricular reform, within which most current courses on Canadian literature found their place, to the present introduction of new curricular designs in 2009 as part of the Bologna Process. This temporal framework is, therefore, structured around a large reform affecting studies at all European universities and involving a significant epistemological shift. Darias-Beautell's analysis focuses on three main interrelated issues. Firstly, she looks into the teaching of Canadian literature from an institutional perspective, including a description of the obstacles found in the process of introducing the new subject

over the past sixteen years, as well as the difficulties encountered by attempts to situate Canadian literature as independent from "Other/Commonwealth/ Postcolonial" Literatures, on the one hand, and from "American Literature," on the other. Secondly, she examines the contents of a selection of programs of English-Canadian Literature courses taught at university level in Spain. Thirdly, she discusses the teaching methodologies and the theoretical background used in the courses. Most of these courses are taught in English, but the traditional methods of close reading and thematic approach are making a comeback, in the light of the decreasing cultural and linguistic level of Spanish university students. More sophisticated theoretical slants have also been attempted by some Spanish teachers in their syllabi, like feminism, postcolonialism, queer studies and ecocritical studies, especially at Master level courses. Most of these CanLit courses were created thanks to the financial support of the Faculty Enrichment Awards provided by DFAIT, but their development and survival has been - and still is - determined to a large extent by the academic pressures of the institutional contexts in which they originated. During the current Bologna process which implies a large curricular reform aimed at merging with other European universities, these academic tensions are more tangible than ever, and the possibilities for introducing courses specializing in Canadian Literature have been severely restricted.[2]

Darias-Beautell ends her chapter with two open questions: What is the future of Canadian literature in Spain? And what function, as teachers and critics of CanLit, can we have in its development or its evolution? To me, the answer is clear: as academics and cultural ambassadors of Canada, we should disseminate Canadian literature not only in the academic sphere, but also in the wider world outside: in the publishing realm – publishers are gradually becoming more receptive to initiatives coming from translators and academics - in cultural institutions, and in the media. The publication of this volume marks a turning point in the development of English-Canadian literature in Spain and bears witness that Canadian Literature is no longer confined to the space of universities and is venturing beyond the academic walls.

In June 2010, the Canadian Embassy in Spain opened its new offices at Torre Espacio, which, according to its web page, is "one of the most prestigious and emblematic buildings in 21st- century Madrid, from which it will continue to serve Canadians and its Spanish interlocutors with the latest technological advances" (Government of Canada, 2010). The new site of the

2 In 2010 there were no applications from Spanish academics for the Faculty Enrichment Award, the program for Understanding Canada aimed at starting new Canadian Studies courses at Spanish universities. (information provided by the Canadian Mission in Madrid).

Canadian Embassy at one of the three futuristic towers which symbolize the Madrid of the new millennium is symbolic of the new challenges faced by transference of English-Canadian literature into Spain. How will Anglo-Canadian literature continue to matter in a media – and technological- age? How will technological advances like the e-book affect the continuity of translations and the reediting of titles that were once published on paper and are now out of print? What is, or will be, the role of social internet networks in the dissemination of English-Canadian authors and their texts? These questions are to be answered in future studies, as English-Canadian writers continue to be read and appreciated in Spain, even if in ways that we cannot foresee at the moment.

Chapter 1

Contextual and Institutional Coordinates of the Transference of Anglo-Canadian Literature into Spain

Pilar Somacarrera

1. A *terra Incognita* Becomes Known

In 1992, when Nino Ricci's novel *Lives of the Saints* was released in Spain by publisher Seix Barral with an impressive coverage by the Spanish press and a book tour by the writer, an article published in a local newspaper commented on the "miniscule cultural role that seemed reserved for Canada, since the reviewer [and her friends] could not mention a single renowned Canadian writer, musician, artist or journalist of that nationality." (Prieto 1981) Twenty years after, this comment seems strangely dated and odd in light of the recent upsurge of Canadian literature written in English – or, rather, a selection of English-Canadian texts and writers- in the Spanish cultural system. Alice Munro's books, published in the first years of the twenty-first century have been reprinted, and the backlist titles of Robertson Davies - a writer published in Spain in 1996 for the first time - have been reprinted again with great acclaim both from critics and the reading public. As several chapters of this volume will illustrate, these writers, along with Margaret Atwood, enjoy a considerable reputation among Spanish cultural – and even political – institutions: the Ministry of Culture, the Office of the Vice-President of the Spanish Government,the Prince of Asturias Foundation,the Cervantes Institute, and the literary supplements of national and local newspapers. Several renowned publishers and members of the Spanish cultural elite have also expressed their admiration for these Canadian authors, including the Academy Award-winning film director Pedro Almodóvar and the writer Javier Marías. Alice Munro received the Kingdom of Redonda Award in 2005, and Robertson Davies obtained the Llibreter Award of Catalonian Booksellers in 2006, a Prize given for both aesthetic values and sales figures. Most prominently, two Canadian writers have been recipients of the Prince of Asturias Award for Letters (the most important Spanish literary prize for non-Spanish speaking authors): Margaret Atwood in 2008 and Leonard Cohen in 2011, while Alice Munro was shortlisted for the same prize in 2009 and 2011.

2. Translation, the Literary Field and the Marketing of Culture

It is easily forgotten that Canadian literature would have received none of the aforementioned honours if the translations of the works by those Canadian authors had not been undertaken. Often neglected and invisible, translation is a crucial factor in the process of transference, circulation and reception of texts in a culture and in the establishment of comparative literature as a discipline. As the Montreal-based Canadian poet and translator Erín Moure recalls, critics from Raymond Williams to Jorge Luis Borges all agree that the circulation among different languages via translation is the very lifeblood of literature (Moure, 2009). Furthermore, the importance of translation goes far beyond the sphere of culture. As Emily Apter (2006) rightly observes, translation and global diplomacy never seemed to have been so mutually implicated. Translation before 9/11 was deemed primarily an instrument of international relations, education and culture. Today, it seems more than ever a matter of war and peace.

In Canada, as Jane Koustas (2002) argues, translation remains politically and socially charged. It hardly seems necessary to stress the role that it has in Canada's political, social and cultural life, as institutions such as the Canada Council for the Arts, Foreign Affairs Canada and the Department of Canadian Heritage are becoming more and more interested in it (Schneider, 2005). Melanie Rutledge, head of the Canada Council Writing and Publishing Section, acknowledges that "[translation] is part of the zeitgeist right now, in a lot of conversations we are having." (quoted in Schneider, 2005). However, it is often forgotten that Canadian translation is no longer an exclusively internal affair or a conversation between the two major language group (Simon, 2008). Erin Moure (2009) also denounces this situation: "talk of a Canadian context for a translation, for the reception of literary text from a foreign language, is not common here, and the work of translating foreign literatures –other than Quebec or Canadian French into Canadian English, or vice versa –scarcely exists publicly in Canada". In addition, until recently there has been little interest in the translation of Canadian Literature into other languages and cultures and how it has changed Canadian literature's perceptions of itself.

As a deliberate and context-bound act, eminently social and historical, a translation translates a reading practice which is a historically and culturally determined codification /decodification (von Flotow, 2005). Translation is not an act of faithful reproduction but, rather, a conscious act of selection, assemblage, structuration, and fabrication (Tymoczko and Gentzler, 2002). As such, as André Lefevere (1992) points out, it is the most obviously recognizable type of rewriting and ... potentially the most influential because it is able to project the image of an author and or his or her works beyond the boundaries of their culture of origin.

Lefevere (1992) describes the literary system in which translation functions as being governed by three main factors: first, professionals within the literary system (critics and reviewers, teachers and translators themselves); secondly, patronage outside the literary system, like publishers, the media, and a political class or party in power in a particular country; and thirdly, the dominant poetics of a culture, which includes the concept of the role of literature in the social system in which it exists. These are factors that we shall return to throughout the different chapters of this volume.

Lefevere (1992) developed this argument from the well-known translation theory of polysystems, influenced by the ideas of the Russian Formalists (Even-Zohar, 1978) in the 1920s, which argues that literatures work as systems in the way that the target language selects works for translation, and in the way the translation norms, behaviour and policies are influenced by other co-systems. Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997) define the polysystem as a heterogeneous, hierarchized conglomerate of systems which interact to bring about an ongoing, dynamic process of evolution within the polysystem as a whole. This "dynamic process of evolution" is vital to the polysystem and explains why the position of translated literature changes throughout the history of a literary system, occupying at times a primary or a secondary position. Even-Zohar (1978) gives several cases when translated literature occupies the primary position. Two of these cases are especially interesting when studying the position of translated English-Canadian literature: first, when there is a critical turning point in literary history at which established models are no longer considered sufficient; and, second, when there is a vacuum in the literature of the country (Munday, 2001).

The polysystem model tends to focus on abstract models rather than on the real-life constraints placed on the texts and translations (Munday, 2011), but translations occur in a social, economic, and political situation, with parties that have vested interests in the production and reception of texts across linguistic cultural boundaries (Tymoczko and Gentzler, 2002). Following this line of thought, our study also draws on the ideas of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, insomuch as they claim that the apparent hierarchy of texts in a culture depends on its position in the literary field, which is the site of power struggles between participants or agents. As Randal Johnson observes, with the concept of *field*, Bourdieu grounds the agent's action in objective social relations (Johnson, 1993). In Bourdieu's words:

> The literary or artistic field is a *field of forces*, but it is also a *field of struggles* tending to transform and conserve this field of forces. The network of objective relations between positions subtends and orients the strategies which the occupants of the different positions implement in their struggles to defend or improve their positions, strategies which depend for their force and form on the position each agent occupies in the power relations (Bourdieu, 1993).

Two forms of capital are important in the field of cultural production. *Symbolic capital* refers to the degree of accumulated prestige, celebrity, consecration, or honour and is founded on a dialectic of knowledge (*connaissance*) and recognition (*reconnaissance*). *Cultural capital* concerns forms of cultural knowledge, competences or dispositions (Johnson, 1993) and it is always unevenly distributed.

More recently, Bourdieu's concept of field has been expanded and adapted by other critics. In his adaptation of Bourdieu's notion of field, John B. Thompson adds three other forms of capital: economic capital, which is the accumulated financial resources; human capital, which is the staff employed by the firm and their accumulated knowledge; and finally, social capitalwhich means the networks of contacts and relationships that an individual or organization has built over time; and, finally, intellectual capital, which consists in the rights that a publisher owns or controls in intellectual content (Thompson, 2010). From postcolonial studies, Graham Huggan has elaborated on Bourdieu's influential notion by adding that cultural capital is transmitted, acquired, and accumulated through the interaction between producers and consumers of symbolic goods (Huggan, 2001). With the rise of cultural studies, the concept of cultural capital has also been invoked in the identification of the literary canon, a question which came to the fore in Anglo-American and Canadian literary criticism in the late eighties and early nineties, and resulted in the publication of studies like John Guillory's *Cultural Capital: the Problems of Literary Canon Formation* (1993) and Harold Bloom's well-known *The Western Canon* (1994). In Spain the canon debates did not start until the late nineties and the first years of the new millennium, as demonstrated by the belated translation in 2002 of Harold Bloom's emblematic volume, which has had an impact on the selection of English-Canadian books that were to be translated into Spanish.

As David Thorsby (2001) observes, cultural production and consumption can be situated within an industrial framework, and the goods and services produced and consumed can be regarded as commodities in the same terms as any other commodities produced within the economic system. In a neo-liberal economic system such as the one we live in, cultural goods –including, of course, books- need to be marketed. Although some Spanish publishers and critics seem reluctant to accept this reality (and we shall provide some examples), marketing, as Claire Squires (2007) argues, is, in a very real sense, *the making of contemporary writing.*

3. The Spanish Context: Politics, Publishers, Readers

The local context - the local reading space - which according to the polysystem theory selects and translates the elements it needs from a foreign literary system, is probably the most important factor in the process of importing a literary text through translation. Ironically, this context is beyond the control of any official

culture and may have little to do with national identity (von Flotow, 2008). In fact, as Lawrence Venuti points out, translation is fundamentally ethnocentric, and most literary projects are initiated in the domestic culture, where a foreign text is selected to satisfy different tastes from those that motivated its composition and reception in its native culture (Venuti, 1998). Therefore, a presentation of the Spanish publishing scene seems in order before I discuss the transference of Anglo-Canadian literature into Spain. Recent data from the Spanish Ministry of Culture describe Spain as one of the most active countries in the world in translation, given that approximately 25% of published books are translations. These figures illustrate the size of the investment of the publishing sector as well as the interest of Spanish readers in reading books published originally in other languages (Dirección General del Libro, 2008). However, it should be pointed out from the outset that the number of readers in Spain does not correspond to the size of the Spanish publishing industry.

The market for books in Spanish is thought to be the second-largest in the world. It is the biggest for books in translation, which account for about a fifth of the 120,000 Spanish titles published each year. In the context of the Spanish-speaking market, Spain occupies a privileged position, as demonstrated by the fact that the Association for the Export of Canadian Books (now known as "Livres Canada Books") published a leaflet titled "Selling Canadian Books in Spain," which recommends Canadian publishers approach Spain not as a national market, but as international one, that is, as the gateway to the Latin American market (Association for the Export of Canadian Books, 2004).[3]

In one of the interviews granted on the occasion of receiving the Prince of Asturias Award, Margaret Atwood mentioned Spain's capacity for reinvention and regeneration: "Spain is an amazing country which has learned to reinvent itself many times" (Rojo, 2008), a statement that can be applied to practically every realm of Spanish life. In only thirty-five years, Spain has changed from being a dictatorship ruled by General Francisco Franco (1939-1975) to a thriving, effective European democracy which became a member of the European Common Market in 1986, and whose government is a constitutional monarchy led by King Juan Carlos I. After the death of the dictator, Francisco Franco, in 1975, a democratic regime which incorporated a system of universal suffrage

3 Although several Spanish publishers have branches in Latin America or have an aspiration of accessing the Latin American market, this study will limit itself to the publication of Anglo-Canadian books in Spain, in peninsular Spanish and the other co-official languages. However, we occasionally refer to reviews from Latin American media. The increasing impact of books in Spanish in the United States, which has resulted in the creation of imprints in this language by the world main publishing houses has recently been analyzed in the Spanish press (Aguilar 2012).

was set up in Spain. Subsequently, the central government started delivering a degree of self-autonomy within different areas of government to the so-called *comunidades autónomas*, or autonomous communities. The autonomous communities with a distinct language of their own and a historical singularity are considered "historical," a category in which the two most relevant examples are the Basque Country and Catalonia. These communities would be similar to Canadian provinces in terms of political attributions and cultural idiosyncrasy. Thus, the Spanish system of government is not dissimilar to that of the Canadian Federation.

Under the government of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Partypresided over by the elected president José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, [4] Spain has implemented some of the most advanced social policies in the world, including the opening of a Ministry of Gender Equality, a legal framework designed to deal with violence against women, and same-sex marriages. The passage of Spain from a dictatorship into a liberal democratic state between the years of 1975 and 1978 – the year when the Spanish Constitution was sanctioned by the Spanish people in a referendum - is known as the "Transition" (Transición). Usually considered a model of how a country can peacefully undergo such a dramatic political change, this historical period is currently being submitted to revision by political sectors who argue that the peaceful change was possible at the cost of burying the crimes and brutal repression of the Franco regime. After a decade of economic prosperity, based mainly in the construction business, Spain is currently undergoing a profound recession, one of the worst in Europe. Furthermore, the unemployment rate has risen to almost 5,000,000 and the economic crisis is affecting every aspect of Spanish life, including cultural production.

Cultural production was precisely one of the realms in which the Franco regime exerted the strongest repression, with the intention of isolating Spain from "subversive" external influences. Imported films and books from foreign countries were subjected to censorship, a process which continued under different names, if only as a formality, until 1985 and may have delayed the publication of certain English-Canadian books. However, as publisher Jorge Herralde (2012) explains, between 1965 and 1975 - despite the reigning political repression - there was a favourable climate for publishing because of the external agitation provoked by the May 1968 protest, the Cuban revolution, the Vietnam war, the anti-imperialist movements, and because of internal events like the *Ley de Prensa e Imprenta* (Press and printing act), promoted in 1966 by

4 Zapatero was president of the Spanish Government between 2004 and 2011. At the time of revising this chapter (December 2012) the conservative party (Partido Popular) governs in Spain, having won the elections in November 20, 2011 and its leader, Mariano Rajoy, was elected president.

the then-Minister of Information and Tourism, Manuel Fraga, which implied a real opening up of the regime in terms of publishing.

After Franco's death, translations started to multiply in reaction to the cultural xenophobia imposed by the dictatorship. In fact, the book-publishing sector has grown in the last thirty years in ways parallel to the development of the Spanish democracy. As stated in "Selling Canadian Books in Spain" (2005), the early 1990s was a boom time for Spanish publishers and bookstores. The increase from the 4,000 titles published in Spain in 1958 to over 70,000 released in 2007 gives an idea of the development of this sector ("Apunte para la memoria," 2008). The year 2008 registered a record in the publication of books (Dirección General del libro, 2008). In 2009, presumably because of the recession, the production went down 13.7%, and 74,521 titles were published, which, despite the decrease, is still the second highest in the decade ("España registró," 2010). In 2010, publishing in Spain rose 3.9%, with electronic publishing as the sector undergoing the highest growth, up to almost 50%. ("La edición electrónica de libros," 2011). Recent appreciations on how the e-book has fared in Spain, however, state that it has still not been launched to its full potential because of frequent illegal downloads, unfavorable tax conditions and the fear that the new format may threaten the market for print books, which still forms the economical basis of the sector (Del Corral, 2011).[5]

One frequent complaint among Spanish publishers is that too many books are published for the meagre number of readers, which does not seem to be increasing in any significant way.[6] According to Beatriz de Moura, editor of the publisher Tusquets, there is a disproportion between the reading capacity of Spain and the amount of newly published books. The result is that, the greater the quantity, the lesser the quality of the product (Quoted in Azancot, 2008). A study undertaken in 2007 by the Federación de Gremios de Editores de España (Spanish Federation of Book Publishers, 2011)), evinced that 43% of the Spanish population admitted that they hardly ever read, although the reading rate has gradually improved in the last years and reached 56.9% in 2007. But, the recession has not had a positive impact on the number of readers in Spain, since in 2008 the rate went down to 54.6 % and the population who admits they never read a book rose to 45.4 %. The profile of the average Spanish reader has stayed the same, however, being that of a young woman holding a university degree who reads in Castilian at home for the purpose of entertaining herself.

5 The latest data evince that in 2012 the production of books in Spain went down considerably (60,218 volumes were published) and sales also decreased 20%. (Azancot, 2013b).

6 120 years ago, the prolific Spanish author Emilia Pardo Bazán (1981) complained, along with numerous others, about the lack of a general reading public in Spain.

Another active reading sector of the Spanish population is that of children. In 2008, children between 10 and 13 were the group who read the most, reaching the figure of 81.9 ("Los españoles que más leen," 2008) Publishers have learned to take advantage of this fact, so that children's literature is "characterized by a massive and commercial production which includes a handful of good books" (Puerta Leisse, 2008).

Over 3,300 publishers in Spain —as opposed to the much smaller size of Canada's 600 professional editors (MacSkimming, 2004)— provide books for this fluctuating readership. As described by von Flotow (2007b), Spanish publishers share the fate of the German ones in that, unlike Canadian publishers, they do not receive government subsidies if they are privately owned and therefore need to rely on expected sales and deploy aggressive marketing strategies. Speaking for *El Cultural*, Jorge Herralde, director of the emblematic press Anagrama, blames these marketing and commercial practices for what he calls "the trivialization of culture," leading to the transformation of the book into a mere commodity (quoted in Azancot, 2000). However, Herralde (2000) seems to contradict himself because, next to his statement, the literary supplement published a half-page advertisement for the newly published books of his publishing house.

Diatribes against the commercialization of literature have, of course, been around as long as the capitalist markets themselves. In 1932 Q.D. Leavis argued that works reaching "a very small minority audience," what she called "highbrow," yield "a very small proportion of gold" (1979). In Bourdieu's terms (1993), cultural value or "cultural capital" is the opposite of economic worth or audience size, and the distinctive characteristic of an autonomous and successful cultural work is its disinterestedness, that is, its degree of independence from the economy. However, in the global Spanish-language market of the twenty-first century, Spanish presses who care about producing quality literary books cannot turn their back on traditional and new forms of promoting literature.

Because of this tough competition to control the market, in Spain the publishing scene is dominated by several mega-groups which own numerous imprints and affiliates throughout Spain and Latin America. The gradual globalization of the economy has caused smaller imprints to be subsumed by large companies which control the elements of the publishing chain, from content to points of sale and finally media. The bulk of Spain's publishing activity –roughly two thirds- takes place in Madrid and Barcelona. Generally Madrid focuses on school and reference titles, while Barcelona is more targeted to books for the general trade, notably literature, including international authors (Association for the Export of Canadian Books, 2004).

As Isabel Alonso-Breto and Marta Ortega-Sáez point out in their chapter about the translation of Anglo-Canadian authors in Catalonia, Barcelona represents a

paradoxical case on the Spanish publishing scene. Barcelona is, in the words of Anik Lapointe (2011) - editorial director of the Spanish press RBA - "a capital of the publishing world," a site of the most prestigious literary publishers of the country, targeting the rest of Spain and Latin America but, at the same time, the centre of publication in Catalonia's co-official Catalan language. In addition to Catalan, two other co-official languages co-exist with the Spanish state's official language (Spanish or Castilian): *Euskera* or Basque language in Euskadi (Basque Country), and Galician in Galicia.

The translations between these Spanish official languages form a significant part of the total amount of translations (almost 25% of the total translating activity), but each of these languages also becomes a target language for the translation of foreign literatures. Most English-Canadian writing has been translated into Spanish, which is clearly the hegemonic language, but some books have been translated into the other co-official languages, Basque and Galician, and, above all, Catalan, in which we have found 75 translations alone as of April 2010. As Alonso-Breto and Ortega-Sáez point out, one of the literary genres that predominates in the translations of Canadian literature into Catalan is children's literature, since the educational system in Catalonia is in need of juvenile books to be used as textbooks or reading materials in Catalan language classes. The Spanish literary system does not seem to provide enough of these texts, so they are sought in another culture, in this case Canadian culture, where children's literature occupies a primary position. In his 2008 report about the state of children's literature in Spain, Gustavo Puerta Leisse (2008) notes that many of these books are translated, a fact which reveals a lack of talented native writers to accompany an excellent generation of Spanish illustrators.

As Belén Martín-Lucas (2011) points out, the Basque and Galician literary systems, publishers do not usually publish works which have already been released in Castilian. Out of the four titles of Canadian literature I have traced in Basque translation, three belong to the category of children's and youth literature: Joyce Barkhouse's *The Witch of Port Lajoye / Port Lajoyek sorgina,* Kevin Major's *Dear Bruce Springsteen / Bruce Springsteen adiskidea* and Eric Wilson's *Murder on the Canadian Express / Canadian Express eko hilketa.* The last title was released by publisher SM twelve years after the Spanish version came out in 1985, probably with the intention of addressing the needs of the teaching of the co-official languages of the autonomous regions. In 2010, a translation of Alice Munro's short story collection *Too Much Happiness* (*Zorion Hondiegia*) was released in the Basque language by publisher Meettok with a site in San Sebastián, thus opening a new trend in the realm of publishing in the Basque language.

Rather than a commercial initiative, the case of the two existing Galician translations of English-Canadian literature is the outcome of institutional and

academic collaboration: Erin Moure's *Little Theatres*[7] (Editorial Galaxia, 2007) was translated as *Teatriños ou autuxos calados,* and Rachna Mara's short story cycle *Of Customs and Excise* was rendered into Galician as *Entre o costume e a rupture* (Edicions Xerais de Galicia, 1998). The translator of both books is María Reimóndez, a Galician poet and former student of Belén Martín-Lucas's Canadian literature course. Neither *Little Theatres* nor *Of Customs and Excise* are available in Spanish.

As I recalled before, although publishers are patrons outside the literary system, they govern the literary system in which translation takes place (Lefevere, 1992). The role of literary publishers in the dissemination of Anglo-Canadian literature in Spain deserves some attention in a study like this. The main editorial groups who are – or have been - involved in the publishing of English Canadian books in Spain are Grupo Planeta, Grupo Random House Mondadori, Grupo Zeta and Grupo RBA. To start with the largest, family-owned and based in Barcelona, Grupo Planeta is, because of its economic and social capital, the first editorial group in Spain and the seventh in the world. Planeta sponsors one of the most financially substantial awards in the world: the Premio Planeta, worth over 601,000 euros, the second higuest amount for a literary prize after the Nobel. It owns one of the most important book-selling chains, the emblematic Casa del Libro ("House of the Book"), with its mythical establishment located in downtown Madrid and is now aiming at opening 12 selling points in different Spanish cities in 2012 (Geli,2008). It owns more than twenty publishers and imprints, like the prestigious literaryoriented Destino and Seix Barral. Destino, founded in 1942, during the darkest years of the Spanish dictatorship, created the Premio Nadal, the oldest and one of the most prestigious awards for writing in Spanish, which strongly contributed to the dissemination of Spanish post-war writers like Carmen Laforet, Rafael Sánchez Ferlosio and Carmen Martín Gaite. It owns the rights to canonical Spanish writers like the Cervantes Prize[8] winners Miguel Delibes and Ana María Matute, next to best-selling foreign ones like Stieg Larsson. As far as Canadian authors are concerned, it has launched authors of prestige such as Robertson Davies, Michael Ondaatje and Douglas

7 Finding out that she had a Galician ancestor excited Moure's curiosity about the North West Spanish region and led her to learn its language and culture, which, gradually, became part of her poetry: "I exist in Galician: a language that, as Galician writer Manuel Rivas said once to me, belongs to those who love it" (Moure, 2009).

8 The most prestigious literary prize given to a Spanish-language writer, awarded by the Spanish Ministry of Culture after consultation with the Academies of Spanish language in all the countries in Latin America.

Coupland.[9] The last Canadian author they have published in Spanish is Joseph Boyden, of Irish, Scottish and Métis heritage, whose war novel *Three Day Road* was published in 2010.

Whereas the capital of Planeta is Spanish, Random House Mondadori, the world's second largest Spanish-language publisher, was established as a result of the merging of the German publisher Bertelsmann and the Italian Mondadori. They incorporated the best- selling Spanish imprints Plaza y Janés, Grijalbo and the book club Círculo de Lectores. Random House Mondadori owns the prestigious literary imprint Lumen, which has ventured to publish, for the first time in Spain, Margaret Atwood's essays in a collection titled *La maldición de Eva* (2006, a selection of essays from *Curious Pursuits*), followed by the collection *Érase una vez* (2007) (a selection of short stories from *Good Bones* and *Dancing Girls*). Lumen, a Barcelona-based publisher founded by the family Tusquets[10] in 1960, celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 2010 with the launching of its new collection "Futura," featuring authors like Antonia Byatt, Linn Ullmann and, most significantly, Alice Munro. The current literary editor of Lumen is Silvia Querini, who promoted the publication of the aforementioned Atwood's titles, as well as of Mavis Gallant's *Selected Stories* in 2009.

Ediciones B, which belongs to the editorial group Grupo Zeta, has published most of Atwood's books in Spain as well as some by as a few other emblematic Canadian writers like Leonard Cohen (*Beautiful Losers* and *The Favourite Game*), Douglas Coupland (*Generation X*, *Microserfs*, *Shampoo Planet* and *Girlfriend in a Coma*), and Bharati Mukherjee (*Jasmine*). This choice of authors and works evinces a preference for the avant-garde, the multicultural, and alternatives to the traditional canon. Atwood's most recent publications in Spain *(Moral Disorder*, *The Door*, *True Stories*, *The Year of the Flood* and *Payback*) have been released by Bruguera, a mythical literary imprint owned by Grupo Zeta. Bruguera, one of the oldest publishers in Spain, was founded in 1910 by Juan Bruguera under the name of "El Gato Negro" ("The Black Cat") and, after decades publishing non-canonical literature (comics, children's literature, detective novels and westerns)

9 Destino published Robertson Davies's last novels M*urther and Walking Spirits* and *The Cunning Man* in 1996, Michael Ondaatje's *Anil's Ghost* in 2001 (in Spanish and Catalan), Douglas Coupland's *All Families Are Psychotic* (also in Spanish and Catalan) in 2002 and Yann Martel's *Life of Pi* in 2003. Martel's book has been republished and has hit the best-seller lists after the launch of Ang Lee's film based on the novel in December 2012.

10 Lumen originally was a small independent publisher founded in 1960 by the Tusquets family of the high Catalan bourgeoisie. For further details about the history of this publishing house, see Tusquets' memoirs *Confesiones de una dama indigna*.

shifted its catalogue to "great literature" in the sixties.[11] Bruguera was bought by Grupo Zeta in the early eighties but could not overcome its financial problems and was shut down in 1986, passing over its comics and children's literature titles to Ediciones B, the new editorial imprint created by the group in 1986. Ten years later, Ediciones B was the second bestselling publisher in Spain and owned the rights of Nobel-Prize winning authors like Nadine Gordimer and Toni Morrison. Its description of Margaret Atwood in 1996 as "an editorial bet for the future" that "they would continue to publish" illustrates of how mainstream Canadian authors have continuously been presented in Spain as young and as literary novelties (Massot, 1996).

Twenty years later, in 2006, Grupo Zeta decided to resurrect the imprint Bruguera and its black cat logo under the expert hands of the writer Ana María Moix, which added human capital to the firm and strengthened the reputation for publishing great authors it once had in the sixties. The imprint intended to specialize in "high brow" literary texts (essays, fiction and poetry) which, next to Margaret Atwood, included authors like Tenessee Williams, P.D. James, Doris Lessing, Nadine Gordimer and Alberto Manguel. However, Bruguera's new literary venture was not successful and, ironically, in the year of its one-hundredth anniversary Bruguera became, once again, the victim of another recession. Grupo Zeta shut it down in the spring of 2010 and fired its literary editor Ana María Moix, who pessimistically declared: "Everyone knows the future of literary collections at present" (Niéspolo, 2010). Given that Ediciones B has also been seriously affected by the crisis, it is unclear who will continue to publish Margaret Atwood's books in Spain, although the cultural critic Juan Palomo in his weekly column of *El Cultural* expressed his faith that Bruguera would be resurrected for a third time, full of good literature and imagination (Palomo, 2010).[12] Palomo's words were prophetic as the imprint was re-launched as "Nueva/New Bruguera" in 2012 albeit with a more mercantile orientation: "Bruguera is now re-launched with the will of bringing the commercial spirit with the literary vocation." [13]

A special case in the brief history of the publication of Canadian books in translation in Spain is Grupo RBA. According to their web page, it is an independent multi-channel company whose capital is 100% Spanish and presents itself as a leader in the area of magazines, collectibles and editorial promotions who has now consolidated itself in the book-publishing area (RBA

11 Among the general public Bruguera is still associated with juvenile books and comics, but as Ana María Moix mentioned in the first relaunching of the imprint, its former collection Nuevos Narradores ("New Narrators") had already released authors like Cesare Pavese, Juan Carlos Onetti and Gabriel García Márquez in the seventies.

12 Palomo, "Aptitud cultural," 6.

13 See presentation of Nueva Bruguera on Ediciones B webpage.

website). RBA is especially interesting for our concerns because its editorial director is the Montreal-born Anik Lapointe, who came to Barcelona in her early twenties to study the connections between Quebecois and Catalan writing, and stayed to pursue a fruitful career in the Catalan editorial world, which includes working with the Catalan publishers Quaderns Crema and Edicions 62 and, since 2000, with RBA.[14] Her philosophy is to "fill in gaps and to promote the coexistence of the classics with the findings of the new generation" (Lapointe, 2011). The result of this formula is that Lapointe's choice of authors and texts is diverse in category and thematics. She is particularly fond of detective novels and has imported some of the best crime fiction writers into Spain -Dennis Lehane, Philip Kerr and the Canadian Giles Blunt among the English-speaking ones. In the early years of the new millennium she launched Alistair MacLeod and Alice Munro in Spain and was not deterred by their, at the time, relatively modest sales.[15] Now that Munro is better known in Spain, as I shall illustrate in Chapter 5 of this collection, her rights have also become more costly and RBA has lost them to the multinational corporation Random House Mondadori, a fact which has been bemoaned by some cultural journalists.[16]

Next to these great publishing corporations, there are also smaller publishers who have participated in the dissemination of the Canadian literary word in Spain. One interesting example is Libros del Asteroide – who was awarded, jointly with six other small publishers, the national prize for best editorial work in 2008. It is an independent publisher set in Barcelona whose aim is to publish "fundamental books of twentieth-century literature which are not available in Spanish."[17] Therefore, it was "looking for a classic,"[18] and it was not with the intention of publishing a Canadian book that they rediscovered Robertson Davies for the Spanish readership. They first imported the *Deptford Trilogy,* with its three novels *Fifth Business / El quinto en discordia,* 2006, currently in its sixth edition; *The Manticore / Mantícora* 2007, currently in its fourth edition, and *World of Wonders/ El mundo de los prodigios, 2007*, presently in its third edition.

14 The magazine *Qué leer* dedicated an article to Anik Lapointe authored by Antonio Lozano("Anik Lapointe, la mirada canadiense/the Canadian view") which includes some details of her biography. The title erases Lapointe's Quebecois origin subsuming her under the tag "Canadian."

15 Their sales, as she acknowledged in an interview were "limited, but correct" (Unpublished interview of Anik Lapointe with Pilar Somacarrera, Barcelona, 5 July, 2007).

16 The columnist of *Babelia* and Munro supporter Manuel Rodríguez Rivero (2010) considers the disappearance of the Canadian author from RBA's catalogue "a great mistake."

17 See webpage of Libros del Asteroide.

18 Unpublished interview with Luis Miguel Solano (Director of Libros del Asteroide) by Pilar Somacarrera (4 July 2007).

The first novel of the trilogy, *Fifth Business,* obtained the prestigious Llibreter Award 2006, an independent prize awarded by the Association of Book Sellers of Catalonia intended to promote lesser known, quality writers, and it was subsequently published in the Catalan language. Libros del Asteroide has so far reached sales of over 15,000 books with the Spanish edition of *Fifth Business* and 3,000 with the Catalan edition, as well as 5,500 of *The Manticore* and 3,000 of *The Rebel Angels.*[19] According to Concha Cardeñoso, the Spanish translator of four of Davies's books, the clue to Davies's Spanish success is not Canadianness, but his universality. Cardeñoso describes Davies's style as elegant, perfect, and fluid and labels him as one of the best writers of all times and languages.[20]

Other Spanish publishers will be discussed in the other chapters of this volume, but I would like to emphasize from the outset that Canadian writers have been fortunate to have as their publishers some of the most culturally and politically committed presses in Spain. In the sixties and early seventies literature was one of the few realms of resistance against the Franco regime and Spanish publishing houses had a crucial role in importing foreign authors, stigmatized as "subversive" by the censors of the regime.

4. The Role of Canada's Institutional Support

Although I have argued that the local context is decisive in the penetration of a foreign literature in a target culture, it is also true that institutional support from the Canada Council and Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade has been an incentive for some publishers to undertake translations of Canadian writers into the different peninsular languages and for academics to develop courses on Canadian literature and write academic articles about it. The impact of the DFAIT Canadian studies programs (Faculty Research and Faculty Enrichment Awards) in Spanish universities has been impressive. Thanks to these programs, hundreds of Spanish academics have been able to undertake four-week research stays at Canadian universities, producing countless monographs, articles in Spanish and international academic journals and conferences papers. They have also designed and taught courses about Canadian literature at many institutions

19 At the time of revising this chapter (December 2012), Libros del Asteroide has released the complete Deptford (published in a one-volume edition in November 2009) and Cornish trilogies. The first title of the Salterton trilogy (*Tempest-Tost*) has recently been translated, and the other two titles of the trilogy are in preparation. Thus, since 2006 Libros del Asteroide has been publishing Davies's books at the rate of one volume a year.

20 Response to the questionnaire for translators of English-Canadian literature sent by the editor of this volume. Cardeñoso has translated the three volumes of the Cornish trilogy and *Tempest-Tost.*

of higher education, a topic which is addressed by Darias-Beautell in Chapter 8 of this volume. Unfortunately, in May 2012, Foreign Affairs and International Trade decided to "phase out the international Canadian studies program" (FAIT, 2012). The consequences of the decision to cancel the Understanding Canada Programme for the survival and expansion of Canadian Studies throughout the world are still to be measured.[21] I hope, however, that this edited collection sheds some light into its results in Spain so far.

The International Translation Programme of the Canada Council, subsidizing approximately half of the total translation costs of a Canadian book into a foreign language, has contributed to the publication of approximately 100 books since 1991[22] and has even been praised in the Spanish press for its efficiency in the promotion of reading (Lasheras, 2008). However, over two-hundred titles of Canadian literature in English have also been published in Spain without the subsidy, just on the basis of their potential commercial success. Other publishers have considered that the grant required too much bureaucracy for the reduced sum it provides and therefore have decided not to apply for it. Therefore, if the role of the International Translation Grants cannot be dismissed, often the decision to import a text into a target culture relies more on an estimation of the readership favour, and readers, as von Flotow (2008) rightly points out, cannot be institutionalized.

The other institutional initiative which has launched Canadian literature in Spain has been the establishment of Canadian Studies, first in Canada, and then, internationally. The International Council for Canadian Studies was established in 1981 as a federation of national associations of Canadian Studies. The Spanish Association for Canadian Studies (Asociación Española de Estudios Canadienses, AEEC) was not founded until 1988 and joined the International Council for Canadian Studies in 1990. The Association was founded thanks to the enthusiastic initiative of Spanish professors from different universities and academic disciplines who first joined together as a research group in 1986. Two years later, during a conference which took place in Madrid, they decided to found the Association. Its first president was Bernd Dietz, at the time Professor of the University of La Laguna in the Canary Islands. Dietz founded the first Canadian Studies Centre in Spain at that university in 1991, and it was followed by another one in Cáceres, hosted by the University of Extremadura, and one in Barcelona in 1996. Of the three centres, the one in La Laguna, which offers a one-year course on Canadian Studies, has the strongest literary emphasis.

21 However, the financial aid provided for the cultural exchange between the United States and Spain seems to have increased, as witnessed by the numerous grants provided by the Instituto Franklin (Research Institute of American Studies) of the University of Alcalá in Madrid.

22 Data provided by Catherine Montgomery, officer responsible for this program.

The Spanish Association for Canadian Studies was most active between 1988 and 2004. It released, in collaboration with various Spanish Universities, a number of significant literary publications which are too numerous to quote here, although I will mention three examples: under the initiative of the Centre of Canadian Studies of the University of La Laguna a translation of Gwendolyn MacEwen's poem *Terror and Erebus*, by Dulce Rodríguez and the anthology *Sealed in Struggle: Canadian Poetry and the Spanish Civil War* (1995), edited by Nicola Vulpe and Maha Albari, an impressive anthology of Canadian poetry about the Spanish Civil War. Both Dulce Rodríguez and Nicola Vulpe were faculty at the English Department of the University of La Laguna and members of the Spanish Association for Canadian Studies at the time, which proves the narrow collaboration between the Association, the University and the Centre of Canadian Studies. Vulpe's anthology, as Jacqueline Hurtley (1996) noted, filled a gap in several fields: Canadian Studies, Comparative Literature and studies in English-language poetry in general.[23] From the many conferences which were organized at Spanish universities with the financial support of DFAIT and initiatives from the Spanish Association, a few yielded publications of selected papers, like *Visions of Canada Approaching the Millenium*,[24] which was reviewed by Neil ten Kortenaar for the journal *Canadian literature*. Kortenaar confesses to having "found an unusual pleasure in the outsider's perspective brought to bear on Canada (Kortenaar, 2002). Between 1991 and 1998 the AEEC published the *Revista Española de Estudios Canadienses* (Spanish Journal of Canadian Studies).[25] Unfortunately, and partly because of the reduction of funding from DFAIT, these initiatives are now frozen.[26]

It is mainly the Foundation of Canadian Studies (Fundación Estudios Canadienses), established in 1998, which now promotes knowledge about Canada in Spain, although following the direction of DFAIT, literature is not one of its priorities. Supported by the Government of Canada as well as by private entities, like Nortel Networks and the Catalan bank La Caixa, the Foundation

23 These two publications (Dulce Rodriguez's translation of *Terror and Erebus* and *Sealed in Struggle*) were released in non-profit limited editions with no ISBN number, a fact which considerably restricted their dissemination.

24 Piñero and Somacarrera (Eds.), *Visions of Canada Approaching the Millennium.* The volume contains the proceedings of the I International Symposium of Canadian Studies held at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid in November 1997.

25 About the history of the Spanish Association, see Marisa Calés and Bernd Dietz (eds.), "X Aniversario de la Asociación Española de Estudios Canadienses," a booklet issued to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the Spanish Association for Canadian Studies in 1998.

26 The current Conservative Federal Government policy seems to be the reduction of funding for the Arts in Canada and consequently, a reduction of funding for "cultural capital" as well, outside Canada. Several Canadian artists, including Margaret Atwood, have complained about this policy. See her article "To be creative is, in fact, Canadian."

manages the Caixa-Canada scholarships, given to Spanish graduate students of high academic achievement interested in studying in Canada.

5. Between the Market and Aesthetic Value: Reviewing in Spanish Literary Supplements

Canadian institutional support undoubtedly planted the seed for English-Canadian literature to develop in Spain. However, it has also grown spontaneously, following random tendencies determined by the tastes and emotional affinities of Spanish readers and, most importantly, by the necessities of the market and the Spanish literary system, in which agents and factors like publishers, the media, cultural and political institutions have much to say. According to Edward Said, the visibility of a literary text in a culture depends on the status of the author, the historical moment, and the conditions of publishing, diffusion and reception (Said, 1983). In this context, publishers and reviewers have a very importantinput. These agents are often unpredictable because their first concern is the not the promotion of the foreign country and its literature but, rather, their focus is on the home market (von Flotow, 2007). As recorded in the 2010 *Libro Blanco de la Traducción Editorial en España*, Spanish publishers have three main priorities: first, best-sellers over classics; second, contemporary, consecrated authors over emerging writers; and third, new genres like self-help books or books on general trends of knowledge (Ministerio de Cultura, 2008).

Reviewers and the literary supplements in newspapers are as important as publishers in the dissemination of Canadian literary works. Although von Flotow's statement about the "considerable weight of the review as a discursive form in Germany" (2008). cannot be extrapolated to the Spanish situation, it is accurate to say that many middle-class Spanish readers use the feuilleton pages or literary supplements to keep abreast of recent publications by the latest authors. According to Fruela Fernández, literary supplements are an interesting area of study because they are situated at the intersection of different fields: the press, which produces a certain version of "reality," always infused with political, ideological and economical tenets; the academic world;[27] authors and their

27 In the highly competitive academic field of English Studies in Spain, there are very few academics who are regular contributors to literary supplements. Several reasons can be found, but one of the main ones is that writing this kind of "general criticism" (in Spanish, *divulgación*) for newspapers or literary supplements is looked down on, and not valued in the periodic assessment of their research to which Spanish university teachers can voluntarily submit themselves every six years.

groups of influence and, of course, publishers, with their own economic interests and their networks of influence in institutions, distributors and, obviously, in the literary supplements themselves (Fernández, 2007). These supplements attract our attention as an appropriate territory in which to explore one of the main obsessions of the humanities today: to analyze how the "value" of artistic works *is created* (Fernández, 2007), a preoccupation which lies behind Bourdieu's seminal notion of "cultural capital."

According to the directors of Spanish literary supplements María Luisa Blanco (former director of *Babelia* [28]), Blanca Berasátegui (*El Cultural*), Fernando Rodríguez Lafuente (*ABC Cultural*) and Llàtzer Moix (*La Vanguardia*), interpretation together with selection, information and criticism are the tasks assumed by literary supplements (Berasategui, 2011). During their debate about the market needs of the book industry and literary value, the four directors take up similar stances, making a clear distinction between the cultural market and what really *has* cultural value. Moix points out that while the multiple products offered by cultural industry cannot be ignored, they must be filtered and ranked according to their aesthetic value.[29]

The literary supplements that these literary critics work for (*Babelia, ABC Cultural*, *El Cultural* and *Culturas*) are published jointly with national newspapers and on the internet. *Babelia* is published by *El País*, which likes to refer to itself as "the global newspaper in Spanish." Ideologically close to the Spanish Socialist party, it belongs to the media group PRISA which owns several publishing houses, like Alfaguara, as well as one of the main radio stations of Spain, SER. *Babelia* often includes reviews of the Canadian authors released by the publishing houses of the group. *ABC Cultural* is published by the more conservative *ABC*, affiliated with the media group Vocento. *El Cultural* is published by *El Mundo*, affiliated with the media group Unidad Editorial, and clearly sympathizes with right-wing political tendencies, tending to be critical of the socialist party. Its journalistic style recalls that of British tabloids,[30] sometimes verging on the sensationalistic approach. *Culturas* is distributed with *La Vanguardia,* a Spanish-language newspaper published by the Grupo Godó. One of the oldest newspapers

28 María Luisa Blanco was fired as the director of *Babelia* in 2004 because of defending critical independence: she allowed the publication of a negative review of a novel by an author published by a press from the group. There are numerous web pages about the case, but see, for example: "El caso Echevarría-*Babelia*."

29 A more recent and extensive account of literary criticism in cultural supplements can be found in a special issue of *Babelia* (26 November, 2011) titled "Radiografía de la crítica literaria." It includes the results of an interview held with 22 critics and directors of literary supplements.

30 This kind of newspapers do not exist in Spain.

in Spain (founded in 1881), it is ideologically situated in the centre and is supportive of Catalan nationalism.

In charge of the filtering and ordering of books for the readers of the literary supplements are reviewers, whom von Flotow defines as professional target culture readers who tell their audiences what to think of a new book in the daily or weekly feuilletons of newspapers (von Flotow, 2007). They can be university professors, well-known writers, people connected in one way or other with the literary world, or simply members of the staff of the newspaper in charge of the cultural section. In fact, as Susan Janssen (1991) notes, reviewers are strongly inclined to stress their own autonomy and the exclusive or decisive role of artistic criteria in their choices and value judgements regarding a literary work. Along the same line of argument, Bourdieu (1993) observes that in reviews not only the status of artistic products and their makers is at issue but also the status of the critics themselves: "Every critical affirmation contains, on the one hand, a recognition of the value of the work which occasions it, which is thus designated as worthy object of legitimate discourse [...], and on the other hand an affirmation of its own legitimacy. According to Linda Hutcheon (2009), book reviewers are taste makers.

The Canadian critic expands Bourdieu's view by saying that book reviewers throughout the centuries have seen themselves as arbiters of public taste who could create an informed and intelligent reading public for the authors of their age. The Spanish critic Ignacio Echevarría suggests, contentiously, that the role of educating readers belongs to the publishers, not to the critics, quoting literary editor Consantino Bértolo to support his statement: "According to Bértolo: 'Contrary to the general belief, critics are not intermediaries between writers and readers. This role corresponds to publishers, whose work consists in making proposals to the reading community or market about those books which - according to their editorial criteria - may satisfy their needs [of the reading community]. The critic analyzes and values these proposals and, therefore, his work situates him between publishers and readers (Echevarría, 2010).

In Spain, unlike what happens in English-speaking countries, literary supplements have a set list of critics who are in charge of the reviews. They also tend to specialize in genres or the literature of a particular country or a certain period. This explains why we shall encounter the same names of critics in the different chapters of this volume: José Antonio Gurpegui writes reviews of English-language fiction for *El Cultural*, María José Obiol reviews of Canadian women writers for *Babelia*, Javier Aparicio Maydeu reviews the work of contemporary fiction writers for *El País*, and A. Sáenz de Zaitegui writes about women poets for *El Cultural*. Throughout this survey of the Spanish reception of Canadian literature, we shall also see how some critics sometimes write a negative review when the writer concerned was barely known in Spain, and then a flattering one once the author has become consecrated.

Literary supplements are a part of the newspaper and, therefore, a review is the result of a specific reading process which attempts to cover newly published texts as pieces of news, worthy of reader consideration and attention. As such, they often have titles that are striking and attract the readers' attention, even using literary devices like ambiguity, puns or deliberately shocking metaphors. In the case of Spanish reviews about Canadian books, we shall show examples of how they often seem less concerned with Canada and its literary context and tradition, than with those aspects that might apply to be useful for the home culture, omitting social, political or cultural facts that might have been relevant for understanding the reviewed text. One of the most hackneyed strategies - if the intention is to consecrate a Canadian writer in the Spanish literary system - is to find a Spanish equivalent for the Canadian writer who is being reviewed, or to compare the author with other British or US counterparts.

In addition, reviews about Canadian literature often include allusions to Canadian stereotypes or illustrations of stereotypical Canadian landscapes. One of the most recurrent of these is to relate Canada and/or its literature and its attractiveness because of its unexplored nature. In a review entitled "Narrativa 'made in Canada,'" which inspired the title of our book, Javier Aparicio Maydeu invents yet another metaphor for the unexplored territory of Canadian literature, that of the "narrative cosmos." In the light of this metaphor, he writes: "A certainly attractive planetary system, fascinating but barely explored, featuring many other names like Robertson Davies ... Nancy Huston... and Elizabeth Smart (Aparicio Maydeu, 2009) Accompanying the article is a picture of a lake with two persons in a canoe and the Rocky Mountains in the background.[31]

Beyond stereotypes, which may be a media technique aimed at capturing wider audiences, reviews often are a loop of imprecise opinions which provide little information to the readers and to the professionals related to the literary world. One of Fernández's complaints is that critics tend to write about the "beauty" and the "style" of a book without taking into account that they are reading a translation (2007). Solid assessments about the quality of the translation are, in fact, very scarce in the corpus of reviews of Canadian literature that we have dealt with. If the translation is valued, there is often no reference to the characteristics which make it successful or subject to improvement. A final feature of reviews is that they can be derivative, a carbon-copy of other reviews,[32] restricting themselves to paraphrasing the plot.

31 Interestingly, the photograph is not very different from the ones published by Canadians themselves in a photo competition organized by *The Globe and Mail* and Facebook for the occasion of Canada Day (2 July, 2010). See Facebook Canada, "Share Your Canada."

32 This practice is less frequent now because of the easy dissemination of information through the internet, but it still happens in local newspapers where the readership is less educated.

As Linda Hutcheon (2009) argues, a preliminary list of expectations about reviewing would probably include the assumption that the process will be fair, impartial, responsible, open and objective and, I would add, also minimally informed. In an interview held with 22 literary critics and directors of literary supplements by *Babelia*, most of them agreed that the practice of criticism should be revised, since it lacks independence, courage, engagement, rigour and depth, which are the qualities of good reviewing (Manrique Sabogal, 2011). Naturally, these qualities are at odds with the commodification of culture currently undertaken by the media corporations who are responsible for the publication of literary supplements. Everyone involved in cultural criticism of some kind – academics included - should be concerned about the kind of reviewing disseminated in these publications because of its potential influence on a "middlebrow" readership which deserves to be taken seriously.

6. Whom and What Has Been Translated?

Over three-hundred English-Canadian books have been published in Spain in the last four decades. Figure 1.1 shows the development of the publication of CanLit books in Spain:

After a slow beginning, the publication of Canadian books underwent its first rise in the late 1970s as a result of the decadence and end of the Franco regime and the subsequent popularity of Leonard Cohen's songs, which led to the publication of some of his collection of poems. After 1986, the predominant

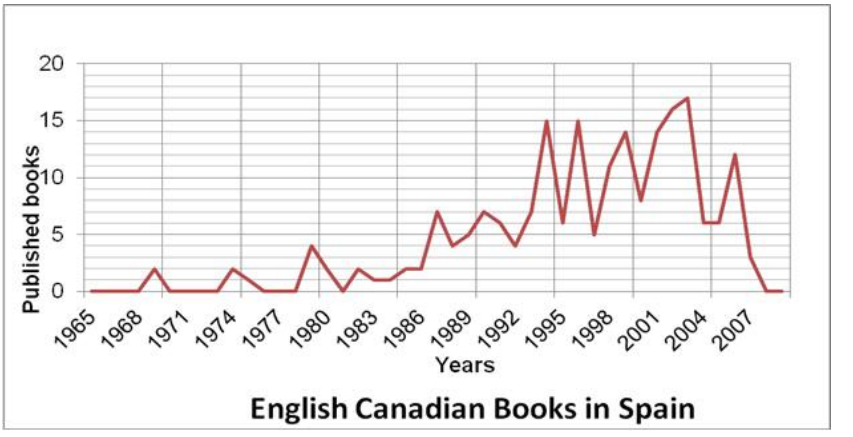

Fig. 1.1 English-Canadian books published in Spain (1966-2008) (Sources: Spanish International Book Number Database and Spanish National Library Catalogue).

trend was a constant increase in the number of publications, reaching its peak in 2003. Following that year, numbers started to decline, reaching their lowest point with the beginning of the current recession in 2008-2009.[33]

If we look at the authors who have been published, some clear trends can be perceived. The first is the predominance of contemporary authors, with the interesting exception of two books by Stephen Leacock, *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town* and *Arcadian Adventures with the Idle Rich*. Leacock's works were translated under the initiative of the literary editor of the publishing house 451 (Javier Azpeitia) in 2007 and 2008 because he had read a translation of Stephen Leacock published in Spain in the forties.[34] The second trend is the prevalence of mainstream authors, like Margaret Atwood, Leonard Cohen and Michael Ondaatje. Next to them, we find emerging literary celebrities with an increasingly prominent profile in Spain and the rest of Europe, like Alberto Manguel.[35] English-Canadian names (Eric Wilson, Pauline Gedge) are also visible in alternative literary genres, like children's literature and romance. With 47 entries in the Spanish ISBN database, Pauline Gedge is the most frequently published Canadian author in Spain, surpassing Atwood, Munro and Ondaatje, even if, ironically, she was born in New Zealand, not in Canada. It is also ironical that her historical romances, which have become a best-selling phenomenon in Spain and which are distributed even in fascicles, are set in ancient Egypt and not in contemporary Canada. She is followed by Margaret Atwood with 25 titles, Alberto Manguel[36] and Eric Wilson in a draw with 17 titles, Leonard Cohen with 12 titles, followed by the rising success of Alice Munro with 10 titles, four of which were reprinted in 2009.

The "top-6 list" of Canadian writers in translation in Spain illustrates that, unlike countries like Germany, Italy and Sweden, who will go for the emerging and more multicultural authors (Rutledge, quoted in Schneider, 2005), Spanish publishers are still very traditional in their choice of writers, and often do not

33 Only 7 and 6 titles were published in those years, respectively. Despite the scarcity of published titles, 2008 and 2009 were very important years for CanLit in Spain because Margaret Atwood received the Prince of Asturias Award in 2008 and 2009 saw the beginning of the "Munro boom," with the reprinting of four of her back titles.

34 This information was provided by Tamara Gil Somoza, the Spanish translator of Leacock's books, on the questionnaire I distributed among members of the Spanish Association of Translators of Books.

35 Alberto Manguel, who is not usually recognized as a Canadian, but as an Argentinian in Spain, is a regular contributor for *El País* and *Babelia*.

36 I am counting only the titles which have been translated from English.

include racialized authors in their catalogues.[37] As Belén Martín discusses in her chapter, a small group of Indo-Canadian writers have been published in Spanish, like Rohinton Mistry, M.G. Vassanji, Anita Rau Badami, Shauna Singh Baldwin and Shani Mootoo. The most successful has been Rohinton Mistry, with six of his titles translated into Spanish and Catalan. His popularity has even led his publisher (Random House Mondadori) to venture to release his short-story collection *Tales from Firozsha Baag* (1987) / *Cuentos de Firozsha Baag* (2007), twenty years after its original Canadian publication, in spite of the limited popularity which short-story collections still have in Spain.

In a study of the transference of the literature of one country into a foreign culture, omissions are sometimes more meaningful than presences. Two notable absences in the catalogues of Spanish publishers are East Asian-Canadian and First Nations writers. Books which occupy such a pivotal position in the Canadian literary system as Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* are still not available in Spain. And, whereas in Germany translations of First Nations writers are scarce, curiously, in spite of the German fascination with "things Indian" (Gruber, 2007), in Spain it is almost impossible to trace publications by First Nations Canadian authors writing in English or in French. Names as representative as Tomson Highway[38] or Thomas King are still not available in Spanish versions. Only two titles by Aboriginal authors have been traced in the Spanish ISBN database: Ruby Slipperjack's *Honour the Sun* (1987) / *Honrar al sol* (2007) published by Takusan Ediciones twenty years after its original publication in Canada,[39] and Joseph Boyden's *Three Day Road* (2005), translated into Spanish and Catalan in 2010. The Spanish version was published by Destino, one of the imprints of Grupo Planeta.

In terms of genre, the most noticeable gap in the transference of English Canadian writing into Spain is English-Canadian drama. As Albert-Reiner Glaap (2000) argues for Germany, the interest in Canadian plays stems from the now universal concerns of the Canadian dramatic texts and their innovative dramaturgical concepts and approaches. Glaap also explains that the cultural section of the Canadian Embassy in Berlin was particularly instrumental in publicizing and promoting Canadian playwrights and plays (Glaap, 2007).

37 During the nineties, a series of articles commissioned from Spanish journalists by the Canadian Mission in Spain, multiculturalism was presented as "the" characteristic of the Canadian society (Bayón, 1990).

38 A Spanish translation of Tomson Highway's *The Rez Sisters* by Pilar Somacarrera will appear in the autumn of 2013, published by the imprint Fifth House, owned by Highway's Canadian publisher Fitzhenry & Whiteside.

39 It was Kathleen Firth, a professor of Canadian literature at the University of Barcelona, who took the initiative of proposing this book for translation to the publisher.

Presumably, the same characteristics which have captured Germans would make English-Canadian playwrights attractive to Spanish audiences, but academic impulse and institutional support similar to those in Germany has not occurred in Spain yet. In fact, the export and translation of theatre is affected by many more problems than those that confront books of fiction (von Flotow, 2008). These include accessibility and information, royalties and performance, publication, even film, CD and DVD rights. There are very few publishing houses in Spain which specialise in drama, and often plays have to be published in theatre journals which are not always able or willing to pay the rights of Canadian authors who, though they may be considered novelties here, are well-known and established in Canada.

Albeit beyond the scope of this study, the case of certain Quebecois playwrights has been an exception in the transference of Canadian drama into the Spanish cultural system, and I will deal with it briefly because of the great impact it has had –and still has- on the Spanish theatre scene. Three of Michel Tremblay's plays - *Albertine en Cinq Temps*, *Les Belles Soeurs* and *Encore une fois, si vous permettez* (*For the Pleasure of Seeing her Again*)- have been translated and performed in Spanish theatres, although only the last two have been exploited commercially in conventional stages: *Les Belles Soeurs*/*Las Cuñadas* launched in the Teatro Español[40] in the spring of 2008, and *For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again*, which toured Spain in 2009- 2010 and continued to be performed until the fall of 2011. The keys to the success of this play can be traced through the popularity of its protagonist Miguel Ángel Solá, an Argentinian actor who has often appeared in television series in Spain, and in the emotional identification of Spanish audiences with the content of the play, a tribute to Tremblay's dead mother.[41]

Equally impressive, though perhaps less surprising because of his unique cross-cultural and global appeal, has been the success of Robert Lepage.[42]

40 "Albertine en cinq temps"/"Albertina en cinco tiempos" was translated by Rosa de Diego and published in the Theatre Journal ADE Teatro (July-September 2001). It was performed in a dramatized reading at the Casa de América with the financial assistance of the Spanish Association for Canadian Studies. The Teatro Español is a public theatre owned by the Spanish Ministry of Culture which publishes the plays it performs in a collection titled "Cuadernos del Teatro Español." The Spanish version of *Les Belles Soeurs* was published in this series in June, 2008. A Catalan version (*Les Cunyades*) had been published by Edicions Bromera in 1998.

41 The promotional blurb for the play published in the free magazine *Teatros* distributed in Madrid theatres is headed by the phrase "A las madres..."/"Dedicated to the Mothers" ("Por el placer de volver a verla," 2011).

42 It should be pointed out, however, that Robert Lepage's plays have always been performed in their original versions in Spain, albeit including some scenes in Spanish for his Spanish-speaking audiences.

Constantly praised for "his innovative and transgressive stage techniques" (Lafont and Torres, 2009). Lepage's dramatic productions have been performed almost every year at the Festival de Otoño, a festival of the international stage arts organized every fall by the cultural department of the autonomous government in Madrid. This kind of participation in international festivals and global touring is very typical of Lepage's productions. In the case of his Spanish tours a key institutional contact has been former director of the Festival de Otoño, Pilar Yzaguirre.

7. Translators' Corner

As mentioned in the second section of this chapter, the translator's role in the process of transferring a foreign literature has traditionally been neglected. In keeping with this line of thought, Peter Bush and Susan Bassnett (2006) state that with the written text, read individually, or the performed play, seen by an audience, the illusion of the unmediated word has traditionally been maintained. Given the hardships of the profession of translator (lack of social recognition, low rates of renumeration and unacceptable working conditions which include sometimes translating without a legal contract, among other abusive practices), why do translators continue to translate? Ramón Sánchez Lijarralde (2010), translator and former President of ACEtt (Spanish Association of Literary Translators) responds by declaring that he is involved in translation because of literature, because translation has been his main way of participating in it. Through a recent interview with five Spanish translators, the cultural journalist Sergi Doria (2012) has shown the impact of the economical recession affecting the Spanish publishing scene on the crucial but often meagrely paid work of literary translators.

The following information about Spanish translators and their work has been obtained from a survey distributed among translators of English-Canadian literature through the list of the Spanish Association of Literary Translators. [43] The number of responses received (seven) represent a very small sample which, clearly, cannot be taken as representative of the large corpus of translations available, but nevertheless reveal some interesting data. First of all, six out of seven of the translators who answered the questionnaire were women living in Barcelona, which confirms the trend described in the *Libro Blanco de la*

43 My thanks go to Roser Berdagué, Concha Cardeñoso, Carmen Francí, Tamara Gil Somoza, Magdalena Palmer, Mónica Rubio and Dolors Udina for kindly responding to the questionnaire.

traducción editorial en España 2010 ("Official document on literary translation") that the majority of literary translators who have joined the profession in the last seven years are young women living in Catalonia holding a university degree, and which indicates a feminization and professionalization of the translation activity (Ministerio de Cultura, 2008). Three of these women translators (Roser Berdagué, Mónica Rubio and Concha Cardeñoso) had read and enjoyed Canadian authors (Margaret Laurence, Alice Munro and Margaret Atwood) before they started their translations.

The Spanish translators who responded to my questions had various opinions about how publishers dealt with the corrections once they had sent in their final version. As Bassnett and Bush (2006) observe, translators have to negotiate with editors good and bad; both have to transform imaginatively images, metaphors or points in grammar that pass uneasily from one language into another. Whereas one of the interviewed translators voiced her frustration about how her version was changed without her consent, another told about an excellent collaboration with her proof-reader. In some cases, the title chosen for the Spanish version by the translator was changed by the publisher without consultation, presumably for commercial purposes. One striking case is that of the translation of Neil Bissoondath's *The Soul of All Great Designs* as *Falsas Identidades* ("False Identities"), a title chosen by the publisher after the translator (Mónica Rubio) had carefully proposed of another title which was closer to the meaning of the original.[44]

The difficulties encountered during the process of translation naturally vary from author to author. Tamara Gil had to undertake an impressive task of documentation to translate Stephen Leacock into Spanish. She also had to struggle to bridge the distance between the world portrayed by Leacock and that of the Spanish contemporary reader. Magdalena Palmer, the translator of *Late Nights on Air* by Elizabeth Hay, had difficulties with some Canadian place names and the names of plants and animals in the area around Yellowknife where the novel is set. The Canadian origins of Coupland were irrelevant for Carmen Francí, translator of *Microserfs* because the novel is set in California. However, she had problems in reproducing the informal register of the novel, as well as its technological language, including two pages written in computer binary code which she had to translate into English with the help of a computer expert, then into Spanish and, finally, back into the computer binary code. Dolors Udina, translator of more than one-hundred books, including Atwood's *The Blind Assassin* into Spanish, refers to the difficulties she encountered transferring "the

44 Mónica Rubio had provisionally proposed "El alma de los grandes diseños" ("The Soul of Great Designs"), which is more faithful to th meaning of the original title and to its sonority. However, the word *diseño* in Spanish does not have the double meaning of *design* in English, as "purpose" and "artistic pattern."

simplicity of Munro's style" into Catalan. She confesses that *Too Much Happiness* is one of the books whose translation has required the most revisions precisely because of the apparently "easy" style of the original.

Translating Margaret Atwood also poses special challenges for translators. The Catalan translator Roser Berdagué, who rendered *Cat's Eye* into Catalan, and highly values Atwood as a writer, remarks that she is a writer with a most personal style, "of superior quality to the average," which it is necessary to reproduce as faithfully as possible. The difficulties become naturally greater when the challenge is to translate her poetry. According to Luis Marigómez (2000), translator of her poetry collection *Interlunar* into Spanish, poetry allows Atwood an immediacy that has to do with photography. Her poems are moments of illumination, which sometimes are developed into novels. His personal technique when translating Atwood's poems – a task which he has thoroughly enjoyed - is to allow the reader to *see* the poem at a first reading, which will require further readings in order to fully appreciate its worth (Marigómez, 2000).

I also have had the privilege of translating Atwood's poetry into Spanish and share in her other translators' enjoyment of the experience. My guiding principle has been that suggested by the Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset (1937) in his essay about translation: "It is only when we force the reader from his linguistic habits and oblige him to move within those of the author that there is actually translation." I have thus tried to bring the Spanish reader to Atwood's voice. Atwood writes in free verse and her poems present a bareness and immediacy of expression which is almost laconic and definitely alien to the more verbose nature of the Spanish language.[45] However, in *The Door*, Atwood evokes the regular rhythms of traditional English poetry and rhymes are used for comic effects. These aspects had to be reproduced in my translation. I also strived to be respectful of Atwood's punctuation, especially her use of the hyphen, which recalls that of other North American poets like Emily Dickinson and Adrienne Rich (Somacarrera, 2008).

Given that a translator is the agent of the literary system that gets the deepest knowledge of a literary text – even more than readers or even critics - the fact that all the interviewed translators admit as to having had much intellectual pleasure in translating CanLit authors must be indicative of the quality of Canadian writers. As for the result of these translators' work, it remains an object for future studies. But, from my knowledge of their translations and the assessment which has been published about them in reviews, most of them have been successful in bridging the linguistic and cultural gaps between the CanLit texts and the Spanish reader.

45 For a fuller account of the difficulties I encountered and the techniques I used when translating Atwood's poetry collection *Power Politics*, see Somacarrera (2005).

8. English-Canadian Poetry in Translation in Spain

As the Spanish poet, translator and publisher of poetry Jesús Munárriz points out, poetry seems to have a paradoxical status in Spain. [46] Munárriz explains his point as follows: "What happens with poetry is a very strange thing. There are very few poetry books in bookstores, but there are lots of prizes, and thousands of internet pages devoted to it" ("La poesía disfruta de un 'boom,'" 2011). However, despite the poetic revival on the internet, the vitality of poetry prizes, poetry festivals and new poets, the genre suffers from the same problem as the rest of the literary sector of the Spanish book industry: lack of readers ("La poesía de hoy", 2009). The publication of poetry books in Spain remains in the hands of a few select, small, independent publishers, among which I will highlight Hiperión (Munarriz's publishing house), Bartleby, Visor and Pre-Textos because they have published most of the available titles of Anglo-Canadian poets.

In Spain, academics began reading Canadian poetry from the vantage point of Northrop Frye's *The Bush Garden* and Margaret Atwood's *Survival,* two works which, now being over 40 years old, seem somewhat dated in the context of the current "urban turn" in Canadian Studies. In the introduction to his 1985 anthology of English- Canadian poetry, Bernd Dietz (1985) writes that, as would happen with any young literature, one of its most obvious problems is the parochial exaltation of its own literary deficits. As for literary influences, Jordi Doce (2003) more recently argues that Canadian poetry is affected by the fractures and tensions of modernism, which "they could access very soon, thanks to the extraordinary vitality of their US colleagues." The point that can be elicited from all these comments about Canadian poetry is that the Spanish literary establishment (critics and academics) have traditionally considered Canadian poetry as "young" (in spite of the age of some of some of its most significant practitioners) and "derivative" and, therefore, not worth publishing, which could partly explain why so few books by English-Canadian poets have been published in Spain.

The list of English-Canadian poets who have been published is reduced to only twenty titles by seven authors, all of them mainstream,[47] and only

46 Without looking further into the past, we can recall the "Generación del 98" and "Generación del 27," some of whose members were among the most outstanding poets of the twentieth century, like Antonio Machado and Federico García Lorca.

47 Once again, racialized and First Nation writers are not in the catalogue of published poets, a fact which mirrors the same absence in the Canadian literarysystem.

one bilingual anthology of poetry in book form published in 1985 selected, translated and with an introduction by Bernd Dietz.[48] The only other Spanish anthology of Canadian poetry in English in translation I have been able to trace is the one compiled and translated by Fruela Fernández, "Pequeña antología canadiense,"/ "Little Canadian Anthology," a contribution to the Asturian literary journal *Clarín* in 2001. In his introduction, Fernández draws on the usual stereotypes about the young and "unknown" nature of Canadian literature. In fact, the journal describes itself as "a journal of new literature." It contains eleven poems by Earle Birney, Ralph Gustafson, Louis Dudek, Raymond Souster, Elizabeth Brewster, Pat Lowther, Margaret Atwood and Joe Rosenblatt. The "youth" and "newness" of most of these poets is more than questionable: Birney and Gustafson were born in the first decade of the last century and died in the 1990's. Dudek lived from 1918 until 2001, and even Atwood, one of the youngest in the list, is now seventy-three years old. No new names of Canadian poets have been added to the Spanish list since the publication of Anne Carson's first book in 2007. Even the publication of the rest of Atwood's poetic titles is uncertain in the light of the aforementioned closure of the former version of the imprint Bruguera led by Ana María Moix and its recent reorientation as a more commercial venture.

Browsing through the list of the English-Canadian verse translated into Spanish, it is easy to perceive a tendency to select writers who are novelists as well as poets, and whose novels had been published earlier than their poetry collections. Margaret Atwood, Anne Michaels and Michael Ondaatje fit this category. Anne Michaels' first novel, *Fugitive Pieces*, was published in Spain in 1995, and the first Spanish translation of her poetry, *The Weight of Oranges/El peso de las naranjas*, appeared in 2001 followed by *Skin Divers/Buceadores de la piel* in 2003, both published by Bartleby. In the case of Ondaatje, introduced through the translation of *The English Patient* in 1995, his poetry was transferred into Spain in 2000 thanks to the voice of the poet and translator Justo Navarro. The project was undertaken by Ediciones Hiperión, who also published *Power Politics/Juegos de poder* by Margaret Atwood that year. Both poetry collections were published with the aid of the International Translation Programme of the Canada Council.

48 Dietz includes his own translation of the following Canadian poets in his anthology: Earle Birney, Irving Layton, Al Purdy, Raymond Souster, James Reaney, Phyllis Webb, Alden Nowlan, Joe Rosenblatt, Leonard Cohen, Joy Kogawa, George Bowering, John Newlove, Patrick Lane, Margaret Atwood, bill bissett, Gwendolyn MacEwen, David Solway, Michael Ondaatje, Seymour Mayne, Pier Giorgio Di Cicco, Mary Di Michele, Robyn Sarah, David Satherley, Susan Musgrove, Kevin Irie. They all gave permission to publish the poems at no cost.

Hiperión has also published three other Canadian poets: an anthology of Irving Layton's poetry titled *Love Poems / Poemas de amor* (1983), *As Close as We came/Lo más cerca que estuvimos* by Barry Callaghan (1989), and *The Raven Steals the Light/ Cuentos del cuervo* (1998) by Robert Bringhurst and Bill Reid. Jesús Munárriz, director of Hiperión, may have been influenced by Bernd Dietz in his decision to publish Canadian poets. In his own anthology of Canadian poetry, Dietz (1985) hails Layton as "the most influential Canadian poet of the century." Robert Bringhurst, also a writer of prose and non-fiction, as well as a translator of Haida myths, has had a fruitful connection to the Centre of Canadian Studies of the University of Laguna, which he has visited several times, and where he has also been interviewed for the *Revista Española de Estudios Canadienses* (Llarena, 1997). The circumstances of the publication of Layton's and Bringhurst's poetry illustrate the vital role which the networking between academics and publishers has had in the dissemination of Canadian poetry in Spain.

In the next section, I will briefly examine the different circumstances which have conditioned the translation and reception of three Canadian poets (Leonard Cohen, Margaret Atwood and Anne Carson) in Spain, in the order in which their works have been published in the country. If academic or institutional support was behind the publication of Layton's, Bringhurst's and Atwood's poetry, Leonard Cohen started to be published as a result of social and political changes in Spain. Dietz (1985) warns the reader in the introduction to his anthology: "to speak about Leonard Cohen in Spain implies reminding fans of his music that he is a profoundly lyric poet in the traditional manner of his Elizabethan precursors." Cohen's books entered Spain after his music in a historical moment – the years immediately preceding and following Franco's death - when the country was receptive for his poetic message of erotic and political freedom. Another factor which has influenced Cohen's success among Spanish audiences is that he has often acknowledged Federico García Lorca as one of his favourite poets. He named his daughter Lorca, in homage to the Spanish poet, and his song "Take this Waltz" is a transformation of Lorca's poem "Little Viennese Waltz" into a song of intense and dark sexuality (Manzano, 1989).

As Alberto Manzano, translator and friend of Cohen, recounts, it all began in 1974, when Cohen himself gave concerts in Madrid and Barcelona during the last throes of the Franco regime (Manzano, 2007). In less than a year, two poetry books and two novels were published: *Selected Poems* and *The Energy of Slaves;* [49] and *Beautiful Losers* and *The Favourite Game*.[50] In 1974,

49 *Selected Poems* was translated by Jorge Ferrer-Vidal for publisher Plaza y Janés in 1974 and *The Energy of Slaves* was translated by Antonio Resines for Visor in 1974.

50 *The Favourite Game* was translated by Susan Hendry and Blanca Tera, (Fundamentos, 1974) and *Beautiful Losers* by Javier Sainz and Susan Hendry (Fundamentos, 1975).

Cohen's music became even better known in Spain because his album *Songs of Leonard Cohen* became the soundtrack of the film *McCabe and Mrs Miller* (translated in Spain as "Los vividores") by Robert Altman. Even a translation of Leonard Cohen's biography in French (Vassal, 1974) was published. *Let us Compare Mythologies*, published for the first time in 1979 and subsequently reprinted in 2002 and 2007 by Visor. *Flowers for Hitler* (1981), *Parasites of Heaven* (1982), *Death of a Lady's Man* (1983) and *The Energy of Slaves* (1988) were also published by Visor. Alberto Manzano was in charge of the Spanish version of *The Spice Box of Earth* in 1999 and of most of Cohen's songs for a series of translations of pop songs published for the first time in 1979, followed by a sequel ten years later.[51] Cohen has been fortunate to have been rewritten in Spanish by the same translators, most prominently Antonio Resines and Alberto Manzano, the latter having recently published a book about Leonard Cohen in Spain. Having been awarded the Prince of Asturias Award for Letters in 2011, we may speculate that Cohen's works will continue to be disseminated in Spain.[52]

Next to Leonard Cohen, whose verse has become known in Spain thanks to the popularity of his music, the Spanish literary system has also imported the poetry of Anne Carson, which has reached a smaller and more select group of readers. Her books *The Beauty of the Husband/ La belleza del marido* (Lumen, 2003)- most probably transferred into Spain as a side-effect of her receiving the T.S. Eliot Prize in 2002 - and *Men Off Hours/Hombres en sus horas libres* (Pre-Textos, 2007) have been translated into Spanish by two prestigious translators, Ana Becciu and Jordi Doce, who are poets themselves. Reviews of Carson in the conventional press do not abound, even if Alberto Manguel (2010) recommended her as one of his favourite writers in *Babelia*. In Spain, it is in web pages specializing in poetry that she has received the attention she deserves. The blog "La manera de recogerse el pelo" ("The way to pin up your hair") which is related to a book titled *Generación Blogger* (Bartleby, 2010), a collection of women's poetry published in blogs, includes a poem from *The Beauty of the Husband* translated by the Argentinian poet Ana Becciu. *The Beauty of the Husband* is classified as an "indispensable book" by

51 See Leonard Cohen, *Canciones*, (1979) which has been reprinted eight times, the last one in 2008; and Leonard Cohen, *Canciones. Volumen 2* (1989, reprinted three times, both published by Fundamentos.

52 At the end of 2011, clearly because of the commercial impact of the Award, two more books by Cohen appeared in Spain: *A mil besos de profundidad. Canciones y poemas(1956-1978/1979-2006) / A Thousand Kisses Deep: Songs and Poems*, and *El libro de la misericordia / The Book of Mercy*, both published by Visor and translated by Alberto Manzano.

writer Alberto Infante in his blog *albertoinfante.es* Some Spanish readers who subscribe to a conventional notion of poetry may be discouraged because her poetry has been described as not having "a lyrical sense" (Moga, 2008). Critics writing about Carson on the web particularly value the way that the Canadian poet breaks the conventions of form and genre by interweaving her poems with essays, quotations, fragments of letters and typographical games. Another additional difficulty in Carson's poetry resides in her numerous intertextual allusions, many of them coming from classical literatures, which have disappeared from the Spanish high-school curricula. Given the already reduced circle of poetry readers in Spain and the linguistic and cultural challenges posed by Carson's lyrical work, her books will probably appeal to a very select and minority readership and, therefore, we may expect that their publication will be discontinued.

Despite her position as an author who has won the Prince of Asturias Award for Letters in 2008, Atwood's poetry also needs to be reappraised in the Spanish literary system (Somacarrera, 2005). The extent to which her poems –and essays- has been overshadowed by her novels has been recognised by cultural journalists and critics (Moix, 2008; Somacarrera, 2008). *Power Politics* was finally published in Spain in 2000, almost twenty years after its original publication in 1971, which is revealing of the delayed penetration of feminist ideologies in Spain, in spite of the fact that the poems clearly mean much more beyond their possible feminist content (García, 2001). However, other critics, mainly male ones, argued that during the sixties her "militant feminism" resulted in her poetry being overvalued (Dietz, 1985). Echoing Dietz, Doce (2003) claims that "her profile as a poet has been diluted by her work as a novelist and the possessive and reducive readings of a certain undercurrent of feminist criticism."

However, beyond her alleged feminism or her position as a novelist, some of her Spanish critics, and not only the male ones, are to blame for her fragile reputation as a poet in our country. In a bizarre review of *The Door*, A. (Ainhoa) Sáenz de Zaitegui, who is usually in charge of reviewing Atwood's poetry for *El cultural*, defines her as the Canadian-feminist-protoecologist-political activist, a fiction narrator version of Henry David Thoreau (Sáenz de Zaitegui, 2009). Even more disturbing than this anachronistic comparison with the nineteenth-century American author is the ambiguous tone of the review. Sáenz de Zaitegui does not seem to value Atwood as a poet but instead of providing solid reasons for her judgement, her evaluation verges on the sensationalist,. In her piece about *True Stories*, published only a year later, this critic continued her litany of epithets for Atwood: "Iron Lady," "goddess of possible worlds," "*Atwood Rainbow Warrior*," and "*saint Margaret of our feminisms*" (Sáenz de Zaitegui, 2010). Referring to the collection as "a book of the old times" because it was originally published in 1981, the review does not situate the poems in

Margaret Atwood's *oeuvre* or place them in their Canadian or North American literary context.

Once again, it is in the blogs of readers outside the literary system that we find some the most informed appreciations about Margaret Atwood's poetry. Reviewing *The Door* in his blog, Francisco Casoledo (2009), a lawyer and amateur writer, does what most professional critics fail to do, establishing connections between Atwood's poetry and her prose fiction and locating her main themes and preoccupations - her uneasy contemplation of nature and her interest in political and gender issues. "Amateur" readers and Atwood aficionados in their blogs and web pages are more likely to promote Atwood's poetry than professional critics, but as we can infer from Casoledo's blog, they are often much more discerning about her work than the professional reviewers. But while amateurs have the option and leisure to read and write about the writers they enjoy, professional critics are constrained by the needs of media corporations which demand, almost every week, that they review a new book which has already been selected for them, and that they do it in ways that capture the largest possible readership for the book they are dealing with. The squalid panorama of the Canadian poetry in translation may be attributed to this lack of informed, responsible, and objective reviews which has possibly had an impact on publishers selecting a Canadian poet or poetry book for translation, or on readers deciding to buy them.

Slowly but steadily, English-Canadian literature is taking off outside the academic circles and starting to have a visibility in Spain, a country which cannot boast of a very high index of readership or a marked inclination for sophisticated literature. However, Canadian writers are gradually penetrating the journalistic media (print and online) and, most importantly, the blogging and social network spheres are currently disseminating them. This is due, in part, to the joint efforts of several institutions and individuals, but also due to the favourable conditions of the Spanish target market which has promoted the rewriting and rereading of many English-Canadian texts through translation in the last twenty years. We can no longer ignore the fact that in our consumer societies literary texts are commodities like any other goods and, as such, they are subject to market needs. It is precisely these market concerns, rather than institutional or literary interests, which capture direct the attention of the publishers and reviewers who are concerned with CanLit in Spain.

Chapter 2

Cosmopolitans at Home: the Spanishness of Canadian Women Writers

Nieves Pascual

1. Translation Theories and Cosmopolitanism

In 1999, during the peak of institutional collaboration in the dissemination of Canadian writing in Spain, the Canadian Embassy, the Spanish Association for Canadian Studies and the prestigious Madrid cultural centre Círculo de Bellas Artes jointly organized a series of readings by Canadian Women Writers titled *Escritoras canadienses de fin de siglo* ("Canadian Women Writers of the Turn of the Century"). An invitation card was issued for each of the invited writers (Margaret Atwood, Mavis Gallant, Nicole Brossard, Ann-Marie MacDonald and Anne Michaels), for which several Spanish Canadianists were asked to write a text, while all featured a common blurb written by Bernd Dietz, professor of Canadian literature and founder of the Spanish Association for Canadian Studies (Fig. 2.1):

Dietz presented the cycle in his text[53] in the following terms: "Can anybody still question that it is the time of Canadian women writers? At the moment, an attentive, enthusiastic and international reading public has succumbed to a singular constellation of narrative talent. Naturally, Spain is no exception and their novels regularly see the light in prestigious publishing houses." This text is symptomatic of the way English-Canadian literature has been presented in Spain: as an international, sophisticated, cosmopolitan, and "avant-garde" cultural artifact which is assimilated by the target or home culture, whose cosmopolitanism in turn enables reception of the newness of this foreign writing.

According to Homi K. Bhabha (1994), this newness enters the world through translation, a crucial and often neglected site for cultural production even if sometimes this "newness" goes unnoticed. This economy of entering spaces invites us to think of translation as a threshold, "the threshold of all reading-writing" (Derrida, 2004). Thresholds demand guardians and the guardian of translation must carry newness across (*translate* comes from the Latin *trans+ latus*:

53 See a Spanish translation by Pilar Somacarrera in the Appendix

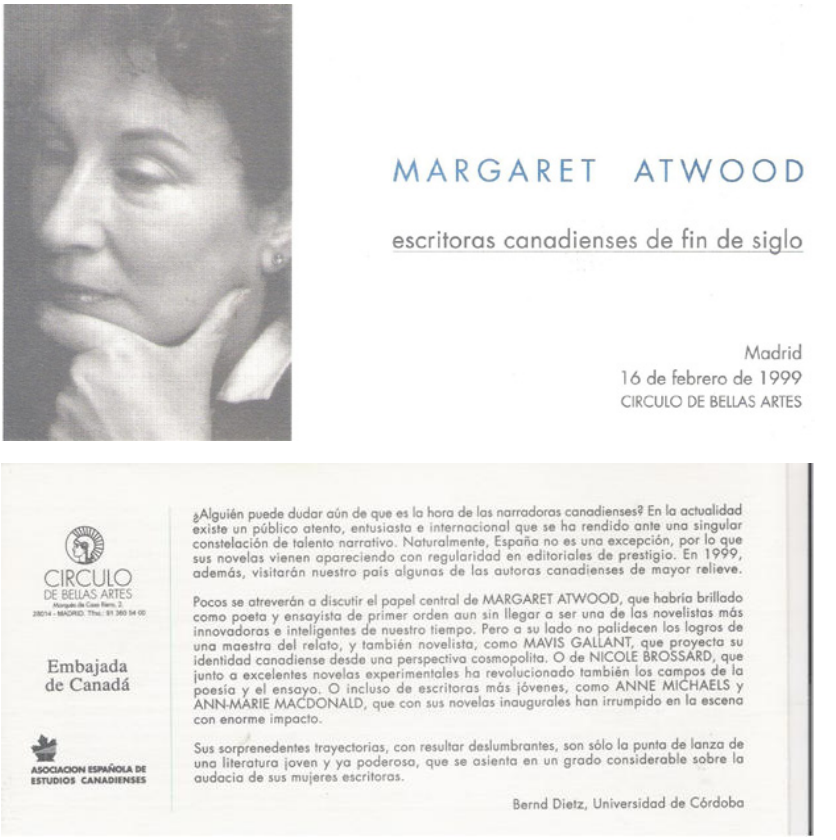

Fig. 2.1 Invitation card for Margaret Atwood at the Canadian Women Writers of the Turn of the Century reading series (February 16, 1999)

carried across). In physiology and psychology threshold can also mean the limit below which a stimulus is not perceptible or does not evoke a response (Barber, 2004). The translator's gaze must be capable of overreaching this limit, in the sense of possessing the ability, and, most importantly, the will to perceive.

Significantly, in Derrida's view translation is an act of generosity, or, in his words, "admiring love" (2004). In the understanding that love is both admiring - at least the erotic love that he has in mind - as well as responsible, Derrida (2004) writes about the translator's "beautiful and terrifying responsibility" and "his insolvent duty and debt." Since the word "responsibility" comes from *responsum*, which means "a reply" to the call of the Other, the duty of love is to respond to the Other's call to be transferred into the new culture. This is the

beautiful part of the translator's responsibility. When Derrida (2004), alluding to Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, says that translation's debt is "Much like what is owed to Shylock, insolvency itself," he implies that the debt is insolvent because there are linguistic limits insurmountable by translation, and the translation between flesh and money is impossible. I am not interested in the hackneyed debate on the impossible possibility of translation. What matters to me is that Derrida's reference to Shylock the Jew exhibits translation as "stigmata of suffering" (2004). This is the terrifying part of the translator's work because what is at stake is the notion that translation foments violence, which takes the form of abuse, self-abnegation and abrasion of the bodies of text and translator alike.

Theorists of translation studies have often resorted to metaphors that connote this notion of violence. The concept of abuse, to start with, is the cornerstone of Lawrence Venuti's theory. In *Rethinking Translation* he demands that translation be dominated by "abusive fidelity" - fidelity to the tone of the source text and abusive of the literary norms of the target language - thereby allowing more elements of the foreign to enter the family of the target culture (Venuti, 1992). He calls upon translators to apply "resistant strategies" that evoke a sense of the foreign by sending the reader abroad instead of using domesticating ones (Venuti, 1992).

For Gayatri Spivak (2004), abuse gives way to self-abnegation as she confesses that during translation she surrenders to the control of the text, that is, she turns the self into something like the other and gives up her own self, "los[ing] [her] boundaries" in the process. A translation must have a sense of the rhetoricity of the original (Spivak, 2004). Logic moves from word to word, making clear connections but the translator must also attend to the rhetoric, which interrupts the process of making meaning, "breaking the surface in not necessarily connected ways" (Spivak, 2004).

Carol Maier in "Translation, *Dépaysement*, and Their Figuration" (2002) shifts the accent away from surrender into friction: "when translation occurs as fully as possible, the translator not only conveys or communicates a 'message' but may also experience the ambivalence, the absence of ease, and even the abrasion that are no doubt inherent in any *dépaysement*" or in any experience of exile. Translators must become "rootless cosmopolites" (Maier, 2002), implying that translators must free themselves from national attachments so as to be faithful to foreign cultures. Apparently, it is this rootless cosmopolitan commitment that provides the foundation of translation, as if cosmopolitanism were the very condition of translation. These three theoreticians hold that the process of translation is fully accomplished when translators separate themselves from their own *pays*, remove themselves from their home texts, and mentally estrange themselves from themselves by letting themselves be eroded by the abuse, abnegation and abrasiveness of the foreign.

But, can one really uproot oneself? "Does the human self manifest any positive tendency in its structure, even an ambivalent one, to rise above its own worlds, its 'personalized space' to inhabit the other world?" asks Siby K. George (2010). Departing from a phenomenological vantage point, George, like Heidegger, leans toward the need of a sense of place. In this critic's view, our cultural proximities shape our notion of the self (George, 2010); but he combines this perspective, however, with the Lévinasian understanding of identity as porous and transcendent (versus solid and substantive), moving "from a world that is familiar to us . . . toward a yonder" (George, 2010). It is precisely this movement towards this yonder place that challenges the at-homeness of the subject. George (2010) draws on Lévinas's idea of integrating the Other in the self when he suggests that to be oneself "is to be like a stranger, hunted down even in one's home, contested in one's own identity." "For Lévinas," George (2010) continues, "to be oneself is to be challenged by the other in one's very identity," to be foreign to oneself. The crucial point here is that when S.K. George (2004) says that "there is a way of 'living at home abroad or abroad at home'" and that "there certainly can be an at-homeness about not being at home anywhere," he means that rootedness and participation in the cosmopolitan ethos are not mutually exclusive. He adds that "it is always from the concrete [from what belongs to our immediate experience] that universality arises." (George, 2010).

The fundamental problem, however, is that S.K. George's theoretical stance is different from material reality, as he emphasizes himself: "Reality, however, is different: totality is a myth, the ultimate utopia which sustains the little and the non-central" (2010). The fact, as he acknowledges, is that the universal arises from the concrete but basically in the sense, I should add, that the concrete is being universalized; that is, the concrete familiar is being taken as the universal criterion of value. Judith Butler (2004) poses the following question: "At what cost do I establish the familiar as the criterion for valuing others?" The cost is universalism, the abstract cousin of cosmopolitanism (Anderson, 1999). Defined by Amanda Anderson (1999) as the project that holds that knowledge of the concrete is true and objective, universalism enacts "forms of privilege or exclusion" of ideas and aspects of other distant cultures that challenge that knowledge. This unavoidably results in a universalism that is not universal: "No true universalism can be constructed without recognizing that there is a diversity of universals on which analyses are based, and that these are often in fact quite particular -not universals at all, but rather interpretations devised for particular historical and conceptual situations. These are less universals, and more in the nature of arguments for the universal (Pollock *et al.*, 2002). The non-universal character of universalism leads Sheldon Pollock *et al.* (2002) to propose "that cosmopolitanism be considered in the plural, as cosmopolitanisms." My title "Cosmopolitans at home" refers to the cosmopolitanism that is unchallenged by the foreign and affirms sameness. It refers to the cosmopolitan whose obligation

to "a universal norm is tethered to a tenacious [...] provincialism in matters of cultural judgment and recognition" (Pollock *et al.*, 2002). This universalist cosmopolitanism is violent too in the sense that it presupposes the *dépaysement* of the source culture, but I am running too far ahead of my argument.

My focus in this essay is not on the translated text itself, but on the paratexts that surround translation and which aim at disseminating the Canadian literary works of Margaret Laurence, Carol Shields, Elizabeth Smart, Mavis Gallant and Anne Michaels in Spain. Gérard Genette (1997) defines *paratext* as "what enables a text to become a book and to be offered as such to its readers. More than a boundary or a sealed border, the paratext is, rather, a threshold, - a word Borges used a propos of a preface- a 'vestibule' that offers the world at large the possibility of either stepping inside or turning back."[54] In other words, a paratext is the space where a textual product is public-ated. In the case at hand, the word "vestibule," which designates an anteroom, is more accurate than threshold, for the translated text is already a book when it is offered to its readers. Their decision to pass into the reading room once again depends on whether the paratext transfers the intensity of textual difference.

In examining these paratexts that make public the Canadian cultural product in Spain, I ask two questions: What is cosmopolitan in the Spanish literary field? How does a Canadian work become home in Spain? I will be drawing upon Bourdieu's work in answering these questions. The French sociologist defines symbolic capital as the degree of "prestige, celebrity, consecration or honour" a cultural artifact accumulates (quoted in Johnson, 1993), while he posits that cultural capital is the appreciation for or empathy towards other cultural products and "concerns forms of cultural knowledge, competences or dispositions." It is difficult not to read cultural capital in terms of the degree of cosmopolitanism an artifact accumulates. I will argue (a) that the symbolic capital of a Canadian literary work in Spain depends on the accumulation of cosmopolitanism; (b) that Canada is translated by and into Spanish culture as a cosmopolitan culture; and (c) that it is through cosmopolitanism that the work's specificity is denied and ours is confirmed.

First, in order to arrive at the essence of literary cosmopolitanism in Spain, I will examine the presses that publish texts by Canadian women writers by analyzing their editorial policies, which define the term cosmopolitan and produce reception patterns. Next, I will look at reviews by professional critics that appear in newspapers and on the internet, as well as jacket-blurbs. These will

54 In his book *Paratexts* Genette also includes the literarys prize in the category of "factual" paratexts, but he leaves it unexamined and focuses on the "peritext" and "epitex," the features produced by the publisher and author of a text.

more specifically affirm and consolidate legitimate discourse about Canadian cosmopolitanism. A final remark is appropriate on the complicated issue of the definition of terms. Having in mind the endless efforts to define cosmopolitanism and to differentiate cosmopolitanism, globalization, internationalism, pluralism, eclecticism, transversalism, and related terms from one another, and given their changing usage at different times and in different places, I have decided not to distinguish among them, but to take cosmopolitanism as a more comprehensive term including all the imaginable components belonging to the domain of the foreign.

2. The Cosmopolitanism of Spanish Publishing Houses

James H. Kavanagh (1990) writes that "the primary point of ideology, that which defines its social function, is not to 'give knowledge' or make an accurate 'copy' of something, but to constitute, adjust, and/or transform social subjects. The distinctive effect of ideology is not theoretical but pragmatic, to enable various social subjects to feel at home, and to act (or not act), within the limits of a given social project." If Kavanagh is correct and ideology makes one feel at home, then it is possible to speak of an ideology of cosmopolitanism. If the aim of ideology is not to abuse fidelity, but to cultivate fidelity to one's home, ideology certainly reveals affinities with the project of universalist cosmopolitanism defined above. Still, it is important to know which ideologies produce the feeling of home or, put differently, which ideologies produce cosmopolitanism? In this regard Kavanagh (1990) mentions literature and the framing discourses that "prepare and re-present texts, and associate them with other texts and social practices." Obviously he is referring to literary criticism and publishing houses. The latter he describes as apparatuses that prepare readers in their social context to receive a cultural message by working up "a rich 'system of representations' . . . in specific material practices [read: texts]."

In the case of Canadian women writers in Spain, this preparation starts in 1969, when the Spanish publishing house Grijalbo begins to disseminate the Canadian message with the translation of Margaret Laurence's *Rachel, Rachel*. The publisher had been founded seven years before in Barcelona, where Juan Grijalbo had returned after his exile in Mexico. Although the message was launched in a vacuum, this translation had no bravura. In this case, as in many other cases of the translation of English-Canadian books in Spain, Bourdieu's insights hit the nail on the head when he affirms that "Translation is pre-eminently financial investment that always aims, openly or not, at the production of best-sellers" (1999). Two facts seemed to guarantee the commercial success of Laurence's

novel in Spain. Firstly, Laurence had received the Governor General's Award for *A Jest of God* in 1966. Secondly, and perhaps, most importantly, Paul Newman had directed *Rachel, Rachel*, based on Laurence's novel, in 1968. Laurence's reputation was well-established when Grijalbo invested in the translation of her work. Although Grijalbo was absorbed by the Italian group Mondadori in 1989, no modifications were made in terms of the publishing policy of the imprint. Its official webpage reads: "In fiction, Grijalbo publishes best-sellers by first-rank names such as Barbara Wood or Ken Follett [...] as well as a renovated catalogue of international authors" mostly made up of works that have been successful in the United States.

Most tellingly, Bourdieu connects best-sellers with escape literature intended for or written by women. In his words: "The director of a series of foreign literature at a large publishing house identifies his best foreign bread-winners as 'great women's novels, escape novels,' especially those written in English. The more one approaches this pole, the more the publishers produce lucrative translations, resorting to the selection and purchasing processes of international speculation, massively introduced by scouts or American literary agents. One informant says that, even in France, 'the Americans are the masters.'" (Bourdieu, 1999). In fact, when the evaluation criterion of internationalism is brought into alignment with best-selling fiction, it is, at the same time, bound to femininity and also, by implication, to youth. This is not surprising, since in Western culture women's writing has traditionally been considered immature and not serious enough to be taken into account, even if it appealed to large audiences.

The adjective "young", when applied to Canadian women writers and their works, carries connotations of freshness, vigor, vitality, and avant-gardism that can be extended to the press disseminating them. The avant-garde in its turn has a close affinity with eclecticism when one considers that experimentation is always composed of elements drawn from a variety of sources. It makes sense, then, that the first thing that leaps out when combing through the catalogue of Muchnik Editores is eclecticism. In 1994 Muchnik markets its translation of Laurence's *A Jest of God/ Una burla de Dios* and *A Bird in the House / Un pájaro en casa*. It had already published a translation of *The Fire-Dwellers/ Los habitantes del fuego* in 1993. In 1995 it issued *The Diviners /El parque del desasosiego*. In the course of 2003, Muchnik changed its name to El Aleph Editores, and the publisher continued to be steeped in an eclecticism that manifests itself in two ways: (1) through a selection of "foreign, Spanish and Latin American authors" and (2) through the "perfect synthesis of tradition and modernity," which is precisely how Margaret Laurence was marketed (webpage of El Aleph). One should note that the foreign excludes Latin American literature, which is supposed to make Spanish readers feel at home (as if Spanish literature did not stop at its borders), but includes Europe and North America.

As to the past-present "synthesis," El Aleph specifies: "El Aleph basically publishes fiction, able to combine Nobel Prize winners like Elfriede Jelinek with the Portuguese avant-garde" (El Alpeh website). The "able," however, casts doubt on the possibility of such a combination. The publication of a Nobel Prize winner is undoubtedly an indication of commercial success, but is commercial success not in turn an index of traditionalism or non-eclecticism? The sad and sane truth of the matter is that, when a press accords priority to commercial aims, it also "perpetuates the most traditional literary forms or [canonizes] young authors conforming to old models or so uninformed of literary changes that they attach an idea of avant-gardism to the [...] house (Bourdieu, 1999). Bourdieu (1999) does not mention who these young authors are but he makes explicit reference to Gallimard and the consecration it has "given to several of the early discoveries (notably Samuel Beckett and Claude Simon)." In this manner old authors, like Beckett, Simon or like Margaret Laurence, for that matter, escape aging and the press is rejuvenated. The upshot of all this is that the publication of books that sell well goes hand in hand with the fantasy of modernity or conservative modernization conveyed by young authors who simply mime the real transgressions of the past or, in Bourdieu's words "produce attenuated or muted alternatives to the original ruptures" (1999).

This fantasy of modernity has endeared Tusquets Editores to a generally middle-class readership. Headquartered in Barcelona, Tusquets is a mid-sized publishing house with reduced salaried staff and branches in Mexico and Argentina. It started in 1968 with an insurgent ideological framework, proof of which is that 25 of its titles were censored during Franco's dictatorship. Today its founder Beatriz de Moura continues to rebel against the literary establishment when she describes her editorial philosophy as follows: "From the beginning I aimed at three targets: 1. Reclaim 20th-century vanguards and the literature which despite being marginal, minority and even 'damned' was still important; 2. Provide elements for a lively, active and polemic debate in the field of culture and ideas through texts against the granite ideologies dominant at the time; and 3. Publish the prose of novel Spanish and Latin American authors" (website of Tusquets). This does not mean that Tusquets does not publish foreign-language writers. Milan Kundera, Italo Calvino, Samuel Beckett, Albert Camus, William Faulkner, Henry James, Arthur Miller, Alexandr Solzhenitsyn, Edgar Allan Poe, Ezra Pound, Jonathan Swift, Mark Twain, Boris Vian, Nadine Gordimer and James Joyce, for instance, appear under their imprint. They also published such an emblematic title as Michael Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion/ En una piel de león*. This translation was released in 1989, only two years after its original publication and almost six years before Ondaatje became popular, thanks to the adaptation of his novel *The English Patient* into film. The experimental and avant-garde nature of Ondaatje's novel would certainly suit the first two of the publisher's aforementioned objectives, although he can hardly be considered a "marginal" writer at the moment.

In 1996 Tusquets published *The Stone Diaries*/*La memoria de las piedras* by Carol Shields. The translation of this novel came heralded by a range of literary prizes: it had won the Governor General's Award in 1993 and had been nominated for the Booker Prize the same year, followed by the National Book Award (1994) and the Pulitzer Prize in 1995. As an author with a double national affiliation (US and Canada[55]) and what Robert Thacker (2009) calls an "unassuming feminist commitment," she had the perfect cosmopolitan profile that the Spanish publisher needed. However, despite protestations to the contrary, Tusquets clearly favors the publication of the canonical - Shields is certainly considered part of the canon — painlessly entering the world of dominant ideology.

As Graham Huggan (2001) perceptively points out, the function of canons is to prop up "the institutional systems through which 'traditional' values are inculcated and upheld." Contrary to Guillory, who, in *Cultural Capital* (1993), associates the traditional values sustained by canonical works with the cultural élite, Huggan (2001) links them to the bourgeoisie. On discussing the canonical status of Margaret Atwood's work, he brings to the fore her anti-establishment views and remarks that these "have always tended to move with the fashions of the moment [...] [and deep down] represent the orthodoxy for [the] particular social group" of the middle-class. Her oppositional stance, translated into marginalized and disempowered heroines, is to Huggan (2001) a fantasy negotiated "from the safety of the middle-class family, the middle-class educational system, the middle-class home". What appears to be at the root of the paradox is that "her novels elicit sympathy not so much because they [her characters] are outsiders as because they register readily identifiable forms of middle-class alienation (Huggan, 2001), just as Shields' heroines. I would like to push the argument further by suggesting that this middle-class alienation makes Atwood and Shields compatible. In their novels we are involved in a bourgeoisization of alienation which compels the particular to explain an unfashionable universal. In other words, subversion is timeless and therefore eternally young, no matter that its writers are dead or aged, and, the timelessness of subversion is linked to an alienation discourse which, although grounded in the concrete existence of the middle-class, elicits universal sympathies. These characteristics can also be applied to the other Canadian writers I shall discuss below.

55 When Chicago-born Carol Shields, who had lived in Canada since 1957, visited Madrid in 1996 on the occasion of the launching of *The Stone Diaries* in Spanish, her trip was sponsored by the US Embassy. She gave her reading at the Instituto International, founded in 1871 - when Spain was far from being a cosmopolitan country-, as a charitable mission by an American couple, Alice and William Gulick, to promote the education of Spanish women.

When I said that in Spain the foreign excludes Latin American literature, I meant that our imagination of home is closely linked to it. Now I wish to contend that, by virtue of canonization, the *our* of our literature is made even more inclusive. Let me expand on this argument by addressing the literary capital of two other publishing houses: Periférica and Sirmio (subsidiary of Acantilado). A brief word on Lumen is appropriate too. Lumen Editores is closely linked to Tusquets at the level of the distribution of published works.[56] While it boasts of its autonomy as an imprint, it pursues the same publishing policy of illusive modernity as Tusquets. The banner on its web page reads: "Lumen bets on the classics of yesterday, today and tomorrow." In 1996 it commissioned the translation of Elizabeth Smart's *By Grand Central Station I Sat Down and Wept* from Laura Freixas, [57] renowned Spanish novelist, influential in the Spanish social context through her contributions to two newspapers of high circulation in the country like *El País* and *La Vanguardia*. She also translated *By Heart/ Elizabeth Smart* (1996), Rosemary Sullivan's biography of the author, reviewed by Lourdes Fernández-Ventura as yet another example of the bourgeois alienation which the Spanish literary system has found so attractive in Canadian women writers: "Elizabeth Smart had a paradoxical life: she escaped from her destiny as a beautiful debutante from the Ottawa high bourgeoisie, and persisted in an illegitimate passion (Ventura, 1996).

More than ten years later (2009) *By Grand Central Station I Sat Down and Wept* was reissued by Periférica, a small publisher set in Cáceres[58]. Established in 2006, Periférica offers through its 42 published titles a selection of "modern classics." It is worth noting that the selection includes mostly consecrated writers who helped create the idea of Europe, and that the press won the National Prize for Cultural Editorial Work in 2008. However, the editorial trend which must have led them to reprint Elizabeth Smart's prose poem is, as published on their web page, that they intend to leave some room to recover titles that emerged in the

56 The story of their association, however, contains a family plot. In 1960 Magín Tusquets bought Lumen, a publishing house specialized in religious books founded during the Spanish Civil War, from his brother Juan Tusquets, a supporter of Franco's side. Soon after that, his daughter Esther Tusquets took over as director, helped by her brother Oscar. In 1969 Oscar Tusquets and his wife, Beatriz de Moura, split from the original family business and created Tusquets Editores, while Esther continued to be the director of Lumen until 2001, when it had already been absorbed by the editorial group Bertelsman.

57 In the same year, 1996, Laura Freixas had also translated Rosemary Sullivan's biography of Elizabeth Smart *By Heart* for publisher Circe, which specialized in books written by and about women.

58 Cáceres is the second largest city in the autonomous region of Extremadura which, before the upsurge of the autonomous communities in Spain, was traditionally known as an impoverished region whose population was drained by emigration to other, more prosperous regions of Spain, like Catalonia.

twentieth century on the margins of the "literary establishment" or the dominant taste, and which represent "a submerged current of contemporary literature." [59] If we read through the lens of the polysystems theory, Smart's book was chosen because the prose poem is a literary genre lacking in the Spanish literary system. However, the reviews published in the Spanish press for the occasion of the reediting of the book describe it as an autobiographical account of a passionate and obsessive love story. The titles of the articles are revealing in themselves: Hidalgo, "Elizabeth Smart: arte, amor, hijos/ art, love, children" (Hidalgo, 2009), and "Crónica de un amor obsesivo"/"Chronicle of an obsessive love," (Aparicio Maydeu, 2009).

Despite its prize for cultural editorial work, Periférica does not have the cosmopolitan glamour of Lumen, which celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 2010, and, according to its web page has always aimed to look for authors who are strong enough to become classics" and has published women authors like Antonia Byatt, Linn Ullmann and Alice Munro. In 2009 Lumen published Mavis Gallant's *The Selected Stories/ Los cuentos*, once the reputation of Canadian writers of short stories was established in Spain, including the following blurb, attributed to the editor, on the dust jacket of the book: "Flannery O'Connor, Eudora Welty, Natalia Ginzburg and now Mavis Gallant. These ladies of writing are the pride of Lumen's catalogue" (Gallant, 2009, dust jacket). However, before Mavis Gallant had become "a lady of writing" in Spain, it was the publisher Sirmio that introduced her work with the translations of *Overhead in a Balloon*, published in the same volume as *Paris Notebooks,* in 1990 (*Elevado en un globo/Doce historias de Paris*) and *In Transit/ En tránsito* in 1992. Sirmio was created in 1987 as a Spanish-language imprint of Quaderns Crema, a Catalan publishing house founded by Jaume Vallcorba, at the time professor of Spanish literature at the University of Barcelona. As Josep Maria Ripoll (1990) observes in his review of the Spanish translation of *Overhead in Balloon*, Sirmio specialized in "little oddities of the connoisseur which had been forgotten...or renowned authors who were unpublished among us, such as the case of Mavis Gallant." In Jaume Vallocarba's words, the press capitalizes on "transversal thinking" in place and time, that is, a combination of the classical and the modern, "moving outside fashions in a subtle balance between the intellectual and the commercial." [60] Significantly, Vallcorba exerts great influence on the

59 See the website of Periférica. Periférica has recently published the second part of Smart's autobiography, *The Assumption of the Rogues and the Rascals / Los pícaros y los canallas van al cielo* (2011).

60 See the web page of his current publishing house Acantilado, founded in 1999. *Acantilado* means "cliff" and Vallcorba acknowledges giving it this title to refer to the risks of starting such a press of such characteristics.

awarding of literary prizes and has received many prizes himself: "In 2002, Jaume Vallcorba receives the National Prize for best editorial work awarded by the Spanish Ministry of Culture, and soon after the Gold Medal of Cultural Merit by Barcelona Town Hall as well as the Great Order of Cultural Merit of the Republic of Poland, granted as recognition for the projection of Polish literature to the Hispanic world" (http://www.acantilado.es/). The honours received by Vallcorba speak to a certain Europeanization of the press that makes his proposition of transversalism suspect. If national prizes are awarded as recognition for publicizing European works, could we not say that the press is vernacularising Europe and, perhaps more importantly, concomitantly provincializing the canonical? What is clear is that for Sirmio, Lumen, and Periférica the canonical enables us to feel at home. It is also clear that, for these publishers, the canonical is European but includes Canadian Literature, as if Europe subsumes Canada.

This Europeanizing strategy becomes more nuanced in the "global project" of Alfaguara, yet another Spanish publisher. Founded in 1964 by Nobel Prize winner Camilo José Cela, Alfaguara has 20 offices in various American countries and reaches "more than 400 million readers" (Alfaguara website). The publisher organizes the Premio Alfaguara de Novela, "a referent of quality literary prizes awarded to an unpublished work written in Spanish," and boasts of a "global vocation, Latin American and Spanish." At first sight, the "global" reach of this publisher solely embraces Latin America and Spain. This impression is confirmed through the description of the project "Alfaguara Global":

> The Project Alfaguara Global [...] originates in 1993 with the publication of *Cuando ya no importe* by Juan Carlos Onetti, one of the emblematic authors of Latin American literature in our century. This edition, the outcome of the joint efforts of the Alfaguara editors from both sides of the Atlantic, has opened the path to follow. Since then, we have continued to publish Spanish and Latin American writers, both from the boom period and from the new generations, in a permanent back-and-forth journey from Spain to America, which makes the global vocation of Alfaguara more meaningful (Alfaguara website).

Clearly Spanish and Latin American literature alone are here made into the sign of Alfaguara's global vocation. Undoubtedly, the symbolic capital of the publisher is established by way of its purported global vocation, but also involves its access to national award juries, the institutionalization, circulation and impact of its prize, as well as the prestige of its list of published works. It should be stressed that Alfaguara translated in 1997 Anne Michaels' *Fugitive Pieces* as *Piezas en fuga* by Alfaguara. *Fugitive Pieces* was reprinted in 2008, and

in 2010 they issued her book *The Winter Vault/La cripta de invierno*.[61] The call of its uniquely "global" vocation may have been ignored when they published Michaels' first novel due to the many prizes it had garnered (The Orange Prize for Fiction, the Trillium Book Award, the Chapters/Books in Canada First Novel Award and a Lannan Literary Award for Fiction). Another more plausible interpretation, however, is that under the banner of the global, situated in the intimate sphere of Spain and Latin America, the publisher crusades for a host of internationally recognized award-winning texts which become intimate by losing their own situatedness. We will see that, in effect, Canada is merely glossed over in literary reviews, neither explained nor situated. Of course, there is much violence in this *dépaysement* against the Other (the Canadian Other in this case), who is forced to lose her boundary in order to turn into something like the self.

In order to explain the publishing policy of yet another publishing house, Bartleby, I need to elaborate on what Alfaguara means by its "global vocation." The word "vocation" comes from the Latin *vocare*, meaning "to call" and situates the global in the field of responsibility. Implied is the duty to respond to the call of others stemming not – as seen – from our difference from them but from their sameness to us. "Vocation" also brings to mind associations of virtue (a vocation is a response to a divine, religious call) and remuneration (a vocation is a profession or a job), the combination of which is a prevalent strategy in the publishing world, or rather, it is the duty of publishers. "Publishers," writes Bourdieu (1999), "are thus *double characters* who should know how to reconcile art and money, the love of literature and the quest for profit. Their strategies must be located somewhere between realistic or cynical submittal to commercial considerations, and heroic or foolish indifference to financial needs."[62]

Bartleby is a very small independent publisher that distributed Michaels's *The Weight of Oranges/El peso de las naranjas and Miners Pond* in 2001,[63] followed two years later by *Skin Divers/ Buceadores de la piel*. To Pepo Paz, editor-in-chief of Bartleby, independence is the attribute of a press like his that does not participate in the race for literary prizes, does not cultivate institutional contacts or recommendations, does not compete for best-sellers,

61 Both books were translated by Eva Cruz, daughter to Juan Cruz, direction assistant of *El País*. *El País* and Alfaguara are brands of the business group PRISA, which explains the attention the Spanish newspaper often pays to Alfaguara's publications.

62 Bourdieu, "A Conservative Revolution in French Publishing."

63 The 2003 edition of *Skin Divers* published by Barteby is prefaced by writer Alfonso Armada, renowned journalist and regular contributor to *El País*. The epilogue is written by poet Jordi Doce, who has translated Paul Auster, William Blake and T.S.Eliot,among others, into Spanish. Undoubtedly, this confers a high symbolic value on the text. The text is monolingual (only Spanish).

is willing to take risks with "new" and "unknown" authors, and specializes in "a plural literature" (*El lector perdido*, blog, 2009) It is clear that cosmopolitanism supports Paz's insistence on "independence," but this insistence does not mark his freedom from dependence on the processes of power. Bourdieu (1999) explains that the constraints imposed on small publishers make their margin for maneuvering very narrow, although these publishers help "provide the game with its basic justification and 'spiritual point of honor,'" meaning that, because they do not have the means to enter the race (of prices, publicity, contacts and big international best-sellers), they are forced to become virtuous by espousing an independence and/or cosmopolitanism that are actually forced upon them (1999).

Significantly, however, much as Paz discredits the publishers' race, he at once confesses his desire to address the "largest possible public." This is essentially an open confession of a profit-driven desire that ultimately reveals his virtuous global vocation to be a commercial ruse. Although no press, no matter how lofty its ideals, can afford not to be profit-driven, all this indicates that cosmopolitanism is the euphemism for the "sordidly commercial" (Bourdieu, 1999) maneuvers of the editorial world. On how the material conditions that rule the selling of books are euphemized, again Bourdieu (1993) has this to say: "Entering the field of literature is not much like going into religion as getting into a select club: the publisher is one of those prestigious sponsors (together with preface-writers and critics) who effusively recommend the candidate [...]. But the law of the universe, whereby the less visible the investment, the more productive it is symbolically, means that promotion exercises, which in the business world take the overt form of publicity, must here be euphemized.The implication is that, first, the more "spiritual" a publisher becomes, the more material profit it accumulates, and, second, that the material has to be euphemized as spiritual in order to be profitable. On another level, I wonder what the difference is between going into religion and getting into a select club when we consider the euphemism hidden within "vocation," religious or otherwise. Perhaps instead of the ideology of cosmopolitanism, it would be more accurate to speak of the ideology of the cosmopolitan vocation as that which enables social subjects to feel at home for purposes of solid profit.

3. Cosmopolitanizing Strategies

The rest of this essay focuses on the strategies used to disseminate Canadian literature in Spain. The use of the word "strategy" is inspired by Venuti's *Rethinking Translation* and determined by the business connotations it carries. I begin with the basic idea that Canadian literature is translated as a cosmopolitan literature and show that cosmopolitanism, as it may already

be apparent, is one of the primary conceits for illustrating Canadian non-difference, so that, far from being "resistant," it operates as a "domesticating" strategy. Cosmopolitanizing strategies include: (1) emphasis on vitality and tradition (European and American), which I have called the fantasy of modernity; (2) attention to bourgeois alienation; and (3) use of an international style. The first two strategies have already been discussed in the first two sections of this essay.

In order to address the first cosmopolitanizing strategy I need to return to the text of the brochure of the cycle "Canadian Women Writers of the Turn of the Century" mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Clearly the title of the reading series is intended to ring associations of experimentation. Inevitably, "turn of the century" connotes a change and therefore a break with tradition. This is precisely what Bernd Dietz underscores when he asks: "Can anybody still question that it is the time of Canadian women writers?"[64]? He then describes the potential readership of these writers as "attentive, enthusiastic and international," adding that that this "singular constellation of narrative talent" could, obviously, not escape Spanish readers and publishers. Canadian women writers, he points out, are only "the spearhead of a young already powerful literature" which rests on their "audacity." I will not focus here on the connection between internationalism and mainstream publishers or their affinities with youthfulness, femininity, and the avant-garde, as this has already been discussed. It needs be stressed, however, that the youthfulness of this "powerful" literature circulates here as a token of symbolic capital. The economy of transmission between reader and text implicit in Dietz's words suggests that this capital is indeed translated, not from texts to readers, as might be expected, but to texts from readers, who are already attentive, enthusiastic and international when they enter the intimate scene of Canadian women's writing. What is more, the sum of these qualities enables them to embrace this "singular" constellation, singular because their readers are preeminently singular. It is mostly in them and not in the text that singularity resides. With this move Dietz accomplishes two things. On the one hand, he includes us in the Canadian literary system by making it feel like our own projection. On the other hand, he consecrates our reading competence and hence the literature (read: the canon) that has made its acquisition possible.

In "Soledades y desamores"/"Loneliness and Unrequited Loves," a review of Margaret Laurence's *The Diviners*, Valentí Puig (1995) capitalizes on the relation between the young and the canonical, juggling the former's need for autonomy with the latter's desire for relatedness:

64 See full text of the brochure in the Appendix.

> The prestige of Margaret Laurence is not just due to the efforts of young literatures to copy the elements of an adult literature: its wise men, its rebels, its Victor Hugo and its Kafka; and its great woman writer. In the case of Canada there had to be a great writer of the prairie and such a writer was Margaret Laurence. In the national Canadian literature studied at school, Margaret Laurence's books occupy an outstanding position in the syllabus, so that the children of the Canadian melting pot may know the streets of Manawaka, with the Tabernacle, the Parthenon bar, the Flamingo Club, the Roxy Theater and the jokes of Ukrainian children.

Whether Laurence is Canada's great woman writer is debatable although several Spanish critics seem to agree that she is, even greater than Atwood.[65] The question is, of course, whether the geographical specificities mentioned can provide Canadian literature with the originality that is not a copy of the "adult literature" Puig mentions in his review. The short answer is probably yes, but when the author concludes by saying that "the honesty and sincerity [of] Margaret Laurence brings proximity" to contexts that otherwise would feel foreign, he pointedly gives us to understand that the cultural capital she accumulates here results from empathy towards our old literary geographies (our Victor Hugo and our Kafka and hence our Margaret Laurence) rather than from the appreciation for distant ones (their Victor Hugo and their Kafka and their Laurence).

In his review of Anne Michael's *Fugitive Pieces* for the Argentinian newspaper *La Nación*, which provides evidence of Alfaguara's global outreach, Eduardo Berti (2011) demonstrates his knowledge of this matter when he recalls that Jakob Beer and Athos Roussos settle in Toronto, but nothing more is said of the locale. Why is nothing said if not to make the site imprecise, intangible, unidentified and unmemorable? Poland, however, brings to his mind memories of the war and serves as a stepping stone to other data such as Michaels' place of birth. This is a recurrent strategy of Spanish commentators who often hasten to make a point about the European origins of Canadian novelists and are prone to narrate their experiences in Europe. Greece inspires in Berti (2011) a whole ode: "The inclusion of Greece as the third country in the novel [the other two being Canada and Poland] is not casual. Zakynthos is an island where great poets are born; Greece is the cradle of poetry and European cultures." Echoes of Greek poetry, however, do not resonate in Michaels's novel but echoes of our Paul Celan and our Adorno do, as Berti makes clear. For her part,

65 Ayala-Dip (1993) in his review of *The Fire-Dwellers* argues that Laurence is subtler and richer in psychological nuances than her countrywoman Margaret Atwood.

the Spanish academic critic Esther Sánchez-Pardo also recognizes in *Fugitive Pieces* the voices of Walter Benjamin and Primo Levi.[66] Muñoz Molina in *El País* investigates the stylistic features of *The Winter Vault* by relating it to the work of Proust and Juan Carlos Onetti. Celia Ramis discovers Borges and Whitman in *The Weight of Oranges*.

The same strategy of alluding to canonical writers is applied to the other writers who are being addressed in this chapter. Reviewer María José Obiol (1996a) remembers that Elizabeth Smart lived by the maxim of Kafka who said that literature works like a pickaxe to break the frozen seas inside the soul. In the review "Jardines fascinantes" by Tomàs Delclós (2008), Carol Shields is listed alongside the names of Borges and Goethe. In the invitation card for Mavis Gallant's lecture, Pilar Somacarrera describes Mavis Gallant's work through references to the novels of Jane Austen and the short stories of Anton Chekhov.[67] The comparison gains additional significance in the light of "Destellos deslumbrantes," ("Blinding twinkles"- the title seems to anticipate Dietz's star imagery as deployed in the text of the Canadian Women Writers cycle) wherein Jorge Barriuso (1993) opines that *In Transit* "sometimes reminds us of a certain Joyce, and at other times, of a certain Chekhov." Chekhov is again alluded to by Josep Maria Ripoll (1990) Julià Guillamon (1990b) in her review titled "Eventualidad" adds Henry James and F. Scott Fitzgerald to the catalogue of correlatives. In her review of Mavis Gallant's *Selected Stories*, writer and journalist Rosa Montero (2010) confesses having felt the same emotions reading Gallant and Steinbeck. Perceptively, Salustiano Martín (1993) asks: "To what extent is Mavis Gallant a Canadian writer?" Put at its simplest, Gallant appears not singularly different from Joyce, Chekhov, Austen or James, which begs the difficult question of whether the canonical writers she is compared to are singularly different among themselves. There is a clear reason for these comparisons with canonical writers: by approximating Canadian authors to the European canon, Spanish reviewers "own" the works.

Nevertheless, I have already explained that canons combine modernity and tradition, or, to be more precise, offer tradition under the guise of modernity. Definitively, Kafka, Celan, Adorno, Levi, Benjamin, Goethe, Proust, Whitman,

66 In the brochure card dedicated to Anne Michaels for "Canadian Women Writers of the Turn of the Century."

67 Once again, in the invitation card for Mavis Gallant issued for "Canadian Women Writers of the Turn of the Century" referred to in the main text. Gallant has another "domestic" connection to Spain. As Pilar Somacarrera explains in her text, her presence in the cycle meant her return to Spain fifty years after her visit (1951), which had inspired her two stories about life in Madrid in the 1950s. Ironically, Gallant cancelled her visit in the last minute due to unexpected health problems. Now in her late eighties, it is doubtful that she will ever resume that journey.

James, Austen, Fitzgerald, Chekhov and Joyce fit the canonical fantasy of conservative modernization. I would argue that Canadian literature, when taken over by these canonical writers, becomes young and old, modern and classic simultaneously. In light of this, if one cannot doubt that it is the time of Canadian women writers, one cannot doubt either that it will remain so as long as they add to our intimate estate of literary capital.

In order to explain the second cosmopolitanizing strategy, which I have called "attention to bourgeois alienation," I need to go back to Huggan's argument that Atwood's subversive views are negotiated through "identifiable" and tranquillizing "forms of middle-class alienation" (2001) — which implies no subversion at all — and then apply it to Elizabeth Smart. Following Huggan (2001), Atwood's "success is largely due to her ability to capture and mobilize popular feelings." It is crucial to note here that middle-class alienation is popular as it is easy to understand for the majority as well as the minority. The forms this alienation takes he does not specify. What follows is my own brief description of these forms of alienation present in Spanish reviews of Elizabeth Smart's *By Grand Central Station I Sat Down and Wept*. Consider the following: "*By Grand Central Station I Sat Down and Wept* is more than the narrative of a passion, most of all it is the testimony of the pain that sticks to the feeling of love," writes Obiol (1996). Unrequited love is one form. Illicit love is another. A brief blurb titled "Canción triste de Elizabeth Smart"/"Elizabeth Smart's Blues") inserted in the book section of the women's magazine (*Mujer hoy*) published jointly with the national newspaper *ABC,* announces the following about the second part of Smart's autobiography, *The Assumption of the Rogues and the Rascals*, published by Periférica: "Last year Periférica moved us with *By Grand Central Station I Sat Down and Wept*, the romance of writer Elizabeth Smart with the married (not to her) poet George Barker in the thirties. It has now published its sequel, whose beginning is heartbreaking."

J. Ernesto Ayala-Dip, a regular collaborator to *Babelia*, refers to the liberalizing contradiction Laurence creates in one of her heroines: "Stancey [sic] [in *The Diviners*], on the verge of forty, must preserve the tenderness she feels for her husband from herself, from her own destructive impulse. This crossroads frees her from the boredom of marriage and launches her into the arms of a man younger than her" (1993). Old age is one more source of estrangement in the world and from the self, as José Antonio Gurpegui (1994) makes clear in his review of *The Stone Angel/El angel de piedra,* where he explores 90-year-old Hagar Shipley's sense of existence. It may also be observed that the dislocation of travelling and the loneliness grounded in everyday life appear indispensable ingredients of alienation in Mavis Gallant's works. The other two big forms alienation takes are the pain of loss, in the case of Shields, and the suffering that results from inherited memories. About Anne Michaels' *Fugitive Pieces*, Elsa Fernández-Santos (1997) writes: "Jakob and Ben are marked by events that did not happen to them, and this is a reality to all of us." Similarly, the memory

of what has not been lived and the pain that clings to it also shapes Andrea Aguilar's interview of Michaels in *El País* (2010).

These forms of alienation are real to all of us because they are neither abstract nor philosophical, attributes that would make them difficult to assimilate. They are not materialistic either. Another way to put this is to say that the economic system does not spawn and sustain them because this might make them threatening. Rather, these forms are material or concerned with what is emotionally experienced: "The goal of Michaels," writes Fernández-Santos (1997), is "to communicate sentiments." More specifically, the examined reviews find a form of connection in alienation. The writers' appeal to connection plunges us into the assumption -however highly contestable- that emotions are natural and universal, not subject to referential (class) restraints and transferable from one person. It makes sense, logically, that Salustiano Martín (1993) speaks of "the absence of rooted sentimentality" when he describes *In Transit*. It is not my business here to discuss the cultural constructedness of emotion. What is important for my purpose is that these reviews are over-determined by the belief that emotions of alienation are translatable and universal (in much the same manner as the concrete is universalized) and that this makes them tranquillizing for readers and reviewers alike.

The immediate prompt to the idea that emotions are translatable is the fact that words transmit emotions. Zoltán Kövecses (2000) asserts, if not insists, that language creates emotional realities. For her part, Teresa Brennan (2004) goes further when she claims that one can catch an emotion from the physical properties of words. Obviously, this argument is correct. The art of poetry would not exist were it not for the rhythm, sound, tone, pitch, stress, melody, vibration and pace of the words that make up a poem. If we accept this argument we also have to accept that a certain style may transmit a certain affect and that emotions of alienation are translatable because they are carried in what Julià Guillamon (1990a) in her review of Gallant's *Overhead in a Balloon* and *Paris Notebooks* calls "International Style," which is the name I have suggested for the third cosmpolitanizing strategy used for Canadian women writers in Spain. Guillamon (1990) writes: "Still effective is the civility of the international style of this writer, in whose descriptions nothing is accessory, and in which people and things are subtly woven into the story's texture and structure." The international style is linked to precision in descriptions, lack of verbosity, absence of extraneous elements in the structure and "superb realism." Myrta Sessarego (1993) emphasizes Gallant's "clean realism," which she associates with "elegant precisions and meticulous details," "removal of superficial and rhetorical makeup" and "hard lyricism."

Much in tune with the previous tenor of description is Cecilia Ramis's tenet of transparency: Michaels's "language names the real to make it recognizable" (2001). Ayala-Dip's critical approach to Laurence's *The Fire-Dwellers* occurs in

the expressions: "tranche de vie," "authentic literary relevance," "old narrative method," and "structural unity" (1993), which means there is a beginning, middle, end, and central theme. Of Shields's *Unless*, Rosa Regàs (1997) praises its "naturalness," that is, "the solid structure" and "impeccability" of her prose. The back-cover reads: "*Unless* is a brilliant, daring novel that has the mastery of extraordinary works about the so-called 'normal people.'" Briefly put, social realism is international because it casts off the artificial and the opaque. But how can this preference for the mode of social realism be explained? The reason is that although the world portrayed is imaginary, realism attaches us to the real world and thus the orderly character of the narration allows us to order our lived experience. "Progressive realism," as Spivak (2004) puts it, "is a charismatic way of writing prize-winning fiction [...]. Progressive realism is the too-easy accessibility of translation as transfer of substance;" it makes translation accessible and easy insomuch as it brings the foreign text to readers on their own terms, pleasurably.

4. Conclusions

In *What Is Translation?* Douglas Robinson (1997) criticizes Venuti's concept of "abusive fidelity" in the following terms: "[I]n an abusive translation... who is the abused? The source language author, text, culture? The target language reader, text, culture? Both, or in some combination of the various aspects of the two? [...] What social and psychological effects does it have on its victims and its perpetrators?" Venuti (1998) proposes that the abuse be committed against the hegemonic norms of the target culture through foreignizing strategies. Yet, these strategies, Robinson argues, also abuse source authors and may be unfair to them as well, especially when they cannot fight back, which is usually the case. In like manner, the cosmopolitanizing strategies that foreground the familiar by domesticating the different are abusive of the target culture too, because by hindering the entrance of newness they condemn us to a sameness that impedes conscious awareness of selfhood, which, in accordance with Lévinas, needs to be challenged by the Other. In this logic, if abuse is the measure of responsibility in translation, both kinds of strategies – foreignizing and domesticating - are equally responsible for the violence exerted in the transference process. Thus, one question emerges: is mediation between cultures only possible via abuse? Or, in other words, are cultural thresholds always sites of violence?

The aim of this chapter has been to explore the dissemination of the works of Canadian women writers in Spain. Since the early times, when Canadian institutional agents were still not taking part, the transference of CanLit into the Spanish literary system has been dominated by commercial constraints. Margaret Laurence's *Rachel, Rachel* was imported by Grijalbo and later reprinted by Bruguera as a potential best-seller, based on the "great film directed by

Paul Newman featuring Joanne Woodward" (Laurence, 1972, back cover). It could also have attracted publisher Grijalbo (and later Bruguera) because of its transgressive (certainly under Franco's regime) content about the sexual awakening of a formerly repressed schoolteacher. Other Spanish publishers like Tusquets allegedly import certain foreign writers –including Canadian authors like Carol Shields and Michael Ondaatje- because of their avant-guard and marginal nature, when they are in fact looking for internationally recognized and prize-winning texts. Therefore, the preference for modern and marginal writing just remains an illusion, what I have called the fantasy of modernity.

The Spanish literary system has received some of these Canadian women writers as if they had been writing from within a void, deleting any trace of a Canadian literary tradition. Following the first of the cosmpolitanizing strategies I have discussed in this chapter, Mavis Gallant and Anne Michaels are read in light of the European tradition of Chekhov, Joyce, Primo Levi or Adorno. These canonical correlates allow publishers and reviewers alike to feel at home, evading the abrasiveness of the Canadian foreign. The second strategy, dealing with bourgeois alienation, has been very productive in the transference of texts as distant from the Spanish literary tradition as Elizabeth Smart's memoirs. As an avant-garde woman writer and a single mother, who was passionately in love with a married man and endured much hardship in postwar England, Smart elicits the sympathies of many Spanish readers, male and female alike, who delusively think that the author's emotions are universal.

In Spain we have abused Canadian literature by making it recognizable. Making it unrecognizable would have abused its authors. Perhaps we need to put into practice Lévinas's and S.K. George's ideas and affirm the Other by affirming the self. This might start to be possible when responsibility is detached from abuse and love is dissociated from violence.

Chapter 3

Translation, Nation Branding and Indo-chic: The Circulation and Reception of South Asian Canadian Fiction in Spain

Belén Martín-Lucas

Literary translation constitutes an important marker of status in economic and cultural global systems as it determines the range of the circulation of texts and, therefore, their span of reception. It also plays a relevant role in nation branding and cultural diplomacy, which are directly addressed to encouraging trade in foreign countries. The capitalistic forces of neoliberal globalization not only benefit from such governmental encouragement of trade, but determine to a greater degree the type of texts to undergo the economic and cultural transactions that translation involves. It is my aim in this chapter to scrutinize the role played by the translation of South Asian Canadian narratives in Spain in relation to these two major forces – the Canadian state's cultural diplomacy and cultural industries — their common interests regarding translation, and their points of friction. I propose to measure the success or failure of their enterprise by looking at the reception of these narratives in Spain in order to evaluate how "Canadian" or how "Asian" they are perceived to be by their Spanish audience. How do they contribute to the nation branding of Canada as a multicultural country, and to what extent do they participate in or resist the global phenomenon of Indo-chic?

1. Translation in Cultural Diplomacy

Translation Studies have provided a good number of theories and reflections on the role of this activity throughout history. However, it has been only recently that translation has started to be analyzed as a relevant tool in public diplomacy, more specifically, as a form of cultural diplomacy. In Canada, the works of Luise von Flotow (2007a, 2007b, 2008) on the translation of Canadian literature into German have been groundbreaking in this area.

Public diplomacy "is the work of governments to initiate dialogue with foreign publics in order to gain favorable opinion. If successful, public diplomacy aims to influence the policy of the target nation to the advantage of the nation installing the public diplomacy program. [...] Public diplomacy is pursued through numerous channels, primarily, international broadcasting and educational and

cultural exchange programs (Maxwell, 2007). It differs from "classic diplomacy" in that the target is not another state's government and diplomats, but a wider audience that constitutes the "public". Among the many forms of public diplomacy, most specialists argue that cultural diplomacy is the most important, to the point that the *Report of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy* issued from the United States Department of State in September 2005 (in the midst of the war in Iraq and Afghanistan)[68] is titled "Cultural Diplomacy: The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy." According to American Ambassador Cynthia P. Schneider (2006), "[p]ublic diplomacy consists of all a nation does to explain itself to the world, and cultural diplomacy — the use of creative expression and exchanges of ideas, information, and people to increase mutual understanding — supplies much of its content." The fundamental idea is that culture can be used to affect foreign public opinion and garner support for a nation's foreign policies – including military interventions, as the quoted Report from the United States evidences –, and therefore "cultural diplomacy remains a valuable tool of diplomacy and is likely to become more important to governments, particularly to their public diplomacy and as a contributor to soft power, because of cultural diplomacy's promulgation of a distinctive national identity, the increasing importance of a cultural aspect in economic interests, and the intrinsic appeal of culture to globalized populations (Mark, 2008).

In Canada the goals of cultural diplomacy are targeted to opening and consolidating new and old markets for international trade and, at the same time, at protecting domestic (cultural) industries from the absorbing powers of globalization. As Simon Mark (2008) indicates, "[f]or some states, cultural diplomacy plays a role in the protection of cultural sovereignty. Canadian cultural diplomacy supports the international activities of domestic cultural industries and has sought to maintain the right to provide this support within the multilateral free trade framework." The main reasons for the promotion of Canadian culture abroad, he points out, are the direct economic benefits in the cultural industry (jobs and assets) and the visibility of Canada on the international scene, because "a country that does not project a clearly defined image of what

68 This contextualization is relevant, as the document highlights the role of cultural diplomacy at times of war, opening with this most telling paragraph: "Cultural diplomacy is the linchpin of public diplomacy; for it is in cultural activities that a nation's idea of itself is best represented. And cultural diplomacy can enhance our national security in subtle, wide-ranging, and sustainable ways. Indeed history may record that America's cultural riches played no less a role than military action in shaping our international leadership, including the war on terror. For the values embedded in our artistic and intellectual traditions form a bulwark against the forces of darkness" (Report of the Advisory Committee, 2005). Most experts mark 9/11 as the turning point in the prioritization of public diplomacy (Potter, 2010).

it is and what it represents, is doomed to anonymity on the international scene (FAITC, 2010). While the second of these reasons – championed in Canada most notably by John Ralston Saul — can be understood as more politically related to the state, the first is clearly one that will benefit primarily the capitalistic interests of private companies, and not exclusively social wealth. Cultural diplomacy is more and more important in the current neoliberal moment as a governmental policy that tries to protect national interests in a transnational context, "one of a number of tools in the battle to protect their national identity from the impact of globalization (Mark, 2008).

The capital of culture, rephrasing Bourdieu's terms, is no better exposed than in its value as diplomatic instrument that attempts to "captur[e] global mind space" (Potter, 2010) in the global economy: "Canadian artists, by telling the world about Canada as only they could, influenced the way people abroad saw Canada when it came 'to invest, immigrate, import goods, travel or pursue post-secondary education.' Arts and culture could 'open international doors.' Culture was also very important to the Canadian economy" (Mark, 2008). This importance is made explicit also by Evan Potter (2010) when he explains the strategic value of diverse federal programs: "The purpose of the grants is not to subsidize Canadian culture *per se*; rather, it is to *select specific cultural activities that will reinforce foreign policy objectives.* This point is frequently misunderstood. [...] Culture is not only an essential means of projecting Canadian values and messages; it is also a multi-billion dollar business which supports some 50,000 Canadian jobs from exports alone." As the Canadian Heritage website proudly synthesizes, "Canada's innovative arts and cultural products and services help to express our diversity, values and identity. They are a vibrant element of Canada's economy– worth almost $5 billion per year in exports of products and services."

The tasks of Canadian cultural diplomacy are carried out by three main agencies that at times cooperate and at other times compete fiercely for public funding: DFAIT (Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade), Canadian Heritage, and Canada Council for the Arts (Compendium 2008, online).[69] They all have a long history of promoting the Canadian cultural sector and its successes around the world as part of its efforts to advance Canadian foreign policy objectives, which include projects in literature and publishing: author travel, international translations, and launch tours for translated books in partnership with the Canadian Missions at the different countries where Canadian culture is exported.

69 Despite the recognition of its crucial importance by the Canadian governements, "there has been a dislocation between the commitment given to cultural diplomacy as suggested by the third pillar, and actual funding for federal cultural diplomacy. The money has not matched the rhetoric" (Mark 2008).

Literary translation is, therefore, one of the tools of cultural diplomacy that has been listed among the prioritized activities, as this recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Cultural Diplomacy (2005) to the Secretary of the State of the US reveals: "To set aside funds for translation projects, into and out of English, of the most important literary, intellectual, philosophical, political, and spiritual works from this and other countries." In Canada, literary translation is also funded by the federal government in order to achieve its "foreign policy objectives," as mentioned above. As a crucial element of intercultural communication, translation is an influential agent in the evolution of any literary system and in the construction both of a national canon and of a global one. The promotion of Canadian writers abroad –including here the translation of their works— has been one of the key lines of work in cultural diplomacy since the 90s: "Canadian writers in English used to be 'overshadowed by more famous writers from Britain and the US,' but now themselves 'cast a long shadow.' Canada's culture was as good as any in the world, was the theme, and Canadians could rightfully be proud of this" (Mark, 2008). However, as a professional business itself, translation has proven a telling barometer of the forces of multinational corporations and of the hegemonic status of the English language in the world.

In the complex entanglement of hundreds of literary imprints that belong to merely two or three gigantic corporations, publishers "operate in terms of the modalities of multinationals" (Ponzanesi, 2006), and most often sell the rights for translation of the authors they "own" to their sister branches in other countries and languages.[70] The demands of the audiences/consumers –attended and nurtured by professionals in marketing whose job includes, among other tasks,that of creating trends – will determine to a much greater extent the kind of texts to be translated in a given cultural market. Are the interests of Canadian foreign policy and the interests of global foreign audiences different? Not really. Since foreign policy attempts to defend the interests of Canadian cultural industries, it is not surprising to find that Canadian public programs have been helping those publishers who were already successful in the market.[71]

70 Random House, Penguin Putnam and Harper Collins are the three major publishing conglomerates of literary publishers in the Anglophone world. The three have overcome the restrictive federal measures to protect Canadian cultural sovereignty by creating their respective Canadian branches, Random Canada, Penguin Group Canada and Harper Collins Canada. Random House owns 25% of the shares of McClelland and Stewart. They are only a small part of much bigger corporations that control hundreds of publishing imprints in other countries and distribution channels.

71 From the list of South Asian Canadian writers published in Spain, the following have received financial aid from the International Translation Programme of the Canada Council: *The English Patient*, *Handwriting* and *Anil's Ghost* and by Michael Ondaatje, *Family Matters* by Rohinton Mistry, *The In-Between World of Vikram Lall* by M.G. Vassanji and Neil Bissoondath's *The Soul of All Great Designs*.

The International Translation Grants program of the Canada Council for the Arts subsidizes the publication of Canadian works in foreign languages abroad, covering half the honoraria for the translator, though never the printing, editing and distribution of the translated text. The program specifically states that "[p]riority will be given to books that have been short-listed for or have won literary awards (for example, Governor General's Literary Awards [...] and Canada-Japan Literary Awards)" (Canada Council website), a condition that can work to favor affluent mainstream publishers over small ones and which capitalizes on the cultural value already obtained by a book (Kim, 2008). According to Christine Kim (2008), despite the symbolic value which prestigious prizes bring to small publishers, the economic burden they carry in terms of publicity and reprinting costs is often too high to be confronted successfully.

These aspects will be further considered later in relation to the South Asian Canadian texts that have been translated into Spanish. As Luise von Flotow (2007) has observed, "[l]iterature in translation, in other words, has been found to rarely circulate innocently or by chance. It *is* circulated – by certain powers, at certain times, for specific purposes ... diplomatic and mercantile." I suggest that the foreign policy objectives that determine the selection of cultural activities to be promoted by the Canadian government are, in fact, coincident with the kind of cultural products that bring more profit to mainstream publishers in the global market.

2. The Circulation of Canadian Multicultural Literature

One of the main goals of public diplomacy is that of nation branding, to which cultural diplomacy significantly contributes. Several critics point out the "gap between how Canadians viewed themselves and how others perceived them," and policy designers were appalled to learn that "[a]ccording to a review of Canada's international brand undertaken in 2000, contemporary elements - dynamism, innovation, technology, tolerance, competitiveness and multiculturalism - were conspicuously absent" (Potter, 2010) Branding Canada was then identified as a major task to be performed by Canadian diplomacy. All efforts have been consequently directed to this goal, which brings a double benefit to the country, since a positive international projection has a strong impact on the domestic citizens' self esteem, a value foregrounded by Jozef Bátora (2005): "Although public diplomacy in the most commonly used meaning of the term seeks to engage actors abroad (that is, *outside* the state), an essential pre-condition for a successful public diplomacy is the attractiveness of ideas and values that a state represents to the actors *inside* the state. The state, in other words, needs to be

attractive not only to foreigners, but also (and perhaps more importantly) to the domestic constituency, who will then gladly associate their actions abroad with their state and hence promote its soft power ...In this way, the state's ability to capture the mind space of foreign audiences is enhanced."

The promotion of Canadian culture abroad "provided a feel good factor that served to make Canadians proud of their country, enhance social cohesion (partly through the presentation abroad of aspects of Canada's multiculturalism), and refashion Canada's national identity (Mark, 2008). This aspect of "foreign" policy is not a collateral one; when considering the kind of texts from Canada that get widely distributed abroad, one may get the idea that the image of harmonious multiculturalism promoted by its literature is intended to reinforce dominant liberal definitions of the Canadian nation for domestic consumption rather than to convince foreign audiences of the multicultural nature of the country. Numerous studies on Canadian public diplomacy point out that multiculturalism is the most valued characteristic of Canadian society (Stairs, 2003). [72] The promotion of Canada as a cosmopolitan and multicultural society has been the responsibility of Canadian Heritage (Bátora, 2005). These promoted qualities, "Cosmopolitan" and "multicultural," are key terms in my consideration of the selection of racialized Anglophone authors circulated in translation in Spain and the main point of confluence of the Canadian state's and private publishers' interests.

On the international scene, as Emily Apter (2001) explains, "[t]here are specialized niche markets within the 'global' that contribute to fads and fashions (to wit, the current popularity of Indian English-language novelists and Irish playwrights), sorting writers into subcategories such as 'international'... 'postcolonial'... and 'multicultural,' 'native,' or 'minority.' [...] These labels, though they can help launch or spotlight world-class writers — pulling them out of ethnic area studies ghettos on the bookstore shelves — also cling like barnacles to their reception and afford constrictive stereotypes of identity." Canadian literature has contributed notably to the creation of such a global taste for the ethnic Other. In Canada, where "visible minorities" have a long history of struggle for, precisely, visibility, the rise of Multiculturalism as an official policy from the 1970s onwards gave place to a "Multicultural Literature" that has effectively been instrumentalized in Canadian public diplomacy (von Flotow, 2007a) for nation branding, as a convenient representation of

72 Since the issuing of the Review of 1995 "Canada in the World", where it was stated that "[o]nly Canadian culture can express the uniqueness of our country, which is bilingual, multicultural, and deeply influenced by its Aboriginal roots, the North, the oceans, and its own vastness (FAITC, 2010), more recent programs have focused on the change from a predominantly pastoral view of Canada as "a land of mountains, snow and maple trees [...] to one of an innovative, cosmopolitan and multicultural society" (Mark, 2008).

Canada state on the international stage.[73] Prominent "ethnic" authors like Michael Ondaatje or Rohinton Mistry figure in the new Canadian canon that is taught, reviewed and promoted internationally, both in English and in translation (also in Spain). Although the success of these South Asian writers - conveniently indexed in our literary systems as "diasporic," "multicultural," or "ethnic"- is highly indebted to the work by diverse activist groups that demanded public space and visibility for racialized artists, their commercialization in the cultural market has exposed a renewed Orientalist desire that has led numerous critics to affirm that "[i]mmigrant writers have become a commodity" (Ponzanesi, 2006). The commodification of multicultural/ethnic writing in Canada and its negative implications for anti-racist activism have been extensively studied. The ongoing internal debates in the last decades over appropriation, racism and cooptation have critiqued that idyllic image of Canada, one that Smaro Kamboureli (2007) has described as the "fetishization of its multicultural make-up." These protests could be understood as an important impulse behind the Canadian government's urge to promote the multicultural brand in the present decade, while the preference for South Asian narratives - besides participating in the wider phenomenon of the Indian boom to considered below - has been associated by Donald Goellnich (quoted in Kim, 2008) with domestic political issues, when he suggests that their choice to "focus in their fiction on the past in a distant place that still haunts them, another place, not here, rather than writing novels about racism and discrimination in Canada may also help to explain why it has been easier for their works to get published by mainstream publishing houses."[74]

3. Global Indo-chic and its Reception in Spain

In Spain, Canadian titles available in translation from racialized writers are scarce, and most of them happen to be award recipients of South Asian origin, confirming Graham Huggan's theories in *The Postcolonial Exotic: Marketing the*

73 Because narrative is, undoubtedly, the best selling literary mode and English is the hegemonic language of globalization, I am limiting my study here to the fiction by South Asian Canadian writers in that language.

74 In her comparative study of Shani Mooto's *Cereus Blooms at Night* and Larissa Lai's *When Fox Is a Thousand* Christine Kim suggests that the limited success of the second as compared to the first novel may be due to the "troublesome position [it] takes up within dominant ideas of the nation, as the novel demonstrates the limits of official multiculturalism" (Kim, "Troubling the Mosaic," 163). The first, on the other hand, has been read as a "postcolonial" text that does not criticize this most cherished quality of the Canadian nation(s) and this would explain, for Kim, its international projection.

Margins. To my knowledge, there is no translation into peninsular Spanish of texts by Black Canadians written in English, only two by a Native Canadian (Ruby Slipperjack's *Honrar al sol* (2007) and Joseph Boyden's *Tres días de camino* (2010). East Asian Canadian fiction is limited to only four titles: Lydia Kwa's *Un lugar llamado ausencia* (2002 by Seix Barral; 2005, in a collectible series titled "Biblioteca oriental" ("Oriental Library," by Planeta), Denise Chong's *La niña de la foto* (Salvat, 2002), Nancy Lee's *Chicas muertas* (Circe, 2007) and Madeleine Thien's *Certeza* (Alfaguara, 2007), significantly, all by women writers.

The list of titles by South Asian Canadian authors in peninsular Spanish (Castilian) is limited to seven writers, Michael Ondaatje being the one who has the highest number of titles in translation. The list of Ondaatje's Works which have been published in Spain includes: *The English Patient*/*El paciente inglés* (1995, 1997, 1998, 2003, 2004, 2008); [75] *In the Skin of a Lion*/*En una piel de león* (Tusquets, 1989; Destino, 1999; Punto de Lectura, 2009); *Running in the Family*/*Cosas de familia* (Destino, 1998); Coming Through Slaughter/*El blues de Buddy Bolden* (Destino, 1999); Handwriting/*Escrito a mano* (Hiperión,2000); Anil's Ghost / *El fantasma de Anil* (Destino, 2001, 2002), *Divisadero* (Alfaguara, 2008); *Las obras completas de Billy el Niño* (Punto de Lectura, 2008); Shani Mootoo's *Cereus Blooms at Night*/*El cereus florece de noche* (Debate, 1999); Rohinton Mistry's *A Fine Balance*/*Un perfecto equilibrio* (Mondadori and Círculo de Lectores, 1999; Nuevas ediciones de Bolsillo, 2006), *Such a Long Journey*/*Un viaje tan largo* (1999), *Family Matters*/*Asuntos de familia* (Mondadori, 2003; Nuevas Ediciones de Bolsillo 2004), Tales from Firozsha Baag/*Cuentos de Firozsha Baag* (Mondadori, 2007); Anita Rau Badami's The Hero's Walk/*El paseo del héroe* (Ediciones del Bronce 2001); Shyam Selvadurai's *Cinnamon* Gardens/*Jardines de canela* (Salamandra 2001, 2005); Shauna Singh Baldwin's *What the Body Remembers*/*Lo que el cuerpo recuerda* (Anagrama 2002); M.G. Vassanji's *The In-Between World of Vikram Lall*/*El mundo incierto de Vikram Lall* (Salamandra, 2006,2008); Neil Bissoondath's *The Soul of All Great Designs*/*Falsas identidades* (Maeva, 2010).

Some of these works were also simultaneously translated into Catalan: Ondaatje's *El fantasma d'Anil* (Destino, 2001); Badami's *El camí de l'heroi* (Columna, 2001); Baldwin's *El que recorda el cos* (2002); Mistry's *Un equilibri perfecte* (Edicions 62, 2002), *Afers de família* (RBA-La Magrana, 2003, 2005)

75 *The English Patient* has been distributed in Spain by a variety of publishers and in a variety of formats. Its first edition, reprinted several times, appeared in 1995, in the emblematic Spanish imprint Plaza y Janés, bought by Berstelmann in 1984 and later assimilated by Random House Mondadori in 2004. It has also been published by Círculo de Lectores (1998), Mediasat Group (2003), and RBA Collectibles (2004). The rights of Ondaatje's novels are currently owned by Punto de Lectura, an imprint of Santillana Ediciones Generales which is part of the the PRISA group.

and Vassanji's *La patria aliena de V. Lall* (RBA-La Magrana, 2006). None of them are available in Basque nor in Galician,[76] although there is an interesting exception in this last peripheral literary system: the translation of Rachna Mara's *Of Customs and Excise* (1991) as *Entre o costume e a ruptura* (1998), the result of the personal interest of writer and translator María Reimóndez, who had studied the text in my classes on Canadian Literature at the University of Vigo. Her advantageous position as an award-winning author and prized literary translator in the Galician publishing industry enable her to influence her publisher's decisions on translation. Although this is not the most frequent procedure, since "[c]urrent copyright law ensures that translation projects will be driven by publishers, not by translators (Venuti, 1998) publishers may be receptive to titles that come with the extra symbolic value attributed by the prestigious author/academic who signs the translation (and they will in turn publicize this collaboration). These highly reputed translators thus constitute one more agent of legitimation that confer prestige and merit among the many "relatively neglected agents of literature-making including editors and publishing houses; literary agents and their firms; film producers and their backers; booksellers and book clubs; university professors and the academy; prizes and their judges, administrators and sponsors; book reviewers, fiction editors, and the journals that employ them; and, very importantly, other authors" (Ponzanesi, 2006).

This group of South Asian Canadian writers have been especially successful, publishing with mainstream houses (*all* of them have published some title with the powerful Random House),[77] receiving multiple awards and distinctions including the Booker Prize, the Giller Prize, the Commonwealth Writers Prize or the Lambda Literary Award. They have achieved international recognition, reaching further into foreign publishing markets (in English and in translation) than any other new racialized literary figures from Canada.[78] The interest of Spanish publishers, critics and lay readers in South Asian Canadian literature in English must be understood in the context of the so-called "Indian boom" in international cultural markets that has a wider resonance affecting all sorts

76 Contrary to the higher status of the Catalan literary system (many mainstream publishers are settled in Barcelona), publishers in the minoritarian literary systems of the Basque and Galician languages have difficulties getting the rights for translation of titles published in the dominant language, Castilian; besides, the competition with a language of higher social prestige that is understood by their audiences is an unequal one.

77 However, in Spain only Rohinton Mistry has been published by Random House Mondadori.

78 It is relevant to take into account the role of these prizes and awards for the translation of these titles: of the books by Shani Mootoo, Anita Rau Badami, Shauna Singh Baldwin and V.G. Vassanji, only their most awarded ones have been translated into Spanish and Catalan.

of culture, high and low (food, clothes, body decoration, film and music, for instance),[79] in what has been called Indofrenzy and Indo-chic.

The Rushdie affair and Arundhati Roy's Booker Prize (1997) were two main catalysts at the turn of the century for the contemporary success of Indian fiction in English. Their frequent appearances in the media served to promote Indian fiction in English all over the world, and most especially in the West, a success confirmed by V.S. Naipaul's Nobel Prize in 2001, the Man Booker Prizes awarded to Kiran Desai in 2006 and to Aravind Adiga in 2008, and the *Slumdog Millionaire* (Boyle's film adaptation of Vikas Swarup's novel *Q&A*) global phenomenon, together with an important number of other South Asian novels translated into diverse languages in recent years and the precedent of Michael Ondaatje's Booker Prize (1992) and Anthony Minghella's film adaptation of *The English Patient* (1996). As can be inferred from the number of times that *The English Patient* has been reprinted in Spain, it can be interpreted as a clear case of how the book industry has located and exploited a foreign text which already possessed the potential for a large readership because it had been adapted to another form of mass culture, in this case a Hollywood award-winning film (Venuti 1998).

In Spain, while Canadian Studies have a much longer tradition in academia (for instance, the Spanish Association for Canadian Studies, AEEC, was founded in 1988 and became a member of the International Council for Canadian Studies in 1990), the recent interest in Indian culture[80] is acquiring all the stamina that Canadian Studies seem to be losing (due mostly to the severe cuts in programmes assisting national associations: Spain's was withdrawn in 2008 and the entire Understanding Canada scheme (except The Canadian Leadership and the Canada-US Fullbright Programmes) programme has been terminated in May 2012.

In Spanish newspapers and magazines, South Asian Canadian writers have been promoted and read mostly as "Indian" or Sri Lankan authors respectively,[81] and their added value as migrant authors is foregrounded with persistent references to the many displacements in their lives, where sentences like "born in Sri Lanka/India/Kenya, educated in the United States/Great Britain, now lives

79 Deepa Mehta's films have been received warmly in Spain.

80 The Spanish Association for Interdisciplinary India Studies (AEEII) was created in 2007. Interestingly enough, the first conference of this association was held in the summer of 2009 in Córdoba around the topic "India in Canada, Canada in India: Managing Diversity", with the participation of M.G. Vassanji, Padma Viswanathan and Nurjehan Aziz as plenary speakers.

81 Michael Ondaatje has been mistakenly described as a "Canadian writer of Dutch origin raised in India" (Giménez; my translation). Vassanji is presented as an Indian author born in Nairobi.

in Canada" are common stock (though more often than not Canada is not even mentioned as their place of residency). Michael Ondaatje has been mistakenly described as a "Canadian writer of Dutch origin raised in India (Giménez, 2004).[82] Vassanji is usually presented as an Indian author born in Nairobi. References to their Canadian "nationality" are, for the most part, nonexistent. Only after Margaret Atwood's Prince of Asturias Prize in 2008 has Ondaatje become "Canadian" in Spain, for the promotional tour of his novel *Divisadero* (published in Spain that same year), profiting thus from the "Atwood effect" in the Spanish media.[83] Ondaatje's international (and, by inclusion, Spanish) celebration elicits a tension: that between the bolstering of Ondaatje's position as "a Canadian Ambassador abroad" - contributing to Canada's cultural legitimacy- and the unsettling of the same position through the international emphasis on his Sri Lankan identity which conceals his Canadianness (Roberts, 2011).

The list of awards, shortlistings and longlistings of these writers is, however, not forgotten. Their novels are systematically described in terms that emphasize their hybridity ("mestizaje" being a trendy term in Spanish when alluding to "world cultures"), and their synopses allude to displacement and dislocation, cultural clash, war and "turbulent times," colonial times, social conventions, arranged marriages, gender and sexual oppression, submission and rebellion, while in terms of style they are praised for their sensuality and lyricism. As a representative example we may consider the promotional text for Shyam Selvadurai's *Jardines de Canela* used by internet sellers, where all the above clichés are reproduced, together with this synthetic line: "*Cinnamon Gardens* is a portrait tainted by nostalgia for the placidity of colonial life suddenly shaken by convulsive political events."[84] With the notable of exception of some of Michael Ondaatje's novels, all the fiction by South Asian Canadian authors translated into Spanish takes place in "exotic" lands (the Caribbean, Africa and South Asia), not in Canada (too cold and Western to be considered "exotic" by Spaniards), and this is considered an asset, as expressed in this review of Mistry's *Cuentos de Firozsha Baag*: "Mistry, although a resident in Canada since 1995, stands out for not having abandoned 'indi' themes in his novels. It is precisely this characteristic which gives his work a special touch. In *Tales from Firozsha Baag* Mistry portrays the diverse aspects of everyday life in the industrialized cities of India, where tradition and modernity go hand in hand in a completely natural way" (Javaloyes, 2007).

82 All translations from reviews and blurbs are mine.

83 While in the interviews and reviews of *El paciente inglés* and *El fantasma de Anil* his Asian origin is always mentioned, there is no allusion whatsoever to his biography and origin in the review of *El Blues de Boddy Bolden* by José María Guelbenzu in *El País* (Guelbenzu, 1999).

84 Promotional synopsis for *Jardines de Canela,* by Shyam Salvadurai (Google Books).

At Spanish universities, South Asian Canadian writers are included in courses, seminars and conferences on Indian fiction in English, diasporic literature and/or migrant literature, and they are usually inserted without further comment in the long list of famous Indo-English authors:

> On the shelves in Spanish we find pioneer authors like Rabindranath Tagore (who translated himself into English from his mother tongue Bengali); two of the three narrators considered to be the fathers of the Indian novel in English, Mulk Raj Anand and R.K. Narayan (the third one, Raja Rao, has not been translated); *best-sellers* who started to emerge in the eighties, like Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy, Amitav Ghosh, Vikram Chandra, Anita Desai, Vikram Seth, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and Manju Kapur; other authors of international prestige like Rohinton Mistry, Manil Suri and Gita Mehta, and also some scarce texts by Anita Rau Badami, Anita Nair, Ardashir Vakil and Amit Chaudhuri (Sales, 2005).

This is the case also with Spanish publishers themselves, judging from the testimony of Jorge Herralde (founder and director of Anagrama, which published Singh Baldwin's novel *What the Body Remembers* in 2002) when asked in an interview about his new interests: "I don't have any editorial patriotisms, nor do I discover anything new: 'discoverer' is an imposing word. I do intend to publish the most valuable of what emerges in diverse contexts. Perhaps the most splendorous literature of the recent years has been Indian English Literature, with Arundhati Roy, Vikram Seth, Salman Rushdie, Gita Mehta and Amitav Ghosh, well known by Spanish readers. My next bets in this area are Ardashir Vakil, Pankaj Mishra and Shauna Singh Baldwin (Berasátegui, 2000).

Only those academics with a solid background in Canadian Literature speak of these writers as Canadian authors or specifically as South Asian Canadian, as most of the papers presented at the first AEEI conference evidenced.[85] Due to the fact that most of the Canadianists in Spain have been supported in our research by the funding agencies and programs of DFAIT and of the International Council for Canadian Studies, we can consider the promotion in our courses of these South Asian authors as Canadian proof of the success of Canadian foreign policies on cultural diplomacy. While sponsoring their publication abroad through translation and tour programs does not seem to have had much effect on the Spanish readers and reviewers' perception of their Canadianness, studying them in courses on Canadian culture does help sustain that notion of Canadian multiculturalism that the government

85 Juan Ignacio Oliva dedicates one chapter of his study *Historia, clase, género y raza en la literatura angloindia en la diáspora* to South Asian Canadian women poets.

is so interested in portraying. For the publishers, nevertheless, the economic benefit resides, in this decade, on the exotic appeal of their "Oriental" background.[86] As von Flotow has indicated, "the translating culture is as much, if not more, involved in the selection of the foreign materials it wishes to have circulated and read as any neo-colonialist force providing the funds to make this possible (von Flotow, 2007a), and it is quite clear that right now the Spanish public demands "Indian" fiction. But, as Sandra Ponzanesi (2006) reminds us, it is the essential nature of any (cultural) market to prey on novelty, and "what this year is Indo-chic may next year be Moroccan-suave and then the following year Latinfusion." Despite the success in the markets of these texts, it is too early to know which ones will resist the test of time and maintain their canonical status. Rachna Mara's and Shani Mootoo's translated works are no longer available in Spanish bookstores. To this date, no other work by Baldwin or Badami has been translated, although both of them have published other novels and stories later. Popular surveys like the BBC's Big Read of 2003 show that despite the undeniable support of literary prizes to turn a novel into a bestseller, awards neither grant durable favor among readers, nor guarantee sure access to the literary canon: on the list of best books chosen by participants in the BBC Big Read survey, Rushdie's Booker of Bookers, *Midnight's Children* came in position 100, while Mistry's *A Fine Balance* came in 196 (Ponzanesi, 2006), and "even Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient* is missing, the fanfare around the Booker in (1992) [sic] and the film (1996) being forgotten" (Ponzanesi, 2006). In Spain, Ondaatje and Mistry have had several reprintings of their works, and seem, so far, to do well among critics and readers. The impulse given by "the Atwood effect" in 2008 might be behind the publication of new and old titles by Ondaatje, Mistry and Vassanji that year and during the following one. The absence of more books by South Asian women authors is certainly surprising at a time when "Indian" novels by women continue to be translated in significant numbers every year. Their ephemeral success seems to confirm the hypothesis of the "supposed tokenism for shortlisted black, female or diasporic authors" (Ponzanesi, 2006), who are translated at the moment of their widest international attention in the media but are no longer supported after that. Why are their new titles not being translated into Spanish? I leave the question open to their publishers.

86 While in the English language there is a clear distinction between the terms "East" (as a geographical reference) and "Orient" (as a cultural construction), in Spanish the word "oriente" is used in both senses.

4. Conclusions

It has been my aim here to examine the role that South Asian Canadian fiction in translation plays as a form of cultural diplomacy that contributes to nation branding - reinforcing on the international scene the image of Canada as a multicultural and advanced nation that provides self-confidence to Canadians themselves -, and attempts to pacify protests by antiracist cultural and political activism on the domestic scene, since as Ken Lum has remarked, "[multicultural] diversity was designed to be the basis of the cultural pillar of Canada's foreign and domestic policy" (quoted in Maxwell, 2007).

The emphasis on multiculturalism as the crucial Canadian value to be branded in cultural diplomacy has helped to project globally a selection of multicultural authors of whom the majority happen to be of South Asian origin. From the perspective of Canadian cultural diplomacy, the narratives of these authors may seem safer and less politically compromising for their (neo)liberal interests. Besides, they are a perfect point of confluence with the economic interests of powerful Canadian cultural industries that benefit from the sales of their authors within the global Indo-chic boom.

The small number of South Asian Canadian authors translated in Spain is still much higher than the list of authors from any other racialized community from Canada. All these authors publish (or have published in the past) in Canada with imprints of Random House, the most powerful publishing group in the literary realm. Economic interests of private corporations and the political interests of Canadian public diplomacy coincide, then, in their instrumentalization of South Asian Canadian fiction. However, the political aim of cultural diplomacy at risk in Spain by the marketing and circulation of these narratives as "Asian" texts, more specifically as "Indian" texts (regardless of the ethnic origin of their authors or their nationality). Judging from the promotional synopses and biodata offered in interviews and reviews (both academic and in newspapers), these books are read as "Indian" books, not as Canadian ones, and only Ondaatje seems to have been recently labelled as a Canadian author. Because these stories are set far from Canada, Spanish readers fail to see them as the products of Canadian multiculturalism, as the federal programs would like them to be appreciated. This proves true von Flotow's observation (2007) that "the process [of cultural diplomacy] and its outcome depends as much if not more on the participation and choices of the receiving culture." The translation of a greater diversity of racialized authors from Canada in Spain would help greatly to offer a more accurate view of the cultural capital of Canadian writing. In order to achieve the objectives of cultural diplomacy to brand Canada as a multicultural country on the international sphere, greater efforts must be made by governmental funding agencies to support the translation and international promotion

of Black Canadian, Native Canadian, Inuit and other Asian and minority writers of diverse ethnic backgrounds into Spanish, and then export them to other Spanish-language markets (see Martínez-Zalce, 2001). Relying on the economic success of some token ethnicities in a global market driven by monetary awards is a poor contribution to a true implementation of Multiculturalism and a tactic that, at least among Spanish readers, fails in its main objective. The wealth of racialized writing from Canada is too great to be so reductively delivered abroad.

Chapter 4

Canadian into Catalan: The Translation of Anglo-Canadian Authors in Catalonia

Isabel Alonso-Breto and Marta Ortega-Sáez

1. Catalonia's Singularity and Parallelisms with Quebec[87]

Although it may seem disconcerting to begin this chapter about the translation of Anglo-Canadian writers into Catalan with a comparison of Quebec and Catalonia in a book which only deals with CanLit in English, we find that the parallelism is apt because of the minority language and distinct nation status of these two constituencies, and because Quebec and English Canada are co-existent national entities, just like Catalonia and Spain. The parallelism between Catalonia and Quebec has recently been strengthened with the recent upsurge of nationalism and the demand for a referendum to decide whether to become separate from the Spanish state. The story is not new, since as a "historical" autonomous community with a language of its own, Catalan, and a distinct history[88] and cultural tradition, often at odds with the Spanish ones, Catalonia presents some interesting parallelisms with Quebec, a province with its own language and cultural singularity, which sometimes are also in conflict with those of English Canada.

Over the centuries, Catalan has acquired a strongly political added value, so much so that Catalan identity cannot be understood in isolation from commitment to the language. In fact, as regards language, parallelisms in the linguistic situations of Catalonia and Quebec cannot be overestimated. In Quebec, French has been the only official language since 1977. In spite of this, federal government interventions take place attending to the official status of both French and English in the Federation (Létourneau, 2002) Similarly, in Catalonia both Catalan and Spanish are official, even if only the first is

87 We wish to thank August Bové and Jacqueline Hurtley, Professors of Catalan Literature and English literature at the Universitat de Barcelona, for kindly revising this piece.

88 In spite of the union of the Crowns of Aragon and Castille through the marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castille in the 15th century, Catalonia remained a different political entity with its own institutions after 1714 (besides its own language) until the 18th century, when it was incorporated into the kingdom of Spain.

the "llengua pròpia de Catalonia" (Catalonia's own language) according to the Catalan "Estatut" or Statue of Home Rule. Thus, Gade remarks that since the late 1970s Catalonia and Québec "have enjoyed substantial autonomy to chart their own cultural courses" (Gade, 2003) and also that "everywhere in these two polities, language use and policy define issues that remind inhabitants of the need for vigilance in protecting and expanding their minority rights" (Gade, 2003). Indeed both Catalan and Quebecois are islands of linguistic minorities in a sea of speakers of two overwhelmingly powerful languages - Spanish and English. These two hegemonic languages turn out to be menacing for these linguistic communities for different reasons, among which the enormous output of global cultural production in them is one of the most important.[89]

According to Gade (2003), "in Québec, the mother tongue of 81 percent of its 7.4 million people is French. Close to 10 percent of the population speak English as their maternal language and ... [a]nother 10 percent of Québec's population comprise a more fluid multilingual category of immigrants or children of immigrants whose first language is neither French nor English but who use both" (Gade, 2003). In the case of Catalan, it is not spoken in Catalonia only, but also in other autonomous communities, like Valencia and the Balearic Islands, some areas in Aragon (the Franja de Ponent or "Western Fringe"), and Murcia (the area of El Carxe), the independent state of Andorra in the Pyrenees, the Northern Catalonia areas in France (incorporated by this state in the 17th century) and the city of l'Alguer on the Italian island of Sardinia. The legal status of Catalan varies in these territories, being the official language in Andorra and co-official in Catalonia, Valencia and the Balearic Islands. Together with the differences in the legal status, there are also regional variations in the use of Catalan in these areas.[90] In all, and broadly speaking, some 10 million people can be said to be fluent in Catalan. [91]

89 Other reasons would be, in the case of Quebec, the proximity of a cultural and linguistic giant like the USA (besides the overwhelming presence and use of English in the rest of Canada) and, in Catalonia, the massive arrival of Latin American immigrants who speak only Spanish and are not especially interested in or need to learn Catalan.

90 See the web of the Foundation for Endangered Languages. It should be cautioned here that if considered according to linguistic criteria, Valencian is not perceived as a language different from Catalan (as it is presented, for instance, in the document *Selling Canadian Books in Spain*). Rather, it is commonly acknowledged, also in most Valencian cultural and political spheres, that Valencian is a variant of Catalan. One of the main Valencian editing houses in Catalan, Bromera, has translated many of Eric Wilson's teenage mystery novels.

91 The overall estimated population who understand Catalan (although they do not necessarily speak it on a daily basis) amounts to 13.529.127 (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2012).

In spite of the many similarities, there are also differences. For one, the variant of French spoken in Quebec has had to fight off the stigma of being a local and inferior version of European French, which remained the standard for what was not only correct but also chic. Catalan has not had this problem as it has been in charge of setting the norm for itself. There are further differences, some of which are signalled by Daniel W. Gade as follows (we quote the passage at length because it is illustrative of the difficult course of the Catalan language through history, a course which can be matched to Catalonia's own difficult history):

> In Catalonia, the Catalan language has a written history that predates by at least 500 years the appearance of French in Québec. Unlike Québec, however, where the British conquest never led to suppression of the language, in Catalonia periods of tolerance for Catalan have alternated with harassment and proscription. [...] A 1716 Bourbon decree imposed Castilian on Catalonia, but not until 1857, when a national network of public schools was established, did the central government in Madrid mandate teaching in Castilian. A diglossia emerged in Catalonia, in which Castilian became the public language and Catalan was left as the home vernacular. Later in the nineteenth century, Catalan re-emerged as part of a larger movement (La Renaixença) toward self-government, education, literary achievement, and economic advancement. The Second Republic (1931-1939) in Spain built on these developments and gave legal protection to Catalan. [...] The Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) aroused complex allegiances in Catalonia, and language was only part of that equation. After 1970, resistance grew and Madrid loosened its control over these matters somewhat. Franco's demise in 1975 presaged a new vision of a democratic and diverse Spain (Gade, 2003).

Although all the areas where Catalan is spoken make up the so-called "Països Catalans," or "Catalan Countries," a historical and ideological entity that holds strong for most Catalans, Catalan remains an endangered minority language. An expert in endangered languages,[92] researcher Carme Junyent of the Universitat de Barcelona, places Catalan within the 40% of languages of the world which show symptoms of replacement. Junyent attributes the detriment of Catalan, which could lead to its extinction, to the use of Spanish among immigrants and to the lack of institutional support (Vernet and Llobet, 2004). Gade (2003) follows this train of thought and indicates the bullying that the Catalan language

92 Carme Junyent participated in the foundation of GELA (The Study Group pro Endangered Languages) – an international association of worldwide linguists – in 1992.

undergoes not only in the rest of the Spanish peninsula but also within the above mentioned "Catalan Countries":

Since 1975, knowledge and use of Catalan has increased rapidly in Catalonia. Yet it remains an in-group phenomenon, for non-Catalans are rarely expected to speak Catalan even when they understand it. Catalans see their language as a marker of their own shared identity to be used among themselves and, at the same time, manifest the ability to incorporate Castilian seamlessly as an alternative mode of expression. Parallels in grammatical structure and lexical similarities have predisposed most Catalans to become fluent in Castilian, perhaps as much through cultural osmosis as formal study. The rest of Spain makes no such accommodation; indeed, Catalanoparlants [Catalan speakers] have occasionally met with hostility outside their home regions as living representatives of the subversion of Spanish unity (Gade, 2003).

Notwithstanding differences between Quebec and Catalonia, there exist a number of cultural ties. Proof of this proximity is the existence of the Bureau de Québec à Barcelone – the only one in Spain. As María Jesús Bronchal, its Attachée aux Affaires Institutionelles, Publiques et Culturelles, affirmed in an unpublished interview, the institution is very active in the promotion of cultural manifestations of Québec throughout Spain.[93] Such is the case of outstanding Québecois companies like Cirque du Soleil, Les Sept Doigts de la Main, Cirque Éloize; and relevant personalities of the artistic world: Denys Arcand and Robert Lepage, among others. Bronchal's perception is that in Spain, and more specifically in Catalonia, people are increasingly becoming more aware of the existence of a specifically Québecois culture, distinct from the Anglo-Canadian and the French ones. The exhaustive work carried out by this institution has resulted in a greater familiarity on the part of the Spanish cultural consumers with Canadian culture at large. One of the areas in which the Bureau de Québec has been particularly active is the publishing sector. In 2008 Québec was the Guest of Honour at the 26th International Book Fair in Barcelona, through the invitation of the Federation of Spanish Publishers (Federación del Gremio de Editores Españoles). This event went together with an agreement between Québecois and Catalan cultural institutions to favour the exchange of autochthonous literature through translations. Unfortunately, this agreement has not been as productive as initially expected. Nevertheless, it testifies to the sense of proximity and actual collaboration between the two territories involved. Furthermore, some Catalan institutions which work in

93 The interview with María Jesús Bronchal was held on 15 December 2009. We wish to thank Mrs. Bronchal for her willingness to cooperate, her great kindness and the useful data she provided.

the publishing and cultural industries have been designed on the Québecois model, as Bronchal pointed out in the same interview.

2. The Publishing Industry in Catalonia

Barcelona is a vibrant centre of the Spanish-language publishing industry in Spain and Latin America. The city has long been recognized as an outstanding, first-rank cosmopolitan centre by publishing and cultural standards, not least because in the 1960s it pioneered the publication of authors like Gabriel García Márquez and Julio Cortázar and was arguably the birthplace, in publishing terms, of the so-called "Boom" of the Latin American novel. The Catalan Institute of Cultural Industries reports that 44.9% of the overall book production in Spain was generated in Catalonia in 2008.[94] Ernest Folch (2006), editorial manager of Edicions 62, one of the biggest Catalan publishing houses, recalls that Catalonia is "the world area where more books in Spanish are sold per capita."

But Barcelona is also the capital and cultural centre of Catalonia, the most culturally and economically independent of the Spanish autonomous communities, and as such it owns a full and complex industry devoted to publishing in the Catalan language, itself a language as old as Spanish. Although Ernest Folch (2006) contends that sharing territory with the most important publishing houses in Catalonia makes Spanish-language publishing houses all the more aggressive and undermining for Catalan, at the moment the book industry in Catalan appears to be in very good shape, at least in comparative terms. In fact, no other language without a state supporting it is experiencing an upsurge comparable to that of Catalan, and the main reason for this is the firm investment in continuity and the normalization of the Catalan language. Thus, while it cannot be doubted that in many senses Catalan has suffered the consequences of coexistence with Spanish - also in the area of publishing - with Catalan publishing firms having been absorbed by Spanish ones (Capilla, 2006), some voices suggest that the Catalan publishing industry has benefited from the close contact with the Spanish one: "Without the profit and infrastructures generated by the industry of books in Spanish, it would have been impossible to start and sustain the industry of Catalan books" (Olmos, 2006).

94 See Generalitat de Catalunya (2009), "Dades bàsiques sobre el sector editorial a Catalunya." We wish to thank Iolanda Pelegrí, from the "Institució de les Lletres catalanes," forkindly answering several questions and addressingus to useful sources of information.

We have seen that the area of reception of works published in Catalan spans an ample territory. However, readership in those areas remains overwhelmingly Spanish. This may be due to several factors, such as the minor visibility in bookstores and libraries of books in Catalan together with their higher price: the fewer copies produced, the higher their cost and therefore their final price, and editions in Catalan are necessarily smaller than their Spanish counterparts (Folch, 2006). Capilla (2006) also suggests that the educational system and cultural institutions in Valencia do not support the Catalan language sufficiently and the argument can be extended to the Balearic Islands.

Usually, a single work is published simultaneously in Spanish and Catalan, in the hope, according to translator and writer Bernat Puigtobella (2008), that "the success of the Spanish edition will help to push the Catalan one up into the best-seller lists." In this context, everything which is translated into Catalan has also been translated into Spanish, but not the other way round. As a result, the reader will seldom take the trouble to investigate whether there is a Catalan version to the more visible (and again, often cheaper) Spanish version of a translated novel. Thus, Catalan is always at risk of seeing itself reduced to being the language of expression of local writers, of either fiction or non-fiction (Puigtobella, 2008). In order to counter this jeopardy, sponsoring policies have been needed and have been systematically put into practice by the Catalan authorities to boost translations from world literature into Catalan.[95]

Neither of the other two minority peninsular languages -Basque and Galician- compare in size and readership to the publishing industries in Catalan (Capilla, 2006). In this context, it may sound contradictory that an article published recently in the Catalan press should state that "only 32.16% of the books published in Catalonia, Valencia and the Balearic Islands last year were in Catalan" ("Només el 32,16 %," 2010). This figure is compared to the 57.32% of books published in Galician and the 45.7% of books in Basque. Nevertheless, one should not forget that these figures need to be contextualized, bearing in mind the pivotal position of Catalonia in the Spanish book industry. Taking all these aspects into account, the above-mentioned article provides the overall percentages of books in the co-official languages of Spain in 2009, showing that Catalan exceeds the numbers of Basque and Galician (11.2% in Catalan, 2.5% in Galician and 1.4% in Basque).

95 For further information on sponsorship, see the webpage of the Catalan Department of Culture and Communication. Of particular interest are the sections on Cultural Industries and Books and Literature.

3. Anglo-Canadian Literature in Catalan: Facts and Figures

Consultation of two fundamental databases, the ISBN[96] and the *Index Translationum*, [97] from 1988 (the year of the foundation of the Spanish Association for Canadian Studies) up until the present, provides information regarding the number of Anglo-Canadian authors whose works have been translated into Catalan in the period in question. The research we carried out shows that a total of thirty-two Anglo-Canadian writers have been translated into Catalan, which amounts to seventy-six publications (including different editions and reprints), among which there are fifty different titles. As regards the publishing houses, and in purely quantitative terms, the most active are Edicions 62; Columna Edicions, Llibres i Comunicació, S.A.; Bromera; Edicions Proa, S.A; Ediciones B, S.A.; and Editorial Cruïlla, S.A. The numbers of translations into Catalan are reflected in Figure 4.1:

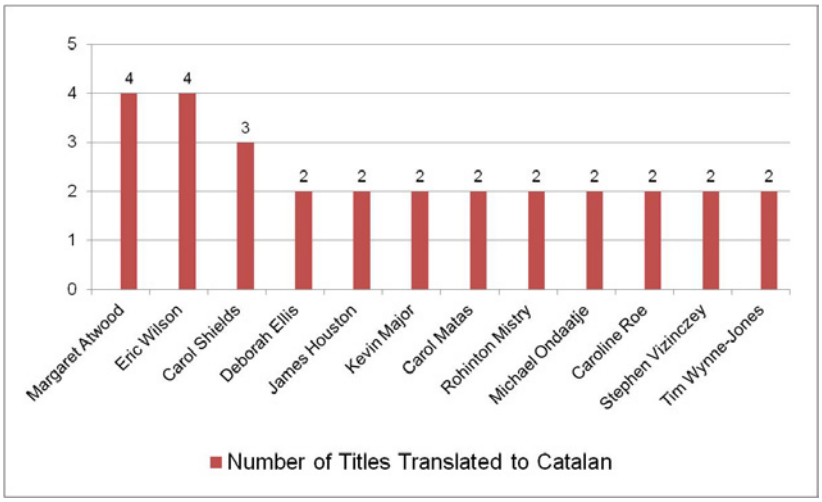

Fig. 4.1 Number of Anglo-Canadian books translated into Catalan.

96 The Spanish International Standard Book Number.

97 The *Index Translationum* is an international bibliography of translations created in 1932 by the UNESCO.

Three of them – Edicions 62, Columna, and Proa – currently belong to the publishing group Grup 62. This group, which emerged as an expansion of Edicions 62 (originally founded in 1962), is a major point of reference in the Catalan publishing world and it comprises eighteen publishing houses in Catalan and – interestingly - five publishing houses in Spanish. As regards our object of study, almost 43% of the translations into Catalan from Anglo-Canadian texts have been published by firms that belong to this group.

Edicions 62, which heads the list, has published the translations of a considerable number of works by authors such as Stephen Vizinczey, Carol Shields, Pauline Gedge, Rohinton Mistry and Caroline Roe, among others. Secondly, Columna Edicions has published the translations into Catalan of Anita Rau Badami, Alan Bradley, Andrew Davidson, Will Ferguson, Barbara Gowdy, James Houston and Yann Martel. In third place is Bromera, a publishing house in Alzira (Valencia) which has published two printings of all the translations into Catalan of children's literature author Eric Wilson. Finally, Proa and Cruïlla have both published translations of Margaret Atwood's texts. Proa, absorbed by Edicions 62 in 2007, has also published translations of Shauna Singh Baldwin and Francis Itani; whereas Cruïlla, only publishes Children's and Youth Literature, like the novels by Tim Wynne-Jones. Ediciones B has been in charge of publishing some of Carol Matas's and Kevin Major's works, who are also included in the category of juvenile literature.

When examining the number of works by Anglo-Canadian authors in translation (see Figure 4.1), it comes as no surprise that Margaret Atwood should head the list, together with Eric Wilson, each with four translated titles. Margaret Atwood's considerable popularity in Spain at the present time responds in part to her having been the recipient of the Prince of Asturias Award in 2008.[98] Only two of her children's literature books, which had probably been commissioned before news about the prize came out, were published in Catalan that year: *D'alt de l'arbre* (*Up in the Tree*) and *L'Anna vol tenir un animalet* (*Anna's Pet*, written in collaboration with Joyce C. Barkhouse), and none afterwards. Her latest attempts in the field of speculative fiction, *Oryx and Crake* (2003) and *The Year of the Flood* (2009) have still not appeared in a Catalan version.

Before being awarded the Prince of Asturias Award, *Ull de gat* (*Cat's Eye*) had been translated in 1990, only two years after its launch and nomination for the 1988 Governor General's Award in Canada and one year after being short listed for the British Booker Prize.[99] It was published by Edicions de l'Eixample, a relatively

98 See Chapter 2 in this book.

99 Barcelona was the first place that Atwood visited in Spain when she came for a book tour of *Cat's Eye* in 1990. She returned in 1992 for Pen International Conference and, again, in 1996. This information was provided by Pilar Somacarrera.

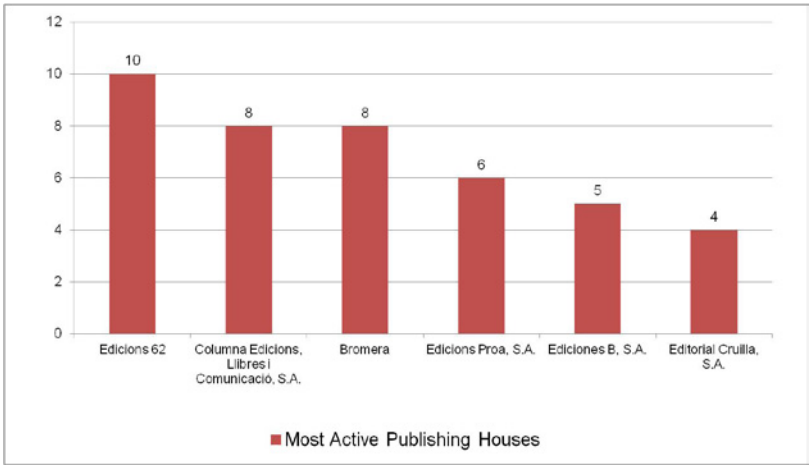

Fig. 4.2 Catalan publishing houses who have published English-Canadian authors.

new publishing house (founded in 1984) which included Atwood's novel in its collection "Women's Space." Only when Atwood won the Booker Prize in 2000 for *The Blind Assassin* was she translated into Catalan again. Its Catalan translation, *L'assassí cec*, was reissued four times after the first publication in 2001, something unique in the restricted area of Catalan translations of Canadian authors (other comparatively best-selling authors like Kevin Major and Carol Matas have so far only reached three editions each). Among these best-selling authors, the case of Pauline Gedge is worth mentioning. *La dama del Nil* (*Child of the Morning*), which combines historical exactitude with romance and was widely distributed in Spanish in collectibles, was published in 1992 and successively reissued in 1996 and 2001. These three editions show Gedge (who was born in New Zealand) as an author as popular as Margaret Atwood in Catalonia because only herself, Atwood and Stephen Vizinczey, together with children's literature best-sellers Kevin Major and Carol Matas have ever reached three editions in Catalan.

4. Translations of Children's Literature

Interestingly, the two books by Atwood published in 2008 belong to the category of children's and youth literature, precisely the genre practised by Eric Wilson, a former teacher from British Columbia who now writes children's mystery novels with Canadian settings. The four titles by Wilson published in Catalan are: *Assassinat en el Canadian Express* (*Murder on The Canadian Express*, available in Spanish as early as 1982, and with Catalan editions in 1997 and 2009), *Pànic*

a Vancouver (*Vancouver Nightmare*, 1997 and 2008), *Terror a Winnipeg* (*Terror in Winnipeg,* 1998 and 2005) and *Els vampirs d'Ottawa* (*Vampires of Ottawa*, 1998 and 2006).

This considerable number of translations is not casual: seven out of the twelve Anglo-Canadian authors who have seen two or more of their works translated into Catalan belong to the genre of children's and youth literature: Margaret Atwood and Eric Wilson, but also the following less-known writers: Deborah Ellis, with the works *El pa de la Guerra* (*The Breadwinner,* 2004 and 2009 in the Catalan editions) and *El viatge de la Parvana (Parvana's Journey*, 2004); James Houston, with *Diamants negres: a la recerca del tresor artic* (*Black Diamonds: A Search for Arctic Treasure*, 1988) and *Foc glaçat: una història de coratge* (*Frozen Fire: A Tale of Courage*, 1994 and 1996); Kevin Major, with *Estimat Bruce Springsteen* (*Dear Bruce Springsteen*, 1989, 1992 and 1993) and *Lluny de la riba* (*Far from Shore*, 1993); Carol Matas, with *Lisa* (1989, 1993) and *Jesper* (2001, 2005, 2006); Tim Wynne-Jones, with *Una fuga i una mentida* (*The Maestro*, 1999) and *Un lladre a la casa de la memòria* (*A Thief in the House of Memory*, 2006).

In all, ten out of the thirty-two Anglo-Canadian authors translated into Catalan can be placed in the category of children's and youth literature. Joyce Barkhouse, Alan Bradley, and Melanie Watt can also be included with one title each: *La bruixa de Port Lajoye* (*The Witch of Port Lajoye*, 1987 and 1989 in its Catalan editions), *Els estranys talents de la Flàvia* (*The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie*, 2009), and *L'Agustina es muda al Pol Nord* (*Augustine is Moving to the North Pole*, 2009), respectively.

There are reasons to explain this phenomenon. On the one hand, Canadian children's literature is a particularly strong area of the Canadian literary system. Adrienne Kertzer (2002) mentions the elements of realistic fiction that place the protagonist in conflict with the wilderness, together with fantasy, as two of its main strengths. But there is a further reason. The document *Selling Canadian Books in Spain*, edited by the Association for the Export of Canadian Books, states that the impact in the Spanish market of the edition of books written in languages other than Spanish is mainly in textbooks. In this context, we should recall that in Catalonia, as the previous data illustrate, the production and circulation of texts for schools is particularly prominent. By the expression "texts for schools," we refer not only to textbooks, but also to fiction in the Catalan language, including translations, incorporated in primary and secondary education curricula. As stated before, readership in the Catalan countries is overwhelmingly Spanish, but the fact is that primary and secondary education in some of these areas (especially in Catalonia) is conducted fully in Catalan, so much so that Catalan students devote fewer hours per week to the study of Spanish than to the study of English. This means that in the Catalan autonomous community children and teenagers are encouraged to read virtually always in Catalan and only exceptionally in Spanish. As a result, the Catalan market in the

area of textbooks and fiction is comparatively stronger than that of adult books in Catalan, and also more important than that of children's and youth literature in Spanish published in Catalonia or elsewhere in Spain. Catalans only start reading mostly in Spanish after leaving high school.

5. Canadian Women Writers Translated Into Catalan

Outside the realm of children's and youth literature, other Canadian women authors, besides Margaret Atwood, figure prominently in the list of the most translated writers into Catalan, just as they do in the list of Spanish translations. The third position is occupied by Carol Shields. Three of her novels, which are also available in Spanish, have been rendered into Catalan: *La memòria de les pedres* (*The Stone Diaries*, Catalan version issued in 1996), which remained in the best-selling list for books in Catalan for several months, *El sopar d'en Larry* (*Larry's Party*, 1999), and *Deixar-ho tot* (*Unless*, 2003). Given Shields's success as a writer, the fact that the city of Barcelona appears in *El sopar de Larry* is probably only incidental – although it has been noted in the Catalan press (Huertas, 2003).

Of the two major Canadian women authors of the short story, Mavis Gallant and Alice Munro, who are regarded, together with Atwood and Shields, as "the leading English-Canadian writers of the latter half of the twentieth century" (Thacker, 2009), only Munro has been translated into Catalan. Her belated transference into the Catalan literary system, with the translation of *Too Much Happiness* (*Massa felicitat*, Club Editor 2010) and of *Hateship...Marriage* (*Odi, amistat, festeig, amor, matrimoni*, Club Editor 2011) comes only after her acceptance in Spain has been solidly established. Quebec-born editor and publisher Anik Lapointe from the publishing group RBA, which has a series in Catalan known as "La Magrana," contributed considerably to make Munro known to Spanish readers.[100] In an unpublished interview with Lapointe when Munro was still unpublished in Catalan, she suggested that Munro had not been translated, simply, because of the negligibility of the market for books in Catalan.[101] This negligibility could be one the reasons for the non-existence of

100 For more details about the translation of Munro's works in Spain, see chapter 6 of this volume.

101 The interview was held on 12 January 2010. We wish to thank Mrs. Lapointe for her kindness in answering our questions and providing very interesting insights into the issues under consideration.

translations of Mavis Gallant's stories into the language, but it could also be attributed to her lack of popularity in Spain.

Shifting from literary fiction to genre fiction, Caroline Roe (a pseudonym of Medora Sale), features in the list of the most translated, this time with two novels: *Remedy for Treason* (1998) and *Cure for a Charlatan* (1999), a combination of mystery and historical fiction which originates in the author's research about medieval times. Roe's two novels were rendered into Catalan as *Remeïs i Traicions: Cròniques d'Isaac el Cec* (1999) and *Remei per a un xarlatà* (2000). The interest of these translations for Catalan publishers will be clear if we consider that the novels are the first and second parts of the mystery fiction series called "Chronicles of Isaac of Girona," comprising eight books and which are set in the Catalan city of Girona in the 14th century. A celebratory presentation of the Spanish and Catalan translations of the first novel took place in Girona, a clear example of how a target culture appropriates a foreign text for its own interests. Even the mayor of Girona was present at the book launch, and he praised it enthusiastically, aware no doubt of the possibilities of promotion for Girona and Catalonia created by such a literary feat (Soler, 1999). Unfortunately, only the two titles from the series mentioned above have so far been translated into Catalan (as well as into Spanish.)

Already in the 21st century, we need to highlight a wealth of female Canadian authors, at least in comparative terms. Gail Anderson-Dargatz's *A Recipe for Bees* was published in 2000 as *El secret de les abelles*; Bonnie Burnard's *A Good House* came out as *Una bona casa* in 2001; Frances Itani's *Deafening* became *Sordesa* in 2004; and in the same year Mary Lawson's *Crow Lake* became *A la vora del llac*. All titles were published by Edicions 62, except Itani's which was released by Proa, in the same year that it was released in Spanish by publisher Maeva in Madrid. Other interesting examples of women's fiction published in Catalan by RBA's Catalan collection "La Magrana" and mentioned by Anik Lapointe in the interview, are Stef Penny's best-selling novel - soon to be made into a film - *The Tenderness of Wolves* (*La tendresa dels llops*, translated 2009); and Nancy Huston's *Lignes de Faille* (*Línies de falla*, translated 2008). These works do not strictly fit our corpus but, nevertheless, speak about the shifting and elusive nature of CanLit, as Stef Penny was born in Scotland, although her novel is set in 19th-century Canada; and Nancy Huston, albeit born in Alberta, now lives in Paris and writes in French.

6. Multicultural Authors

Stephen Vizinczey, an author of Hungarian origins who has lived in Canada since the 1950s has had four Catalan editions of his best-selling novel *In Praise of Older Women*, first published in 1965 and made into a film featuring actor

Tom Berenger in 1978. The first translation into Spanish by Círculo de Lectores dates from 1989 and it was subsequently translated into Catalan in 1994. It was probably the success of the Spanish editions due to its erotic content (the blurb on the poster of the film hailed it as "A sexual coming of age classic"), which prompted translation into Catalan. There have been three more editions in Catalan, four in all: another in the same year, one in 2002 and one as recently as 2007. In the last of these, the title in Catalan was changed from *En Lloança de les dones madures: memòries eròtiques d'Andras Vajda* to the more pointed *Elogi de les dones madures*. Vicenczey's second translated work, *Un millionari innocent* (*An Innocent Millionaire*) also reached two editions, both in 1996.

South Asian Canadian authors have also been imported into the Catalan literary system. Rohinton Mistry's *A Fine Balance*, originally published in 1995 and translated into Spanish three years later, was not transferred into Catalan until 2002 (*Un equilibri perfecte*), coinciding with the year of the original publication of Mistry's third novel, *Family Matters*, published in Catalan as *Afers de família* in 2003. Another South Asian Canadian author who has had two of his books translated is Michael Ondaatje. *El fantasma d'Anil* (*Anil's Ghost*) was issued in 2001 and the more recent *Divisadero* (2007) has also been brought out in a Catalan version (2008). However, it is surprising that despite the great success of Anthony Minghella's film, premiered in 1996 (four years after the novel's publication and Booker Prize award), *The English Patient* was never translated into Catalan. In this case the Catalan book industry does not seem to follow the trends of the Spanish one, which has selected all of his novels –and even one of his poetry collections, *Handwriting* – for translation. Perhaps Catalan publishers were pragmatic in deciding that, when buying *The English Patient*, "in spite of the book cover changed to jibe with the movie's poster, ...[readers] may be "disappointed with the novel's complex structure, closer to a jigsaw puzzle than to a conventional love story" (Martínez-Zalce, 2001).

It is our perception that these translations and reprintings of Mistry's and Ondaatje's novels respond to the authors' worldwide success rather than to a genuine interest in Canadian letters, and might be understood within the framework of a wider context of enthusiasm in Spain for authors of Indian or South Asian origin (see chapter 3 in this book), to which the selective market of books in Catalan responded immediately. Therefore, it is no coincidence that three further Canadian authors on our list (each with only one translated work), who were published in the same years as Mistry and Ondaatje, have South Asian origins and have therefore drawn on the boom in Indian literature - a paratextual circumstance which, in our view, is independent of the high literary standards of these works. The authors and works in question are Anita Rau Badami, with *El camí de l'heroi* (*The Hero's Walk*, Catalan version in 2001), Shauna Singh Baldwin with *El que recorda el cos* (*What the Body Remembers*, 2002), and M. G. Vassanji, with *La pàtria aliena de V. Lall* (*The In-Between World of Vikram Lall*,

2006). Lebanese-born Rawi Hage can be listed after the previous authors so as to complete the group of "multicultural" Anglo-Canadian authors translated into Catalan, as his novel *El joc de De Niro* (*De Niro's Game*) was translated in 2009. In 2010 the first novel by a native Canadian author was published in Catalan. *Tres dies de camí/Three Day Road* by Joseph Boyden is described by its publisher Columna as "a magical story, based on real fact, about an Indian from an American tribe who goes to fight in World War I" (Columna webpage, "Tres dies de camí"). The novel is thus marketed as a war novel rather than as a work by a Native Canadian author.

7. Mainstream and Emerging Canadian Male Authors

Unlike what has happened with women writers and South Asian Canadian authors, the Catalan market has not paid excessive attention to male authors. From the major male authors of 20th- century Canadian literature, only Timothy Findley was translated in the same century into Catalan, and only one of his books, the mystery novel *El joc de les mentides* (*The Telling of Lies*) was published in 1990 by Pòrtic, before the Spanish edition (*Últimas palabras*) released by Alianza Editorial in 1992.[102]

Among the remaining authors who each have only one book translated into Catalan, the figure of Robertson Davies comes to the fore. In 2006 Davies's *Fifth Business*, translated into Spanish as *El quinto en discordia* the same year, was awarded the "Premi Llibreter", an annual literary award created in 2000 by the Association of Barcelona and Catalan Booksellers (Gremi de Llibreters de Barcelona i Catalunya). The novel had been translated into Spanish and published by Libros del Asteroide, a small but select publishing house based in Barcelona, founded in 2005. After the award the sales of Davies's novel rose from 2000 to 10000 (Ayén, 2007), so the prize was instrumental in making the Spanish reading public acquainted with this great man of Canadian letters. It was after this success that Libros del Asteroide decided to translate the novel into Catalan, and it came out in 2007 as *El cinquè en joc*. Robertson Davies' way into the Catalan literary system through *El cinquè en joc* was paved by an introduction by the Balearic writer Valentí Puig and an accurate translation by Carles Miró Jordana. The Catalan version was widely reviewed and praised

102 With only one title published in Catalan and Spanish, Timothy Findley's works remain one of the most blatant absences both in the Catalan and Spanish literary systems.

in the Catalan-speaking media. So far, and in spite of the huge success of his novels following the "Premi Llibreter," only this one novel by Davies has been translated into Catalan, contrasting with the nine titles that have been rendered into Spanish. Like Robertson Davies, the three remaining names on the short list of prestigious male authors who have only been published once were also safe investments for different reasons. In order of age, the first is Leonard Cohen, who has just been distinguished with the Prince of Asturias Award for Letters of 2011. Needless to say, his prestige as a musician and composer make him a well-known figure for Spanish and Catalan audiences. Only his novel *Bells perdedors* (*Beautiful Losers*) was published by Angle Editorial in 2002, whereas many of Cohen's books have been rendered into Spanish.

The second name is Douglas Coupland, a younger author whose book *All Families Are Psychotic* was translated into Catalan only one year after the original release, appearing as *Totes les famílies son psicòtiques* (2002). As explored elsewhere in this book (see chapter 7), Coupland was a well-known author by then in Spain; the Spanish version of *Generation X* went through a number of editions and all his other works had been automatically translated into Spanish as they were produced. Again, it is worth noting the contrast between the eighteen editions of the different works of Douglas Coupland in Spanish and only one existing in Catalan. As is the case with Robertson Davies, this huge gap illustrates the limitations of the book market in Catalan.

The third well-known author is Yann Martel, whose birth in Salamanca in 1963 may have made him more popular among some Spanish readers. His Booker Prize-winning novel *Life of Pi* was published in 2003 as *Vida de Pi* in both Spanish and Catalan, the similarities between the two languages due to their common origin in vulgar Latin resulting in a identical title for each edition. The book has so far reached six editions in Spanish, and although it sold very well, it has never reached a second edition in Catalan.

In the section of emerging authors we can situate Will Ferguson and Andrew Davidson, whose novels were published in Catalan in the same year of their release in English, possibly preceded by their international commercial success. Ferguson (born in 1964), a prolific critic of Canadian society and culture, is represented by his book *Happiness* (*Felicitat* in its Catalan version), a satire on self-help books, published in Catalan and Spanish in 2002. Andrew Davidson, an author of the same generation as Will Ferguson, was transferred into the Catalan literary system through a psychological thriller about love, illness and medieval history. *The Gargoyl*, whose rights had already been sold to 25 countries when it was published in Spanish by Seix Barral in 2008 (Mendoza, 2008), came out in Catalan as *La gàrgola* in the same year.

One is tempted to ponder the reasons for this relatively high number of Canadian authors translated into Catalan at the beginning of the 21st century (we should bear in mind that many South Asian Canadian and Canadian authors

of children's literature were also translated in the same period), and several explanations can be found. First of all, we should consider the high quality and ever-increasing status of Canadian literature in the global literary field. In addition, and on a more material level, this presence can be perceived – if only partially – as a consequence of the above-mentioned institutional initiatives to promote exchanges between authors of Canadian and Catalan origin. Whereas the agreement between the Québecois and Catalan cultural institutions affected mostly French Canadian authors, it can be argued that it encouraged a better knowledge of Canadian literature in general and stimulated a greater interest in it. In addition, the Canadian consulate in Barcelona actively contributes to the export of Canadian books into Catalonia (and Spain) by establishing contacts between Catalan publishers and Canadian publishers and literary agents at international book fairs.[103] Finally, as Anik Lapointe pointed out, it has been economically advantageous for literary agents to represent - and for publishing houses to buy - the rights of Canadian emerging writers because in general terms they are cheaper than their USA counterparts, whereas their literary quality is by no means inferior.

8. Conclusions

As we highlighted at the beginning of this chapter, Catalonia is politically and linguistically singular, and Catalan is not only spoken in Catalonia but, to a greater or lesser degree, in all the area referred to as the Països Catalans. In spite of the differences pointed out in this article (and possibly others), there are many aspects common to both the Catalan and Quebecois political situations and socio-cultural realities, particularly in the area of language. In both territories there is a language which, regardless of its official status, is perceived by the majority as their own, but which has to coexist with another hegemonic language which turns out to be menacing and even undermining.

In Catalonia, as in other areas of the "Catalan Countries," supportive institutional policies have been in place for years. Together with the strong feeling Catalans have for their language and the solid sense of identity which emerges from a history of resilience against all too frequent political odds, these policies have resulted in a solid corpus of literature in the Catalan language, both original and in translations, quantitatively unmatched in any of the other Spanish

103 Information provided by Pilar Somacarrera, obtained in a private conversation with Lesley-Anne Reed, Consul and Trade Commissioner of Canada in Barcelona at the seminar "Barometer of the relations between Spain and Canada," organized by the Chamber of Commerce Canada-Spain on February 21, 2011.

autonomous communities. Barcelona is one of the main world centres of the book industry in Spanish, and the undeniable focus of production for books in Catalan. The propinquity of these two industries has sometimes been perceived as positive for the one in Catalan, as the major publishing houses in Spanish may have provided a ready industry (infrastructures, printing machinery, etc.) for book production in Catalan. However, it has more generally been perceived as negative, because of the big pressure that coexistence with the huge Spanish market puts on the more limited market in Catalan, which is currently classified as a language at risk.

The corpus of translations into Catalan of works by Anglo-Canadians since 1988 can be broadly categorized in five groups: (1) literature for children and teenagers; (2) consecrated Canadian authors; (3) multicultural authors (especially South Asian Canadians); (4) Canadian best-sellers and (5) emerging Canadian authors. After reviewing the different names, titles and number of editions in each category, we conclude that, given the size and scope of the publication of books in Catalan, Anglo-Canadian works are translated into Catalan only when there is a virtual guarantee of commercial success or because these authors have already achieved sales in the Spanish-language market. Authors included in the first four categories enumerated above seem to respond to this dynamic for one reason or another and sometimes for more than one as would be the case with Margaret Atwood - a consecrated author, highly distinguished in terms of awards, a safe bet in terms of literary quality, and a bestseller in English-speaking countries.[104] In terms of genre, the Catalan publishing industry has not risked much, either. Only novels, several of which can be included in the category of formula fiction – mysteries or romances with a tinge of historical fiction - or the safe wager of children's literature have been released. Not a single volume of poetry or non-fiction can be traced in our list of English-Canadian volumes translated into Catalan, not even works by Atwood who excels at both such genres.

However, in the restricted landscape of translations into Catalan, Atwood emerges once again as the queen of Canadian letters in English. She is arguably the most translated and the best-known Canadian writer in the Catalan Countries. Yet, as such, the relatively small number of works by this prolific author which have so far been rendered into Catalan can be read as symptomatic of the overall health of the industry of (translated) books in Catalan. It is remarkable, however, that none of her novels for adults has been published in Catalan after *L'assessí cec (The Blind Assassin*) in 2001, which might be explained by the lower sales her books in Spanish have at the moment.

104 Her condition as a best-selling author in Spanish will be addressed in chapter 5 of this volume.

As we were concluding this chapter, the cultural supplement of *El Mundo*, a right-leaning Spanish journal issued in Madrid, published an article titled "Late News on the Edition in Catalan" (Azancot, 2010). The article provides a summary of controversial issues with regard to this field, such as the question of institutional support for the book in Catalan. Several authors and professionals hold different views on this question. For some, it has helped develop an indispensable corpus of literary works in Catalan; for others, it has negatively influenced a bilingual society in which Catalan writers who express themselves in Spanish find themselves at a disadvantage; while still others go as far as claiming that systematic funding has curtailed creativity. Against these voices critical of institutional support, Catalan poet Miquel de Palol, regrets that it is insufficient (quoted in Azancot, 2010), while poet Alex Susanna claims the need to enhance the ecolinguistic consciousness in Spain (quoted in Azancot, 2010). Overall, while the sales and number of titles published in Catalan have fallen because of the global economic crisis, the directors of several series in Catalan seem to agree that there is stability and continuity in the market, with a faithful readership in Catalan. It is apparent that both the situation and the interpretation of data are highly politicized, to the extent that many authors and professionals prefer to keep their opinions to themselves.

In conclusion, considering the specificity of the socio-political and linguistic situation in Catalonia, and comparing the number of Anglo-Canadian books published in languages other than Spanish in other historical autonomous communities (the Basque Country and Galicia), we need to acknowledge that the body of works of Anglo-Canadian authors translated so far into Catalan is not negligible, but rather the contrary. We would venture to say that perspectives for the future seem optimistic, in the light of following factors related to both source and target cultures: the rising value of CanLit in Catalonia and Spain, the direct and indirect effects of the institutional support from the Canadian government and the Quebec Mission, the strength of the book industry in Barcelona and, finally, the cosmopolitan and highly literate nature of Catalan society.

Chapter 5

A Prince of Asturias Award for the Queen of Canadian Letters: Reading Margaret Atwood's Texts in Spain

Pilar Somacarrera

1. The Story of Atwood's Translations in Spain

In an interview with Geoff Hancock (1987), Margaret Atwood expressed her concern about how her books were read in the countries where they were being translated: "I'm now translated into over twenty languages, only two of which I can read, more or less. I have no idea what those other versions are saying to the people who read them."[105] Atwood is making a crucial reflection about how her writing acquires a new life once it has been translated into another language and exported into a different culture, a process which requires favourable economic, sociological and political conditions. In a more recent interview held in Spain, she acknowledges that her own books could not be imported to the country when she started publishing (late sixties-early seventies) because of the ideological repression of the Franco regime: "During the Franco years it was difficult for [her] books to be translated in Spain, as they were considered too radical. Or, they often appeared first in other Spanish-speaking countries such as Argentina" (Stone, 2006). Surely she could hardly imagine at the time that in 2008 she would receive the Prince of Asturias Award, one of the greatest literary honours of the same country where her books would have been forbidden or censored twenty years before. In this chapter I would like to explore two aspects of how Margaret Atwood's texts are read in Spain. First, I will analyze the factors which have influenced the Spanish transference of her writing – the books chosen for translation and the translators and publishing houses in charge of them. Secondly, I will consider the way in which what Richard Dyer (1979) calls the "star text" of her literary celebrity has been read in Spain through the study of reviews, articles, notes and interviews published in the written press.[106]

105 Atwood (2009) has not disguised her scepticism about the activity of translation itself, especially with poetic texts. At the videoconference she held with the Spanish press for the launching of *The Door* on February 2, 2009, she argued that poetry is the most difficult genre to translate and praised her translators as "courageous," because the rhythm and music of poetry are always language-specific.

106 All translation of the articles and reviews are mine.

The process of transference of a new writer into a target language often resembles a narrative in which the characters are authors, translators, publishers, editors, readers, publicity officers, reviewers, and cultural and political institutions. In a review of Atwood's novels *Lady Oracle* and *The Robber Bride*, María José Obiol (1996b) narrativizes the story of how the Canadian writer started to be published in Spain: "It was in 1987 when the word of Margaret Atwood came to this country in a novel recreating a future in which women had lost control over their bodies. The title of this disturbing parable about the future was *The Handmaid's Tale*." Its publication had been preceded and accompanied by a various references to Atwood in the Spanish press, first as an internationally acclaimed writer who had been elected President of PEN International in 1984, and later as a candidate for the Nobel Prize for literature. Twelve years after Franco's death, Catalan publisher Seix Barral released the novel as part of its emblematic collection Biblioteca Breve (Brief Library). As the Catalan editor Esther Tusquets (2009) recounts in her book of memoirs, during the years of Franco's dictatorship Seix Barral and his director Carlos Barral played a crucial role in introducing relevant foreign authors in Spain (228-29). Given Seix-Barral's publishing history, surely *The Handmaid's Tale* was not a random choice (Azancot, 2011). The novel accumulated a number of assets. Firstly, as "a disturbing parable about the future" (Obiol, 1996b), it could be included in the category of speculative fiction - in Spanish, *novela de anticipación* (Morreres i Boix, 1987)[107] - a genre mostly absent from the Spanish literary system at the time but with considerable market possibilities because of its numerous followers. Secondly, it was written by a woman, which was perceived as unusual for this kind of novel. Thirdly, drawing on the cosmpolitanizing technique which Nieves Pascual calls an "emphasis on vitality and tradition,"[108] Aldous Huxley and George Orwell were invoked as its intertexual referents.[109] Fourthly, it touched on the then current debates kindled by a document released by The Vatican about reproduction *in vitro* (Morreres i Boix, 1987).[110] It had won several international awards - the Governor's General Award in 1985 and the Arthur C. Clarke Award for Science

107 Morreres i Boix uses this term to refer to *The Handmaid's Tale* ("*obra de anticipación*") and mentions a novel of this genre, *Andrea Victrix* (1974), written in Catalan by Llorenç Villalonga, under the influence of Aldous Huxley.

108 See chapter 2 of this volume.

109 These authors are mentioned in the "epitext" or publicity material published by the press.

110 In 1987 Spain was ruled by the second socialist government of Félipe González, who had passed the Abortion Law in 1985, not without polemical reactions among the most right-wing sectors of society, inheritors of Franco's conservative views about the family.

Fiction in 1987. Finally, the famous playwright Harold Pinter was writing the script for a film about it, as noted in an article written to publicize the launching of the novel at the edition of the Madrid Book Fair in 1987 (De León-Sotelo, 1987). Interestingly, the setting of the novel was not Canada but the United States, a country that most Spaniards would recognize as the birth-place of modern democracy.

In María José Obiol's version, the story of Margaret Atwood's books in Spain continues with the market success of *The Handmaid's Tale*[111] which excited readers' interest and made them "wait for more novels from this Canadian writer to fill their personal literary pantries (Obiol, 1996b). "They did not have to wait very long, as her books started to appear regularly in Spain: between 1987 and 1996 five novels and one collection of short stories were published in Spain.[112] During this decade (1987-1996), the trend was to publish a recent title and one title from the back list. In addition, the time between the publication of Atwood's titles gradually reduced. Since 2000, the tendency is that the Spanish translation of a new novel by Atwood appears the year after the original. Two years later, *The Handmaid's Tale* was followed by the short story collection *Bluebeard's Egg* (published originally in 1983), then by *Cat's Eye* in 1990, next in the list of Atwood's novels after *The Handmaid's Tale*.

Atwood's poetry entered Spain with *The Journals of Susanna Moodie/ Los diarios de Susana Moodie*[113] (1991), a text of marked Canadian content contrasting with the feminist bias of the fiction that had been published before. The Canadian content of the collection (about an English woman pioneer struggling in the Canadian wilderness) was most probably missed by the Spanish reader because the text was published without Atwood's Afterword, which gives essential clues about the significance of the figure of Susanna Moodie for Margaret Atwood and for Canadian culture in general (Somacarrera, 2005).[114] Also related to Canada's image as a Northern country is the publication of the story "The Age of Lead"/"La edad de plomo" in Spanish translation, containing

111 The book was reprinted again in the year of its first publication and, subsequently four more times, two of these immediately after Atwood won the Booker and the Asturias Prizes.

112 See the chronology of the publication of Atwood's books in Spain, as well as of events related to her presence in country at the end of this chapter.

113 The text could have been chosen because of its unquestionable position in the Canadian literature canon (Surette, 1995).

114 To this day, the reason why the collection was published without Atwood's Afterword remains a mystery. In a personal conversation, Alberto García, one of the translators of the book, revealed that the publisher had sent them Atwood's poems without the Afterword. The passage from Atwood's Afterword which deals with schizophrenia as Canada's mental illness has been translated by Somacarrera (2000).

a reference to a TV documentary describing the death of John Torrington, a young sailor of the ill-fated Franklin expedition to find the Northwest Passage in 1845. The story was published in issue number 139 (December 1992) of the renowned journal *Revista de Occidente*.[115] dedicated to "Contemporary Women Authors," together with other stories by women writers like Angela Carter, Helia Correia and Elena Poniatowska. The publication of Atwood's story in *Revista de Occidente* as an example of "the attractive panorama of contemporary feminine literature" ("Revista de occidente," 1992) signifies an important step in the process of Atwood's admission to a cosmopolitan and avant-garde Spanish canon of women writers.

In 1994, along the same cosmopolitan vein, the publisher Muchnik Editores, directed by the Argentinian editor Mario Muchnik, published *Surfacing* in a translation by Ana Poljak, twenty-two years after its original publication in 1972. Its publication in Spain may probably be related to Harold Bloom's inclusion of the novel as one of the Canadian books of his Western canon in the same year. Ten years later there was a retranslation of this novel by Gabriela Bustelo in charge of another reputable Spanish publisher, Alianza Editorial, only two years after Harold Bloom's *The Western Canon* had finally been published in Spain in 2002. The imprint chosen for publication in 2004 was *Libro de Bolsillo* (Pocket Book), aiming, perhaps, at a wider readership. Following the Prince of Asturias Award in 2008, Alianza Editorial reprinted the novel in its more expensive imprint Alianza Literaria, aimed at a "higher-brow" audience (cover price of 18.50 €, as opposed to 8.50 € of the Pocket Book edition). This edition presents a more sophisticated cover design and a blurb referring to Bloom's canonization of Atwood's novel, describing it as "one of the fundamental and most influential works of our culture" (Alianza Editorial, "Promotional synopsis." The covers of both editions of *Surfacing* published by Alianza Editorial emphasize its Canadian setting, presenting Canada, not as it really is - a country of urban-dwellers -, but as a wilderness territory of breath-taking natural beauty, full of lakes and mountains. In accordance with Anna M. Gil's (1996) summary of the novel as a return to the North of the Great Lakes, an area of trappers, lumberjacks and hikers, the Pocket Book edition shows a landscape which evokes the Northern Quebec area where the novel is set. The Alianza Literaria edition displays a landscape evoking that of the Canadian Rocky Mountains, a touristic setting which is probably better known to Spanish readers.[116]

115 Founded in 1923 by the famous Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset and now directed by his grandson, José Valera Ortega, *Revista de Occidente* aims at "paying attention to the most innovative currents in thought as well as in artistic and literary creation (See Fundación Ortega-Marañón).

116 The covers for both editions can be seen at the Alianza Editorial webpage.

Between 1996 and 2000, three more novels (*Lady Oracle*, *The Robber Bride* and *Alias Grace*) and one short story collection (*Dancing Girls*) were published. Atwood visited Madrid to promote *Alias Grace* in 1998, addressing a full room of readers at the Círculo de Bellas Artes, a famous cultural institution of Madrid, in a lecture series called "Canadian Women Writers of the Turn of the Century" organized by the Canadian Embassy. The years between 1998 and 2003 marked a peak in her popularity among the Spanish readership. It coincided with a period when the Spanish Association for Canadian Studies was particularly active, and when the dissemination of her works received strong institutional support from the Canadian Mission. Partly as a result of the aforementioned factors, she received much attention from the media and appreciation from her Spanish readers, mostly middle-class women with a high level of education and between the age range of 20 and 50.[117] Since Atwood received the Man Booker Prize in 2000 for *The Blind Assassin*, published in Spain in 2001, the pace of publication of her work increased to at least one book a year, keeping up this rate until the time of writing this essay. All her novels have been published in Spanish except *Life Before Man* (1979) and *Bodily Harm* (1981).

Encouraged by the popularity of her fiction and the prestige conferred upon her by the Booker, publishers have ventured to release titles from other genres practised by Atwood. Lumen, now an imprint of Random House Mondadori, published a sample of her essays as *La maldición de Eva* in 2006. Two of her children's books were published in 2008: *Anna's Pet* (in Catalan) and *Up in the Tree* (in Catalan and Spanish). In 2011 the outcome of Ana María Moix's last collaboration with Bruguera, the non-fiction volume *Payback/ Pagar (con la misma moneda*) was published in a translation by Ana Becciu.

Four of her poetry collections have appeared in Spain in three different stages, separated by an interval of approximately a decade. After the first poetry collection (*Los diarios de Susanna* Moodie) appeared in 1991, *Power Politics* and *Interlunar* became available in 2000, edited by two prestigious publishers specializing in poetry (Hiperión and Icaria). Considered by some critics as the only poetry collection by Atwood to have had a certain impact on the Spanish readership,[118] *Power Politics/ Juegos de Poder* appeared on the fifth position of the chart of bestselling poetry books of the cultural supplement of *ABC* ("Libros más vendidos," 2000).

117 Many of Atwood's Spanish readers are female university students who have read her, mostly in English, in courses about CanLit or about other subjects taught in Spanish universities.

118 See the report of the videoconference organized for the launching of *The Door* published in *El Mundo*. Its sensationalistic title was ""If the human being is scared, he is capable of anything" (Plaza, 2009).

In the third and latest stage of the Spanish publication of Atwood's poetry, Bruguera released two volumes in two years: *The Door* (2007)/ *La puerta,* her latest poetry collection in 2009, and a year later, *True Stories* (originally published in 1981). As the first book to be published after Atwood had received the Prince of Asturias Award, *The Door* was marketed in a way unusual for a poetry collection, including a videoconference held in February 17, 2009 with the author speaking live from Toronto. This spectacular launching strategy, suggested by Atwood herself [119] and in which Bruguera had invested most of its publicity budget for that year, resulted in massive attention on the part of the press with notes and articles too numerous even to attempt to mention them here. However, it did not have a significant impact on the sales of *The Door* possibly because of intrinsic reasons - the content and tone of the collection, focusing on autobiographical and philosophical themes, rather than on the more popular feminist preoccupations of *Power Politics* -, as well as external ones - the recession that had started to hit the Spanish book market in 2008.

Atwood's Spanish publishers have been her prestigious sponsors, adding cultural capital to her qualities as a writer. Victor Pozanco, poet and translator of *Dancing Girls* for Lumen, has rightly observed that it has been the publishers with most sensitivity for great literature who have included Atwood in their catalogues. He tells the anecdote of how Esther Tusquets, director of Lumen, had offered him the translation of another potential Nobel Prize, saying that Atwood "was not a Nobel Prize-winner yet, but would be one day (Pozanco, 2008). KRK, a small independent press based in Oviedo published *Asesinato en la oscuridad* (*Murder in the Dark* and *Good Bones*) following the initiative of Professor Isabel Carrera of the University of Oviedo, who did the translation herself. However, the rights of this book were soon ceded to Ediciones B who produced a different selection of the stories in 2005. This press belonging to the media group Zeta has published all the titles of Atwood's fiction since 1998 and in 2008, under Ana Maria Moix's direction of its imprint Bruguera,[120] also acquired the preference to publish her poetry. Moix's project was to publish the entire backlist of Atwood's poetry collections but, sadly, the closure of Bruguera has left her project unfinished.

If her publishers have played an important role in the transference of Atwood's works in Spain as patrons who, following André Lefevere (1992) are outside the literary system, no less crucial have been her translators, as professionals *within*

119 Atwood herself had suggested this way of launching the book at the dinner organized in her honour by the Canadian Mission in Spain for the presentation of the Prince of Asturias Award (October 23, 2008).

120 For the history of this emblematic imprint, see chapter 1 of this volume.

the literary system. A good translation always implies collaboration between translators and editors although the vagaries of how these translators are chosen by publishers are too complex to be addressed in a study like this. Twenty-three different translators have translated Atwood into Spanish versions and into Catalan. Five of them have worked on more than one book: Jordi Mustieles (*Cat's Eye* and *The Robber Bride*), Juanjo Estrella (*The Edible Woman* and *Oryx and Crake*), María Antonia Menini (*Alias Grace* and *Murder in the Dark*), Victor Pozanco (*Chicas Bailarinas* and *Érase una vez,* both containing stories from *Dancing Girls*) and Pilar Somacarrera (*Power Politics*, *True Stories* and *The Door*).

Arnulf Conradi, Atwood's German publisher, is of the view that the success of Atwood's books in Germany has to do with her having had the same translator (Brigitte Walitzek) for several of her books (Conradi, 2000). I agree with Conradi that when the same translator produces more than one translation by the same author, the resulting work is usually stylistically coherent and adapted to the requirements of the target readership whose responses they have also come to know over the years of translating the same author. In the Spanish list of Atwood's translators, we find writers and poets (Luis Marigómez, Gabriela Bustelo and Victor Pozanco), university teachers (Isabel Carrera, Lidia Taillafer, Pilar Somacarrera), translators who have been in charge of some of recent bestsellers (Juanjo Estrella of *The Da Vinci Code* and Gemma Rovira of the Harry Potter series), and even one who has received the National Prize of Translation for a lifetime career in 2009 (Roser Berdagué, translator into Catalan). Some of these translators (Carrera, Pozanco, Marigómez and Somacarrera) have referred to their personal enjoyment in translating Atwood's texts (Pozanco, 2008). They have also acted as commentators, critics and preface writers, thus showing their personal involvement in the role of sponsoring Atwood and conferring upon her further symbolic capital.

2. Reviews of Margaret Atwood's Works in the Spanish Press

In the second section of this chapter, I will look into the role of literary reviews published in the printed press in the canonization or deprecation of Atwood's work, and try to determine to what extent these written reports contribute to her integration into the dominant poetics of Spanish culture. Because of space restrictions, I will focus on a selection of the reviews of three novels - *The Handmaid's Tale*, *Surfacing* and *The Blind Assassin* -which form a basic Atwood canon. Although I agree with Graham Huggan (2001) that Atwood cannot be considered an alternative writer, she was originally imported into Spain as such. As I stated in the previous section, with *The Handmaid's Tale* Atwood was

transferred into the Spain of the late eighties as a marketable writer associated with timely antihegemonic and transgressive ideological tenets. It was a novel set in a dictatorship – a setting that could well evoke Spain's recent past - belonging to the genre of speculative fiction, written by a woman, and dealing with the topic of alternative ways of human reproduction. But from this peripheral position as a genre fiction writer, Atwood has slowly entered the centre of the Spanish literary system through a number of initiatives (editorial and/or institutional) that have conferred symbolic capital on her, like the previously mentioned inclusion of one of her short stories in *Revista de Occidente*. Most significant was her participation, under request, in the volume *Don Quijote alrededor del mundo/ Don Quixote Around the World*, published in 2005 by the Cervantes Institute to celebrate the 500th anniversary of *Don Quixote*. The book featured a preface by Harold Bloom and essays by writers who had received – or would receive in subsequent years - the Nobel or Asturias Prizes.[121]

As Rien T. Segers (1991) points out, a literary review is a sort of frozen, more or less structured, reading experience, the result of a specific reading process which attempts to cover newly published texts as pieces of news, worthy of reader consideration and attention. I would add that reviews are, in a more or less explicit way, instruments for marketing a book. [122] Given that the attachment of meaning and value is a culturally determined activity (Segers, 1991, reviews are a useful way of gauging the responses of readers of a specific reading community, in this case the Spanish one. This community will include different types of readers to whom the publishers want to reach out: those who read the book for mere entertainment, those who look for some literary quality and, finally, academic readers. Although some of her first reviewers were anonymous, literary reviews and criticism of Margaret Atwood's books published by Spanish presses have gradually increased with time, keeping pace with her growing presence and popularity. Atwood's greater visibility in Spain, along with the various prizes she has received, could explain the multiplication of reviews.

The symbolic capital of many of her reviewers is similar to that of some her translators. In fact, as mentioned before, in some cases her translators

121 Among other writers, the volume features J.M.C. Le Clézio (Nobel Prize in 2008), Nélida Piñón and Ismail Kadaré (predecessor and successor of Atwood in the Asturias Prize, respectively).

122 Atwood herself has written numerous book reviews in which we find invaluable information about her own literary taste and about her own writing. Atwood's reviews have also played an important role in the promotion of many writers, Canadian and international. The reviews included in her collections *Second Words* and *Moving Targets* may serve as an example.

have reviewed her work. In a critical context such as that of Spanish literary supplements, where reviewers are not often well-informed enough about Canadian literature, it does not seem surprising that the press would ask Atwood's translators for articles or even reviews of her works.

Otherwise, Atwood's reviewers have been Spanish academics, writers and publishers who, sometimes, hold more than one of these positions. José Antonio Gurpegui (a professor of US literature and Director of the Franklin Institute for American Studies at the University of Alcalá de Henares in Madrid), who regularly writes reviews for *El Mundo*, has reviewed all of Atwood's fiction titles since *Cat's Eye*. Among other Spanish writers who have also acted as Atwood's critics for the press, we can list Laura Espido Freire, Rafael Reig, José Mª Guelbenzu, Ana Maria Moix and Antonio Muñoz Molina. All of them are well-known writers and the last two have also held positions at institutions which form part of the Spanish cultural scene and which have played an important part in the dissemination of Atwood's works: Moix as Atwood's editor in Bruguera, and Múñoz Molina as director of the Cervantes Institute in New York. Other professional reviewers have written all the reviews of Atwood's texts for a newspaper, as is ithe case of Robert Saladrigas for *La Vanguardia*, a fact which gives coherence and continuity to the critical discourse about the Canadian writer.

There are two repetitive arguments deployed to praise Margaret Atwood in the Spanish press. The first is that she is the most important Canadian writer, and the second that she is a winner of numerous literary honours and a permanent candidate for the Nobel Prize.[123] These two superlatives need to be placed in perspective because, as Graham Huggan points out, this representative status has been enhanced by the wrong view that Atwood is one of the few Canadian writers who really matter, and that Canada's is, after all, a minor literature/culture in terms of world standards (Huggan, 2001). Drawing, perhaps, on this prejudice against Canadian literature, writer and critic Valentí Puig, in a review of *Cat's Eye* (1990), contests Atwood's canonical status as well as her permanent condition of Nobel Prize candidate. Puig (1990) ranks Atwood among the three most relevant Canadian writers, together with Mordecai Richler and Robertson Davies, but, out of the three, he considers Davies as the only "occasional candidate to the Nobel Prize" (Puig, 1990). Puig values Davies over Atwood because, as he writes in his prologue to the Spanish edition of *Fifth Business/ El quinto en discordia,* "some of his novels had been translated into Spanish, but did not appeal to the fervour of masses nor to the enthusiasm of critics who still read" (2006). When he wrote his prologue to the Spanish translation of Davies's novel in 2006,

123 See, for example, the following reviews of her latest novels published in newspapers of different political orientation: Velasco (2004) and Barrios (2010).

Puig could possibly be referring to Atwood when he spoke about writers who provoke "the fervour of masses," and "the enthusiasm of critics." because he had described her as a popular author in reviews he had written about her in the nineties, like the previously mentioned review of *Cat's Eye*. However, he also claims in his review of *Cat's Eye* that in contrast with Davies, Atwood "took off as a writer who gathered prestige and sales, a peculiar species common in the Anglosaxon world" (Puig, 1990). He then questions the canonical value of *Cat's Eye*, describing it as "not one of those novels one would choose for the library of a desert island."

Atwood is also often disfavoured in comparisons with Alice Munro, Margaret Laurence and Mavis Gallant. In a review of *Surfacing*, Alicia Giménez Bartlett, a Spanish author of detective novels and recent winner of the prestigious Nadal Prize, reveals that "she had always thought of Atwood as a writer who had been overestimated by the critics, and lacking the authenticity and sensibility of Margaret Laurence, who is, however, much less famous" (Giménez Bartlett, 1994). In a review of the Spanish translation of Mavis Gallant's *Selected Stories*, the writer Rosa Montero (2010) claims that she considers Gallant a much more interesting writer than the "icy" Margaret Atwood, the permanent Canadian candidate for the Nobel Prize. The main difference between Gallant and Munro and Atwood can be found in their use of genre. Whereas the first two authors practise the short story almost exclusively, Atwood moves comfortably across genres, a fact which has also contributed to raise her cultural capital. To use her first translated novel in Spain as an example, *The Handmaid's Tale*, because of the different genres it encapsulates - as a classic work of feminist polemic, of dystopian literature or of science fiction - can be incorporated into different canons (Huggan, 2001). Genres function as "horizons of expectations" (Jauss, 1992) for readers and "models of writing" (Todorov, 1990) for authors, but Atwood skilfully plays with them to break readers' expectations in her novels and *The Handmaid's Tale* is no exception. Genre can also be used as a "selling" feature because, as Claire Squires (2007) points out, it becomes a mutable and dynamic property of its marketing.

Spanish reviewers have included *The Handmaid's Tale* in both the categories of utopia and dystopia. The first term is used to refer to a genre in which an ideal society is depicted, whereas dystopia has been used to designate an anti-utopia, a place marked by extreme mechanization or authoritarianism (Beckson and Ganz, 1989). Although the second term (dystopia) describes the content of Atwood's novel more accurately, an anonymous reviewer in a brief article titled "Slavist society based on reproduction" published in *La Vanguardia* before the novel was even translated, classifies it within the genre of utopia. However, he makes a distinction between Atwood's novel and those of "the English gentlemen Wells, Huxley and Orwell" ("Sociedad esclavista," 1986). When he argues that the main element the novel is the issue of reproduction (unlike the works of Wells, Huxley and Orwell), he thus contradicts the strategy of marketing that the

Spanish publisher of the novel will undertake – the comparison of Atwood with the English masters of dystopias. The reviewer of *ABC* –equally anonymous- also contradicts the publicity campaign of the publisher, warning the readers that the novel is not a utopia in Thomas More's style nor – in spite of the publicity - in Orwell's mode, because the feminine condition of the writer informs it with "idiosyncratic characteristics" ("El cuento de la criada," 1987).

Like *The Handmaid's Tale*, the Booker Prize-winning *The Blind Assassin* is described by Spanish reviewers as a compendium of a variety of genres, all of which are commercially successful: gothic, science fiction, realist novel, melodrama, harlequin romance, thriller with a touch of love story, journalism. In his suggestively titled review "Las sombras del pasado"/ "The shadows of the past," Mauricio Bach (2001) notes that whereas the protagonist's political ambitions sometimes recall the script of *Dallas* or *Dynasty*, the novel also contains an account of Canada between the two World Wars and "an intelligent reflection about literary creation and fiction as a manipulation of reality." Bach thus simultaneously markets the novel for both the "lowbrow" and "highbrow" reader. Robert Saladrigas (2001) in another review with an enticing title ("El precio de la pasión prohibida" / "The price of forbidden passion") speaks about "the amazing skill with which Atwood borders the dangerous reefs of melodrama." Saladrigas situates *The Blind Assassin* on the border between literary fiction and genre fiction. However, the reviewer contradicts himself by saying that what Atwood is really doing is to play with readers' expectations about genre: "The shrewdly chosen title *The Blind Assassin* may lead us to think that, given Atwood's penchant for changing registers, she may have decided to try genre narrative. Not in the least. *The Blind Assassin* is not even a false detective novel." Interestingly, Margaret Atwood (2002), some months later, in a review on Dashiell Hammett[124] which she wrote for *The Guardian*, revealed she had always been intrigued by Hammett and may have been influenced by him when writing *The Blind Assassin*.

Nuria Barrios' text "Dios es verde,"[125] ("God is green," review of *The Year of the Flood,* August 14, 2010) is so far the most recent review of an Atwood book published in the Spanish Press. In addition to some of the usual gambits (allusion to her Nobel candidacy and her literary prizes, including the Prince of Asturias Award, introduction of biographical details), this piece presents some aspects which are unusual in the latest trends of reviewing Atwood in Spain. To start with, it is published in *Babelia*, the literary supplement of *El País*, the leading newspaper of

124 In his review of *The Blind Assassin*, Gurpegui (2001a) finds echoes of Dashiell Hammett in *Alias Grace*.

125 The title contains an ambiguity because *verde* in Spanish also means "obscene or indecent" (as in *chiste verde*: "dirty joke").

the country owned by Grupo Prisa, media rival of Atwood's publisher Grupo Zeta.[126] The novel is hailed in the pre-title of the review as "book of the week." It has as an illustration (as opposed to the usual photograph of Atwood), a photograph of John Hilton's *The Road,* the film version of Cormac McCarthy's Pulitzer Prize- winning novel of the same title, which is later mentioned in the text as one of the referents of Atwood's *The Year of the Flood.* It also refers to the same correlates (*Brave New World* by Huxley, *1984* by Orwell, *Farenheit 451* by Bradbury) mentioned in the earlier reviews of *The Handmaid's Tale.* The lead-in text reads: "The Canadian Margaret Atwood elaborates a funny eco-theology for the post-apocalyptic future in her last novel." The blurb alludes to the sophisticated and funny nature of the novel, and assigns it to different genres (ecology, theology and dystopian fiction), a strategy which makes it potentially attractive to different sectors of readers.[127] The choice of the reviewer is consistent with the recent tendency of having prestigious writers and intellectuals as critics of Atwood's books. Nuria Barrios, Ph.D., short story writer and poet as well as an award-winning columnist, crafts a particularly well written, informative and coherent review showing that she is what a good reviewer should be – well-read: she appropriately quotes from the Spanish translation of Atwood's poem "Another Visit to the Oracle," included in *The Door*). She ends, enticingly, with the following words: "The desolate future invented by Atwood projects a possible image of the desolate future which our reality draws. As you read *The Year of the Flood* you hear yourself laugh, but the sound of that laughter is only too reminiscent of the nervous hilarity provoked by fear" (Barrios, 2010).

3. The Prince of Asturias Award and Atwood's Spanish Celebrity

In Spain, Atwood cannot be considered a popular author but, rather, a literary figure. As such, Margaret Atwood has enjoyed preferential treatment by the Spanish media in comparison to other Canadian writers, especially in the last

126 *Babelia* had not published a review of an Atwood book since the publication of the Spanish translation of *Oryx and Crake* in 2004. It had never published a review of Atwood's poetry collections even after Atwood had won the Prince of Asturias Award. Whether *Babelia* does not value Atwood's poetry or whether it is just a matter of rivalry between media groups (Prisa, publisher of *El País* and Zeta, publishers of Atwood's books) is still undecided.

127 The marketing strategy seems to have been effective because when I asked for the translation, five days after the publication of the review, in a personal visit to one of the main downtown branches of El Corte Inglés (Spain's most important department store), I was told that they had run out of copies.

ten years. The publication of most of her recent books has been echoed in the Spanish press by a review of the newly launched novel and an interview. This may have to do with the fact that, as Graham Huggan (2001) argues, Atwood is not just a consecrated writer but also a cultural celebrity and her opinion on global and local –in this case Spanish- issues is highly valued. There is a growing body of critical material on the phenomenon of Atwood's celebrity and how she herself has reflected on it (See Huggan, Becker, York and Moss). Huggan and York agree that the global reach of Atwood is in part due to the quality and readability of her work, but also at least in part due to the way she is marketed by herself, her publishers, the media, and the Canadian Government. Marketing, as Claire Squires (2007) has it, is conceived as a form of *representation and interpretation*, situated in the spaces between the author and the reader – but which authors and readers also take part in - and surrounding the production, dissemination and reception of texts.[128]

Following the premise that I put forward at the beginning of this chapter - that Atwood's celebrity is another "text"-, the aim of this section is to inquire into how this "text" is produced, disseminated and read in Spain. Atwood's "star text" (Dyer, 1992) is obviously closely linked to her literary texts but functions independently, as I will try to demonstrate. Unlike other Canadian writers who have been published in Spain (Gallant, Munro), Atwood has actively participated in the marketing of both texts - her celebrity and her writing - satisfying her Spanish audiences[129] with several live performances. She has visited Spain four times, three times on official visits, twice on book-tours (in 1990 for *Cat's Eye* and 1999 for *Alias Grace*), and she herself suggested holding a videoconference with the Spanish media when the translation of her poetry collection *The Door* was presented in Spain.

As expected, the Booker Prize and the Prince of Asturias Award have changed the way in which Atwood is read and marketed by the media in Spain. One of the most visible effects was the appearance in an issue of *Babelia,* published just in time for the Christmas shopping season, of a two full-page reportage titled "Margaret Atwood: the strength of writing"(December 15, 2001), promoted by the then director of *Babelia*, María Luisa Blanco. The reportage which featured an interview and a full-page review of *The Blind Assassin* by Ana María Moix, also featured a sizeable photograph of Atwood placed on the cover page of the

128 Italics in the original.

129 Since the publication of *The Year of the Flood* in 2009, Margaret Atwood joined the world of online book promotion to reach her English-speaking readers, launching a new and more sophisticated website. She now has her own blog and participates in Twitter and Facebook (run by her publishers) social networks. Atwood's participation in cyberspace has been commented on by the Spanish press (Silió, 2011). Her website (http://margaretAtwood.ca/), however, has no material in languages other than English.

cultural supplement. In fact, since 2001 the reproduction of her image in Spanish newspapers, literary supplements and magazines has constantly increased. Photographs and caricatures of her have appeared regularly in a variety of publications, of which I will just mention two representative examples. The first is a group of photographs illustrating the first article (on Margaret Atwood) in a series about "great world women writers" (Fresneda, 2007) to appear in the women's magazine *Yo Dona*, published jointly with *El Mundo,* in 2007. [130] Secondly, the reproduction of her image in caricatures, like the one published in *El País* authored by Agustín Sciamarella (2008) as an illustration of the reportage announcing her as the winner of the Prince of Asturias Award for Letters.[131] Even more prominently, the literary supplement *El Cultural* of the national newspaper *El Mundo* (October 23-29, 2008) used another caricature, in which her face is hardly recognizable, as the cover-page of the issue published the week of the presentation of the Prince of Asturias Awards (Fig. 5.1):

Given that they are often used for politicians or prestigious male authors in Spanish newspapers, the use of caricatures instead of photographs to represent Atwood signifies an unusual degree of consecration – which in Spain is not often granted to a woman writer- and popularization of her figure at the same time.

The story of why and how Atwood was selected for the Asturias Awards interestingly corresponds to elements of her writing that have been exploited in order to market her work more broadly and successfully. According to the minutes of the Jury, Atwood was chosen for the Award for Letters "for her splendid literary *oeuvre* that has explored different genres with acuteness and irony, and because she cleverly assumes the classical tradition, defends the dignity of women and denounces social injustice.[132] Unlike the Nobel

130 *Yo Dona* publishes two photographs of a smiling Atwood, one in colour and another in black and white. In the first one she is wearing a red scarf and matching red lipstick. In the black and white photograph, she is holding her fists out in a victorious attitude, appealing to the young, active, professional woman to whom the magazine is addressed.

131 Sciamarella draws caricatures of significant male politicians and intellectuals for *El País*. The newspaper published his caricature of the Spanish writer Miguel Delibes on the occasion of his death on March 12, 2010.

132 To see the Spanish version of the minutes of the jury pertaining to the bestowal of the prize on Atwood, as well as other information about the Foundation and the Awards, see Fundación Príncipe de Asturias, "Margaret Atwood." Given for the first time in 1981, the Prince of Asturias (the heir to the Spanish crown) Awards, sometimes known as "the Spanish Nobel Prizes," are a series of annual prizes given in Spain by the Prince of Asturias Foundation to individuals and/or organizations from around the world who make achievements of universal value in the sciences, humanities, or public affairs. The Jury is made up of members of the Spanish cultural elite endowed with a high symbolic value, like the then President of the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language, Victor García de la Concha, Directors of Literary Supplements and prestigious writers.

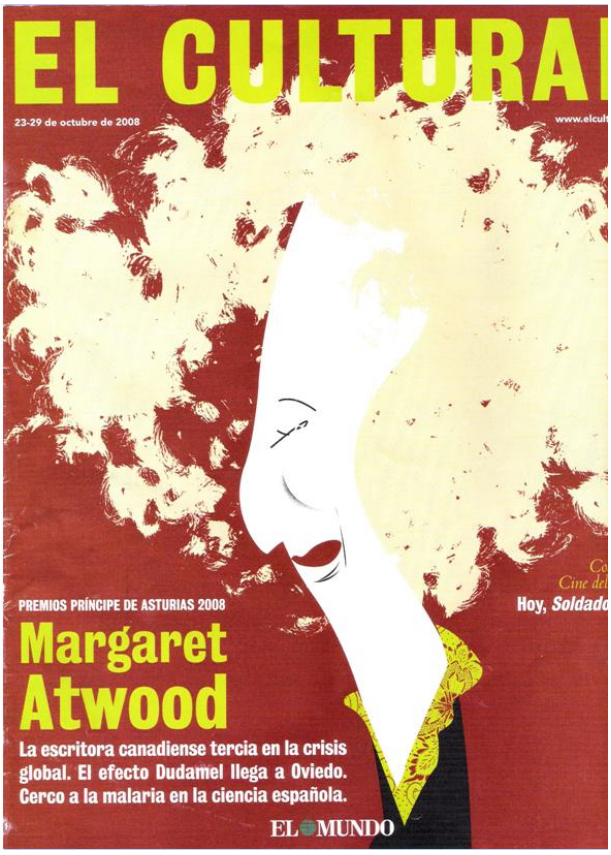

Fig. 5.1 Caricature of Margaret Atwood on the cover page of *El Cultural* (23-29 October, 2008).

Prize which, as James English (2005) puts it, converts the profits from the manufacture of deadly explosives into a mantle of literary achievement, the Asturias Prizes are associated with a non-lucrative organization whose aim, as specified in its web page, is to strengthen the ties of the Spanish Monarchy with the region of Asturias.[133] Besides their highly institutional dimension, the Prizes are a mediatic event broadcast by Spanish public television and covered by all Spanish newspapers. In their almost thirty years of history

133 The Foundation's aim does not lack ideological intentions, as Asturias was well-known for its revolutionary inclinations in the early twentieth century. These resulted in the proclamation of a socialist republic in 1934 - brutally repressed by General Franco – which was one of the events leading to the Spanish Civil War in 1936.

so far, only five women - besides Atwood - have won it. [134] Doris Lessing, Nélida Piñón and Margaret Atwood are the only writers to have received the Award as a single recipient, a sign of the notorious minority of women among the candidates and winners of this Award. Commenting on the news about Atwood receiving the Prize, the Uruguayan writer Cristina Peri Rossi (2008), now a resident of Barcelona, declared her surprise because "the majority of the candidates were male writers and great prizes are usually bestowed on them" and because "if any of the male members of the jury of the Prince of Asturias Award has in effect read Margaret Atwood carefully and voted for her, then something must have changed in this country." Peri Rossi is referring to the subordinate position women had under Franco's dictatorship which has later transformed itself into a veiled inequality of rights which the present Ministry of Health, Social Policy and Equality[135] of the Socialist Government is trying to address.

In spite of the official defence of equality between men and women, a certain negative bias against feminism still lurks in some conservative Spanish media. In these media, defining Atwood as a "defender of women's rights" often means to classify Atwood as a "feminist writer." As Fiona Tolan (2007) points out, Atwood has repeatedly been pressured to support and endorse feminist politics and to explicitly associate her work with the movement. She has repeatedly refused to be drawn to into such an allegiance. In an early interview with Margaret Kaminski, she provided the following description about *The Edible Woman*, often considered one of her most feminist novels: "I don't consider it feminism. I consider it social realism" (Kaminski, 1990). In a later conversation with Rebecca Garron, she still resists having the label "feminist" attached to her as a writer: "In other words, if you're doing something because you think you should, whatever it is, it's likely to be bad. If there is no real energy behind it, it becomes billboard, it becomes dutiful. And that goes for anything, including feminism [...]. The thing may be a good cause, and as citizens we may deeply approve of it, but if as writers we don't feel organically inspired to write about it, we shouldn't" (Garron, 2006).

134 The Spanish novelist Carmen Martín Gaite shared it with her countryman poet José Ángel Valente in 1988; Fatima Mernissi (a Moroccan feminist writer) shared it with Susan Sontag in 2003; Doris Lessing obtained it 2001. The last woman to win it before Atwood was Nélida Piñón (a Brazilian writer of Spanish descent) in 2005. Doris Lessing, the last English-speaking author to receive the Asturias Award before Atwood, was awarded the Nobel Prize in 2007, thus confirming that some Asturias awardees are afterwards recipients of the Nobel.

135 Between 2008 and October 2010, there was a Ministry of Equality. The merging of the three ministries occurred during the recession.

Among certain sectors of the Spanish public – those who have contributed to perpetuating the aforementioned gender inequality - this association with feminism can be considered what Lorraine York (2006) calls a disabler of celebrity status. Her alleged condition as a feminist writer has been, and still is, a site of contestation for the Spanish critics, especially - but not only - the male ones, who do not think the adjective suitable for Atwood. Luis Marigómez (2000) remarks that "she has a feminist point of view, [but] it is not radical." Gurpegui (1998) observes that to catalogue Atwood as a feminist author is to reduce the meaning of her work. Antonio Colinas, a Spanish poet and member of the jury of the Prizes, states that her vantage point about the feminine is not the result of a mere topical feminism (Colinas, 2008). Among the female critics, there also seems to be a divergence of opinions. Lourdes Ventura (2008) calls her a "protofeminist," and Peri Rossi (2008) a "feminist *post lettre.*"

Before ending this section, I would like to illustrate how Atwood's ideas have often been manipulated by the Spanish press. With reference to her categorization as a "feminist writer," let us consider an interview published in *El Mundo* on the day of the announcement of the Asturias Award. The article had the following titillating title: "We should be judged by our merits. And without our skirts!" (Alemany, 2008). The elliptical form of Atwood's statement[136] - insisting on her old argument that she does not believe in the distinction between men and women writers, but only between good and bad writers – may provoke all kinds of comical interpretations, surely unintended by Atwood who only wanted to reiterate her dissociation of gender and good literature. In the lead-in to the interview, Atwood is hailed as a "veteran of feminism," and when asked by interviewer Lluis Alemany whether she considered feminism (or its literature) as part of official culture, Atwood responded that she would not say she writes feminist literature as that would sound too much like a political programme. This statement was turned into another headline, printed on the cover page of the newspaper itself: "Feminism? it sounds too much like a political programme"(Alemany, 2008). Notwithstanding the headline, throughout the interview Atwood bluntly attacks a number of stereotypes about men and women and insists that she does not believe that being a woman is an obstacle for writing.

Let me provide a final example from her latest visit to Spain, when she came to be presented with the Prince of Asturias Award in 2008. A current affair at the time was the proposal of the internationally famous Spanish Judge Baltasar

136 What Atwood actually said was "Women writers should be judged by their merits. And do not let skirts interfere with these judgements, if possible."

Garzón[137] to pass judgement on the crimes committed by Franco during the Spanish Civil War and his subsequent dictatorial regime. Garzón labelled the dictator's crimes as "genocide." Asked about this issue by several right-wing Spanish newspapers (*El Mundo*, *La Razón,* and *ABC*) on June 23, 2008, Atwood responded: "I am not sure that genocide is the most appropriate label. The war was fought between citizens of the same country who only had different political views ... In addition, it is perhaps already too late for that. Most of the people who participated in that war are already dead (Lucas, 2008). Javier Ors (2008) in *La Razón* reproduces Atwood's answer in similar terms, while adding a comment about the role of Canadians who came to fight in the Spanish Civil War. Antonio Astorga (2008) also includes Atwood's opinion in the lead-in of his article published in ABC.

These declarations seem unexpected in someone like Atwood, who has permanently condemned political violence and defended human rights. Furthermore, since her view coincides with the take of right-wing sectors of Spanish society on this matter, it would not be too far-fetched to conclude that these three newspapers could have taken advantage of Atwood's reputation as a public intellectual to support their ideological position. Nevertheless, these headlines could also be taken as examples of her ability to be provocative with regard to a current event. To conclude this section, I would like to state that, in spite of the way in which the Spanish media have used Atwood's statements for their purposes, I agree with Graham Huggan that there is something of a staged controversiality surrounding Atwood. She is what Huggan (2001) calls an "establishment subversive," with an ability to pick current topics and offer a provocative slant.

137 Garzón came to international attention in 1998 when he issued an international warrant for the arrest of former Chilean President, General Augusto Pinochet, for the alleged deaths and torture of Spanish citizens. Since the first revision of this chapter (July 2011) until the second (February 2012), Garzón has been accused of various irregularities and finally indicted on three different counts relating to a fraud trial, the investigation of Francoist crimes and taking bribes. Although he has been acquitted of exceeding his authority in investigating the crimes of the Francoist era, he has been accused of illegal wiretapping of conversations between suspects and their lawyers in a well-known case of political corruption (*Caso Gürtel*). The trial judge described this act as appropriate to a dictatorship and sentenced him to eleven years disqualification from judicial activity.

4. Conclusions: the Future of Atwood's Writing in Spain

Like most Canadian writers, Atwood was imported into Spain as a marketable author of certain kinds of genre fiction (science-fiction, feminine novel), but in contrast to most of her countrymen/women - except, perhaps, Alice Munro- she has increasingly accumulated symbolic capital. As has been the case with other Canadian writers, the reediting and reprinting of Atwood's works has been linked to the progressive accumulation of prizes and indexes of canonization, like Harold Bloom's famous inclusion in his Western canon. Prizes play a crucial role in the interaction between genre and the marketplace. They also influence notions of cultural value and literariness (Squires, 2007) but I am of the same view as Belén Martín-Lucas,[138] prizes neither guarantee durable favour among readers nor permanent inclusion in the literary canon. Literary taste, in fact, does not always depend on prizes. For Bourdieu (1984), all taste in literature is an effect of prior determinants and class position, since training and one's education classify readers into groups that favour one kind of literature over another. Skilfully addressing different potential audiences, when interviewed by the Spanish press on the day that news about the Asturias Prize broke out, her Spanish editor Ana Maria Moix (2008a) spoke about her cultural capital to the high/middlebrow readers of *El País*: "Atwood's books do not reach spectacular sales but the reader appreciates the exquisite quality of her prose, her exquisite sensibility, her unbendable irony. But on the same day, Moix (2008b) also described the Canadian writer to the lowbrow audience of *20 Minutos* "as a writer of prestige who had not fully reached the great public." Moix (2008a) is right to say that in Spain Atwood is supported by a group of personalities from dominant cultural and political groups, whose allegiance adds to her growing symbolic capital. However, in spite of the Asturias Prize, she is still unknown to the average Spanish reader who feeds on best-sellers.

Atwood cannot be considered a bestselling author in Spain at the moment. However, all her books – with the exception of her poetry collections - were translated into Spanish with the aim of becoming best-sellers. As Bourdieu (1999) rightly observes, "translation is a pre-eminently financial investment that always aims, openly or not, at the production of best-sellers. If we follow Connor's 1996 definition of literary fiction ("Literary fiction is usually defined by negation – it is *not* formula fiction or genre fiction, *not* mass market or bestselling fiction – and, by substraction, it is what is left once most of the

138 See chapter 3 of this collection.

conditions that obtain in contemporary publishing are removed") Atwood could not be considered a literary author. She is well-known for using the strategies of formula fiction and genre fiction in her novels and she takes part in *all* the resources of contemporary publishing and book marketing. Among her English-speaking readers, the dissemination of her works and presence through social networks like Twitter[139] (in which she participates directly) and Facebook (run by her publishers) is well-known. Social networks have still not been used by her Spanish publishers to publicize her writing, but the number of spontaneous Spanish blogs and websites about her is growing steadily.

Whereas Atwood's online Spanish popularity is a relatively new phenomenon, as a public intellectual she has been respected for a while. I have shown how she is quoted and appropriated by media of diverse political tendencies but, most prominently, some of her cutting-edge societal concerns -defence of women's rights and social justice in general, sustained economic development and ecological preoccupations) (Somacarrera, 2012) coincide with the ideological values of the Spanish Socialist Party. To say that she could have been co-opted is, no doubt, a controversial statement. However, evidence for the solid institutional support she has received from the Spanish Socialist government can be found, for example, in the fact that her candidacy to the Asturias Award, questioned by some members of the jury who wanted a Spanish-speaking winner, was backed by the former General Director of Book Affairs, Archives and Libraries of the Spanish Ministry of Culture, Rogelio Blanco. César Antonio Molina, writer, director of the Círculo de Bellas Artes and Minister of Culture at the time that Atwood received the prize, could also be counted among her supporters.[140] That institutional support for Atwood in Spain has come even from the highest political spheres is proved by the fact that the Vice President of the former Spanish Government, Mª Teresa Fernández de la Vega, once quoted from Atwood's acceptance speech for the Asturias Prize. Atwood's words were quoted by Fernández de la Vega in a public intervention on the occasion of an agreement between the Ministry of Presidency and the Prince of Asturias Foundation. The Vice President used Atwood's words from her acceptance speech to speak about the prestige of the Asturias Prizes and of the importance of creativity for human beings.[141]

139 Atwood has recently been mentioned in an article in *El Cultural* about writers who use Twitter to communicate with their readers (Trubek, 2012).

140 César Antonio Molina's wife is Mercedes Monmany, regular columnist of literary supplements and a well-known commentator and admirer of Atwood.

141 Gobierno de España, "Intervención de la Vicepresidenta Primera del Gobierno."

Five years after the Asturias Prize, Atwood's Spanish followers face new questions as another publisher (Lumen), with higher symbolic capital, continues to publish her work: Will internet social networks and blogs make her more popular? How will her future books be distributed? As for the channel of dissemination, Margaret Atwood latest works have been distributed as e-books on the internet, showing the author's conviction that technological advances in publishing are here to stay and are the best way to reach a global audience. Genre-wise, since the beginning of the second decade of the twenty-first century, Margaret Atwood has focused on writing speculative short fiction and essays is about science fiction (*In Other Worlds: SF and the Human Imagination*). This collection of essays (still unedited in Spain) and the three episodes of the Positron trilogy ("I'm starved for you," "Choke Collar" and "Erase me") speak of Atwood's return to the kind of dystopian writing which captured her first Spanish readers in the late eighties and will surely capture them again.[142]

142 At the time of revising this chapter (March 2012) Lumen (Random House Mondadori) has already released Atwood's first e-book in Spanish, *Tengo hambre de ti/I'm Starved for You*, the first part of the Positron trilogy, which has been advertised in a tweet in Spanish in Atwood's Tweetwood. I venture to anticipate that Silvia Querini's (her new Spanish editor) talent for negotiation and communication (Lozano, 2011) will raise the sales of Atwood's books in Spain.

Chapter 6

A Spanish Passion for the Canadian Short Story: Reader Responses to Alice Munro's Fiction in Web 2.0

Pilar Somacarrera

1. Alice Munro, Readers' Emotions and Reader Response Theory

In 2010, the year of the 150th anniversary of Chekhov's birth, Alice Munro, "the Canadian Chekhov," entered the Spanish literary canon. Although various factors have contributed to this canonization, such as the support of Spanish publishers, professional writers and cultural institutions, it has ultimately been the passion and devotion of Spanish readers – both renowned and anonymous - which has elevated her to this special position on our literary altars. In this chapter I would like to delve into the reasons why many Spanish readers are currently approaching Munro's stories and commenting enthusiastically about them in numerous blogs and websites.

The Spanish writer Elvira Lindo,[143] who has contributed to Munro's Spanish consecration by including her in the reading list of a short story workshop she taught at the Universidad Internacional Menéndez Pelayo in the summer of 2010,[144] has confessed that she is attracted to the way Munro's writing is full of emotions, a characteristic which, in her view, is not valued in the Spanish literary system: "Americans have been talking about their family conflicts forever, but here [in Spain] showing one's feelings in fiction has usually been considered a fault. Alice Munro's stories are filled with intimate feelings, but in Canada this is respected in a different way from here" (Castilla, 2010).

143 Elvira Lindo, writer, novelist and a regular contributor to *El País*, has worked as a script writer for radio, television and cinema and written award-winning novels. Ironically, she is often relegated to a second place in the Spanish literary hierarchy as the wife of the writer Antonio Muñoz Molina, Director of the Cervantes Institute of New York.

144 The title of the course was "Short story workshop: Chekhov and company." With its main site in Santander (Spain) the Universidad Internacional Menéndez Pelayo, is one of the best-known European summer universities. Alice Munro was included in the reading list along with the Russian writer and the usual canonized authors from the US (Salinger, Cheever and Carver).

Notwithstanding whether Elvira Lindo is right or not in her generalization about the "absence of feelings" in Spanish fiction, reader response criticism seems an appropriate theoretical background for the analysis of the emotions which Spanish readers experience when they read the short stories of Alice Munro. Reader response theory started as a reaction to the Anglo-American New Criticism's treatment of the literary text as an object that should be interpreted in dissociation from the emotional effects it might provoke in the reader. For my analysis of internet responses to Munro's stories I shall draw on the work of theorists from the Constance School of the Aesthetics of Reception, Hans Robert Jauss and Wolfgang Iser.

One important basis for these theorists is the philosophy of phenomenology, which refers to those things in the world which are perceived by human consciousness. It is well-known that this theory is usually associated with Husserl and his disciple Heidegger, but it was Hans-Georg Gadamer who, in *Truth and Method* (1975), applied Heidegger's situational approach to literary theory. Gadamer argued that the meaning of a literary work depends on the historical situation of the interpreter, an idea which was followed and expanded by Jauss. In *Aesthetic Experience and Literary Hermeneutics* (1982), Jauss suggests that differences in the reading of texts, not only between individuals but also across time, cannot be accounted for by differences in personality alone. In order to explain these differences, he provides the terms "paradigms" and "horizon of expectations." A paradigm contains both implicit and explicit cultural assumptions, which are only relevant until changes cause them to shift. Each culture in each paradigm has a "horizon of expectations" –a set of assumptions which will contribute to the production of certain kinds of readings. According to Jauss (1982), the "horizon" is constructed in three ways: first, through familiar norms or the immanent poetics of the genre; second, through the implicit relationship with familiar works of the literary-historical surroundings, and third, through the opposition between fiction and reality, between the poetic and practical functions of language, which is always available to the reflective reader as a possibility of comparison.

Wolfgang Iser also draws on the phenomenology of Husserl to describe the individual act of reading as the concretization or realization of the text as a literary work. Because the literary work has no objective referent outside of itself, it must create its own object through the provision of numerous perspectives of that object (Shellenberg, 1995). These determinate perspectives are incomplete, however, leaving gaps that are filled during the act of reading. For Iser (1974), the subject who encounters the text is not a stable, unique "I," but a stereotype constituted from various other textual codes: "one text is potentially capable of several different realizations, and no reading can ever exhaust the full potential for each individual reader will fill in the gaps in his own way, thereby excluding the various other possibilities." Gaps can occur at various levels of the text –

semantic, plot or narrative, for example – together with the indeterminacy which invites the reader's response. In fact, literary criticism of Alice Munro has explored how the Canadian author forces readers to pay attention to the gaps in her fiction and to the process of reading (McGill, 2002).

2. The Spanish Revival of the Short Story and Alice Munro's Rising Value

Munro's success is parallel to a "rebirth," which some call a flourishing, of the short story in Spain. A genre with an important tradition in nineteenth-century Spanish literature - especially in its fantastic and realist variants - but neglected for a long time, the short story has recently been rediscovered because authors no longer have prejudices about it, "like considering it the 'poor brother of the novel' or an exercise of style" (Manrique Sabogal, 2009). Fernando Valls (quoted in Rodríguez Marcos, 2010), a professor at the University of Barcelona and one of the most relevant Spanish critics of the genre, has spoken about the continuous trajectory in the last forty years of a genre which has appeared and disappeared on the Spanish literary scene." For Juan Casamayor (quoted in Rodríguez Marcos, 2010), director of Páginas de Espuma - a Spanish press which specializes in short stories - what the short story is currently going through is a sustained growth rather than a boom. By founding his press ten years ago, [145] Casamayor challenged one of the major clichés of the Spanish publishing scene (that the short story does not sell) and succeeded, as proved by his catalogue which includes 170 printed titles, twenty e-books and a four-volume anthology of the short story in Spanish titled *Pequeñas resistencias/ Small Resistances*.

In addition to the creation of specialized presses, three other factors, relevant for the inquiry into Munro's Spanish success, have promoted the vitality of the short story in Spain. First, literary workshops, like the one run by Elvira Lindo, which not only use short stories as teaching material, but have also been attended by authors who now teach in them. The second factor is the internet, a critical and creative refuge for a genre neglected by traditional means of dissemination. In recent years, we have seen the upsurge of numerous blogs dedicated to the short story, like *El síndrome Chéjov* / *The*

145 Eloy Tizón (quoted in Rodriguez Marcos' article) comments on the important role that the appearance of specialized presses have had in the consolidation of a genre which never enjoyed in Spain the prestige it had in Latin America and in the United States.

Chekhov Syndrome, led by Miguel Ángel Muñoz; *La luz tenue / The Faint Light* by José Manuel Martín Peña and *La nave de los locos / The Ship of Fools*, run by Fernando Valls. Finally, the genre has received steady support from the media (especially daily newspapers and the cultural supplements) in the form of a series of articles or special issues dedicated to the genre, which have appeared frequently over the last two years. To give an example of the rising importance attributed to the genre in newspapers, it will suffice to see the evolution from the headline of an article published in the online edition of *El Mundo* in 2008, announcing that "The short story finds its way in the book industry" (Lifona, 2008), to that of the special issue dedicated to the short story in its literary supplement in 2010 - "Las letras españolas viven del cuento" / "The Spanish letters live on the short story" (Bonilla, 2010).[146] *El Mundo*'s rival newspaper *El País* has not fallen behind and has dedicated two issues of *Babelia* to the short story in only two years. The first one ("Vivir del cuento") was published on 24 January 2009, coinciding with the two-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Edgar Allan Poe. The second one was released in 2010 for the occasion of Chekhov's 150 anniversary ("El siglo de los cuentos"/"The century of short stories").

Despite this medi attention, the short story is not fully established in Spain yet and still needs to be defended. From an open session in her short story workshop in July 2010, Elvira Lindo complained about the little appreciation that the short story still receives in Spain and mentioned its scarce presence in periodical publications and newspapers as one of the reasons (Hidalgo, 2009). Elena Ramírez, editorial director of Seix Barral acknowledges that they publish few short story collections because it is a genre "with difficult commercial possibilities" (Bonilla, 2010). In the meaningfully titled article "Praise of the Short Story," Alberto Manguel (2009) replies to this remark: "For absurd commercial reasons, publishers have decreed that the short story does not sell. [The writers that do not sell] include Poe, Kipling, O.Henry, Chekhov, Katherine Mansfield, Ernest Hemingway, John Cheever, Borges, Silvina Ocampo, Alice Munro, Mavis Gallant."

Before going on to the analysis of Spanish readers' responses to Alice Munro in blogs and websites, a few words about the history of her translations in Spain and the more conventional channels of reception (reviews in print editions of newspapers) are in order. Alice Munro's books started to be published in Spain in the 1990's, shortly after Margaret Atwood's first books. As I already mentioned

146 There is a pun in the Spanish phrase *vivir del cuento* ("To live on the short story"), as it also means "to live without working." The pun is used in several titles of the reportages dedicated to the short story in Spanish literary supplements.

in the previous chapter of this collection, comparisons between Atwood and Munro have been inevitable, owing to their condition as established Canadian female authors. The question of whether Munro's excellent reputation in Spain can be considered, as von Flotow (2008) suggests for Germany, "a result of Atwood's success" is debatable, because as many Spanish reviewers and readers that I will quote in the next section of this chapter have noted, Munro is a writer with clearly idiosyncratic characteristics.

The first translations of Alice Munro's books in Spain were introduced by small publishing houses: Versal published *The Moons of Jupiter / Las lunas de Júpiter* in 1990 and *Friend of my Youth/ Amistad de juventud* in 1990. Debate, a progressive press specializing in non-fiction which is currently an imprint of Random House Mondadori, published *The Progress of Love* in 1991 with the financial aid of the Canadian Council International Translation Programme, and later *Open Secrets* in 1996. However, most of Munro's titles since the turn of the century (with the exception of *The Love of a Good Woman)* have been published by RBA, a Barcelona-based press specializing in collectibles. RBA's editorial literary director Anik Lapointe bought Munro's backlist in 2007, which allowed the press to release *Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage* (2003), *Runaway* (2005) and *The View from Castle Rock* (2008). The last of these titles occupied the seventh position in a list of the best books of that year published by *Babelia* in December 2008. Once again, some commentators will probably have interpreted Munro's popularity as a side effect of Atwood's winning the Asturias Award that year. However, only one year later, Munro started to shine in Spain as a prize-winning author herself, as she was honoured in 2009 with the Man International Booker Prize, by then well-known to the Spanish public despite its English-speaking affiliation. This news provoked the publication of various articles about her in the Spanish press and the reprinting of most of her back list. In 2010, the publishing corporation Random House Mondadori acquired Alice Munro's rights, an operation which has so far allowed them to publish in their imprint Lumen her latest short story collections *Too Much Happiness/ Demasiada Felicidad* (2010) and *Dear Life/ Mi vida querida* (2013), as well as to recover one title from her back-list, *Lives of Girls and Women/La vida de las mujeres* (2011). In 2010 and 2011 Munro was nominee for the Prince of Asturias Award, won in 2011 by another Canadian writer, Leonard Cohen ("El Príncipe de Asturias," 2011). A last example of the high esteem the Canadian short story author enjoys in the Spanish literary system is that three of her books were mentioned as fundamental titles of the twenty-first century in a survey among Spanish writers undertaken by the cultural supplement of *ABC* in its twentieth anniversary : Ignacio Martínez de Pisón chose *The View from Castle Rock* (number 3 out of 5), Javier Marías opted for *Too Much Happiness* (the third in a list of 4) and Soledad Puértolas selected *Runaway* (number 5 on a list of 5 books) (Torres, 2012).

Going from the hands of the "lowerbrow" oriented RBA to the cosmopolitan Lumen undoubtedly confirms Munro's Spanish canonization. However, Alice Munro did not always receive the enthusiastic critical response she now enjoys. In one of the first reviews of her books, José Antonio Gurpegui (1990) describes her as a conservative and naïve writer, without any sense of irony, adding that "the simplistic ideas of her characters beg to question the need to translate and publish everything that comes from the other side of the sea." Less than ten years after that, the same reviewer was referring to her as "one of the great contemporary Canadian narrators." In the first decade of the twenty-first century, however, we have seen how praise for Alice Munro and her works in the Spanish press has increased in a geometrical progression, parallel to the aforementioned recovery of the genre in the Spanish literary system. Articles acclaiming her work and her presence and comparing her to the masters of the short story (Chekhov, Henry James, Eudora Welty) are just too numerous to quote. Often called the best contemporary writer of short stories (Monmany, 2007) she is metonymically identified with the genre itself and praised for her portraits of "passionate" women, as the following text from *La Vanguardia* illustrates: "Alice Munro is one of the great masters of the short story. Her subtle portraits of women, often shut down in grey everyday lives but trying to recover the passion they once knew, are hard to forget. If the Munro genre existed, it would certainly be going through its peak of success in Spain" (Ayén, 2009). [147]

The parallelism between the revival of the short story in Spain and the rising value of Alice Munro's fiction in Spain is not coincidental. The Spanish literary system is currently looking for new cosmopolitan models for the short story and has found a significant one in the Canadian writer. Munro's reputation as an international prize-winning short story writer - currently on the verge of obtaining the Asturias Award obtained by Margaret Atwood in 2008 - does not fall far behind Atwood's own consecration. They both have had prestigious supporters (writers Elvira Lindo and Antonio Muñoz Molina can be counted among Munro's), but as I shall demonstrate in the next section of this chapter, the vagaries of their Spanish reception have been different. Munro seems to have reached a larger number of readers who share their responses thanks to the interactional nature of web 2.0.

147 As I am working on the last version of this chapter (March 2013), Alice Munro has made it to the cover page of *El Cultural*, just as her countrywoman Margaret Atwood did in 2008. The literary supplement has just published a summary of her recent interview with *The New Yorker* (Azancot, 2013a) for the occasion of the translation of her short story collection *Dear Life* into Spanish.

3. Readers' Responses to Alice Munro in Spanish Literary Blogs

In the third section of this chapter I propose to analyse a selection of Spanish readers' responses to Alice Munro's stories collected from weblogs, popularly also called „blogs."[148] The blogger or book club member has been recently added to the reviewing scene, which used to be made up exclusively of professional critics and academics. In Linda Hutcheon's words (2009), with the appearance of blogs and websites expertise has been democratized – or made irrelevant, perhaps. Reviews published on the internet versions of conventional newspapers open up a space for average readers to express their reactions to the reviewed book or to the review itself. To mention but one example, this is one response elicited by an interview with Alice Munro published in *La Vanguardia* on May 27, 2009, posted by a blogger named "ilip" on February 17, 2010: " Alice Munro makes me more attentive to women's affections. The stories she tells are universal and intimate, and, most of the times, heartbreaking. I like to read Alice Munro because her gaze rescues feelings of great depth and her writing denounces the abuses of any power" (Libendinsky, 2009). This response presents a good example of the rhetoric of affection and the feeling of emotional solidarity between women which characterizes many of the blog entries about the Canadian writer by Spanish female readers.

Blogs, a new internet genre which has emerged in the era of Web 2.0, allow for new possibilities of interaction with readers. Weblogs have become extremely popular in the last years as blogging is fairly simple and inexpensive. The result is a running commentary, flooding into the World Wide Web, offering insights and information to curious readers. Weblogs are also public diaries, and personalized media outlets - the best ones lead readers to places they might not have found for themselves (*the complete review*, 2002). The analysis of these online notebooks, which offer fascinating perceptive insights about literary work beyond the traditional explication of literary criticism, confirms David Bleich's view (1975) that reading is a subjective process and that the perception of a literary work is entirely a function of the reader's personality. Furthermore, online blogs are different from a conventional review in that they are interactive; someone writes something on her blog and can get the reactions of readers, whose language is more informal and emotional than that of a conventional review. A blog creates

148 I do not include in the study any of the blogs run by Spanish publishers.

a community of readers who share their reading experiences, often aimed at orienting other readers in their selection of books, or advising beginning writers about which writer to choose as a model. As Linda Hutcheon (2009) rightly points out, because of our school training it feels natural to want to talk about books with others in groups: hence the popularity of the virtual reading community created by blogs.

They resemble traditional reviews, however, in that they are often as much about the person who publishes the review online – who stresses their own autonomy to choose and value a particular writer - as about the writer they are reviewing, in this case, Alice Munro. Voluntarily or not, these bloggers become arbiters of taste in the industry of taste acquisition. In accordance with Wolfgang Iser's view (1978) that the critic's task is not the text as an object but rather its effects on the reader, I shall be using reader-response theories as the basis of the analysis of the blogs on Munro.

Out of the great variety of blogs which contain allusions to Alice Munro and/or her works, I am going to select three main categories, from more to less "official." First, blogs affiliated with a media group; second, blogs maintained by individual writers or cultural celebrities – be they beginners or more or less professional writers, often practitioners themselves of the short story; third, blogs of literary workshops or resources for literary writers. In the first category we find one of the most important literary blogs in Spanish, *El Boomerang-blog literario en español*, belonging to the Editorial Santillana of the PRISA media group which includes a selection of blogs by writers and critics (Edmundo Paz Soldán, Javier Fernández de Castro, Vicente Verdú, Rafael Argullol and others). These "sub-blogs" contain reviews of books and other cultural events to which readers can respond.

The most recent material on Alice Munro published in *El Boomerang-blog* is a review of her latest book *Too Much Happiness* (2009), appearing before it had been translated into Spanish. The title of the review by the Bolivian writer Edmundo Paz Soldán (2009) is "The inevitable stories of Alice Munro." Paz Soldán's text, characterised by a highly rhetorical style, praises Munro's book. He describes the Canadian writer's prose as "sublime and full of details that evoke subtle emotions." He then identifies the "inevitability" alluded to in the title of his review as one of the central characteristics of Munro's fiction. By "inevitable" he means that "things could only have happened in the way in which Munro narrates them" (Paz Soldán, 2009); he finds this inevitability in *Runaway* but not in *Too Much Happiness*. In addition, following the tendency of most Spanish reviews in which Canadian writers are inevitably compared to everyone else except other Canadians, he evokes Joyce Carol Oates as Munro's referent, claiming, however, that Munro lacks "Oates' Gothic fever." Paz Soldán's review is a clear case of how a critic approaches a text with a certain "horizon of expectations" (Jauss, 1982) in mind. First, he fails to see

the distinction between fiction and reality, because nothing is inevitable in fiction. Secondly, his horizon of expectation emerges through the implicit relationship to a writer (Joyce Carol Oates) with whom he identifies. [149]

Javier Fernández de Castro also constructs his own horizon of expectations through establishing "a relationship to familiar works of the literary historical surroundings" (Jauss, 1982). In his review of *The Progress of Love* in the blog *El Boomerang*, he names Balzac himself as a referent for Munro, in spite of the geographical, cultural, and chronological distance between the two writers, and recommends reading Munro's collections one after another in order to evoke a twentieth-century *Human Comedy* set in Canada between Ontario and Vancouver (Fernández de Castro, 2010). Next to Fernández de Castro's comparison, we can read the spontaneous comment of one reader, Anna, who responds to this review by describing how she allows herself to be seduced by the title of a story by Alice Munro as she is cooking dinner. Another reader (inmaculada postigo) responds to the same review by saying that running into *The Love of a Good Woman* and *The Perfection* (sic) *of Love* while browsing through the showcase counters of a bookstore had been like having a wish come true. According to inmaculada, there is no writer like Munro because other women writers are either too "hard" or too "soft." Unlike Fernández de Castro, who, acting like a professional critic, offers objective literary referents for Munro's fiction, these spontaneous bloggers are avid readers who are liberated from the protocols that bind and guide reviewers (Hutcheon, 2009). They relate their reading experiences solely to their personal lives and use impressionistic terms when describing their reactions to Munro's fiction.

In the second category of blogs, those undertaken by writers which also resemble professional reviewing, the blog of the Spanish writer Javier Marías[150] deserves a special mention. In August 2005 he included in his blog a review of *The Love of a Good Woman* which had originally been published in *El País* by the writer Antonio Muñoz Molina (2005). The review was intended as celebration of Munro's having been awarded the Premio Reino de Redonda - an award promoted by Marías himself to distinguish a foreign writer - for that

149 His own novel *Los vivos y los muertos* (2009), advertised on the same webpage as the review, is a high-school thriller.

150 Javier Marías, co-candidate with Alice Munro to the 2009 Prince of Asturias Award for Letters, is one of the most prestigious and translated Spanish writers.

book in 2005.[151] The prize includes a small monetary sum and the awarding of a symbolic and honorific title, which in the case of Alice Munro was "Duchess of Ontario." Marías' appreciation of Munro's literary qualities was one of the first explicit attributions of symbolic value coming from renowned Spanish writers. According to the information in his blog, Munro was awarded the prize for "her perfect mastery of the genre of the short story, her extraordinary capacity for the observation of everyday life and its paradoxes, and her magnificent recreation of women characters, who are apparently ordinary but really have a great depth; often in the rural or semi-rural setting of her native region, Ontario, to which she has managed to give a literary dimension equivalent to those of William Faulkner (Yoknapatawpha) and Thomas Hardy (Wessex) (Marías, 2005). Marías' symbolic honorific title and his description of Munro as a new female Faulkner or Hardy who creates psychologically deep characters and immortalizes her regional setting just as they did, enshrines her Canadian identity.

Run by Miguel Ángel Muñoz and named after a book of his by the same title, *El Síndrome Chéjov* is one of the most active and interesting literary blogs in Spain. As a blog which consists of interviews with Spanish short story writers, and notes and reviews on short story collections, it is clearly oriented to providing a marketing outlet for the work of the writers it deals with, or for literary events recommended by Muñoz, including, unsuprisingly, those he participates in. The blog contains six references to Alice Munro, all found in interviews with Spanish writers. In one of the entries from 2010 ("Vila-Matas, Enrique"), the Catalan writer Enrique Vila-Matas, who published his own personal rewriting of James Joyce's *Dubliners* titled *Dublinesca*, acknowledges Alice Munro as an influence but includes her as the odd Canadian name out in a list of international short story writers: Borges, Kafka, Hemingway, Chekhov, Katherine Mansfield, Poe, Cheever, Alice Munro, and the Joyce of *Dubliners*, of course. Similarly, in an earlier entry, Pepe Cervera admits, in an interview with the author of the blog, his penchant for North American writers and mentions the following: O.Henry, Hawthorne, Sherwood Anderson, Hemingway, Salinger, Cheever, Alice Munro, Annie Proulx, Carver, Tobias Wolff, Richard Bausch, Richard Ford, Thom Jones (Muñoz, 2009). If we recall that in Spain what is generally understood for "North American" is "US" and that all the writers in the list with the exception of Munro are in fact from the US, we see another instance of how Munro's Canadianness

151 The Reino de Redonda is an imaginary literary kingdom set on an island near Antigua. Alice Munro's predecessors in obtaining the prize had been J.M Coetzee (2001), John H. Eliott (2002), Claudio Magris, (2003) Éric Rohmer (2004). Ray Bradbury (2006), George Steiner (2007), Umberto Eco (2008), Marc Fumaroli (2009), and Milan Kundera (2010) have obtained it after her, each with his own literary title. Munro is the only woman to have received the prize so far.

is often erased in Spanish reviews.[152] Gonzalo Calcedo also proposes his own list which features writers of very different themes and nationality, including two Spaniards: Graham Greene, Conrad, Stevenson, London, Melville, Salinger, Faulkner, Carson McCullers, Philip K. Dick, Horace McCoy, Chandler, the two MacDonalds, Paul Theroux, Aldecoa, Richard Ford, Stephen Crane, Lorrie Moore, Sender, Alice Munro, Capote (Muñoz, 2007). The other writer who is interviewed in *El Síndrome Chéjov* and refers to Munro is Eduardo Jordá (Muñoz, 2009) and he has something more original to say about her. He tells about his preference for the longer short story format (20-30 pages) practised by Munro which, unlike the short-short fiction form imported from Latin America and currently so popular in Spain, allows him to expand the family histories of the characters in their stories.

The extent to which writers like Pepe Cervera value Alice Munro as a short story writer is illustrated by the following entry of his blog *El tacto de un billete falso* ("The Feel of a Counterfeit Bill"), which displays a sizable photograph of Alice Munro and the heading: "Quote by Alice Munro" (Cervera, 2011). The quote is from her short story "Fiction" in her collection *Too Much Happiness*, and ironically alludes to the minor status of short stories in a literary system. Cervera cites Munro as an authority to vindicate the genre of the short story. Out of the four references to Alice Munro that we find in Cervera's blog, his review of Alice Munro's *The View from Castle Rock* is the most important (2011). Cervera's text differs from conventional reviews found in the press or in other literary blogs in that it begins with a personal experience: a description by the author of the area in the South of Scotland where Munro's book is set. The review also contains descriptions of the Scottish landscape, which are accompanied by photographs. Featuring a detailed account of the structural and thematic concerns of the story which would be suited to a professional review, the blogger moves on to compare each of the stories "with one of those photographs one keeps inside a shoe box in a closet" (Cervera, 2011). Cervera sees his own desire of finding out where he comes from, of honouring the memories of his dead ancestors reflected in *The View from Castle Rock*, thus projecting his own horizons of expectations onto Munro's short story collection. He concludes the review by recommending the book, "because it is just a short story book, a beautiful and affectionate (*entrañable*) short

152 As Coral Ann Howells (1998) notes, Munro is a writer who has experimented within the short story form and within small-town fiction, both of which are marks of her distinctive Canadian inheritance linking her in a tradition that goes back to twentieth century writers like Sara Jeannette Duncan and through into the twentieth-century with Stephen Leacock, Margaret Laurence, Robertson Davies and Isabel Huggan, for example. Incidentally, all the writers mentioned by Howells have been translated into Spanish, except Sara Jeanette Duncan.

story book" (Cervera, 2011). It should be noted that the word *entrañable* is normally used in Spanish for someone one is close to – not for books. Cervera's enthusiasm for Munro's book sounds so direct and spontaneous that the two readers who react to his review confess that they feel enticed to go out and buy the book immediately. Because of its affective nature, Cervera's response stands between a professional review and the reaction of a fan.

Moving to an even more emotional response to Alice Munro's fiction, José Luís Martín Peña (2009) published in his blog *La luz tenue* a short-short story ("Ayer,"/"Yesterday") about his response to Alice Munro's story "Miles City Montana," which I reproduce here:

> Sunday, 13 December 2009
>
> "Yesterday"
>
> Yesterday it was cold and cloudy when the sun rose.
> Yesterday I thought, once again, that Christmas was drawing near.
> Yesterday I did not shave. I looked at myself in the mirror.
> Yesterday I covered the birds' cage with a cotton rag because they say it will freeze in the upcoming nights.
> Yesterday I read Miles City Montana, a short story by Alice Munro and I was moved.
> This woman's writing resembles the rain when it falls on the sea.

This text which exists on a border-line between the genres of the short-short story, poetic prose, and diary entry, is representative of the kind of material found on Martín Peña's blog, which resembles a diary about his everyday experiences. The blogger finds in Munro's story the appropriate voicing of the oppression and dullness of everyday life and the upcoming winter. As David Bleich (1975 would have it, Martín Peña's perception of Alice Munro's story "Miles City Montana" is its symbolization in a new literary text. The effect of this creative type of reviewing is, just as in the earlier blog entries, to motivate his audience to read Munro's fiction by appealing to their emotions.[153]

Not a creative writer himself but a literature professor and critic, Fernando Valls runs the blog *La nave de los locos* with the subtitle "Literature and more..." indicating from the outset his intention of dealing with extra-literary topics as well. As mentioned earlier, from his privileged position as an academic and critic,

153 Antonio Muñoz Molina's article "Too Much Happiness," with the title of Munro's collection, uses a similar strategy, producing an autobiographical text with a final paragraph in which Munro's collection is suddenly related to the writer's feelings (Muñoz Molina, 2009).

Valls is an indefatigable promoter of the genre and someone the new generation of Spanish short story writers consider a mentor. He has co-edited, with Gemma Pellicer, an anthology of the new names of the contemporary Spanish short story titled *Siglo XXI* ("Twenty-First Century") in which stories of two of the writers I have referred to earlier –José Luis Muñoz and Pepe Cervera – are included. At the introduction of the anthology titled "Stories for a new century," Pellicer and Valls refer to Munro as one of the preferred writers of these new narrators (2010).

La nave de los locos openly demonstrates Valls' preference for Munro. In an article whose title can be translated as "The Halfwits," he argues that the 2011 Prince of Asturias Award should have gone to Munro, and not to Leonard Cohen, as this prize is meant "for another kind of artists – writers, not singers" (Valls, 2011). Like other bloggers I have mentioned in this chapter, he also includes her in a list of favourite short story writers, next to the likes of authors like Poe, Chekhov, Joyce, Isak Dinesen, Dorothy Parker, Borges, Cortázar, Carver, Lorrie Moore. The list is shortened to a triad (Alice Munro, Quim Monzó and Lorrie Moore) in an earlier article of the blog which reproduces an interview of his, published on December 2009 in the books magazine *Mercurio* (Valls, 2010a). The fact that a prestigious critic like Valls endorses Munro as a model for short-story writing – again in a list of international names – transfers much symbolic capital to Alice Munro.

To end this section, I will briefly discuss the presence of Alice Munro in blogs used by creative writing workshops through the example of the one run by writer Clara Obligado. [154] As a special celebration for the Day of the Book, the participants had to read Munro's short stories and say which their favourite was. The survey produced 35 responses which cannot analyzed in detail but offer fascinating insights into how the Canadian writer is read by a sector of the Spanish population who is highly motivated to read literature. Many of the participants (most of them are women) evinced the kind of spontaneous and emotional reactions which are typical of blogs. *Runaway* was the bloggers' favourite. Carmen, for example, transmits her personal involvement with the story "Runaway," as she shared with the protagonist of the story the same need to escape from certain situations in her life in which she has finally been trapped. Pandora sees the protagonist's runaway and her indecisions as her own. Nuria Sierra prefers "Carried Away" because of the condensation of the life of the protagonist in so few pages. Munro's presence as a writer leads her to spontaneously exclaim "What a great lady!" Another frequent comment among

154 Clara Obligado is an Argentinian fiction writer and a defender and practitioner of the short-short story who has lived in Madrid since 1976. She has organized creative writing workshops for several institutions and now runs her own (Obligado, 2010).

the participants of this blog is how Munro's style is complex and natural at the same time, and how she includes the reader in the stories without her noticing how the Canadian writer does it. María Pilar's involvement with Munro's stories is so intense that she exclaims that "since I started reading Munro I'm unfaithful to my husband." Clara Obligado, director of the creative writing workshop summarizes the responses concluding how the participants of the workshop "all seem to be in love with Alice Munro." It would be difficult to say what the outcome of this activity proposed by Clara Obligado in her workshop would have been, beyond the emotional and uncritical endorsement of Munro. It is impossible to be sure whether the bloggers were – or were not - influenced by the "complex but natural" style of Munro's fiction. However, readers of their online exchange who did not know Munro were likely to have been enticed to investigate the stories of the Canadian writer.

4. A Spanish Passion for the Short Story

The title of this chapter was inspired by that of a review of *Open Secrets* titled "The Passion for the Short Story" by María José Obiol (1996c), who writes: "*Open Secrets* has the virtue of a great passion." In a country one of whose national attributes is passion, the presence of this word in a literary review speaks, once again, of horizons of expectation. The genre itself triggers certain expectations as well. María Jesús Hernáez Lerena (1998) observes that when looking at the short story, both readers and critics assume that this genre can often offer us a valid interpretation of our emotional life. In this chapter I have shown that the word "passion," (or similarly related and emotionally loaded terms), appear recurrently in Spanish blogs and websites about Alice Munro. Reviews and commentaries on Munro's texts in blogs are often linked to the real life everyday experiences of her readers, like travelling, cooking, illicit love affairs, aspects which are often motifs of the Canadian writer's fiction itself. However, as Linda Hutcheon (2009) reminds us, we expect a review to be fair, impartial, responsible, open and objective, characteristics which are often absent from the reviews of average readers and/or bloggers.

The blogging responses I have analyzed can be classified in a continuum between the professional review and the mere comment of a fan. Some of the reviewers abide by most of the rules of the professional review (Paz Soldán, Fernández de Castro, Marías); others are imbued with the subjectivity of the reviewer but still maintain the appearance of a serious review (Pepe Cervera), while still others openly come from Munro's fans and are meant to recruit more supporters (see statements by anonymous bloggers ilip, Anna, inmaculada postigo and the participants of Clara Obligado's creative writing workshop).

What are the effects of this new and spontaneous type of reviewing? Some guidance is certainly needed in the jungle of the vast Spanish book market and many readers, especially younger ones, turn to these online sources rather than the print media for information and to develop their taste. Since the tastes of the readers will only take the lead via blogs and publishers seem to dictate the trends according to commercial interests, it seems likely that blogs will soon begin to influence the publishers. In fact, some of these blogs (*El Boomerang*) are openly linked to publishing corporations and others (those of individual writers) also have vested promotion interests, albeit in a much smaller dimension than those of the media groups. Most important Spanish presses now have links to the main social networks (Facebook and Twitter) where, as Linda Hutcheon (2009) has noted, non-expert guidance is posted for free, and even if they do not pay their readers for their posted reviews, these responses contribute to their earning power.

The immediacy and accessibility of the internet as a medium in general – and that of blogs in particular – provides an appropriate channel to register the spontaneous responses of readers of different cultural levels and social status. In addition, blogs offer a fascinating insight into how different communities of Spanish readers respond to Munro's stories in a virtual environment which is radically different from that of the conventional literary review. The examples I have analyzed illustrate that, because of their immediacy, blogs are an excellent medium to show how the mental images received by readers in the act of reading are inevitably coloured by the reader's existing stock of experiences (Iser, 1978). Last but not least, the iterative nature of the multimodal and shifting text of blogs, never static or settled, provides an appropriate way of reviewing Munro's fiction, which often functions in an iterative mode (Hernáez Lerena, 1998), like a hypertext in which one link leads to another.

Voices from different sectors of the Spanish cultural elite continue to rave about Alice Munro. In the blog he kept while shooting his film *Los abrazos rotos* (*Broken Embraces*), the Spanish film director Pedro Almodóvar has often declared that he considers Alice Munro one of his favourite short story writers and he was one of the members of the Jury who named the Canadian writer "Duchess of Ontario." He acknowledged Munro's collections *Hateship, Friendship, Courtship, Loveship, Marriage* and *Runaway* as "being in the shadow" of his film (Almodóvar, 2011). More recently, Munro's short story collection *Runaway* appears prominently in Almodóvar's latest film *La piel que habito/The Skin I Live in* (2011) as one of the books which the protagonist reads (Belátegui, 2012). From the Spanish literary system, Irene Jiménez - one of the new writers of the short story published in Pellicer and Valls' anthology - confesses that Margaret Atwood and Alice Munro are "more important living influences" than some canonical Spanish writers from an earlier generation (González, 2011). In a video published on the web site of *El cultural,* Elvira Lindo ("Elvira Lindo peina," 2010)

avows that she has been reading Munro "obsessively" because she considers the Canadian writer as "the portrait artist of feminine complicity... who has best portrayed the feminine soul." But perhaps the clue to understanding Munro's peculiar Spanish canonization - a canonization of a kind that Atwood has not enjoyed in Spain yet - is that she provokes a passion for her short stories, not only among academics and established writers and critics, but also among numerous anonymous readers who see their experiences and emotions translated by the Canadian writer's precise prose.

Chapter 7

Douglas Coupland's Generation X and its Spanish Counterparts

Mercedes Díaz-Dueñas

1. Douglas Coupland and the Spanish Polysystem

The extent of Douglas Coupland's success as a writer in Spain can be measured according to different parameters. The translation[155] of his books and the number of editions and reprints that have been released is only one of these variables. The number of Spanish web pages devoted to him or which deal with his work is also outstanding (around 3720 at the time this essay is being written).[156] However, his definitive contribution to the Spanish cultural scene cannot be assessed in terms of quantity, but rather based on how his works and their repercussion in the media have helped to change the way literature is conceived and how we perceive contemporary culture.

This chapter deals with the influence of Douglas Coupland's work in Spain, focusing mainly on his fiction. First, it surveys when and how his books have been translated and published and analyses the reviews these works have received in major press publications and specialized journals. Secondly, it focuses on the influence that the term Generation X (popularized by his first novel) has had on Spanish culture and analyzes how the features associated with this cultural movement were assimilated and reworked in the 1990s by some representative Spanish writers who are described as part of this Generation X.

Because of the dialogue of cultures, languages and literatures which has occurred at the transference of Douglas Coupland's works into the Spanish literary system, a theoretical background like the polysystem theory, situated between the disciplines of comparative literature and translation studies, seems appropriate to form the basis of my analysis. Since the seventies, the term "polysystem" has become familiar through the work of scholars Itamar Even-Zohar and Gideon Toury at the Porter Institute of Poetics at Tel Aviv University. According to the polysystem theory, literature is a complex whole of systems –concepts of literature on both a

155 I have retrieved data about the publication of translations of Douglas Coupland's works mainly from two sources: the Index Translationum and the Spanish ISBN Agency database.

156 Even an (in)famous web page where students can download ready-made assignments, "El rincón del vago," has an entry for Douglas Coupland and Generation X.

practical and a theoretical level – which mutually influence each other and which constantly stand in new and changing relations of scales of values (norms) and models that dominate in given circumstances (Tötösy de Zepetnek, 1998). In addition, for this theoretical approach, the principle of historical reception also has a primary importance: all literary texts are historically determined.

Douglas Coupland, a Canadian writer and visual artist born in 1961, who first gained popularity with the extraordinary success of his debut novel, *Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture* (1991), has been translated into twenty-two languages. A frequent contributor to the *New York Times*, the *New Republic*, *Wired*, and *Art Forum*, he has also written the movie "Everything's Gone Green" (2006) and collaborated in the adaptation of his novel *JPod* into a TV series. As a writer, Douglas Coupland has published both fiction and non-fiction, but since his books are not easily categorized in terms of genre, I will follow the author's own classification, as presented in his official website, Coupland.com (http://www.coupland.com/). Since the publication of his first novel, *Generation X*, up to the release of his latest novel, *Generation A*, Coupland has written thirteen works of fiction: *Generation A* (2009); *The Gum Thief* (2007); *JPod* (2006); *Eleanor Rigby* (2004); *Hey Nostradamus!* (2003); *All Families Are Psychotic* (2001); *God Hates Japan* (2001); *Miss Wyoming* (1999); *Girlfriend in a Coma* (1997); *Microserfs* (1995); *Life After God* (1993); *Shampoo Planet* (1992); *Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture* (1991).In addition, he has issued six other non-fiction books *Terry – The Life of Canadian Terry Fox* (2005); *Souvenir of Canada 2* (2004); *School Spirit* (2002); *Souvenir of Canada* (2002); *City of Glass* (2000); *Polaroids from the Dead* (1996). These works would be difficult to classify because they combine pictures, historical facts, characters of video games and fiction in ways that do not adjust to any traditional genre.

In his novels Coupland has explored different themes and delved into recurrent interests ranging from religious or transcendental concerns and extraordinary vital circumstances, to ecological issues and consumerism. The importance of telling stories is also a leitmotif in much of his writing. However, reviewers and critics have focused mostly on his gift for reflecting on and creating contemporary trends, his "fundamentally ironic vision of contemporary culture" (Cullen, 1997) and his ability to engage young readers. Unfortunately, academics have not devoted much attention to his works, and critics remain divided about his literary merit.[157] His

157 There are only thirteen records in the MLA International Bibliography database that make reference to Douglas Coupland. A monograph devoted to Douglas Coupland was published by Andrew Tate of the University of Manchester in 2007. In Spain, some studies from the field of sociology have dealt with Coupland, such as the study by Antonio Gutiérrez Resa, and a dissertation by Isabel Pérez Vega, *Realidad y ficción en la narrativa de los noventa de Douglas Coupland*. As Kegan Doyle points out in Coupland's entry in the *Encyclopedia of Literature in Canada*, there are critics who consider him a witty critic of contemporary society and those who regard him as hackneyed and repetitive (Doyle, 2002).

works are not usually included in the syllabi of Canadian Literature courses at Spanish universities, with the exceptions of the University of Salamanca and the Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (Spanish Open University), which have addressed his works occasionally. He has not received major literary awards, except for the 2004 Canadian Authors Association Award for Fiction, which he was awarded for his novel *Hey Nostradamus.*[158] None of the Spanish translations of his books have been funded by the Canada Council International Translation Programme. Coupland is, in fact, very critical of the grant system of this institution, as he has polemically declared that "CanLit" is when the Canadian government pays you money to write about small towns and/or the immigrant experience (Coupland, 2006). However, this lack of institutional support has not hindered his popularity among young people all over the world.

The transference of Douglas Coupland's books into Spain has been based on the affinity of their themes and styles with literary fashions currently prevalent in the target culture. In accordance with Even-Zohar, my main argument is that, through the works of Douglas Coupland (especially *Generation X)* new elements were introduced into the home literature which did not exist before. As I shall show in the next section, the principles of selecting the works to be translated are determined by the situation governing the home (in this case, the Spanish) polysystem: the texts are chosen according to their compatibility with new approaches and the supposedly innovatory role they may assume within the target literature (Even-Zohar, 1978).

2. Spanish Translations and Reviews of Douglas Coupland's Books

Douglas Couplands's popularity and success are reflected in the fact that his books have been widely translated and reprinted many times, as well as reviewed in the press worldwide. Out of his thirteen novels, only five have not yet been translated into Spanish. In this section I will look into the translations of Coupland's works published in Spain in the order in which they have appeared and analyse their context of publication. At the same time, I will also trace the reception of Coupland's works in the Spanish target culture through a selection of some relevant reviews which are rather mixed

158 It should be noted that the Canadian Authors Association Award for Fiction purports to honor "writing that achieves excellence without sacrificing popular appeal" (Canadian Authors' Association website).

in their view of the Canadian writer, ranging from the most disparaging to fervent fan support.[159]

Blogs and websites, albeit beyond the scope of the chapter, offer much more enthusiastic reactions to Coupland's works than print reviews because they are usually maintained by the reading public and/or Coupland's fans. To end the chapter, I will briefly discuss the factors that may have led to the disregard of his other books by Spanish publishing houses.

The first novel by Coupland to be translated into Spanish was *Generation X*, whose Spanish publication in 1993 coincided with a time of economic and political unrest. In that year, Spain was undergoing a severe recession which had not prevented the Socialist Party from winning the general elections again, despite the considerable rise in votes for the conservative party Partido Popular which would eventually win the following elections of 1996. In this kind of socio-historical context, it seems natural that Coupland's novel about highly educated young people with an uncertain future would be warmly accepted in Spain. It is significant that the novel was published by Ediciones B during its peak of success importing popular international authors. The choice of the prestigious writer Mariano Antolín Rato[160] as the translator of *Generation X*, *Shampoo Planet* and *Life After God* contributed to the accumulation of its cultural capital. After its first publication in 1993 *Generation X* was reprinted every year until 1999,[161] which gives an idea of the wide dissemination of this novel.

This dissemination of Coupland's novel was probably triggered by the article of the same title published by Elizabeth Cabrera published in *Ajoblanco* magazine in January 1994. *Ajoblanco* was a Spanish monthly publication created by José Ribas, which appeared from 1974 to 1980 and from 1987 to 1999. This magazine was one of the first media to spread a counterculture that opposed the Franco regime, but it was also independent of left-wing parties. It brought together philosophers, poets, architects, artists, and comic strip designers from the independent scene in Barcelona. *Ajoblanco* dealt not only with politics but also with social concerns that were new at the time, like environmentalism, collectivism, the gay movement, and sustainable urbanism. During its second period the magazine became more professional and at the same time more critical of the left-wing government of the Spanish Socialist party (PSOE). All in all, *Ajoblanco* was an excellent mouthpiece for different cultural phenomena, including the Generation X hype.

159 Given the impressive number of reviews on Coupland which have appeared in the Spanish press, any attempt of being exhaustive is beyond the scope of this chapter.

160 Mariano Antolín Rato has written over a dozen novels, several essays and has translated into Spanish the works of prestigious writers, such as Jack Kerouac, William Faulkner, Malcolm Lowry, Raymond Carver, and others.

161 The years 1996 and 1997 are an exception.

The general interest aroused by the term probably also caused Justo Navarro[162] to write his review of *Generación X*, a month after the publication of the *Ajoblanco* article. Navarro wrote a lukewarm review of Coupland's first novel for *ABC literario*, in which Coupland is said to belong to a strand of the American literary tradition (Fitzgerald, J. McInerney, B.E. Ellis) obsessed with portraying generations. Navarro praises Coupland's ability to engage the reader by unveiling secrets but criticizes his lack of originality at the same time. The review acknowledges the presence of comic strips as well as a "dictionary of the new time" (Navarro, 1994).

The next book by Douglas Coupland to be translated into Spanish was *Shampoo Planet*, which appeared as *Planeta Shampoo* two years after its original publication in 1992. The novel was received with a rather disparaging review signed by V.V. [163] in *Babelia*, commenting both on the translation of *Shampoo Planet a*nd on *Life After God*, which had not yet been translated into Spanish. The critic blatantly claims that the books are not "good literature," insisting further that "they are not even literature in a pre-postmodern sense (the sense of before *the end of history*)" (V.V., 1994). V.V also refers to the "orality" of the works and to the presence of comic strips but, given the general pejorative and ironical tone of the review, he probably means this as a criticism. He does concede, however, that Coupland's books are humorous and pleasant to read. This kind of criticism illustrates how certain sectors of the Spanish literary system have been extremely reluctant to accept the most innovative aspects of Coupland's fiction.

In 2000 Mariano Antolín Rato, who had translated *Generation X*, *Shampoo Planet* and *Life After God* into Spanish, published what could be considered an opportunistic article for the online version of *El Mundo* dealing with these works and also with *Microserfs*. In the same tone as the previous review by V.V., he is not particularly complimentary about Coupland's production (Antolín Rato, 2000). He claims that *Shampoo Planet* (*Planeta Champú*) deals with the same issues as *Generation X* in a less accomplished way. It seems rather strange that the translator should write a negative review of the very works he had translated. It could be argued that he was seeking to capitalize on the translation's publicity to promote these works, as the article conveniently indicates that the three books are available in Ediciones B, and that "Generation X," in spite of his earlier

162 Justo Navarro is a Spanish writer, translator and journalist and winner of won several prestigious awards for his poetry and fiction. He is an occasional contributor to the newspaper *El País*, and has translated the works of authors such as Paul Auster, Jorge Luis Borges, T. S. Eliot, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Pere Gimferrer, Michael Ondatjee, Joan Perucho, Ben Rice and Virginia Woolf.

163 V.V. probably stands for Vicente Verdú, since this writer and journalist frequently writes for *El País*.

comments, is still an interesting phenomenon. In the same article, Antolín Rato disdained *Microserfs* as merely a disparagement of computer fanatics. Triggered by the success of the earlier novels and by its innovative technological content, *Microserfs* (Ediciones B, 1996) had appeared in 1996 translated by Juan Gabriel López Guix and Carmen Francí Ventosa and with a foreword by Vicente Verdú. They explained in a note to the first edition how difficult it was for them to find suitable words in Spanish for all the references to technology and vocabulary related to computers. Juan Marín (1996) in his review published in *Babelia* also refers to the difficulties that the translation probably entailed, praising the translators for their success in transmitting Coupland's direct and light style.

A second edition, published as a pocket book, included corrections and suggestions made by readers, acknowledged by the translators in another note (López Guix and Francí, 1998). The translation of *Microserfs* was reviewed both in *ABC literario* and in *El País.* José Antonio Gurpegui (1996), writing for *ABC literario*, was still sparing in his compliments for Coupland, although he praised the philosophical questions raided by *Microserfs*. In contrast, Juan Marín (1996) wrote a completely favourable review. Asserting that this was Coupland's best book up to that point, he valued both the content and the style. He emphasized how Coupland reflected the rift of a generation that moves between a digital universe and timeless feelings. Read through the lens of the polysystem theory, the appreciative tone of the review is not surprising, since the novel was dealing with "the innovatory repertoire" (Even-Zohar, 1978) of the new computer era which was only just beginning in Spain at the time.[164] A most interesting effect of the publication of *Microserfs* was the creation of one of the most visited blogs in Spain, named Microsiervos. The blog explains on its homepage that Douglas Coupland is its Patron Saint because he wrote the novel of the same title, which the four author-bloggers venerate. The blog is devoted, among other things, to technology, science, computers, astronomy, aviation, games, urban legends, gadgets and puzzles, as well as book and film reviews.

Ediciones B also entrusted one of the translators of *Microserfs*, Juan Gabriel López Guix, with the translation of Coupland's *Polaroids from the Dead* (1996). This is the only non-fiction work that has been published in Spain so far. It appeared as *Polaroids* in 1999 and received positive reviews, like the one by Félix Romero in *ABC Cultural* which describes Coupland as a spy from "Shampoo Planet" who perceives the world from its corners, and through its noises,

164 Carmen Francí, one of the translators of the novel explains that they had to make a decision on how to translate the term "e-mail", as there was no officially accepted term in Spanish at the time. It turned out that the phrase they chose ("correo electrónico") became the accepted translation some years after (Response to Pilar Somacarrera's questionnaire to Spanish translators of English Canadian literature).

disdaining complex theories (Romero, 2009). However, the favourable reception of the book in the Spanish press did not prompt the translation of other non-fiction books by Coupland, which can be interpreted in the light of the general reluctance on the part of Spanish publishers to venture to release non-fictional works by Canadian authors.

Girlfriend in a Coma (originally published in 1997) was translated into Spanish with the contentious title of *La segunda oportunidad* (Ediciones B, 2001). Critics and readers alike rejected the title of this novel (it means "second chance" in Spanish) because it completely differed from the original: it also gave away the plot and erased the reference to the song by The Smiths. The choice of a poet translator for this novel, Daniel Aguirre Oteiza,[165] who had translated several English-language canonical authors stands, once again, for the symbolic capital which the publisher conferred on Coupland's book. In fact, by the time *La segunda oportunidad* appeared, Coupland had achieved a certain status in Spain and José Antonio Gurpegui (2001b) had more positive comments about the Canadian writer's work. He concluded his review for *El Cultural* by admitting that Douglas Coupland had improved his characterization a great deal and that he was becoming a much more solid narrator.

Between 1999 and 2004, Coupland continued to publish prolifically, producing one novel a year, but only *All Families Are Psychotic* was translated and published in Spain in 2002. The publishing house was no longer Ediciones B, but Ediciones Destino (by then already an imprint of the publishing corporation Planeta). Although different marketing strategies and more complex issues may be at stake in the decision taken by Ediciones B to stop publishing Coupland's works, probably the fact that the Generation X phenomenon was waning in Spain by the end of the century was a decisive factor. In addition, the socio-political context of early twenty-first century Spain - with the conservative party Partido Popular in power -was very different from the one that had provoked the success of Generation X.

There was not only a Spanish translation of *All Families Are Psychotic* but a Catalan one as well (*Totes les famílies són psicòtiques*). The simultaneous translation into two peninsular languages illustrates the commercial expectations that Destino had for this title. However, the actual sales must not have lived up to the expectations because this moving and extremely funny novel, which would make for an excellent road movie, was the only work by Coupland published by Ediciones Destino.

165 Daniel Aguirre Oteiza is a Spanish poet and translator. He has translated into Spanish works by Samuel Beckett, Wallace Stevens, W.B. Yeats and John Ashbery, to name but a few. among many other poets writing in English.

The last three novels by Coupland that have appeared in Spain, *JPod* (2006), *The Gum Thief* (2007) and *Generation A* have been published by El Aleph Editores.[166] *JPod*, whose content echoes that of *Microserfs,* maintains the same title of the original and was published in the same year. *JPod* was, in fact, greeted in Spain as an update of *Microserfs*. While Gabi Martínez wrote an enthusiastic review for *La Razón*, *El País* was not so favourable. According to Martínez, the motto behind Coupland's work could well be "what's important is having fun," a goal he successfully achieves with his readers. This review also describes Coupland as a bridge between the 20th and 21st centuries, between the literary and the graphic worlds (Martínez, 2006). In contrast, Iury Lech (2006), writing for *El País*, was wary of what he deemed an irregular book, combining funny bits with uninteresting parts. He regarded it as a meditation on the current times, similar to *South Park*. Rodrigo Fresán (2008), in his review of *The Gum Thief*, bluntly calls JPod "a slip."

Following up with the translation of the books Coupland had published in the twenty-first century, El Aleph published *The Gum Thief* (2007) as *El ladrón de chicles* in 2008. Rodrigo Fresán's piece about this novel, published in the literary supplement of ABC (2008), is one of the most complimentary reviews Coupland has received in Spain so far. He argues that *The Gum Thief* shows the author at his most brilliant, especially because of his aphoristic style. In the review, Fresán attributes very distinguished forebears to Coupland, such as J.D. Salinger, Kurt Vonnegut and Marcel Proust. But, most importantly, the critic alludes to Marshall McLuhan as Coupland's countryman and inventor of the term "global village," thus situating him in a Canadian context for the first time.

An article titled "La 'Generación X' se hace mayor" ("Generation X becomes older") authored by Paula Corroto (2008) briefly reviews *The Gum Thief*, concluding that the novel shows that Coupland has left behind his pessimistic and resigned conception of life. However, the main point of the article is to trace the evolution of the writers classified under this term – both Spanish and international. As she announces in her title, Corroto (2008) concludes that these writers "have evolved and grown older." She quotes Ismael Grasa (born in 1968), one of the Spanish writers grouped under the label, remarking that he considers the evolution positive because their reflection is more conscious.

166 El Aleph Editores was founded in 1973 by Mario Muchnik and since then it has kept its original policy of being particularly demanding in its choice of writers. It combines tradition and modernity, and is mainly devoted to fiction. It publishes the works of Nobel Prize Winters, such as Elfriede Jelinek, as well relevant Spanish writers, such as Juan Goytisolo and Ray Loriga, who is a member of what has been called the Spanish Generation X of writers.

To end this section, I would like to briefly speculate on why some of Coupland's works have not been selected for translation, beyond what I have already suggested about the trends which have governed the publication of his works in Spain. Given that, as Lawrence Venuti (1998) observes, most translations are initiated in the domestic culture where a foreign text is selected for the tastes of that target culture, it seems that when Coupland's fiction moved away from the theme of unsatisfied young people, Spanish publishers were not interested in translating his books between 1999 and 2006. *Miss Wyoming* (2000), *Hey Nostradamus!* (2003) and *Eleanor Rigby* (2004) have not had their Spanish versions. It could also appear at first sight that publishers in Spain have not been too interested in works by Coupland that exhibit a more traditional or conventional style or form of narration -and this includes the non-fiction titles. In any case, the failure to translate them does not seem to be related to the literary or aesthetic quality of the works, because they have received very positive reviews internationally and in Spain, where Rodrigo Fresán (2008) regretted that neither *Hey Nostradamus!* nor *Eleanor Rigby* had been translated. The explanation for this gap in the list of the Spanish versions of Coupland's works should rather be attributed to the vagaries of commercial speculation among Spanish publishers. Another example of these vagaries can be found in the fact that, as I am writing the final version of this chapter, *Generation A* has just been published in Spanish by El Aleph (2011), possibly on the grounds that it shares some of the features – beyond the similar titles - which made Generation X successful in Spain, as well as some new fashionable elements, such as ecological concerns. However, no publisher has so far shown an interest in publishing Coupland's biography of Marshall McLuhan, which appeared in Canada in 2010.

3. Generation X and its Impact on the Spanish Literary System

As illustrated in the previous section, although all the books published by Douglas Coupland have received considerable attention from the media in Spain, *Generation X* is undoubtedly his best-known and most influential work. Since its first publication in 1993 by Ediciones B, it has seen numerous reprints and editions, all using Mariano Antolín Rato's translation. Even the book club Círculo de Lectores, which has sold over four hundred million books to its members since it was established in 1962, edited its own version in 1994. As late as 2000, a new edition of Coupland's first novel was issued by the imprint Suma de Letras, owned by publisher Santillana of the Prisa group, which attests to the popularity of his fictional debut.

Most readers are probably familiar with the term Generation X, but some may not know exactly where it comes from or what it defines. The connotations that come to mind are those of an undetermined or unidentified generation, any generation, or also a generation that has been crossed out. Douglas Coupland first used it in a 1987 article for *Vancouver* magazine to define the generation that came after the Baby Boomers. He then worked with illustrator Paul Rivoche on a comic strip created for *Vista* magazine in Toronto with the title "The Young and Restless Workforce Following the Baby Boom: Generation X" (Coupland and Rivoche). He was subsequently asked to write a guide to Generation X by St. Martin's Press in New York City, but he decided to move to Palm Springs, California where he wrote his first novel, *Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture* (1991), instead. Apparently, the book was rejected by several publishing houses in Canada and the United States, before being published by St Martin's Press. In spite of having a very small initial printing, no publicity, and few reviews, it soon became an international bestseller and a cult hit. The novel is about three characters of the same age, born in the sixties like Coupland himself. The three take low-paying jobs and retire to a small town – which recalls Palm Springs at the time Coupland lived there- reacting against the society of their time. They reject consumerism and suffer from a lack of motivation, since society does not have much to offer to young people who are better trained than their predecessors, but will have to wait until their elders have abandoned their positions of power to have the chance to develop their own ideas. At the same time, a serious crisis in their system of beliefs seems to affect these young people. The only apparent palliative is to tell stories, or, according to Coupland, the act of narration.

The author himself explains what inspired this title in an article he wrote for *Details* magazine in 1995:

> The book's title came not from Billy Idol's band, as many supposed, but from the final chapter of a funny sociological book on American class structure titled *Class*, by Paul Fussell. In his final chapter, Fussell named an "X" category of people who wanted to hop off the merry-go-round of status, money, and social climbing that so often frames modern existence. The citizens of X had much in common with my own socially disengaged characters; hence the title. The book's title also allowed Claire, Andy, and Dag to remain enigmatic individuals while at the same time making them feel a part of the larger whole (Coupland,1995).

It may be true that Coupland took the term "Generation X" from Paul Fussell's book, but if the public related it to Billy Idol's group it was probably because Coupland himself made a reference to this band in his 1987 *Vancouver* article in a section called "Generation X: The Term." This section began with the following statement: "Generation X was the name of Billy Idol's band before he became just Billy Idol" (Coupland, 1987). No reference to Fussell is to be found there.

Before going deeper into the significance of this novel in Spain, I will provide an overview of the opinions expressed by the author himself in the article from *Details*. These views offer an excellent insight into what he wanted to convey, the circumstances surrounding its publication, and its subsequent effect in the cultural panorama of the 1990s. Coupland explains how his novel was published in March and later that year, Richard Linklater's movie *Slacker* was released. The characters in this film were similar to those in *Generation X* in that they were overeducated and underoccupied. At the same time, what came to be known as grunge music, which originated in Seattle and also implied an attitude of withdrawal and marginality, was becoming popular. From then on, according to Coupland (1995), "the most abused buzzwords of the early 90s" were born: "´generation X´, slacker´, and ´grunge.´"

Coupland (1995) goes on to describe how the term was appropriated by marketers. He concedes that other cultural movements stemming from youth were also marketed: "the 20s expats in Paris, the 50s Beats, 60s Hippies, 70s Punks - all got marketed in the end, but X got hypermarketed right from the start, which was harsh." Tulgan (1996) gives details of how by 1993 many publications, such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Business Week* and *Fortune* were using the term "Generation X. Laura Slattery clarifies that "the impact of the Xer culture on America in the early nineties was not (...) an unaided rebellion, but a media-assisted, media-sanctioned event" ("Generation X to Generation Next"). As early as 1994, historian Jason Cohen and journalist Michael Krugman elaborated a thorough and irony-laden survey of the X hype, in which they were extremely critical of writers such as Douglas Coupland, Jay McInerney, and Bret Easton Ellis in their book *Generation Ecch! The Backlash Starts Here*.

Douglas Coupland has reacted in many ways and on many occasions against this marketing of the term Generation X. He purports to have declined invitations to take part in campaigns aimed at that section of the population. In fact, he denies the existence of such a thing as Generation X and he does not like the fact that some traits of his characters have been used to define a whole generation. In a recent video clip filmed for the promotion of his latest novel, *Generation A*, he claims that neither of his novels *Generation X* and *Generation A* are about "a generation per se, as they are more tombstones to the notion of generation" (CRUSH, 2010). It is ironic, however, that what started as a little game to avoid being called a baby boomer –as expressed in Coupland's article for *Vancouver* magazine in 1987 — pigeonholed a whole generation, including the author himself. In spite of all his protests, he made things easy for the press and marketers, because he put in a nutshell what he regarded as Generation X. Next to the big X of the title "Generation X" the article explains: "They are better educated than those before them, but the jobs are mundane. They are excellent conversationalists, but no one wants to listen to them. They have taste, but those in the power positions have German cars. They wore black, but trend-hungry

baby boomers drove them to colour. They didn't march for peace, and they don't remember the Jack Kennedy assassination" (Coupland, 1987). The product was ready to be sold and Coupland's sentences started to be quoted almost as aphorisms that defined a whole generation, a cultural movement, and an epoch.

In Spain the media did not wait very long to start looking for a Spanish Generation X, which they soon found, and the market started addressing them. An example that many Spanish readers may remember is the advertisement campaign for the Renault Clio car model that had "JASPs" as their protagonists (JASPS is an acronym for "Jovenes Aunque Sobradamente Preparados"), which means young but extremely well-educated. Young people with the characteristics described by Coupland had become the target of advertising campaigns such as that of Renault in Spain.

Naturally, the phenomenon also had an impact on the cultural realm. A piece authored by Elizabeth Cabrero with the same title as Coupland's 1987 "Generation X" article appeared in the January 1994 issue of the aforementioned *Ajoblanco* magazine, a great supporter and promoter of the Generation X trend. Cabrero's article provides the following description of the phenomenon of Generation X: "They are 30-something and have entered the grown-up world for good. They seem asleep, mute, but they are afraid of weariness and are terrified of routine. They seem cynical and disillusioned but they combine scepticism and idealism to improve the world today, not tomorrow. They seem to be conformists but they are pragmatic and, in a discreet way, they are codifying inherited freedoms. They are united by a profound vocation to go unnoticed avoiding any label, although without even having imagined it, they have already been assigned one: they are Generation X" (Cabrero, 1994). Cabrero's article and Coupland's are similar in that they deal with the same generation, but they also present some differences. Cabrero's features photographs of young people representative of Spanish Xers and the tone of her article varies slightly from Coupland's in that it does not actually affirm and vindicate an X culture in contrast to the Baby Boomers, but rather praises this new generation in spite of what appearances might indicate at first sight. In addition to a specialized magazine like *Ajoblanco*, national newspapers like *El País* (in its Sunday magazine *El País Semanal*, which dedicated its cover page to the Generation X phenomenon) also echoed the Generation X, referring to these young people as the best-educated and trained youth of Spanish history and, at the same time, the futureless children of development (Rodríguez, 1994). The articles from *Ajoblanco* and *El País Semanal* feature a considerable number of simplifications and generalizations that readers seem to enjoy and feel the need to identify with. This use of stereotypes allows, in fact, for what Coupland described (see above) as hypermarketing of the term.

Although by the end of the 1990s references to Generation X grew scanter, they tend to reappear from time to time, as evidence of the lasting impact of this cultural phenomenon. For example, less than two years ago, journalists

such as Anna Grau (2008) in her article "Generación X al poder" ("Generation X takes power") were still evoking Douglas Coupland's first novel, this time referring to Barack Obama and his supporters and concluding that Generation X was accessing power with much more creative and eclectic agendas than their predecessors.

One of the most important effects on the Spanish literary system of the cultural trend triggered by Douglas Coupland's book has been the emergence of a Spanish literary Generation X. Suddenly, publishing houses in Spain started accepting manuscripts written by young people and promoting them. This is exactly what Slattery was referring to when she said that Generation X was a cultural movement sanctioned by the media ("Generation X to Generation Next"). In Spain, its literary version was created by publishing firms. In 1994 José Ángel Mañas, twenty-three at the time, was shortlisted for the Premio Nadal[167] for his first novel *Historias del Kronen*. The publication of this novel had a very strong social impact because it bluntly portrayed the lifestyle and opinions of a segment of the Spanish youth, opening up a new path in Spanish literature.

The list of other authors included in this generation X, apart from Mañas, is not clearly established. The idea of this literary generation has been contested by academics. Sabas Martín (1997) in his anthology of contemporary fiction *Páginas Amarillas*, which includes most of the writers who have been labelled as Generation X, shuns the term altogether and sees it as a mistaken attempt to equate the Spanish literary panorama to those of the United States of America or Italy. He does not see a common background to compare the characters described in Coupland's novel with the Spanish situation. Likewise, in her comprehensive study of the novels of young Spanish writers of the 1990s entitled *La novela de la Generación X* (2008), Eva Navarro Martínez (2008) concluded that it was not appropriate to talk about a "generation or a group X" in Spanish literature, because this group of young writers was not homogeneous enough to be given such a name. In her opinion, what they shared was a common idea of writing and literature and that they assumed the risk of introducing a new kind of writing in Spain (Martínez, 2008). It seems, nevertheless, ironic that Navarro Martínez should title her book with an allusion to Generation X only to conclude that there is not one in Spain. The use of a Generation X label which is, at the same time rejected, could be interpreted as a marketing ploy.

On the other hand, Germán Gullón (2005), one of the academics who has dealt most extensively with the Generation X literary phenomenon, limits

167 The Nadal Award for fiction is the oldest literary prize awarded in Spain. It was created by the publishing house Ediciones Destino in 1945, and the list of winners is representative of the development of Spanish literature during the second half of the twentieth century.

the range of writers that could be placed under that label, and provides a list including José Ángel Mañas, Gabriela Bustelo, Cuca Canals, Lucía Etxebarria, Ismael Grasa, Ray Loriga, Pedro Maestre, José Machado, Care Santos and Roger Wolfe. Gullón (2005) uses the adjective "*neorrealista*" (new-realist) first, and then the term "*hiperrealista*" (hyper-realist) to refer to these writers. He praises their achievements in essays such as "Cómo se lee una novela de la última generación (apartado X)/"How to read a novel of the last generation (section X)" (Gullón, 1996), or "La novela multimediática/ the multimedia novel: *Ciudad rayada* de José Ángel Mañas" (Gullón, 1999), in contrast to those who questioned the quality or the literariness of their works. In their textbook about contemporary Spanish literature, Ángel L. Prieto and Mar Langa (2007) avoid the term Generation X to refer to this group and use the term "Realismo sucio" ("Dirty Realism"), but do affirm that their novels are connected to those by Douglas Coupland.

As far as the writers themselves are concerned, just as Coupland himself did, those who were labelled with the famous X in the Spanish literary milieu tried hard to escape that brand name, although these young writers benefitted from the situation at the same time by having their works, sometimes first books, published when in other circumstances they would not have had that opportunity. For example, Roger Wolfe (quoted in Navarro Martínez, 2008) expressed in an interview his belief that there is a need to label things, to gather cattle, he called it, and to classify. He thought that it is obvious that if a group of people live in the same society and are of similar age, they share things which are somehow reflected in their work, but when it comes to writing, they take different perspectives (quoted in Navarro Martínez, 2008).

Indeed, these young Spanish writers deploy different styles and ways of writing as well as common features, which may partly be related to their literary models and to the cultural background they stem from. However, we have to be aware of the fact that to determine literary influences has always been a tricky business and since the 1950s, comparative literature has searched for new paths to move away from this practice. Many critics, such as René Wellek, have previously reflected on the fact that searching and re-searching for direct influences is usually pointless, vain and almost impossible. This is even more so in an era of globalization. From my point of view, it would be more appropriate to talk about common features shared by Coupland's novels and Spanish novels written by young writers in the nineties. Therefore, I will not regard the characteristics that I mention below as the result of a direct influence from Coupland or any other North American writer, especially since most of the literary devices that these writers share are not new. They have been used at other times by other authors, perhaps not predominantly, but certainly occasionally. In addition, given the vast resources at hand for everybody in our time, Spanish authors may have been inspired by many sources.

Although Navarro Martínez (2008) acknowledges that establishing the literary sources from which a given writer has drawn is difficult, she nonetheless points to influences from the Beat Generation and other American writers such as Bret Easton Ellis on the so called Spanish Generation X. She also mentions Coupland as a source of influence, but does not specify exactly how that influence materialises in the works of the writers she analyses. She argues that the influence of *Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture* can be perceived in the topic and stylistic features of Lucia Etxebarria's first novel (*Amor, curiosidad, prozac y dudas*[168]), but not in the other writers she analyses (Navarro Martínez, 2008).

Most young Spanish writers described as Generation X do not acknowledge Douglas Coupland as one of their literary models. When asked about the authors that have influenced them, Pedro Maestre mentions names such as Cela, Céline, Delibes, Carver, Mercè Rodoreda, Peter Handke, Manuel Vicent, Camus (*Ajoblanco*, March 1996, 28), and Ray Loriga makes reference to Camus, Salinger, Kerouac, Auden, Ferlingetti, Bukowski, Carver (Ribas, 1996). On the other hand, writers like Silvia Grijalba, who has not been listed under the Generation X label, openly acknowledges Coupland's influence ("Ha estado con nosotros Silvia Grijalba," 2002).

We can only speculate about why Coupland is absent from these lists of authors mentioned as direct influences. One of the causes may be that Spanish writers, as was reflected above, were trying to escape the label Generation X (Arjona, 2011). Another more complex reason may come to mind: since Coupland had not attained a place among canonical writers, young Spanish writers may not have wanted to have their names associated with him, but with other well-established authors. Finally, many Spanish writers may actually not have read Coupland's works, but received his influence indirectly.

In spite of not recognizing a direct influence from Douglas Coupland, there are a number of common features shared by the Canadian writer and by young Spanish novelists of the 1990s. First of all, they connect with a large number of readers. In the case of Spanish writers, their selling success is supported by the publishing houses and the media who find in them a whole new trend which they can exploit. Douglas Coupland is also a very successful writer whose books sell very well and who often appears in the media. The commercial success of these books has also favoured their adaptation for the screen. Coupland himself worked on the adaptation of *JPod* as a TV series that was launched by the CBC and premiered in January 2008. Some of the Spanish writers' novels have also been made the subject of film adaptations. The most significant was perhaps

168 The translation of the title would be "Love, curiosity, prozac and doubts."

Historias del Kronen, which was adapted by the author himself, José Ángel Mañas, and Montxo Armendáriz. It was awarded the Goya[169] for best adaptation in 1995. Later others, such as *Mensaka* (1998), followed.

The fact that these authors have occasionally worked as script writers and are close to the film industry is quite fitting, since one of their main characteristics is their being marked by a visual culture that both influences and determines their literary production. This is particularly relevant in Coupland's work, where we often find comic strips and layouts that play with visual aspects (images of the contents of a computer screen, graphic design, different types of fonts) that illustrate the preference for the visual in his novels. Some of the Spanish writers of the so-called Generación X, like Ray Loriga, note the importance of visual elements in their creation and complain about the fact that many reviewers ignore the presence of the audiovisual in their work: "En este país se sigue escribiendo como si no existiera la television," which means "in this country people still write as if television did not exist" (Arjona, 2011).

Stylistically speaking, Coupland's novels are characterized by the use of first person narrators and frequent dialogues, which creates an informal register fitting for its young protagonists. In addition, his novels use many neologisms that have often become buzzwords. In *Generation X* some of these words are actually defined at the bottom of the page when they are first used. Terms such as "McJob" (Coupland, 1993) have become so popular that they even have become news items ("McDonald's contra Oxford," 2007).[170] Ismael Grasa (quoted in Corroto, 2008) argues that emerging Spanish writers have much of the spirit of Generation X, especially in their assimilation of language. In fact, Coupland's ability to collect, use and popularize words and concepts such as "generation", "planet" and many others is outstanding.

In contrast, the neologisms that Spanish writers tend to use are adaptations of English words into Spanish and they have not had such an important impact on the language outside the fictional world. Mostly, they have reflected young people's jargon without being particularly creative in that respect. For example, Ray Loriga is criticized by Juan Ángel Juristo (1994) for using expressions such as "ese bastardo cielo azul" ("that bastard blue sky"), because, as he rightly claims, the word "bastard" has not been traditionally used in Spanish except to describe an illegitimate child, but has become popular recently due to the influence of English. Another instance is José Ángel Mañas who very often adapts English

169 The Premio Goya is the Spanish equivalent to the American Oscar Awards.

170 This article, published in *El País* (a translation from a piece from *The Guardian*), which explained that the fast food chain McDonald's was pushing to change the *Oxford English Dictionary's* definition of "McJob," claiming that the term - established in the English language - was insulting to the thousands of staff working in the service sector.

words to show how they sound when used by young people in Spanish, as when he writes "jebi" instead of "heavy", or Nirvana's song "Smells Like Teen Spirit", which becomes "Esmelslaiktinspirit" (Mañas, 1994).

The result of using first-person narrators, the language of young people, as well as places that are familiar to Spanish youth,[171] is that young readers can easily identify with the protagonists of the works by these writers. In this sense José Mañas explained that he had in mind the idea of leaving behind a sociological document about the way people his age were and lived at that time (Ribas, 1994). As a consequence of this quasi-documentary intention, we often find references to current events, celebrities, music, films, video games, etc. These popular cultural references are much stronger than the links to the established canonical literary tradition.

In tune with the times, these writers have often blurred the limits between reality and fiction and have used metanarrative techniques. For instance, Douglas Coupland gives his novel *JPod* a postmodern twist when he himself appears in the novel, interacting with his main character and admitting that the whole novel is based on the information he has retrieved from the protagonist's computer. Similarly, Benjamín Prado in *Nunca le des la mano a un pistolero zurdo* ("Never shake hands with a left-handed gunman") has his four narrators talk directly to him about the development of the story. However, it has to be noted that this device is not new in Spanish literature, since Miguel de Unamuno already used it in his "nivola" *Niebla*.[172]

Another feature shared by Coupland's and Spanish writers' novels is that their protagonists are often young people and, more specifically, groups of friends. It is remarkable, however, that there is an element in Coupland that we do not find in Spanish writers - his young friends often share the need to tell stories in order to escape from or cope with reality. One of the things they need to escape from is an excessive consumerism that Coupland's work is known to denounce. The Canadian writer often makes reference to particular brands to describe and define certain characters, a device which can also be found in Lucía Etxebarria's work. Pedro Maestre partook in this criticism when he expressed the opinion that a society whose values are defeated by consumerism causes ephemeral

171 For example, the locations of *Historias del Kronen* were obvious references to places in Madrid for young people at the time.

172 Miguel de Unamuno (1864 – 1936) was a Spanish writer and philosopher, who belonged to the "Generación del 98." *Niebla* is a work in which he rejects the traditional realist novel of the 19th century. One of the most significant moments of the novel is contained in chapter 31, when the main character, Augusto Pérez, confronts the author, Miguel de Unamuno, attempting to change the course of events in the novel and reflecting on humanity's struggle to come to terms with mortality..

feelings, indolence and worn-out productions, especially in those who will not access the goods (Ribas, 1996). Furthermore, the lack of a suitable job is another cause of weariness which appears both in Coupland's work and in Ray Loriga's first novel *Lo peor de todo* ("The worst of all"), which describes in its first chapter the pathetic working atmosphere in a fast-food restaurant.

To end this section dealing with the features shared by Douglas Coupland's novels and the works by young Spanish writers of the 1990s ascribed to Generation X, a further characteristic may be mentioned. Navarro Martínez (2008) notes that these Spanish writers display a tendency to literary intimism and a first-person narration that resembles a diary, in which the narrator looks for himself or herself Daniel Múgica's *La ciudad de abajo* ("The city below") is an example of this technique that reminds the reader of Coupland's *Shampoo Planet* and, especially, of *Microserfs*.

As I have tried to demonstrate in this chapter, Douglas Coupland's popularity and influence goes beyond the English-speaking world, reaching even Spain. He is a regular guest in the media giving interviews, attending meetings of reading clubs, publishing his own articles and writing his blog.[173] His tremendous success is reflected, as we have seen, in the fact that his books have been widely translated and reprinted many times, as well as reviewed in the press worldwide. However, some disclaimers need to be made as far as his presence in Spain is concerned. First of all, his work is only partially known in this country. Secondly, publishing houses have taken a very particular slant on his work. Thirdly, his most substantial influence has been exerted on an overarching cultural and, even linguistic, sphere. Words like "Planet," as in the title of his novel *Shampoo Planet*, or even "microsiervos" are common in the Spanish media and web pages.

Douglas Coupland is only partially known in Spain because his talent as a visual artist still has to be appraised. In addition, only one of his non-fictional writings, *Polaroids from the Dead*, has seen a Spanish version, and not even all his novels have been translated into Spanish. Finally, Coupland's Canadian origins are not always clear to Spanish critics either. For example, Sabas Martín (1997), when discussing the validity of Coupland's term Generation X for Spanish writers, describes him as a US-American, which is very telling of his lack of knowledge about this author. When Spanish critics and reviewers refer to the Douglas Coupland of Generation X, the portrayer of a generation without ideals, he is usually taken for an American –it is not coincidental that two of his most popular novels, *Generation X* and *Microserfs* are set in California.

Publishing houses have contributed to the creation of a certain image of Coupland, since they have basically selected those of his works for translation

173 His *New York Times* blog is called "Time Capsules."

and publishing in Spain that deal with young people struggling to come to terms with today's world and which can be associated with his famous Generation X. In these works, references to popular culture, rather than the literary canon are predominant. This may be one of the reasons why some literary critics did not initially welcome the works either of Douglas Coupland, or of his Spanish counterparts. The appreciation of these writers would probably require a change of paradigm on the part of the Spanish critics and their acceptance of a new horizon of expectations (Jauss, 1982), in which the visual and popular culture elements, which these critics were not ready to accept at the time, come into play. Reading the transference of Coupland's *Generation X* through Even-Zohar's polysystem's theory, it appears to have filled a literary vacuum at a moment when the Spanish literary system was undergoing a turning point (Even-Zohar, 1978).

According to Gideon Toury (2004), translation is a kind of activity which inevitably involves at least two languages and two cultural traditions, in a process in which some aspects of the source text fit in the appropriate slots of the target culture. The traits of Coupland's works that have captured Spanish audiences are his ironical perception of contemporary issues as well as his ability to engage young readers. However, whether these characteristics have made him an explicit model for young Spanish writers is debatable, even if Coupland's stylistic modes and wide readership among young people coincide with those of the Spanish "Generation X." Douglas Coupland's presence in the Spanish literary system is not so much a direct influence on Spanish writers based on a profound knowledge of his work and the wish to imitate it. It should rather be understood as an indirect impact on the emergence of a general avant-garde attitude towards life and literature in Spain, which suited the socio-political context of the times. His relevance to the general cultural background of the nineties, both in Spain and elsewhere, is unquestionable, as a witness to an era, as an extraordinary gatherer of the Zeitgeist, and as the populariser (if not creator) of the terms that have helped to describe a time and a conception of life and writing.

Chapter 8

Home Truths: Teaching Canadian Literatures in Spanish Universities

Eva Darias-Beautell

Mavis Gallant's award-winning collection of short stories *Home Truths* dispenses neither truth nor a home for the reader, who is rather drawn "into the tricky labyrinth of human behaviour" (McClelland.com, 2010) only to be left "feeling adrift, the world slightly askance" (Allardice, 2009). Depicting a wide spectrum of Canadian characters in the most diverse situations and often travelling within Canada or abroad, the collection epitomizes Gallant's ironic take on the question of Canadianness, which starts with the inscription of a profound sense of homelessness produced as much by historical circumstances as by her characters' own sense of dislocation. Herself a paradigm of the expatriate Canadian, Gallant is both outside and inside her intricate worlds of fiction where belonging is staged in terms of a shifting sense of groundlessness, and where words "are heard but not understood" (Howells, 1987). In the story titled "The Ice Wagon Going Down the Street," the protagonists sit around the breakfast table at their sister's apartment in Toronto disguised in their "peacock" gowns as they reminisce about a (failed) past in the international scene. The question of Canadian identity is implicitly discussed in this context, weighed somehow uncomfortably between an ice wagon (going down the street), an image of a disappearing rural family life in the Saskatchewan winter, and the Balenciaga that Sheila possesses, an increasingly soiled black dress, once a symbol of social status and cosmopolitan glamour. And, on this rather disconcerting note, the story ends by imparting a permanent sense of indecisiveness and loss.

A similar sense of indecisiveness seems to have pervaded Canadian Literature as a field of study and research since its inception and is still resonating in our pedagogical practices outside Canada. In the 2004 didactic guide for the Canadian Literature course taught at the UNED (Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia), for instance, Teresa Gibert (2004) writes: "Since all national literatures are understood as reflections of national experiences, it comes as no surprise that Canadians have often tried to define their literature as the embodiment of the distinctive character of the nation. But there is no easy definition for Canadian literature because there is no unanimous agreement as to what Canadianness is, except for considering it an extremely problematic category." Bespeaking the complexities of Canadian Literature as a field, Gibert's words disclose the labyrinthine structures of our object of analysis, for no other national literature exists on the basis of its own permanent questioning.

Furthermore, her words betray the tautological nature of the institutional practices and conditions both inside and outside Canada that frame our study, teaching, and promotion of CanLit in the international arena.

This essay will provide a critical overview of the teaching of Canadian literature in Spanish universities in the past sixteen years, from the 1994 curricular reform, in which most current courses on Canadian literature found their place, to the present introduction of new curricular designs in 2010 as part of the Bologna Process.[174] This temporal framework is not only complicated in a large reform affecting studies at all European universities and involving a significant epistemological shift but also in a revision of the critical pedagogies we use in the classroom. In the North American literary context, this period also coincides, on the one hand, with renewed debates about the canon and canonical processes such as the often extra-literary principles of inclusion or exclusion which conform to what we call the literary tradition, and with the end of identity politics and the beginning of new forms of social and literary paradigms, on the other (Miki, 2008).[175]

My analysis will assess the impact of those changes in Spanish universities by focusing on three main interrelated issues. In the first place, I will deal with the teaching of Canadian literature from an institutional perspective, including an analysis of the obstacles found process of introducing of the new subject over the past sixteen years, as well as the difficulties encountered by attempts at circumscribing Canadian literature as independent from "Other/Commonwealth/Postcolonial Literatures," on the one hand, and "American Literature," on the

174 The information I provide in this essay is based on data initially collected for a presentation at the "Postcolonialism and Pedagogy Symposium: Canadian Literatures in the Classroom" (University of Ottawa, 3-5 May 2002), which was then reassessed and updated for a round table organized by the editor of this volume, at the International AEDEAN (Spanish Association of Anglo American Studies) Conference held at the University of Huelva in December, 2006. For the present work, I have revised and updated the data again by consulting every university web page as well as by establishing personal contact with other Spanish colleagues. I wish to thank Pilar Somacarrera, María Jesús Hernáez, Belén Martín, Ana Fraile, and Begoña Simal for their help and the information provided. My special thanks go to Teresa Gibert at the UNED for sending me the Didactic Guide of her course.

175 It should be noted that the information presented refers exclusively to the teaching of Canadian literature in English. The specificity of Canadian literature as a bilingual field and its uneven share in the different literature departments are unfortunately beyond the scope of this essay, and outside the thematic of this book. An analysis of the situation of Canadian literature in French, however, would probably reveal how the strict separation between departments has produced large institutional obstacles to the development of the field. Any type of collaboration between the two areas often implies the always complex institutional collaboration between different departments as well as interdisciplinary work in two languages and two cultures. The result in Spain, as well as in many other countries, has been the almost complete separation of the two fields.

other. Secondly, I will examine the contents of the programs, their inclusions and exclusions, the choice of terminology such as "mainstream" and "minority" writers, and the view of the Canadian national identity and tradition they implicitly construct. Here I will look at the influence on the academic syllabi in Spain of the parallel canon debates taking place in Canadian universities. The role, influence and accessibility of literary histories, anthologies and texts will also assessed in the light of this connection. Thirdly, I will discuss the teaching methodologies and the theoretical approaches used, including a critical appreciation of the use of traditional methods of close reading and thematic analysis as well as the state of postmodern, feminist and postcolonial interpretations of Canadian literatures. In this case, I will look at the relationship between the syllabi and the critical pedagogies used in the classroom.

1. Enter: Canadian Literature

As in most European universities, the introduction of Canadian literature in Spanish institutions largely took place in the early 1990s as part of the opening up of the programs to the literature of other countries. That is, it was born at the peak of postcolonial theory and was therefore intimately linked to the introduction of Commonwealth or Other Literatures in English as a field in its own right. The latter was a result of what Bernard Bergonzi (1990) called "the explosion of English," a move that created the possibility of articulating for the first time three different areas of analysis and research within the study of literature in English: English, American (US) and Commonwealth Literature. Only a few decades earlier, American literature had undergone a similar process of identification in order to establish the disciplinary independence that we now take for granted. The explosion of English followed, and, being the direct result of the decolonizing histories of the second half of the 20th century, was perceived as one more step in the creation of separate areas of enquiry within the field of literary studies in English that matched that process of decolonization.

Soon, however, the very categories on which it was constructed proved inexact, insufficient or unsatisfactory for many reasons. Today, for example, the adjectives "English" to refer to Wales, Scotland and Ireland, or "American" to mean literature from the U.S.A., although still widely used, have been repeatedly questioned by critics and writers alike. But perhaps the most problematic of all is the category of "Commonwealth," including countries as different from one another as India, South Africa or Canada. It is undeniable that Canada has many elements in common with other British ex-colonies around the world, and very specifically with settler colonies such as Australia, with which, as critics have argued, Canada shares a twisted history of complicity with colonial discourses and powers, as well as their (mild) critique (Brydon, 1995; Lawson, 1995).

The notion of postcolonialism, in this context, whether it is interpreted as a chronological or an epistemological category, has always been problematic in the Canadian case, and very much so when applied to the literary production of white Canada (Mukherjee, 1990; Hutcheon, 1991). That these questions do not seem to have had much impact upon the curricular structure and the devising of Canadian Literature courses worldwide, most of which have been created and are still taught under postcolonial or commonwealth rubrics, attests to the limitations of literary discourses and reflects as much the institutional contexts as the academic pressures in which the field has been born.[176]

Strategically effective in the moment of its creation, the Commonwealth umbrella has paradoxically been an obstacle in the full articulation and independent development of the field of Canadian Literature. As I will show, the courses that have studied Canada within its North American location are an exception and have taken place at the cost of ignoring its actual geographic, cultural, social, and political contexts. The question of whether Canadians have, for better or worse, always seen themselves as North Americans, and therefore, closer to the United States than to other countries of the old British Empire has not figured prominently in the institutional agendas. The obvious historical and cultural differences between the two neighbouring countries have been, in turn, exposed and explicitly brought to the foreground of official and academic discourse both within and outside Canada. Furthermore, embodying a complex neo-colonial threat, the powerful proximity of the United States of America has fed nationalist discourses in Canada since its inception, and, in fact, a significant part of the process of construction of a Canadian identity has taken the form of opposition to the southern neighbour. On the one hand, such processes prove symptomatic of the large basis of comparison between the two countries, since, as the poststructuralists have taught us, all opposition is identification and vice versa. On the other, Canadians' own reluctance to be included in a comparative North American literary tradition (and the scarcity of works in this line attests to it) is understandable, given the continuous practice of appropriation and absorption of foreign production by American critics. As Smaro Kamboureli (2012) writes in a rather different context: "When Canadian authors like Margaret Atwood or Joy Kogawa do "make it" south of the Canadian border, it is usually because they have their Canadianness suspended or strategically co-opted; a lot of critical work on *Obasan* produced by Asian American scholars barely nods to its Asian *Canadian* origins."

176 In this regard, the academic position of the specialized professor within the hierarchical structure of his or her institution is and has been a decisive factor in the introduction of Canadian Literature courses in the Spanish syllabi.

The Spanish situation is not foreign to these discussions and, as in most European universities, the initial challenge was (and still, to some extent, is) the circumscription of the field "Canadian Literature" around the mentioned parameters within the various English Studies programmes. Back in the early 1990s, the courses labelled "American" or even "North American" were exclusively dedicated to the study of the USA, and there was not one single program in Spain that included Canadian content in their "(North) American" literature courses. The general tendency, therefore, was towards the insertion of Canadian literature first as part of the programs of Commonwealth studies and gradually as monographic (usually optional) courses within English Studies. This was the case of at least eighteen English Studies programmes (around 44% of all programmes in Spain) by the late 1990s. Yet, once the opening of the literature programs took place albeit in this generalist fashion, it proved extremely difficult to set Canadian literature courses as an independent field: that is, as a distinctive field of knowledge, enquiry and research intersecting with but also differing in relevant modes from other national literatures. At that moment, only three universities in Spain advertised undergraduate courses with the name of "Canadian Literature" (Barcelona, Lleida and UNED). Most often, the case was that, given the existence of two optional courses with names such as "Other/New Literatures in English", "Commonwealth Literatures" or "Postcolonial Literatures" I and II, one of these options was frequently entirely dedicated to the literature of Canada (a choice sometimes marked with a course subtitle). The other, less visible, mode of entering the programs was to include one full topic on Canadian literature within a larger literature course with any of the above names. Finally, perhaps inaugurating a move of the field towards cultural studies that has today been confirmed, there was always the possibility of introducing Canadian-content materials in historically-oriented courses such as "History and Culture of the English-Speaking Countries," present in all English Studies programs in Spain.

Initially, these data, although not thoroughly impressive, seemed to constitute an undeniable proof of the ever stronger presence and the steady development of the field of Canadian Studies in Spain. It was clearly a reflection of a large institutional initiative launched by the Canadian Government through its Department of Foreign Affairs and which, in Spain, led to the founding of the Spanish Association for Canadian Studies in 1988. The opening of three University Centres for the Study of Canada (Barcelona, Extremadura and La Laguna) followed suit with the intention of providing both the physical space and the academic forum to promote the research and teaching of Canada in Spain. Soon, however, these goals that had materialized in the late 1990s proved to have reached a dead end, as the growing uncertainty about the future and the present stagnation of some of the above initiatives are making sadly evident.

Many factors could be mentioned in relation to this process of involution, the most relevant here perhaps being the shift in Ottawa's strategies of self-promotion towards different priority areas and the consequent cuts in funding programs, on the one hand; and the implementation of the Bologna curricular reform in all Spanish universities, on the other, fusing back some of the fields that had been slowly taking off, and proposing instead general and more comprehensive degree programs in the humanities. As a result, some courses have disappeared from the curricula or their growing specificity has faded. With the incorporation of two new "Canadian Literature" courses in their respective English Studies degrees, the Universities of Salamanca and La Laguna constitute exceptions to this tendency. Also figuring as an exceptional case, the UNED (Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia) continues to offer a very specific and rather ambitious course on Canadian Literature in English whose contents I will briefly discuss below. Canadian literature content still figures prominently, although within more general umbrella courses, in the English Studies programs at the universities of Vigo, Oviedo, UAM (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid) and Huelva. A timid move forward, somehow compensating for the vanishing of some courses at the BA level, seems to show in the inclusion of Canadian content subjects in the new MA Degrees (La Rioja, Vigo, Oviedo and Salamanca), and most significantly in the creation at the University of La Laguna of an MA in North American Studies exceptionally offering an interdisciplinary study of the three countries of the NAFTA and including the possibility of a major Canadian-content itinerary. Strategically placed between the students' first degree and the PhD programmes, these initiatives at the Master's level, although still very incipient, may introduce a second moment in the teaching of Canadian literature in Spain, building new paths of approach to and engagement with the subject and devising attractive bridges towards continuing research in the field.

2. Canon Disorders

Rather than being driven by the desire to study a formerly non-existent corpus of national literature, the very impulse to insert the study of "new" literatures in the "old" programs involved and mirrored a larger shift in the notions of aesthetic value as well as in our own responses and approaches to literary discourses. Few critics would disagree today with the assertion that the last decades of the 20th century witnessed a significant transformation of Western culture, bringing a radical change that affected our notion of literature, and therefore, of the canon. Postmodern thought and its related theoretical movements, such as post-structuralism and post-colonialism, had a tremendous impact on the humanities, on the ways we had conceived the world and its various representations. Within that general reorientation of epistemology, the interest in Canadian Literatures

was just one more instance of the sudden centrality of what had been historically marginal(ized). At the same time, a focus on the relationship between canon and power became paradigmatic of these larger changes since it opened the field to an ever-expanding interdisciplinarity, based, in turn, on our awareness of the constructedness of the subject through multiple and interacting constituencies such as class, race, gender, and so forth.[177] In only twenty-five years, from the cultural nationalism of the 1960s to the Act of Multiculturalism in 1988, Canada lived this process twice, as it were: as an undeniable part of postcolonial histories, it experienced a new national prominence vis-à-vis colonial powers; as complicit with those powers and subject to the complex multiethnic character of its culture, it experienced a redefinition of the recently-constructed national identity and the restructuring of its literary tradition that came with it, a key reformation process that critics Coral Ann Howells and Eva-Marie Kröller (2009) have referred to as "switching the plot" of Canadian literary history. The intricacies of these huge and relatively fast transformations have definitely framed literary production in Canada as well as the ways we teach it in Canada and outside. As Smaro Kamboureli (2012) convincingly argues:

> While as critics we do not always focus on canonical texts [...]the critical enterprise is invariably marked by a disposition to identify value and systemize knowledge, as well as by the "tendency to modernize the syllabus" and critical discourses, sometimes "at the expense of older works" (Guillory 15). The latter point speaks directly to the emphasis placed in the last decades of the past century upon the literary productions by First Nations authors and authors called ethnic, diasporic, migrant, or postcolonial that has radically questioned the Western ideologies that have long shaped canonization. This troping toward otherness — the mark of minoritization these literatures have in common — involves a direct engagement with racialization and cultural diversity but also with the historical and systemic inequities inscribed upon minoritized cultural communities through the ways in which the hegemonic nation-state manages diversity as yet another phase of its modernity. [....] Indeed, the expansion of critical studies toward this direction has predominated academic production and curricular and pedagogical changes in this time, and there is no shortage of studies discussing the pros and cons of such developments.

I will return to the issues of otherness, minoritization and multiculturalism raised by Kamboureli in the above quote. But, first, I would like to comment

177 The collection *Canon Disorders* (Eva Darias-Beautell and María Jesús Hernáez, eds.) provides a discussion of these issues in the context of both contemporary Canadian and American cultures, including analyses of *disordering* texts and films.

on three interesting developments or effects that the institutionalization of "new" literatures in Spain have produced, even if only as by-products, and that have modified our vision of the canon and of literary studies in general. The first one is related to the attraction of the contemporary. A notion of the canon, as defined by T.S. Eliot as a corpus of works that must have passed the proof of time and traditionally, therefore, excluding contemporary production, had been tacitly practised in English departments, where much time, devotion and attention were often given to Medieval, Renaissance, Restoration, Romantic or (increasingly) Modernist Literatures to the obvious detriment of the second half of the 20th century. The teaching of Canadian literature, as well as of other national literatures defined as "new," has overthrown those conditions, seen now rather as partly elitist and prejudiced. Moreover, the fact that Canadian literature *is* contemporary, most syllabi dealing with 20th-century texts, is increasingly being perceived as an advantage and probably resides at the basis of its success, at least in Spain, in eliciting cultural and contextual references which are closer to the students' own.

The second development I wish to briefly mention deals with the power of the market and the related extra-literary institutional practices. In the first phase of the 1990s, a good part of our syllabi were designed, sometimes even inadvertently, according to the availability of texts in Spain, and this coincided in many cases with what Robert Lecker has called "the New Canadian Library tradition." As Lecker explains in his then controversial book *Making It Real* (1995), the configuration of the Canadian canon in the 1960s and the 1970s had largely been the work of the influential Canadian publisher McClelland and Stewart, whose choice, in its turn, had had much to do with the availability of texts at that time as well as with the existence and amount of book royalties. Even though the situation today has notably changed and the access to sources as well as the distribution of Canadian books have spectacularly improved with the Internet, we could arguably contend that it still is those texts that can be usually found in the Canadian literature syllabi in Canada and abroad, at least in panoramic or survey courses: Frances Brooke, Sinclair Ross, Hugh MacLennan, Robertson Davies, Leonard Cohen, Margaret Laurence, Mavis Gallant, Alice Munro, Margaret Atwood in fiction; D. G. Roberts, D. C. Scott, E. J. Pratt, Dorothy Livesay and Al Purdy in poetry.

A further development in this context talks about the institutional prevalence of the narrative genre. Implicitly supported by the contemporary emphasis on the narrative nature of all forms of knowledge, the literary production of the country in the 1990s seemed to be also mostly narrative production and most seminal critical works were dedicated to the genre (see, for instance, Hutcheon *1988*; Bayard, 1989; Davey, 1993; Turner, 1995). This circumstance may well be another extended effect of the operations of the book market: fiction being the most consumable of all literary forms as well as often the most complicit

with capitalist ideologies. Yet the fact today is that the most acclaimed Canadian writers, both at home and internationally, are great narrative writers and most syllabi reflect this choice by giving a declared preference to the study of novels and short fiction.

Regarding the course contents, survey courses, originally designed to provide the student with a panoramic view of the literature, were common in our universities in the early and mid-1990s, usually containing an historical introduction, followed by a selection of mainstream texts and writers arranged chronologically (often a combination of any of the NCL writers mentioned above) and, increasingly, as the decade moved on, ending with one or two topics dedicated to multiculturalism. Today, however, there are only two programmes in Spain which offer such a choice (Salamanca and UNED) and both prove symptomatic of what Daniel Coleman has called "white civility," or the "static and reified idea of civility, which has its foundations in White, British gentlemanliness" (Coleman, 2007). In Canada, Coleman (2007) argues, "the sharp edges and striations of civility have been most consistently and explicitly drawn along the borders of race and ethnicity." The Canadian Literature syllabus at the UNED seems paradigmatic of this choice, offering an overview of the field from the mid-19th century to the early 1990s in fiction and poetry, author rather than text based, and including such canonical writers as Moodie, MacLennan, Purdy, Laurence, Munro, Atwood. Out of twelve topics in total, the three final topics are dedicated to Native Canadian Literature (Highway and King), Ondaatje (with a topic of his own), and "Multicultural Fictions" (Kogawa and Mistry), respectively.

Most often, however, partly due to spatial and temporal limitations, partly a reflection of the contemporary debates about the validity of the teleological and comprehensive project the panoramic course implies, syllabi have opted for monographic courses of a different kind. By the late 1990s, materials taught usually included writers such as, in order of their frequency, Atwood, Laurence, Ondaatje, Kroetsch, Gallant, and Munro together with Highway, King and Jeannette Armstrong in the "Native category," and Kogawa, Nourbese Philip and Mistry in the "ethnic category." In the present decade, fully incorporating minoritized writers, courses have definitely shifted away from the panoramic objective and into the analysis of selected texts around specific topics: identity, region, gender, genre, history, race, landscape, and so forth.

This tendency was in fact a reflection of similar discussions happening in Canada over the official policies of Multiculturalism. Focusing on the connections between multiculturalism and writing produced a literary restructuring that was, in turn, echoed by the government policies both within and outside the country. Despite their many pitfalls, multicultural policies were perceived as giving an unprecedented impulse to the writing and publishing of texts by authors of all different cultural backgrounds. Yet it gradually became evident that these transformations, perhaps despite their original intention

to transcend certain categories, had been designed on the very binary logics they wanted to subvert, namely on the opposition between mainstream and minority literature. Anthologies like Linda Hutcheon's and Marion Richmond's *Other Solitudes* (1990) and Smaro Kamboureli's *Making a Difference* (1995), both of which have been extremely influential and helpful for pedagogical purposes outside Canada, unwittingly contributed to the perpetuation of these binaries by implicitly articulating a full body of "multicultural" literature outside "normative" Canadian literature. At the time, this came as a salutary strategy to counterpoint the conservative and still powerful literary discourse embodied by Russell Brown and Donna Bennett's *An Anthology of Canadian Literature in English* (1983), also widely used in university courses in Canada and Europe. However, as the second edition of Kamboureli's *Making a Difference* (2006) and the third edition of Brown and Bennett's *Anthology* (2010) attest to, the original parameters and institutional, social, cultural and literary conditions that produced the multicultural aesthetics have changed in the past fifteen years and the division between mainstream and minoritized writers on which it functioned has been largely questioned on all fronts.[178]

Issues of appropriation, racialization, essentialization, and representation have now been at the forefront of academic discourses for long enough to have determined our selection of corpus, our pedagogical choices and our methodologies. We are no longer comfortable in the arena of identity politics, defined by Ashok Mathur (2007) as "at once liberating and constraining, full of potential and contradiction, presenting to us opportunities (at times somewhat mercurial ones) to disturb a social fabric that had become complacent in its homogeneity and lack of attention to power relationships." The end of identity politics has definitely set in motion a rescaling of subjectivity along the transnational parameters of what Roy Miki has called the "global drift," affecting our definition of both the national and the literary and thereby shaping our pedagogical practices. But the death of the multicultural moment in Canada has also happened with an ironic twist: the mainstreaming of many writers of colour. "What began as a brown wafer begging to be tasted" asserts Mathur (2007), "has

178 My use of the term "minoritized" is intended to mark that turning point. Kamboureli responds to these changes by including a new selection of relatively unknown writers beside whom some of the most famous multicultural writers become canonized. Brown and Bennett, well aware of the market exigencies and the pedagogical institutions to which the anthology may appeal, make a move towards increasing diversity: "The new edition is more inclusive, with more women and aboriginal writers and more writers from different ethnic backgrounds. In putting the anthology together, the editors paid close attention to the kinds of themes people are currently teaching, such as questions of identity, contact across cultures, fragmentation, and mobility" (Oxford University Press website, *An Anthology of Canadian Literature in English*, third edition).

become the body it once opposed." A discussion of the ambivalent mechanisms of how previously minoritized writers have become CanLit is well beyond the scope of this paper. Yet, since this transformation is increasingly showing in our teaching practices and syllabi, I believe that we should be alert to the contradictory implications that these changes may involve: by mainstreaming, reading, writing about and teaching previously ignored or marginalized texts, we run the risk of practising the same lack of attention to power politics that we initially criticised, often overlooking the market desire for a particular focus as well as tacit institutional interests in fostering such directions.[179] Therefore, what we are teaching and how we are teaching it is thus a clear reflection not only of our specific institutional contexts in Spain but also of these literary debates and cultural transformations happening in Canada.

3. Teaching Methodologies

How are we approaching Canadian literature in the Spanish classroom? In contrast with the pedagogical situation in Canada, Canadian Literature in Spain barely exists outside the university institution, being constantly produced by/in those institutional frameworks as well as by/in the epistemic structures in which it is studied and taught. Additionally, given the fact that our courses are often the students' first contact with the subject - a general introduction being usually mandatory that provides them with the required social, historical and cultural background – the field is specially vulnerable to changing ideologies, personal criteria and the arbitrariness of the processes of knowledge production.

A glance at those introductions reveals the kinds of explicit and implicit methodologies that underlie the particular courses. The most common critical practice seems to also be the oldest: the close reading of texts. This methodology, conventional by definition, has not necessarily been conservative in the Spanish case since it has often opened the Canadian text up to a wide range of interpretations, as well as to the frequent incorporation of contemporary theoretical discourses that have gradually, albeit sometimes slowly, made their way into the classroom in this reversed fashion (from the text to the theory). In fact, along with the common practice of close reading (not always theoretical in its methodology), the theoretical and critical frameworks used in the past 20 years have invariably moved in the postmodern, postcolonial and/or feminist arenas,

179 See Mathur (2007). A further analysis of this development in the context of the reception of Asian Canadian literature in Spain is found in Belén Martín-Lucas's contribution to this volume.

often consisting of a combination of these. Elsewhere, I have found interesting connections between the type of syllabi and the critical framework used. Thematic readings of literature, although in extinction, continue to be practised, especially in the context of survey courses, where an author-based analysis is still also frequent (or even coming back from the tomb where Roland Barthes had put it[180]). The issue of Canadian identity, for very many years the Canadian topic *par excellence*, is definitely vanishing from our courses, as it is, I think, from Canadian literature itself, gradually leaving its place to other foci, national(ist) or otherwise. However, the identity approach had already reinvented itself in the early 1990s, proving very fruitful in combination with postmodern, postcolonial and feminist critical discourses, which in Spain had by then become the most widely used approaches to the literature of Canada. Undoubtedly, this was the result of very influential theoretical works such as Linda Hutcheon's *The Canadian Postmodern* (1988), a text that wittily argued for the intrinsic postmodernity of the Canadian nation as well as for the necessary interconnection among postmodern, postcolonial and feminist discourses. (In the mid-1990s, 90% of the courses taught in Spanish universities included Hutcheon's text on their list of basic critical readings.) Increasingly, these methodologies are changing, as are the very syllabi, and becoming more diversified and flexible.

I wish to look briefly at two of those discourses in that they seem endowed with certain specificity when it comes to the teaching and the study of Canadian texts: the feminist and the postcolonial. To discuss Canada's connection with feminist discourses is, in the first place, to locate the country in its North American context, where over the past forty years feminist scholarship has brought to the foreground the complex relationship between canon and power, uncovering the patriarchal ideology of our literary and cultural traditions and pushing the parallel questioning of the Cartesian subject in directions never explored before. Extending to the gender arena the poststructuralist approach to reality, culture, and identity as always already constructed in and by language, North American feminists have consistently challenged our grounds of thought, unveiling canon formation as an ideological operation and arguing thus for its revision. Additionally, Canada is one of the few countries in the world where women writers probably outnumber male writers and the number of prominent women critics and theoreticians is also unusually high. I am particularly thinking of critics Linda Hutcheon, Barbara Godard or Smaro Kamboureli, among many others whose seminal studies of the field have shaped the course and the teaching of Canadian Literature in and outside Canada.

180 Barthes' notion of "the death of the author" was suggested in his book *Criticism and Truth*.

Coinciding with the peak of feminist criticism and the success feminist pedagogies in the 1980s, the prominence of Canadian women writers brought about a number of studies that posited the "feminine" nature of Canadian culture itself. Coral Ann Howells's *Private and Fictional Words* (1987), a book on fiction by Canadian women, begins, as Howells herself writes in the introduction, as an attempt to explore such "parallels between the historical situation of women and of Canada as a nation." At the time, the circumstance that there was no clear definition of the national culture and identity favoured the articulation of symbolic parallels between gender and the nation, and feminist discourses often happened alongside the debates on the nature of Canada as nation, Canadian histories and cultures. The alliance proved appealing and fruitful: Margaret Atwood explores the connection between gender and (Canadian) nationality in much of her fiction of that period: *Surfacing* (1972), *Lady Oracle* (1976), *Cat's Eye* (1988); Susan Swan's character Anna Swan, in *The Biggest Modern Woman of the World* (1983), writes: "Indeed, to be from the Canadas is to feel as women feel — cut off from the base of power;" (Swan, 1083) and Mavis Gallant's character Linnet Muir, in *Home Truths* (1981), could be read as an allegory of the nation. In 1994 Patricia Smart provided an illuminating analysis of the connections between feminism and nationalism in Canada, arguing that the category "nation" had been systematically excluded from critical studies on Canadian women's writings. Yet, she continues, "it has been their work, perhaps more than any other in the last decade,that has given me the sense that I belong to a national community." Even though the approach has gradually faded and the effectiveness (and advisability) of such parallels between nation and gender have now been largely questioned, the fact is that the strategy has had its impact on the ways we teach Canadian literature, determining not only the choice of primary work in the syllabi (were women writers are almost always the majority), but also the critical apparatus used in the course. Most recently, feminist approaches have developed in interesting combinations with postcolonial ones, as shown in the programs at the University of Vigo, for instance, including texts by Dionne Brand, Sherazad Jamal, Rita Wong, Suzette Mayr and Nalo Hopkinson, as well as in publications such as *Her Na-rra-tion: Women's Narratives of the Canadian Nation* (2008), papers collected from the Conference with the same name held at the University of Nantes in 2007.

Postcolonialism is precisely the other very powerful theoretical discourse in and about Canada that I wish to discuss in its specificity. As I have mentioned above, the use of postcolonial theories and concepts to analyse the Canadian production at large has never been fully accepted and is still today a matter of dissent. The almost complete absence of references to the postcolonial circumstances of the country in Canadian literary histories and university courses up to the 1980s reveals the extent to which Canadians have been

reluctant to acknowledge both their colonial past and their neo/postcolonial present.[181] The situation in Spain initially mirrored this reluctance, and, although by the late 1990s this was changing fast, the full articulation of the (ambiguous) historical and cultural position of the "settler" subject has never really found a sound place in most syllabi.[182]

The 1990s witnessed interesting and sometimes heated debates over the validity of postcolonial theory to study Canadian texts, which were closely followed by Spanish and other European scholars. For critics like Arun Mukherjee (1990), it is the category of race that draws a sharp line between postcolonialism, a cultural paradigm in which the writing of non-white Canadians must be placed, and postmodernism/post-structuralism, a group of practices that should be best circumscribed to the writings of white Canadians. In a similar vein, Linda Hutcheon's "Circling the Downspout of Empire" objects to the use of the term "postcolonial" in the case of "white" Canada, which she sees as somehow "exaggerated" (Hutcheon, 1991). Although acknowledging the weight of a historical dependence on the British Empire and the effects of an imminent cultural and economic American neo-colonialism, the term "postcolonial," Hutcheon (1991) argues, would be most appropriate to describe Native Canadian literary production whose common use of counter-discursive strategies would offer fruitful grounds for postcolonial enquiry. The notion of the "settler" colony probably meant one of the most important developments in this context and came to clarify some aspects of these discussions. It became obvious that postcolonial theory, as Diana Brydon (1995) notes, "can only illuminate Canadian histories and contradictory complicities if its range is extended beyond what the West finds exotic and entrancingly other." Located right at the intersection between at least two centres of authority/authenticity (Europe and Native North America), the settler subject, Allan Lawson (1995) argues, both desires and wishes to erase those historical and cultural referents.

All these critical texts were widely read and discussed in European contexts, gradually making their way into our programs. Lawson's work became key in this regard, since the more we advanced in the analysis of notions and concepts, the clearer the fact became that there were different postcolonial circumstances. His articulation of the postcolonial as a discursive operation rather than as a specific moment in history created new postcolonial *epistèmes,* not necessarily

181 Brydon (1995) offers a good summary of the history of postcolonial criticism in Canada up to the 1990s. Brydon's article is part of an exceptional special number of *Essays on Canadian Writing* dedicated to the issue of postcolonialism in Canada.

182 The exception to the rule is Pilar Somacarrera's course, which explicitly approaches Canadian Literature from a postcolonial point of view.

defined chronologically; and this, in turn, made possible alternatives modes of dealing with the situation of the settler/invader colonies. A discursive notion of the postcolonial also opened the possibility of analysing synchronic as well as intra-national sites of (post)colonial relations. New work in the field, both in Canada and Spain, is being done in these multiple directions, the turning point perhaps being marked by the "Postcolonialism and Pedagogy Symposium: Canadian Literatures in the Classroom," held at the University of Ottawa in May 2002, whose insightful papers, later collected in two volumes edited by Cynthia Sugars, *Home-Work* and *Unhomely States* (2004a), are now widely used as critical background material.

New pedagogies are slowly being integrated that stem from those transformations: diaspora, hemispheric, gender and queer approaches, just to mention a few. Ecocritical studies, for instance, stemming from definitions of the national identity in the past three decades in connection with Canada's real and/or imaginary wilderness, but also somehow departing from them, are gradually making their way into the syllabi. Following a period of dismantlement of the above associations, a period characterized by the rise of a fundamentally urban multiculturalism in Canadian literature, a focus on the various representations of nature, seen as construct or as essential and material, seems to be recovering some relevance (Darias-Beautell, 2008). Located at the intersection between texts and critical discourses about them, the new courses intend to address this issue by dealing with questions such as: is there anything Canadian about ecocriticism? What could Canadian writers and critics contribute to it? These pedagogies are symptomatic of a growing tendency of our literature courses and discourses towards cultural studies and, in so doing, towards interdisciplinary analyses. Laura Moss and Cynthia Sugars's recently released two-volume anthology *Canadian Literature in English* seems paradigmatic of that movement of CanLit towards the cultural and interdisciplinary, as is the collection of insightful and innovative critical essays *Trans.Can.Lit*, edited by Smaro Kamboureli and Roy Miki, both of which texts are being increasingly used in the Spanish classroom.

4. Home Truths

What is the future of Canadian Literature in Spain? And what function, as teachers and critics of CanLit, can we have in its development or its involution? As I have suggested above, in contrast to the social, cultural and political spheres where the field exists as such in Canada, the nature of Canadian Literature in Spain has so far mainly been institutional and confined to the space of the universities. This fact, however, is slowly changing and there is evidence to believe that Canadian

literature is significantly growing outside the universities.[183] In any case, the development of the field to the present has been largely the result of the work of individual teachers. These instructors, often the recipients of Government of Canada Awards who have to operate in the midst of institutional and personal resistance towards innovative practices, are within but also somehow exceed the boundaries of those academic institutions where they work, since their reading and writing are also conducted outside their universities in other research institutions and public or personal spaces in Spain, Canada and other countries.

As I have tried to show, our practices are not only affected by the institutional frameworks in Spain and Europe, where the tendency of the current curricular reform in post-secondary education is towards general, comprehensive programs to the detriment of the optional, the minoritarian and the specific. Our pedagogical practices also mirror and are at the same time affected by similar discussions in the Canadian academe, where the survival of the field today is equally a subject of concern. As Smaro Kamboureli asserts (her quote summarizes, somehow, the issues I have discussed in this essay):

> The specific trajectories of CanLit bespeak a continuing anxiety over intent and purpose, its ends always threatening to dissolve. This accounts for its intense preoccupation with its formation: its topocentrism; its uneasy relationships with the British, the Commonwealth, and the Americans; its uneven responses to the (post)colonial and its so-called minority literatures; its desire to accommodate global cultural contexts; its obsessiveness with identity; and its institutionalization and celebration through cultural, social, and trade policies. These diverse preoccupations attest to CanLit's specificity, but also to its nervous state (Kamboureli, 2006).

The ongoing problematization of the national as a valid category of enquiry adds up to this state of continuing anxiety. That the "crisis" of the national does not seem to be affecting our courses in English or American literature reveals the extent to which a firm institutional support is more than ever needed both in Spain and in Canada. Yet, in the last instance, I believe that the personal effort of individual teachers to devise, defend, maintain, strengthen and update our courses will continue to be the most powerful driving force.

183 The chapters by Nieves Pascual, Pilar Somacarrera, Isabel Alonso and Marta Ortega-Sáez in this collection show the extent and the impact of these changes.

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Appendix

Document 1: Spanish translation of the text by Bernd Dietz for the brochure of Canadian Writers in the Twentieth Century 1999 (by Pilar Somacarrera)

Can anybody still question that it is the time of Canadian women writers? At present an attentive, enthusiastic and international reading public has succumbed to a singular constellation of narrative talent. Naturally, Spain is no exception and their novels regularly see the light in prestigious publishing houses. In addition, in 1999, some of the most renowned Canadian women authors will visit our country.

Hardly anybody would dare question the central role of Margaret Atwood, who would have shone as a first-rate poet and essayist even without having become one of the most innovative and intelligent novelists of our time. No less brilliant are the accomplishments of a master of the short story and novelist like Mavis Gallant, who projects her Canadian identity from a cosmopolitan perspective; or those of Nicole Brossard, who, next to her excellent experimental novels, has been also groundbreaking in the fields of poetry and essay-writing; or even those of younger writers, like Anne Michaels and Ann-Marie MacDonald, whose first novels have burst onto the literary scene with a tremendous impact.

Her surprising careers, dazzling as they are, represent only the spearhead of a young and already powerful literature, which bases its success to a great extent on the audacity of its women writers.

Document 2: A chronology of Margaret Atwood in Spain

1987	*The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) / *El cuento de la criada*, translated by Elsa Mateo Blanco (Seix Barral).
1989	*Bluebeard's Egg* (1983) / *El huevo de Barbazul*, translated by Eduardo Murillo (Alcor).
1990	*Cat's Eye* (1988) / *Ojo de gato*, translated by Jordi Mustieles (Ediciones B)/ *Ull de gat*, translated into Catalan by Roser Berdagué (L'Eixample). Atwood comes to Barcelona on a promotion tour for *Cat's Eye*.
1991	*The Journals of Susanna Moodie* (1970)/ *Los diarios de Susanna Moodie*, translated by Lidia Taillefer and Alberto García (Pre-Textos).
1992	Olympic Games in Barcelona and World Exhibition in Seville. Atwood visits Spain for the occasion of the Pen Club Congress in Barcelona. "The Age of Lead"/"La edad de plomo" (story) published in *Revista de Occidente* in a special issue dedicated to women's writing.
1994	*Surfacing* (1972) / *Resurgir*, translated by Ana Poljak (Muchnik) Atwood visits Barcelona on a book tour.
1995	*Lady Oracle* (1976) / *Doña Oráculo*, translated by Sofía Noguera *The Robber Bride* (1993) / *La novia ladrona*, translated by Jordi Mustieles (Ediciones B)
1998	*Alias Grace* (1996), translated by Mª Antonia Menini (Ediciones B). *Dancing Girls* (1977) / *Chicas bailarinas*, translated by Victor Pozanco (Lumen). The cultural Center Koldo Mitxelena in San Sebastián (Basque Country) dedicates a seminar to the life and works of Margaret Atwood.
1999	Atwood visits Madrid and makes a public appearance in the series *Escritoras canadienses de fin de siglo* (Turn-of-the-century Canadian women writers) organized by the Canadian Embassy and the Círculo de Bellas Artes. *Murder in the Dark* and *Good Bones* (1992)/ *Asesinato en la oscuridad* (1983), translated by Isabel Carrera. While in Madrid, Atwood writes part of *The Blind Assassin*, inspired by a visit to an exhibition of Robert Capa's photographs about the Spanish Civil War.
2000	*Interlunar* (1984) / *Luna nueva*, translated by Luís Marigómez (Icaria). *Power Politics* (1971)/ *Juegos de poder*, translated by Pilar Somacarrera (Hiperión). Atwood wins Booker Prize for her novel *The Blind Assassin*. Atwood visits Madrid privately for six weeks (February-March).
2001	*The Blind Assassin* (2000)/ *El asesino ciego*, translated into Spanish by Dolors Udina (Ediciones B)and into Catalan (*L'assací cec*),by Mercè López Arnabat and Albert Subirats (Proa). Atwood occupies cover page of the literary supplement *Babelia*, of the national newspaper *El País*.
2003	*The Edible Woman* (1969) / *La mujer comestible*, translated by Juanjo Estrella (Ediciones B). National newspaper *El mundo* publishes *Murder in the Dark/ Asesinato en la oscuridad*, (translated by Isabel Carrera) as one the books of its collection of world classics Millennium III.

2004	*Oryx and Crake/ Oryx y Crake* (2003), translated by Juanjo Estrella (Ediciones B). *Surfacing* (1972) / *Resurgir*, is reprinted in a new translation by Gabriela Bustelo (Alianza Editorial).
2005	*The Penelopiad* (2005) / *Penélope y las doce criadas*, translated by Gemma Rovira (Salamandra). *Asesinato en la oscuridad* / *Murder in the Dark* (1983), translated by María Antonia Menini (Ediciones B, imprint Byblos). "El Quijote de Halffter: una ópera Quijotesca," essay by Margaret Atwood included in the volume *Don Quijote alrededor del mundo* published by the Instituto Cervantes.
2006	*La maldición de Eva* (essays from *Curious Pursuits: Occasional Writing*, 2005), translated by Montse Roca (Lumen). "Autobiography," "Making poison" y "A parable," translated by Tamara Gil Somoza for the journal *Eñe* (winter 2006).
2007	*Érase una vez* (stories from *Good Bones* and *Dancing Girls*), translated by Victor Pozanco and Toni Hill. *Moral disorder* (2006) / *Desorden moral*, translated by Francisco Rodríguez de Lecea (Bruguera).
2008	Margaret Atwood receives the Prince of Asturias Award for Letters and visits Oviedo in October for the presentation of the Prize. *Árriba en el árbol / Up in the Tree* (1978), translated into Spanish by Miguel Azaola (Ekaré Europa). *Dalt de l'arbre/Up in the Tree*, translated into Catalan by Núria Font i Ferré (Cruïlla). *L' Anna vol tenir un Animalet /Anna's Pet* (1980), translated into Catalan by Judit Valentines i Vilaplana (Cruïlla).
2009	*The Door*, poems (2007)/ *La puerta*, translated by Pilar Somacarrera (Bruguera)
2010	*True Stories*, poems (1981)/ *Historias reales*, translated by Pilar Somacarrera (Bruguera). *The Year of the Flood* (2009)/ *El año del diluvio*, translated by Javier Guerrero.

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