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## **16 Translation**

**Abstract:** The history of translation, like the history of language and literature, is interrelated with the history of the country in which translations are being produced, and in the case of Catalan-speaking territories, this relationship is an extremely dynamic one. The history of these regions explains the profusion of translations from the Middle Ages and their in some cases pioneering character, the drop-off in the number of translations from the 16th to well into the 19th century (outside Northern Catalonia and Menorca), the revival during the first few decades of the 20th century followed by further decline during the Franco regime and the stabilisation that is in evidence today.

The translation of Catalan literature into other languages has been largely dependent on the prestige it has enjoyed during each period and is closely linked to the rise of the Catalan language itself.

**Keywords:** translation into Catalan, translation from Catalan, medieval translation, modern translation, contemporary translation

### **1 Introduction**

As in the case of many other languages, particularly during their early development, translation has played a decisive role in the establishment and development of the Catalan language. The Toledo School of Translators, for example, was highly significant in the shaping of Spanish, just as translations of the classics influenced La Pléiade in their model of French.

Catalan experienced its golden age during the Middle Ages when it was the language of the court and was used for all kinds of legal and public documents; it was the language of the Royal Chancery, the governments of Catalonia, Valencia and the Balearic Islands, and during this period also spread to Italy and Greece. However, as a result of Spanish hegemony during the 16th and 17th centuries, along with laws restricting the use of Catalan in the 18th century and during the Franco dictatorship in the 20th century, the use of Catalan as a language of culture later declined.

However, the rich medieval tradition and the Catalan *Renaixença* in the 19th century managed to keep the language alive over the centuries. Catalan was the first language of the Catalan people, who were largely monolingual practically up to the beginning of the 20th century. At this time, political and social advances called for the establishment of “standard Catalan”, which was provided by Pompeu Fabra. In a situation of marked diglossia, translation became a tool for regularisation and a means of assembling a language model that was fluent and efficient, and which could be used in all areas of life. The translation of masterpieces and new foreign works into Catalan was a way of strengthening the target lan-

guage and enabling the subtleties of art and thought to be expressed through it. Above all, it was a way of restoring Catalan's status as a language of culture. The history of Catalan translation has always taken this into consideration, as will be discussed in this article.

## 2 The Middle Ages

As was the case for a number of other European languages, the first documents to be written in Catalan in the 12th and 13th centuries were translations: law, science and religion provided a sense of belonging to the community expressing itself in Catalan. The classics had already begun to be translated well before the *Renaixença*, and from the mid-14th century a group of translators made up of administrators working for the Royal Chancery were able to use a fairly standardised form of Catalan as a target language thanks to the official nature of their work. The court was interested in the classics of Ancient Greece and Rome and in 1383 Titus Livius, mentioned as early as 1315, was translated, as were Palladius, Cicero, Valerius Maximus, Ovid and Seneca a little later. In fact, in quantitative terms, '78 per cent of Catalan medieval translations are from Latin' (Pujol 2002, 11). During this period Latin was considered *superior* to the *vulgar* Romance languages that had recently emerged and which had neither tradition nor authority.

The Italian connection led to a Catalan translation of Petrarch (the humanist and moralist who wrote in Latin, not the Tuscan poet and writer of the *Canzoniere*) a few years after his death. In 1388, Bernat Metge translated *Griseldis*, the last book of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, not from the original but from Petrarch's Latin translation. It was the first translation of a work by Petrarch produced on the Iberian Peninsula. Sometime later, the friar Antoni Canals produced a prose translation of the *Parlament de Aníbal e Scipió* from Petrarch's *Africa*, and Catalan became the first language to rewrite verse in the ultimate metrical form of the original with the translation of Dante's *Commedia* by Andreu Febrer, poet and official in the court of King Alfons the Magnanimous. In the same year the monks of Sant Cugat monastery translated Boccaccio's *Decameron* in its entirety. An unknown translator also rendered Boccaccio's *Fiammetta* while another translator, supposedly Narcís Franch, produced a Catalan version of *Corbaccio*.

Throughout the 15th century, Latin gradually ceased to be a widely read and understood language, which led to the need for a new method of translation, and one which did not follow the original text as literally. In other words, the perception of Catalan as a self-contained language began to emerge, with all its quirks and challenges compared to Latin, which never ceased to be considered the most perfected language of all. Translators recounted this gradual recognition of the

*vulgar* language in several prologues. The best examples are those by Ferran Valentí in his rendering of the *Paradoxa Stoicorum* by Cicero (around 1450), Arnau d'Alfarràs in the *Regula Benedicti* by Saint Benedict (1457) and Francesc Alegre in the *Metamorphoseon* by Ovid (1494) (Badia 1991).

In this brief overview of medieval translations, one in particular should be singled out. In 1478 a complete edition of the Bible was printed in Valencia, of which only the last page, containing the colophon, remains. This is most likely the result of the prohibition of biblical texts in Romance languages from the 13th century onwards and, in particular, the establishment of the Inquisition. This makes Catalan the fourth language to be used for a complete translation of the Bible after German, Italian and Dutch. Even though Bonifaci Ferrer is credited with translating it from the Latin *Vulgata*, it would seem to have come from a pre-existing version worked on by a group of translators of Jewish origin.

### 3 The Modern Period

It is well known that the 16th and 17th centuries have been referred to as the *decadència* in terms of the Catalan literary scene. In fact, while production diminished quantitatively, it was a decline in the ambition of the works being produced as a result of Catalan's lack of prestige as a language that was most noticeable. Catalan was increasingly undervalued in the face of the elevated use of Castilian, the language of the court. Given this context, it is hardly surprising that the need for translations into this underrated language all but disappeared, with the exception of popular texts and manual work, where it was still needed to be able to reach a broad public. So, religious works, traditional narratives and books for teaching and training continued to be translated.

Throughout the 18th century new social, cultural and political conditions allowed for different translation patterns in the two Catalan territories that were not at that time under the control of the Spanish crown: Northern Catalonia and the Island of Minorca.

As a result of the Treaty of the Pyrenees (1659), Catalonia had been divided into two states. On the French side, over a century later, most of the rural and largely illiterate population still only spoke Catalan. This led to a flourishing number of translations of classical works of French 17th century theatre. The main works appeared in what was known as the Tuïr group, led by Guillen Agel in the second half of the 18th century (Vila 1996).

For almost all of that century, Minorca was a colony of the British Empire and experienced significant development, its literature becoming imbued with highbrow European neoclassical trends. This led to a growing number of translations of theatre, which provided the best source of entertainment for a prosperous,

restless and essentially isolated society. Educated in this atmosphere of reform, Antoni Febrer i Cardona and Vicenç Albertí produced all of their work in the first decades of the 19th century, just a few years after the island passed back into the hands of the Spanish crown. Febrer i Cardona made his priority the translation of the Greek and Latin classics: Cicero's philosophical treatises, Phaedrus's fables and Virgil's eclogues. Between 1815 and 1820 Albertí translated around thirty works for the theatre (although only fifteen have been preserved) by Goldoni, Molière, Metastasio, Beaumarchais and Moratín (Paredes Baulida 1999).

## 4 *Renaixença*?

During the first few decades of the 19th century the level of confidence in Catalan as a literary language continued to decline. This low prestige had a knock-on effect on translations and there were very few produced until the final decade of the century.

One, however, stands out particularly for its scope. Josep Melcior Prat, who was exiled to England, translated *Lo Nou Testament*, which was printed in London in 1832 (one year before Aribau's famous work *La Pàtria*, which was considered to mark the beginning of the *Renaixença*; ###13 *Renaixença*). Four editions were printed with a total of 20,000 copies (a considerable number, bearing in mind the percentage of the population that was literate).

A couple of years later, in 1834, one of only a handful of non-religious books to be translated during almost the entire 19th century appeared: *La noia fugitiva*, a version of *La Fuggitiva* by Tommaso Grossi. The translator was named as Joan Cortada, but it seems more likely to have been the work of Miquel Anton Martí, who also produced other unpublished translations of the Italian poets.

From the middle of the century, as a result of personal relations established between some of the Occitan and Catalan writers in a common climate of literary awakening in both regions, and the influence of the work of Mistral, works from writers on both sides were translated in and out of both languages. Just two years after the appearance of the original, Francesc Pelai Briz began to work on his Catalan version of *Mirèio* (1861) in verse, accompanied by his Spanish interpretation in prose (a good indication of the degree of diglossia that Catalan had achieved).

## 5 Up to the Civil War

The political and linguistic awareness that spread across Europe with Romanticism, and the central idea of the mother tongue as the national language, did not

reach Catalan territory until much later, at the end of the 19th century during the belle époque of Catalan *Modernisme*. Despite their late arrival, these ideas had an unusually strong impact. The increase in literary production by such brilliant writers as the playwright Àngel Guimerà, the novelist Narcís Oller and the poet Jacint Verdaguer, supported the conviction that the Catalan language had to be recovered and that it would be capable of transporting and broadening the local culture through the inclusion of some of the greatest literature of all time.

The magazine *L'Avenç* became the intellectual nucleus of this movement, publishing seven magazines along with 525 books in twelve collections. The Biblioteca Popular de L'Avenç was the longest-running collection, lasting from 1903 to 1915, and would also publish the most titles (147) and the most translations (55). The translated works reflected an eagerness to include all the outstanding texts from different countries and periods: Dante, Shakespeare, Pascal, Goethe, Molière, Goldoni, Leopardi, Novalis, Tolstoy, Whitman and Ibsen, among others. The translators included some of the most important figures, both young and old, in the Catalan arts scene: Narcís Oller, Joan Maragall, Joan Puig i Ferrer, Pompeu Fabra and Joaquim Ruyra (Pla i Arxé 1975).

With the aim of creating a national theatre, Adrià Gual founded the Teatre Íntim, a Catalan version of the Parisian Théâtre d'Art, in 1898. The theatre staged plays by a number of foreign playwrights such as Aeschylus, Sophocles, Shakespeare, Molière, Goethe, Ibsen and Beaumarchais, with Gual translating some of the plays from French himself.

The desire to *catalanise* great works of literature can be seen most clearly in the approach to Shakespeare. Some forty translators have tackled his works over more than a century, from the first attempts to translate fragments of *Hamlet* in 1880 to the complete works by Salvador Oliva (1984–1992) and ten new translations by Joan Sellent (2016) and five by Miquel Descot (2017). There have been plenty of other projects in-between: from 1907 to 1910 the Biblioteca Popular dels Grans Mestres published sixteen Shakespeare plays, translated by different translators who often used the French versions as source texts; the poet Magí Morera i Galícia translated six of them directly from English from 1912 to 1924; before the civil war, Cèsar-August Jordana completed twelve for a fateful project that was later cut short; and after the war, Josep M. de Sagarra translated twenty-eight, which were later published and performed frequently up until a few years ago.

This considerable corpus includes everything from the erudite translations by Cebrià Montoliu of *Macbeth* (1907) and *Anfós Par* of *King Lear* (1912), for example, to the translations made more deliberately for the stage, such as those by Sagarra and Sellent. *Hamlet* has been the object of at least eight translations, while many of Shakespeare's other works have also been translated more than once, in particular *Macbeth*, *Othello* and *King Lear*. The sonnets have also aroused considerable interest from translators offering different interpretations:

Ramon Font i Preses translated a selection for the magazine *Catalunya* in 1903; Morera i Galícia translated another sample in 1912 and 1913; in 1928 Carme Monturiol became the first to re-write the complete series; in 1958 Joan Triadú translated forty; Gerard Vergés completed another version of the whole series in 1993 as did Salvador Oliva in 2002, Txema Martínez in 2010 and, finally Salvador D. Insa produced a new version in 2016 (Buffery 2007; Pujol 2007).

Another case also corroborates the argument that translation not only satisfied a peremptory need to understand the foreign works, but also to win the language greater prestige. Over a period of 48 years at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, three complete Catalan translations of Cervantes' famous work *Don Quixote de la Mancha* appeared, while two more complete new versions were produced in 1969 and 2005. The total figure, including partial translations and adaptations, is close to fifty (Bacardí/Estany 2006).

Translation also crossed literary genres and artistic boundaries. Barcelona's passion for Wagner was partly ideological; it represented an alternative model to the *flamencoism* of Spanish clichés and became an assertion of Catalanism. In 1901 the Wagnerian Association was established and focused intensively on the dissemination and translation of the composer's works. Joaquim Pena, Antoni Ribera, Xavier Viura and Jeroni Zanné were commissioned to translate all of Wagner's works and adapt them to music, sometimes working with other collaborators (Janés i Nadal 1983).

As mentioned above, aesthetic and theoretical interest in translation really began with Catalan *Modernisme*. This was followed by *Noucentisme*, which established the basis for a true cultural policy. These movements created intellectual networks that managed to combine great philological rigour with the development of a cohesive group, and which were only broken up by the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War and the subsequent dictatorship (Murgades 1994).

The archetypical works of the *Noucentisme* period have to be those of Carles Riba. Following in the footsteps of Antoni Bergnes de les Cases in the 19th century, Riba incorporated the Hellenistic tradition into Catalan and in doing so created a style which went on to inspire other writers and translators such as Josep M. Llovera and Manuel Balasch, culminating in the adaptation of classical rhythms. A brilliant translation theorist, Riba understood the practice of translation as reading and interpretation, whilst also distinguishing between 'erudite' or scholarly translation and 'substitutive' or communicative translation. He worked in several languages and genres, translating the *Song of Songs* and the *Book of Ruth*, the great Greek tragedies in poetical and philological versions, Homer's *Odyssey* in two versions which have become part of the canon, the entire *Parallel Lives* by Plutarch, stories by Poe, the poetry of Hölderlin, Rilke and Kavafis, among others. It should be added that he also promoted and corrected many other translations, proposed and drew up directives for effective cultural policy in the

field of translation and even revised versions of his own works in other languages (Malé 2006).

Translation of the Latin and Greek classics crystallised in the collection of the Bernat Metge Foundation, which took its inspiration from the Collection Budé, the Loeb Classical Library and the Teubner, and, *avant la lettre*, trained a veritable school of translators directed by Carles Riba. Since its establishment in 1928, the foundation has been responsible for the publication of more than four hundred volumes, except during the period 1939–1946, making the Greek and Roman classics highly accessible to Catalans and, when there was no parallel series available, to Spanish readers (Franquesa 2013).

The leading modern writers in Europe were also translated into Catalan. Engaged in this endeavour were a number of active publishing houses such as Editorial Catalana, Catalònia and Proa and collections like the Quaderns Literaris. Leading Catalan writers, aware of the importance of this activity for redressing the cultural and linguistic balance, became translators themselves. For translations from English, two of the most important figures were Josep Carner, who translated Mark Twain, Lewis Carroll and three of the great Dickens novels, and later on, Marià Manent, who translated a large number of English-speaking poets. The first indirect translations from Russian date from 1886 thanks to the interest of novelist Narcís Oller, who in 1897 translated three narratives by Tolstoy – an author also of great interest to J. Casas-Carbó, who published two volumes of his stories in 1903. Another novelist, Joan Puig i Ferrer, re-translated Tolstoy and introduced Gorky in 1909. In the 1920s the first direct translations appeared: some of the works by Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, Turgenev and Chekov were translated by Francesc Payarols; the politician and essayist Andreu Nin had a firm grasp of the Russian language (having spent ten years living in the country) and translated novels as iconic as Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* (1929) and Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* (1931), as well as more contemporary authors. In the German language, Goethe had a considerable influence: Joan Maragall translated four of his works between 1898 and 1910; Josep Lleonart translated *Torquato Tasso*, *Hermann und Dorothea* and *Faust*, while Joan Alavedra translated *Werther* (Llovet 1982). From Italian, there was particular interest in classical literature and specifically in Dante's *Commedia*; in 1908 a prose summary by Antoni Bulbena was added to Andreu Febrer's 15th century translation, while a partial translation by Narcís Verdager i Callis in 1921 and prose and verse versions by Llorenç Balanzó were published in 1923–1924 (a translation in tercets by Josep M. de Sagarra would appear later between 1947 and 1951, followed by a new version by Joan F. Mira in 2000).

Bible translation has been an important resource in the formation of many national languages. Towards the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, Antoni Bulbena, Francesc de P. Castells, Pere Marcé, Tomàs Sucona and Frederic Clascar embarked on a Catalan translation of the Bible. Spanish hegem-



only meant that no complete Catalan versions of the Bible were permitted until the 20th century. Once the ban was lifted, three appeared simultaneously in the pre-war period, but with very different characteristics: that of the Foment de Pietat Catalana, the Monestir de Montserrat version and that of the Fundació Bíblica Catalana (the first two translations listed were never finished) (Ferrer 2009; Parcerisas 2009). Bypassing the rigour of censorship under Franco, Montserrat published a complete work in a single volume (1970) and, more recently, has added a new, interconfessional Bible (1993) as well as a Protestant version (2000).

The task of translating has often been accompanied by a theoretical reflection on the activity in itself. The list of those who have made substantial contributions is a long one, as seen in the anthology *Cent anys de traducció al català (1891–1990)* (Bacardí/Fontcuberta/Parcerisas 1998). Here, we give just one example. In 1938, towards the end of the war, Cèsar-August Jordana systematised his broad experience as a translator in the article *L'art de traduir* ('the art of translation'), in which he called for the compilation of an inventory of outstanding translations and, later, a history of modern translation. In practical terms, he also proposed a broad classification of translators, dividing them into those who tend to translate more literally and those more concerned with equivalence. He personally supported the latter method and insisted on the need to master the target language, which he illustrated with numerous comments and examples which are still relevant today.

## 6 The Franco dictatorship

It is calculated that over a thousand translations were published as books from the *Renaixença* in the mid-19th century to 1939, when the Franco regime repressed all public manifestations of Catalan culture. This censorship was ruthless and the prohibition of the publication of translations was particularly rigorous in the 1940s and 1950s. The first authorised Catalan translations during this period were Riba's *Odissea* and Sagarra's *Divina Comèdia*, which received permission in 1948 on two conditions, which were extended to other works: firstly that, given the prestige of the translators and the original texts, they could be considered 'literary creations', and not translations; and secondly, that they should be published in luxury editions with small print runs and sold at sky-high prices. After that, whether a translation was authorised or not was always highly arbitrary and depended on the circumstances, personal pressure, the censor, the type of work, and the translator, among other factors (Gallofré i Virgili 1991).

In 1962, a change in government tactics lifted the ban on translations and, from that time on, they were subject to the same controls as other books. The appearance in the same year of the publisher Edicions 62 signalled a revolution in

the publication of translated books, mainly thanks to the El Balancí collection, dedicated to contemporary literature, La Cua de Palla, which published detective novels, and Llibres a l'Abast, which specialised in essays. In addition, in 1964 the Biblioteca a Tot Vent collection of the Proa publishing house set out on a new mission spearheaded by Joan Oliver. According to Francesc Vallverdú (1987), of the total works produced in Catalan in 1965, 55% were translations. However, a few years later the situation reversed as a result of the publishing crisis and saturation of the market; in 1973, for example, only 8% of books published were translations. The translations that were produced, however, bore the names of many of the leading writers of the time: Joan Oliver, Maurici Serrahima, Xavier Benguerel, Rafael Tasis, Lluís Ferran de Pol, Joan Sales, Manuel de Pedrolo, Maria Aurèlia Capmany, Gabriel Ferrater, Joan Fuster, Josep Vallverdú, Jordi Sarsanedas, Ramon Folch i Camarasa, among others. Some individuals began to make a name for themselves as translators: Bonaventura Vallespinosa, Josep M. Güell, Carme Serrallonga, Jordi Arbonès, to name but a few. It would seem that there was a desire to make up for lost time and re-enter the fight for the prestige and authority of the Catalan language (Bacardí 2012).

## 7 Recent decades

Following the deceleration which occurred in the 1970s, the 1980s saw the publication of translations pick up again and experience a new 'phase of expansion' (Broch 1991, 191), representing 16.5% of all Catalan publications in 1990, for example (Vallverdú 1992, 92). In 1981, two new collections appeared for the publication of foreign works: Les Millors Obres de la Literatura Universal and Textos Filosòfics. Joaquim Mallafrè published his translation of an iconic title, James Joyce's *Ulysses* – an undertaking which forms much of the basis of *Llengua de tribu i llengua de polis: bases d'una traducció literària* (1991), ('Language of the tribe and language of the polis – basis for literary translation'), the first book in Catalan devoted to translation as an academic discipline. Previously Jaume Tur in his *Maragall i Goethe. Les traduccions del Faust* (1974) ('Maragall and Goethe. The translations of Faust') did not limit himself to these writers, but dealt with aspects of translation as a method. Throughout the 1980s other collections appeared which were sustained by translations, such as the Clàssics del Pensament Modern, L'Arcà, Venècies, Clàssics Moderns and a new 20th century collection of Les Millors Obres de la Literatura Universal. Segle XX (Mallafrè 2000). However, a number of these collections were suspended during the following decade.

With the turn of the century, the market was flooded with translations of global best-sellers and works by more or less *literary* authors who had achieved

international success, from Dan Brown and J. K. Rowling to Paul Auster and Haruki Murakami. Similarly, a new phenomenon emerged: the translation from Spanish into Catalan, given commercial possibilities for a demand that was not “real” as far as readers understood both languages, but the plot or the writers were felt as part of a Catalan setting, and this blurred the line between *original* and *translation* (Arenas/Škrabec 2006). This mainly homogeneous market stood in contrast to that of the smaller publishers (Adesiara, Edicions de 1984, Edicions del Periscopi and Raig Verd), which opted for the recovery of unquestionable classics or the inclusion of consolidated contemporary works. In the words of Josep Marco (2000, 44), it could be concluded that, today, ‘translations continue to be highly abundant, [...] but they are further removed from nuclei of influence’ than in previous times.

On the other hand, thanks to favourable conditions, these years saw the professionalisation of translation. Now it is not only writers, either out of a sense of duty to their country or because they are the only ones the publishers trust, who take on the lion’s share of translation work. Today it is the professional translator who dominates and is able to more or less make a living from their work as long as the publishing industry remains stable, albeit with ups and downs. This is evidenced by the establishment of specific translation sections in writers’ associations, such as the Association of Writers in Catalan and the Catalan PEN. It may also be as a result of the grants awarded annually by the Institució de les Lletres Catalanes and the Institut Ramon Llull to translators and publishing houses for the translation of literary works into and out of Catalan, as well as other translation prizes that have appeared in recent years. Evidently, some of the main contributors to this professionalisation have been the six Catalonia universities which offer degrees in translation. Additionally, the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona published the first specialised periodical mainly in Catalan: *Quaderns de Traducció i Interpretació* (1982–1992), which reappeared in 1998 under the name *Quaderns. Revista de Traducció*. Since 1995, academic research has been disseminated through the Biblioteca de Traducció i Interpretació collection, published by Eumo, which contains around twenty volumes of essays, manuals and anthologies which have contributed to the creation of Catalan translation studies (Torrents 2010).

## 8 Translation from Catalan

Despite the historical difficulties, there is a large body of literature produced in Catalan and numerous authors have crossed borders and been translated into other languages. Some of these date back to the Middle Ages and even to the centuries of the *decadència* in Catalan literary production. Ramon Llull is certainly the

oldest and best-known author: the *Llibre del Gentil e dels tres savis* was translated into Spanish in the 14th century; *Fèlix* was translated into Spanish, French and Italian in the 15th century; the *Llibre de l'ordre de cavalleria* was translated into English from the French version by William Caxton in 1484 as the *Book of the Order of Chivalry*, and during the first few decades of the 20th century Edgar Allison Peers revived interest in Lull with the translation of five of his works. There have also been translations of the great *Cròniques*, the prose of Francesc Eiximenis, the poetry of Ausiàs Marc and, in particular, the novel *Tirant lo Blanc* by Joanot Martorell, which has been translated into fifteen languages, either directly from Catalan or from intermediary languages, primarily Spanish, which has often acted as a bridge language or even an original source.

In the 19th century the fame of some writers gave rise to new translations. Perhaps the most influential was the poet Jacint Verdaguer, whose works were reproduced in about a hundred different versions in Spanish, Occitan, French, Portuguese, Italian, English, German, Czech, Russian, Latin, Esperanto, etc. About a third of these are versions of *L'Atlàntida*. Àngel Guimerà follows closely behind with more than fifty translations of his works; his play *Terra baixa*, praised by Piscator, is the work on which the operas *Tiefland* by Eugen d'Albert (first performed in Prague in 1903) and *La catalana* by Fernand Leborne were based, and it has also served as the inspiration for several films produced in Europe and the United States; José Echegaray translated many of his works into Spanish, with *Mar i cel* and *Terra baixa* being the most frequently published and performed in many languages. In 1886 Narcís Oller broke into the French market with his first novel *La papallona*, with a prologue by none other than Émile Zola, leading to the popularity of Oller's other work to snowball throughout Europe.

Of the 20th century Catalan writers, Mercè Rodoreda is undoubtedly one of the most frequently translated; *La plaça del Diamant* can be read in around thirty languages, with three versions in English alone and two in Spanish, Italian, Dutch and Portuguese. Other writers from the same generation who have been translated include Josep Pla, Llorenç Villalonga, Joan Sales, Manuel de Pedrolo and Joan Perucho. As far as the poets are concerned, versions of works by Josep Carner, Carles Riba, J. V. Foix, Salvador Espriu, Joan Brossa, Gabriel Ferrater and Miquel Martí i Pol are among the most notable.

Younger writers have also been exported profusely. These include works of narrative by Baltasar Porcel, Jesús Moncada (*Camí de sirga*, in twenty languages), Isabel-Clara Simó, Montserrat Roig and Carme Riera, the poetry of Joan Margarit, Narcís Comadira, Francesc Parcerisas and Maria-Mercè Marçal and plays by Josep M. Benet i Jornet. During the 1990s, the stories and novels of Quim Monzó were translated into twenty languages. Catalan literature gained a certain presence in European markets thanks, to a large extent, to certain foreign translators who acted as ambassadors, and to the internationalisation of certain publishing houses and literary agents. Sergi Pàmies and Lluís-Anton Baulenas,

for example, were also translated. A surge in writing for the theatre during that time meant that work by playwrights such as Lluïsa Cunillé, Carles Batlle and Sergi Belbel were – and continue to be – performed in many languages.

The translation of Catalan literature has taken a new direction since Catalonia hosted the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2007. The event saw the presentation of 53 new German translations of authors of very different backgrounds, periods and styles: Lluïsa, Martorell, Víctor Català, Sagarra, Pla, Espriu, Pere Gimferrer, Maria Antònia Oliver, Belbel and Ada Castells. Maria Barbal, with *Pedra de tartera* (50,000 copies sold), and Jaume Cabré, with *Les veus del Pamano* (40,000), attracted critical attention and almost unheard-of public success (increased by the reception of his next novel, *Jo confesso*, translated into more than twenty languages), followed by *Pandora al Congo* by Albert Sánchez Piñol (25,000), who had already seen his *La pell freda* translated into over thirty languages (Jané Lligé 2012, 166). Two months after the fair, it was calculated that in total ‘around 250,000 books by Catalan authors had been sold in Germany’ (Torner 2012, 118).

Since then, Catalan literature has become much more widely known, read and translated throughout the world and, even though it has not been possible to sustain such high figures for translations – or sales – when all is said and done ‘the Catalan presence can be compared perfectly well with other languages of culture’ (Mallfrè 2009, 16).

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