

The Marketing and Reception of Women Writers in the Twenty-First Century Spanish Nation-State

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Abstract

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This thesis is a comparative study of the marketing and reception of women writers in the twenty-first century Spanish nation-state; more specifically, Galicia, Catalonia, the Basque Country and central Spain. This study analyses and discusses the strategies women writers in the Spanish nation-state use to achieve success and visibility within their respective literary fields, and also takes into account the complex situation that surrounds these women writers. As such, this thesis also discusses issues including language choice and national identity, as well as how women writers negotiate their position with their respective literary fields.

Taking a cultural studies approach, this thesis takes eight women writers as case studies: María Xosé Queizán and María Reimóndez (Galicia); Mariasun Landa and Laura Mintegi (the Basque Country); Carme Riera and Maria de la Pau Janer (Catalonia); and Almudena Grandes and Lucía Etxebarria¹ (central Spain) and examines the individual strategies they use to market their work and achieve success, associating themselves with canonical authors and careful use of paratexts such as prologues and epilogues. In addition, the reception of their mediated identities and their work is discussed through analysis of reviews and interviews in the press.

This thesis shows that that women writers in the Spanish nation-state are engaged constantly in a complex negotiation of various inter-dependent factors. Achieving success – both economic and symbolic – is a complex process, and there may often be cases where economic success can be detrimental to symbolic success, or vice versa. However, if women writers in the Spanish nation-state are able to negotiate these complex inter-dependent factors, success – both economic and symbolic -, prestige and even canonisation are achievable.

¹ The spelling of Etxebarria used in this thesis is the same as that which appears on the covers of Lucía Etxebarria's novels.

Dedication

I wish to dedicate this thesis to my father, who was my biggest supporter and always encouraged me in my studies. He did not live to see me graduate, but had a significant number of 'dad jokes' ready and waiting for when I did.

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Over the course of my four years of study, I have received such an overwhelming amount of help and support from colleagues and family members that there is not sufficient space to credit them all here. However, there are a few important people to whom I wish to express sincere gratitude for their assistance.

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Preface

The foundations of this thesis come from research into Galician women's writing. This previous research was an analysis of approaches to Galician women's narrative as well as suggestions for alternative approaches to Galician women's narrative that would allow female-authored texts to contribute to the national narrative. While undertaking this research project, the women writers I was studying were sometimes analysed alongside other writers from the wider Spanish nation-state. It was then that I realised that there were similarities in the way that women writers were treated in the different autonomous communities, as well as in the way that the work of women writers was approached. I began to see that the Galician literary field was not an isolated one, but part of a complex wider literary context that crossed linguistic and geographical borders. From initial research into women's writing and women writers elsewhere in the Spanish nation-state, I noticed that it was the strong feminist discourse that existed in Galician women's writing that made this literary field different to all the others. Thus, this raised the question of why women writers and academics in other literary fields had decided against or openly rejected a feminist approach to literature. Thus, rather than the central Spanish literary field, the Galician literary field was my gateway into the world of women's writing and women writers and, as such, is the starting point for this thesis. However, there was a particular event that made the focus of this thesis the mediated identities of the authors themselves and the reception of these identities, rather than any kind of literary textual analysis. This too, involved a writer from the Galician literary field.

In 2010, the Galician writer María Reimóndez, who is also one of the case studies in this thesis, gave an undergraduate workshop on the notion of writing as a fabric and locating the different threads that tie a writer's corpus together. Students were asked to read and comment on extracts from a number of Reimóndez's texts, such as an article she wrote about Galician language education in the Galician autonomous community, excerpts from her children's literature, personal musings of her experiences with her NGO in India, her acceptance speech for the *Premio Plácido Castro* translation prize, an excerpt from her novel *O club de calceta* and an article

about women and the nation. What was learned during the session was that Reimóndez's contextual articles and speeches helped to shape the way in which we read the excerpts from the children's literature and novel. An additional interesting aspect, in terms of this thesis, was what Reimóndez was wearing. Reimóndez was dressed plainly in blue or black trousers and a jumper, with her hair loose. This is not interesting in itself, except that on the back cover of her children's book *Pirata*, there is a picture of Reimóndez stood in a courtyard looking up at the camera with her hair in plaits and wearing a purple top and wrapped in a bright pink/red pashmina. Thus, I was presented with two contrasting images of the author. These two images I had of Reimóndez as the 'real' writer and the mediated writer coupled with the contextual articles and speeches that had guided my reading of Reimóndez's work raised the question as to what extent the promotional material and marketing strategies of writers affected the reception of their work. In addition, it raised the question as to whether, an analysis of the text occurred before reading the texts through a reading of the promotional materials.

Although the above paragraphs are anecdotal, they provide an insight into the initial idea for this project and the position from which I am examining the case studies. This thesis does not analyse the above-mentioned case studies starting with the women writers from the central Spanish nation-state as this would reinforce the hierarchal structures of centre and periphery discussed by Even-Zohar. Instead this thesis will use the Galician literary field as a starting point. It will then discuss the marketing of women writers in the Basque literary field, which is Galicia's closest neighbour in comparison with the other literary fields discussed in this thesis both in terms of geographical location and the size of the literary fields. It will then move to the Catalan literary field, which, as mentioned in the introduction, is much closer to the central Spanish literary field in terms of size and resources available. Finally, this thesis will discuss the marketing and reception of women writers in the central Spanish nation-state. This thesis examines first examines the specific cultural and socio-political contexts in which the writers work, before offering an in-depth examination of their mediated identities and the reception these identities have received. Though this thesis looks at each autonomous community individually, it often outlines the links between the literary fields as well as between the strategies that my case studies use to achieve success.

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Introduction

The Spanish nation-state² is a complex mixture of languages, cultures and identities, creating a political climate that inevitably has an effect on literary production and the perception of women writers. This introduction does not intend to provide a complete history of the languages, literatures and cultures of the Spanish nation-state, but rather to give an overview of the literary field and changes that occurred in this field post-1975. In addition, it aims to discuss the situation of women writers within this complex and ever-changing socio-political climate. Finally, this chapter seeks to discuss existing research on the marketing and reception of women writers, identifying gaps or issues that arise and presenting my own objectives, methodology, principal findings and the structure of this thesis. It will begin with a discussion of links between politics and literature in the Spanish nation-state.

There is a difference between a nation and a nation-state. According to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) a nation is ‘a large body of people united by common descent, history, culture, or language, inhabiting a particular state or

² The Spanish nation-state is made up of seventeen autonomous communities: Galicia, Asturias, Cantabria, Basque Country, Navarre, Catalonia, Aragon, La Rioja, Castile and León, Extremadura, Madrid, Castilla-La-Mancha, Valencia, Murcia, Andalusia, Balearic Islands and the Canary Islands; and two autonomous cities: Ceuta and Melilla. After the death of the Spanish dictator General Franco in 1975, this ‘State of Autonomies’ was created during the transition to democracy, between 1978 and 1983 under the newly ratified *Constitución Española de 1978*. The constitution granted an asymmetric devolution of power to the autonomous communities, allowing them a limited amount of autonomy concerning social welfare, cultural and educational matters, among others. Although the majority of autonomous communities were granted this status in 1983, the three ‘historical communities’ of the Basque Country, Catalonia and Galicia were fast-tracked through the process under Article 151 of the constitution. As such, the Basque Country and Catalonia became autonomous communities in 1979, with Galicia achieving the same status in 1981. Although Andalusia was not one of the ‘historical communities’ it also went through the fast-track process in 1982. Though the Spanish constitution acknowledges the different nationalities present and grants a certain degree of autonomy to the autonomous communities, it still portrays the Spanish nation-state as ‘unified’ and as having a common patria. Article 2 of the constitution, for example, states that, ‘La Constitución se fundamenta en la indisoluble unidad de la Nación española, patria común e indivisible de todos los españoles, y reconoce y garantiza el derecho a la autonomía de las nacionalidades y regiones que la integran y la solidaridad entre todas ellas’ (<http://noticias.juridicas.com>). This post-dictatorship constitution, agreed upon by peoples and communities in fear of a second dictatorship and eager to return to democracy, has caused tension between the central Spanish government and the ‘historical communities’ of the Basque Country, Catalonia and Galicia in the twenty-first century; tensions which have only been exacerbated by the 2008 global financial crisis.

territory’, whereas a nation-state is ‘a sovereign state of which most of the citizens or subjects are united also by factors which define a nation, such as language or common descent’ (OED). The definitions above are expanded upon by the academic Montserrat Guibernau in her monograph *Nationalisms: The Nation-State and Nationalism in the Twentieth Century* (1995). Guibernau states, for example, that a nation is ‘a human group conscious of forming a community, sharing a common culture, attached to a clearly demarcated territory, having a common past and a common project for the future and claiming the right to rule itself’ (47). Guibernau’s definition of a nation-state is that it is ‘a modern phenomenon, characterized by the formation of a kind of state which has the monopoly of what it claims to be the legitimate use of force within a demarcated territory and seeks to unite the people subjected to its rule by means of homogenization, creating a common culture, symbols, values, reviving tradition and myths of origin, and sometimes inventing them’ (47). What is implicit in the OED definitions and more explicit in Guibernau’s definitions of ‘nation’ and ‘nation-state’ is that the construction of a nation appears to be an organic process organizing large groups of people in which a sense of unity already exists, while a nation-state involves an imposed power that tries to create unity. In other words, one of the key differences between the nation and the nation-state is sovereignty. A nation is self-governed whereas a nation-state imposes a central government. More generally, however, the OED defines a nation-state as ‘any independent political state’ and, as such, many European countries, such as France and the UK are referred to as nation-states.

In terms of Spain, the situation is more complex due to the existence of the Basque, Catalan and Galician identities. While Spain is not the only place in Europe where multiple languages, cultures and identities exist within the same borders, the persistence of these languages and identities, particularly in the twenty-first century, has made some question the existence of what could be termed a Spanish nation-state. As Mary Vincent states in her monograph *Spain 1833-2002: People and State* (2007), ‘[t]he persistence of Basque, Catalan, and Galician signifies to many the failure to establish a Spanish nation-state’ (45). Indeed, the renewed calls for Catalan independence since 2012 and the devolution of certain powers to the autonomous communities such as, police, health services and education, has led some to suggest that it is not a nation-state, but a federation. As Ailsa Henderson et al. confirm in the edited volume *Citizenship after the Nation-State: Regionalism, Nationalism and*

Public Attitudes in Europe (2014), '[t]hirty years after the constitution, Spain is now a highly decentralized state with a strongly institutionalized division of power. For some observers at least, it is a federation in all but name' (52). Thus, academics have found it difficult to settle on a term that adequately describes Spain's political and cultural situation.

The expansion of the European Union, the opening of borders within Europe, and the creation of the single currency (euro) in 1999 all added a layer of complexity to the Spanish case. European integration gave citizens of Spain a European identity to add to their, in some cases, Galician, Catalan and Basque identities, as well as the overarching Spanish identity. In addition, European integration also led to an openness to regionalism and as such regions – or autonomous communities in the case of Spain – took on a growing political importance (Henderson et al.: 2014, 7; Vincent: 2007, 237). This tendency towards regionalism is evidenced by the 1991 Maastricht Treaty in which the Principle of Subsidiarity 'aims at bringing the EU and its citizens closer by guaranteeing that action is taken at a local level where it proves to be necessary' and is reinforced by the Treaty of Lisbon in 2007 which states in article two that the European Union 'shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity, and shall ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced (eur-lex.europa.eu). This in turn led to a redefinition of the term nation-state to recognize these regions, or autonomous communities. Henderson et al. have termed people with such multiple identities 'multi-levelled citizens' and state that for the most part 'citizens understand their own collective identities and the institutional opportunities they have for pursuing collective goals as both regional and state-wide' (22). Vincent meanwhile, suggests that while the European openness to regionalism now allows for Spain to be referred to as a nation-state, it comes at a time when the creation of the European Union has irrevocably altered the definition of the term. She states, for example, that '[f]or Spain, there may be an irony in that the country achieved a modern nation-state at precisely the time that the accelerating process of European integration changed that state forever' (237-8). Thus, while the expansion of the European Union and the creation of a single currency as well as a European identity has complicated identity discourse in Spain, Galicia, Catalonia and the Basque Country, it has also brought an openness toward regions and autonomous communities with their own identities as well as new opportunities for these regions and communities.

In terms of this thesis, the debate surrounding the definition of Spain and the other identities and cultures within its borders is problematic. However, for the purposes of this thesis it is necessary to find a term that encompasses Spain and the stateless nations of Galicia, Catalonia and the Basque Country. Based on the arguments outlined above, although ‘Spanish federation’ would possibly be an adequate term, it has not been used widely by academics, literary institutions, writers, or the media and therefore will not be used in this thesis. ‘Spanish nation-state’ has therefore been chosen as the term to refer to Spain and the stateless nations of Galicia, Catalonia and the Basque Country. While the use of the term nation-state and its adequacy to describe Spain is still being debated, for the purposes of this thesis it is used to acknowledge that Spain is not a single nation with a single shared culture, but rather there are other identities, languages and cultures within its borders. In addition, it is a recognition that, as shall be discussed further on in this thesis, that many people in Galicia, Catalonia and the Basque Country see central Spain as an imposing, dominant culture and that there are some people who are not united by the Castilian language. Thus in this thesis, the term ‘Spanish nation-state’ signifies the autonomous communities that make up Spain and acknowledges the separate identities of Galicia, Catalonia and the Basque Country.

Over the past two decades, the role of literature within the Spanish nation-state has changed considerably. During Franco’s dictatorship, with many republican writers in exile in the rest of Europe and Latin America,³ as well as policies of censorship, writing, publishing and book selling was considered a political act with the book industry in the Spanish nation-state being linked to a poetics of resistance (Robbins: 2003, 92). In her article ‘Globalization, Publishing and the Marketing of “Hispanic” Identities’ (2003), Jill Robbins states that the editors of Lumen, Akal and Seix Barral ‘were leading intellectuals and writers who believed that the writing, publishing, and reading of literature were political acts’ (92). These ‘political acts’ included writing and publishing literature in Galician, Catalan and Basque which were banned under Franco’s dictatorship. The publication of literature in the languages

³ Examples include: Rafael Alberti (1902-1999) who was in exile in Argentina and Rome until 1977; León Felipe (1884-1968), who remained in exile in Mexico until his death; Luis Cernuda (1902-1963), who was in exile in Britain until 1945 and the USA and Mexico until his death; Rosa Chacel (1898-1994), who was in exile in Brazil and Buenos Aires, before returning to Spain in 1977; and Ramón J. Sender (1901-1982), exiled in France, before moving to New York and then Mexico, before returning to Spain in 1972.

mentioned above demonstrated resistance against Franco's dictatorship as well as ensuring the continuation of these national identities. Thus, literature in the Spanish nation-state pre-1975 was inherently linked to politics and is one reason why language, literature and politics in the Spanish nation-state remain linked in the present day.

However, post-1975, many of the independent publishing houses were bought by huge multi-national publishing conglomerates, such as *Grupo Planeta*, *Random House Mondadori* and *Grupo Anaya*, and the objectives of the book industry in the Spanish nation-state shifted from largely a pedagogical, moral endeavour to focusing on profits and marketing. In the monograph *La novela de la Generación X* (2008), Eva Navarro highlights that the '[t]ransformación de las editoriales en grupos gigantes (multinacionales) surgidos de la concentración de pequeñas empresas de la edición y de otra naturaleza. Este proceso de concentración que comenzó sus pasos en Estados Unidos ha provocado que la rentabilidad se convierta en el criterio máximo de la industria del libro' (254). This globalization of literature in the Spanish nation-state, opened up debate over 'high-brow' and commercial literature that continued into the twenty-first century and surrounds the careers of some of the case studies in this thesis.⁴ In addition, this amalgamation of publishing houses saw editors who had political commitment to social change disappear in the new economy. Robbins uses Esther Tusquets, who Robbins states was forced into early retirement after Lumen was acquired by Bertelsmann, as an example, and argues that, 'Tusquets advanced the cause of women in Spain by publishing in Lumen not only works by Spanish women, but also important foreign theoretical and political books on feminism in Spanish translation. Her departure signalled the end of a certain editorial politics' (2003, 93). Thus, the arrival of democracy in the Spanish nation-state ushered in a new era of consumerism that moved away from the previous political publishing environment.

In her book *Literatura y mujeres. Escritoras, público y crítica en la España actual* (2000), Laura Freixas discusses how as the literary field in the Spanish nation-state became less political, the press found new ways of defining authors, which also had implications for women writers. She states that, '[n]os hallamos además en una sociedad sin controversias ideológicas: las artistas ya no se definen por su opción política y hasta los debates estéticos parecen difuminarse; la prensa recurre entonces

⁴ See, for example, the case of Lucía Etxebarria in Chapter 4 and the case of Maria de la Pau Janer in Chapter 3.

a la edad y al sexo para “etiquetar” a los creadores. Y en una cultura cada vez más basada en la imagen, las mujeres destacan no sólo por ser minoría sino porque su imagen resulta más llamativa’ (37). Thus, according to Freixas, writers were no longer defined by their political affiliation, but rather their physical appearance, particularly characteristics such as age and gender. However, Freixas, Robbins and Navarro’s texts were written and published before the global financial crisis in 2008, the renewed Catalan call for independence in 2011 and the introduction of the *Ley de Memoria Histórica* in 2007.⁵ Though, as shall be discussed later in this thesis, physical appearance is still one of the criteria critics use to evaluate an author, particularly women writers, the above-mentioned economic and political events have made politics once again relevant to twenty-first century literature in the Spanish nation-state. In recent years literature in the Spanish nation-state has been used as a platform to discuss issues such as Catalan national identity as well as events and memories surrounding the Spanish Civil War and its aftermath.⁶ Thus, although there was a lull in the link between politics and literature post-1975, the change in political climate

⁵ Both the global financial crisis and the *Ley de Memoria Histórica* will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 4. In terms of the Catalan call for independence, in 2006, in agreement with the left-wing government of José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, changes were made to Catalonia’s Statute of Autonomy, giving Catalonia greater powers in taxation and judicial matters. In addition, it gave the Catalan language precedence over Castilian and recognised Catalonia as a nation. The amended Statute of Autonomy was agreed in a referendum in 2006. However, these amendments were challenged by the central government’s right-wing *Partido Popular*. Following a four-year legal dispute, the courts ruled in favour of the *Partido Popular*’s concerns that the new Statute would threaten Spanish unity and the amendments were revoked on 28th June 2010, being finalized on the 9th of July 2010. The decision to revoke the amendments proved extremely unpopular in Catalonia, with between 425,000 and 1.5 million people taking to the streets of Barcelona in protest. The discrepancy in the number of the people who attended the rally is due to different numbers being quoted in the press. *El Periódico*, for example, quotes the number given by the *Guàrdia Urbana* of 1,100,000 people (Rico and Martínez, 2010), while *La Vanguardia* cites the number given by the organisers of the protest *Òmnium Cultural* of 1,500,000 people (Anon, 2010a). Finally, *El País* reported that only 425,000 people were in attendance (Anon, 2010b). This protest as well as long-standing resentment over the high financial contributions Catalonia makes to central government has inspired a renewed call for independence and further protests taking place annually since 2012 on the 9th of September, also known as *La Diada*, or Catalan’s national day. Calls for independence have escalated and since 2012, there have been campaigns for a referendum on the subject, campaigns which have been ignored by a now conservative government. Having been ignored, Catalonia used their local elections on the 27th of September 2015 as a de-facto referendum, with the pro-independence parties *Junts Pel Sí* and *CUP* winning the majority of seats. What the case of Catalonia shows are the conflicting ideas of the Spanish nation-state that exist as well as the complex, ever-changing political situation. For more information on the issue of Catalan independence see Kathryn Crameri’s ‘Goodbye, Spain?’ *The Question of Independence for Catalonia* (Eastbourne: Sussex Academic Press, 2014).

⁶ Chapter 4 of this thesis provides an in-depth discussion on the recent trend in historical fiction in the Spanish nation-state, particularly that dealing with the Spanish Civil War and subsequent dictatorship. In addition, it discusses how writers such as Almudena Grandes use this genre to promote a left-wing national agenda. In terms of the Catalan case, see Patricia Gabancho’s novel *El preu de ser Catalans. Una cultura millenària en vies d’extinció* (2008). Full reference in bibliography.

has renewed these political ties and reinforces political affiliation as a marker of an author's identity.

The ties between literature and politics are most keenly felt in the three historical communities of the Spanish nation-state: Galicia, Catalonia, and the Basque Country, where literature is connected to national identity. As such, there is an expectation that writers from these autonomous communities should be loyal to these stateless nations and write in Galician, Catalan or Basque. In his article 'National Literature and the Literary Field' (2010), for example, Antón Figueroa states that from the Galician renaissance (c.1809-c.1905)⁷ 'the renewal of the Galician language, literature and other forms of artistic activity were part of the political projects to reclaim a national status for Galicia' (40). With the strong ties literature has to the nation in the autonomous communities in the Spanish nation-state, academics often discuss the problems that writers then face as part of this literary system. Indeed Figueroa states that in stateless nations such as Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque country, 'authors are still conditioned by a national duty that seems impossible to avoid, at least until the nation achieves the recognition it desires' (42). The strong links between literature and the nation, as well as the pressure put on writers to represent their respective nation inevitably has an effect on the reception of writers; particularly those authors who are from Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque Country, but who choose to write in Spanish.⁸

One of the main debates surrounding literature in the Spanish nation-state is the question of what constitutes Spanish, Basque, Galician, or Catalan literature and which writers can be classed as Spanish, Basque, Galician, or Catalan authors. In terms of Galicia, in 2006 a forum was held for a special issue of *The Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* in which a group of thirteen cultural producers and critics⁹ were asked

⁷ The Galician renaissance, or *rexurdimento*, lasted through the nineteenth century and is defined by the publication of Rosalía de Castro's poetry book *Cantares Gallegos* in 1963. One of the last acts of the *rexurdimento* is the creation of the literary institution the *Real Academia Galega* in 1905.

⁸ See for example two books by Stewart King, which deal with this subject: the edited volume *La cultura catalana de expresión castellana: Estudios de literatura, teatro y cine* (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 2005) and the monograph *Escribir la catalanidad: Lengua e identidades culturales en la narrativa contemporánea de Cataluña* (Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2005). In the latter, Chapter 5 concerning the case studies of Juan Marsé and Montserrat Roig is particularly illuminating.

⁹ These thirteen cultural producers included the writers Luisa Castro, Tucho Calvo and Xelís de Toro; the poet María do Cebreiro Rábade Villar; the publishers Fran Alonso and Olegario Sotelo Blanco; theatre professional Cándido Pazó; musician Ramón Pinheiro Almuinho; the academics Xosé Ramón Barreiro, Ana Luna Alfonso, Henrique Monteagudo and Dolores Vilavedra; and the artist María Ruido.

questions on various aspects of Galician culture, including the question: ‘how would you define a Galician writer?’ (113). Seven of the thirteen cultural producers state that language is the defining characteristic of a Galician writer. For one member of the forum, Fran Alonso, the case was clear cut as he states that:

[a]nybody who writes in the Galician language will be a Galician writer, and, therefore, their work will be part of the Galician literary system. This is the case with my work, or that of Manuel Rivas, Rosa Aneiros, Suso de Toro, Teresa Moure etc. A writer who writes in Spanish and lives in Galicia will belong, clearly, to the Spanish literary system and their work will belong to Spanish literature (for example, Camilo José Cela or Torrente Ballester) (113-14).

For Alonso then, a Galician writer is anybody, within or outside Galicia, who writes in the Galician language, while anybody who writes in Spanish, regardless of whether they live or were born in Galicia, is part of the Spanish literary system or field. What Alonso overlooks are the journalistic articles that writers such as Manuel Rivas and Suso de Toro produce in Castilian, suggesting a hierarchy of genres that will be discussed later on in this thesis. For other members of the forum however, the situation is not as black and white. Xosé Ramón Barreiro, for example, agrees that the Galician language is a defining element of Galician writers, but argues that:

[e]ven if the author writes exclusively in Castilian [...], his work doubtless contains elements of our culture such as descriptions, the characters’ features, customs, etc., which means we cannot deny his position as a Galician writer, even if it is incomplete, because those descriptions, features and customs emerged from – and remained closely linked to – the language itself [...] (114).

Thus for Barreiro, a writer who produces Castilian-language work can still be considered to be Galician if their work contains references to Galician culture. What the above quotes demonstrate is twofold: firstly, that in the twenty-first century, the defining characteristic of literature, in this case Galician literature, is the language; and secondly, that although the majority of cultural producers in the forum agreed that language is a defining characteristic, there are those who recognise that the situation is complex.

For other members of the forum, language was not the defining characteristic of a Galician writer. Five out of the thirteen cultural producers state that the agency of the writer is the most important factor. In other words, if someone wants to be Galician

and believes themselves to be Galician, then they are. Xelís de Toro states, for example, that:

[a] person becomes a Galician writer/artist when they take the conscious decision to try to become part of that artistic/cultural sphere, when they decide they want to participate in that public space, when they want their work to be understood and seen within that cultural sphere (116).

In order to become part of the Galician cultural sphere, it is possible that a writer would have to produce work in the Galician language, but for de Toro, what makes a Galician writer is not the choice of language, but the initial choice of where the writer wants to belong. Cándido Pazó echoes this argument when he states that ‘a Galician artist is one who, whether born in Galicia or not, feels part and parcel of the civic, historical and cultural context that is conventionally described as Galician’ (115). Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Ana Luna Alfonso states simply that ‘I think that whether or not one feels Galician is an individual decision’ (115). For Alfonso then, a writer’s identity is a personal choice and she implies that the cultural sphere in which a writer is situated should not be decided by critics and the media, but by the writer or artist themselves.

For publisher Olegario Sotelo Blanco, however, it is the training and knowledge a writer has received that determines their identity. He states that, ‘if somebody has been educated in Galician, read Galician literature, knows the different Galician artistic traditions, they can truly be said to produce Galician literature, Galician art, or Galician music’ (116). He adds that the question of whether or not a person from outside Galicia can be considered a Galician writer or artist should be considered on a ‘case by case basis’ (116). Thus, for Sotelo Blanco a Galician writer is someone who is well read, has studied Galician literary traditions in-depth, and understands Galician culture. While Sotelo Blanco’s opinion of what constitutes a Galician writer may appear strict, many successful and critically acclaimed writers in Galicia and the wider Spanish nation-state are well-educated and in some cases, are academics who conduct research on their relevant literary field.¹⁰ What the views of this cross-section of cultural producers have shown is that although language is a determining factor when situating a writer within a particular literary field, there are a

¹⁰ This topic will be discussed in more depth later on in the thesis.

number of other factors to consider too. According to the forum mentioned above, the agency of the writer and where they feel they belong should be taken into account and writers should also have knowledge of the literary field they want to work in as well as knowledge of previous generations of writers and literary traditions.

In Catalonia too, the defining characteristic of Catalan literature and Catalan writers is the Catalan language. Stewart King states, for example, that, '[p]ara la comunidad intelectual catalana en general, la literatura "catalana" es aquella que se escribe en catalán, mientras que la literatura en castellano, incluso aquella que escriben catalanes, se considera como perteneciente a la literatura y cultura castellanas o "españolas"'(2005, 3). As such, Catalan writers who write in Castilian, such as Juan Marsé, Esther Tusquets and Ana María Matute are excluded from the Catalan literary discourse. This exclusion was most evident when Catalan culture was invited, by the German Publishers and Booksellers Association, to the Frankfurt Book Fair¹¹ in 2007; as only authors who published in Catalan were invited by the *Institut Ramon Llull*, the Catalan institution charged with supporting the event. This raised political questions, which were discussed with irony and sarcasm by the writer Quim Monzó in his inaugural speech at the fair. His speech tells the story about a writer who has been asked to make a speech at the Frankfurt book fair where Catalan Culture is the honoured guest (thus parodying his own situation), he states that:

The writer in question – Catalan himself and, hence, on his guard – hesitates before accepting the assignment. He thinks, "Now what should I do? Accept the invitation? Not accept it? Should I decline with a pleasant excuse? If I accept, what will people think? If I don't accept, what will people think? (2007, no pagination).

Though Monzó's comments are ironic, they also demonstrate the implications that the links between literature and the nation have for writers. Writers in the Spanish nation-state must carefully consider their position in the literary fields of the Spanish nation-state as well as how decisions they make will be perceived by the press and the reading

¹¹ The Frankfurt Book Fair is an annual event that began in 1949 and is organised by the *Ausstellungs- und Messe GmbH*, a subsidiary of the German Publishers and Booksellers Association. It defines itself as 'transcending borders since 1976' and accomplishes this by inviting one country each year to be the guest of honour. In 2015, the guest of honour was Indonesia, with other previous guests of honour including Brazil (2013) and Finland (2014). The event is attended by approximately 275,000 people each year (<http://www.buchmesse.de/en/company/>).

public. In his speech Monzó also demonstrates the tension between the expectations of the literary field and the will of the author when he states that ‘[...] as it happens the writer in question feels he doesn’t owe anyone an apology for forming part of the culture they have invited to be the guest at Frankfurt that year, so he decides to accept’ (2007, no pagination). Thus, while there is an expectation that writers should justify their choices regarding language, among other things, this is contrasted with writers, such as Monzó who do not feel a need to qualify their decisions.

The debate regarding language and a writer’s identity is also present in the Basque literary discourse, however the arguments take on a markedly different tone. In his book of reflections on the Basque literary field *Ese idioma raro y poderoso: once decisiones cruciales que un escritor vasco está obligado a tomar* (2012), the Basque writer Iban Zaldúa cites the well-known Basque writer Txillardegui and states that the writer ‘[...] afirmaba, en los años ochenta, que el escritor vasco tenía que hacer una elección, “escribir en euskera a favor de un pueblo oprimido, o en castellano a favor de un pueblo opresor”’ (26). Although, as Zaldúa states, this quote is from the 1980s, the choice of language here is striking. The use of the words ‘oprimido’ to describe the Basque Country and ‘opresor’ to describe Spain is extremely strong, but indicative of the relationship between Spain and the Basque Country due to Franco’s dictatorship. These strong sentiments also make it more likely for writers to be seen as traitors if they choose to write in Spanish. In the twenty-first century, while views on the use of Castilian have perhaps changed, the vocabulary used to describe Spain and the Basque Country remain the same. In a response to Koldo Izaguirre’s article ‘Le train express Durkheim-Castejón’ (2007), in which the writer discusses two Basque authors who have chosen to write their latest works in Basque, fellow writer and critic Lander Garro states that, ‘Ez dut nik españolez (zapaltzailearen hizkuntzan) dihardutenen defentsarik egingo, baina derradan, bidenabar, nahiago dudala españolez españolen kontra aritzen dena, euskaraz euskaldunon kontra aritzen dena baino, (edo, bestela esanda, euskaraz, españolen alde)’ (2007).¹² Garro’s choice of words here is highly charged with the use of ‘zapaltzailearen hizkuntzaren’, in English, ‘language

¹² An excellent translation of this quote is provided by Jon Kortazar in his book chapter ‘Tensions in Contemporary Basque Literature’ (2010) and it is this translation that I provide below: ‘I will not defend those who write in Spanish (the language of the oppressor), but I will say that I prefer those who speak in Spanish against the Spanish to those who speak in Euskara against the Basques (or, in other words, those who speak Euskara in favour of the Spanish)’ (138).

of the oppressor'. In addition, his preference for those who 'speak in Spanish against the Spanish' also show the tensions that still exist between the Basque Country and central Spain, as well as the implications for Basque writers who choose to write in Castilian. .

If a writer does choose to write in Basque there is another factor specific to the Basque case that add layers of complexity to the situation of a Basque writer. This factor is the topic of ETA¹³ or, as Zaldua terms it, 'La Cosa' (2012, 71). Zaldua compares the representation of the Basque conflict in Basque literature to that of other major events in Hispanic history. He states, for example, that 'La Cosa es a la literatura vasca lo que la Guerra Civil es a la literatura Española – o al cine español -. O el narcotráfico a los escritores colombianos. O los secuestros a los mexicanos' (72). Thus, Zaldua represents the Basque conflict as both an important part of Basque history as well as something that has come to define the literature and the culture. Despite the centrality of ETA and the Basque conflict in Basque history and culture, Zaldua questions whether the above-mentioned themes should form the image that is used to promote Basque literature and culture to the global literary market. He states, for example, that 'otra cuestión es si La Cosa debería ser la seña de identidad de la literatura vasca en el globalizado mercado de la literatura [...], o más bien habría que olvidarse de ella para triunfar en la República Mundial de las Letras' (91). What Zaldua suggests in the above quote is that it may be profitable for Basque literature to move away from the theme of the Basque Conflict in order to succeed on a global scale. The definitions of Galician, Catalan and Basque writers provided above demonstrate the complex situation that writers from these autonomous communities, or indeed writers from outside these communities who wish to be a part of these literatures and cultures face. They have also shown that while there are differing opinions as to what constitutes a Galician, Catalan or Basque writer, the defining characteristic is still the language in which the author writes.¹⁴

¹³ ETA is an abbreviation of *Euskadi Ta Eskatasuna* (Basque Homeland and Freedom), a Basque separatist organization founded in 1959 that used militancy and violence in its campaign for an independent Basque state (Encyclopaedia Britannica). Robert P. Clarke asserts that ETA's most intense phase was 1978-1980 when assassinations ranged from 68-88 per year (1990, 15). Two ceasefires were announced by the group, one in 1998 and the other in 2006; both were broken. On the 5th September 2010 ETA announced its decision not to carry out further attacks and in January 2011 it declared a permanent ceasefire (Anon, 2011e).

¹⁴ Academics working outside the Spanish nation-state have called for an understanding of literature in autonomous communities, such as Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque Country which looks past

This complex literary environment has had implications for women writers. Robbins argues, for example, that as the changing role of literature in the Spanish nation-state coincided with an increased number of women writers entering the literary field, women's writing was automatically associated with mass-produced, low quality work. She states that, 'women's literature in Spain is de facto considered inferior, sentimental, unintellectual, trite, poorly written, and destined for an uncultured, though large, female reading public. The press correlates the increase in female publishers and female readers with the publication of trivial books, and concludes that those books are by, for, and about women [...]' (2003, 95). This identification of women with sentimental and poorly written literature is by no means a new notion, nor is it particular to the Spanish nation-state; although the topic is discussed with particular reference to Spain in Alda Blanco's book chapter 'Gender and National Identity: The Novel in Nineteenth-Century Spanish Literary History' (1996) and in Susan Kirkpatrick's *Las Románticas: Women Writers and Subjectivity in Spain 1835-1850* (1989). It is, rather, part of the wider gendered critical discourse that has surrounded women's writing since the late nineteenth century and as such has been discussed by feminist academics, which include: Gilbert and Gubar in *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979), Elaine Showalter in *A Literature of their Own* (1977) and Lyn Pykett in *The "Improper" Feminine: The Women's Sensation Novel and the New Woman Writing* (1992). The notion has even been tackled by nineteenth century women writers themselves, as is evidenced in the Galician/Spanish writer Emilia Pardo Bazán's *La cuestión palpitante* (1883). This issue is also related to notions of hierarchies in culture and literature or, in other words, the distinction between high-brow and low-brow art. In this case, women's writing is associated with low-brow art/literature, while male-authored texts are associated with high-brow art.

Robbins later reiterates that this idea of women's writing as inferior is directly related to the globalization of literature when she states that, '[t]he perceived

language as defining a national literature. Kirsty Hooper in her 2003 article 'Girl Interrupted: The Distinctive History of Galician Women's Narrative' looks to create a richer and more complete genealogy of Galician women writers by incorporating Castilian language texts, while the above-mentioned books by Stewart King argue that writers who publish their work in Castilian, but who write about Catalonia or Catalan identity should also be included in the national literature (2005). However, given the arguments mentioned above and the renewed call for Catalan independence giving new importance to the Catalan language, a post-national definition of literature that looks beyond language possibly still has a way to go before it is fully accepted.

feminization and globalization of the publishing industry, like the atomization of the economy, the book business and society at large, represents to many intellectuals – even those who consider themselves leftist – a loss of prestige and reserved for men – the bookstore, the publishing house, the university, the *Real Academia*, the anthology’ (2003, 96). Thus, what these two extended quotes show is the negative way in which women writers were perceived in the recently democratized Spanish nation-state. Part of the problem, as mentioned in the above quotes, is that the rise of women writers was associated with the globalisation of the publishing industry and, consequently, with a lowering of standards. These two events, however, do not represent a case of cause and effect. It is more likely that this rise of women writers was perceived as a lowering of standards as it threatened the status of male writers and intellectuals. Therefore, Robbins’ statements are not necessarily about the intrinsic qualities of women’s writing, but rather the threat male writers feel and how this then turns into arguments about women’s writing being inferior and overly sentimental. The effect of this perception of women’s writing, was that women were often omitted from literary histories, literary institutions and negatively reviewed in the press. This is possibly due to the press and institutions being predominantly male and so attempting to defend male privilege against a perceived female threat.¹⁵

This association of women’s writing with sentimentality had particularly negative implications for women writers in the autonomous community of Galicia. In her monograph *Galicia, A Sentimental Nation: Gender, Culture and Politics* (2013) Helena Miguélez-Carballeira explains that perceptions of Galicia ‘concentrate on the assumption that Galicians are a nostalgic people, living in harmonious communion with their landscape or yearning for its beauty if away from it’ (2). This image of the Galician people led the term ‘sentimental’ to be attached to the nation, often in a pejorative way. Miguélez-Carballeira states, for example, that ‘sentimentality emerges as a feminizing colonial stereotype, of particular strategic value against national insurgence movements that were seen as a challenge to still unstable state politics’ (6-

¹⁵ For a further discussion on this topic see Alda Blanco’s book chapter ‘Gender and National Identity: The Novel in Nineteenth-Century Spanish Literary History’ (1996), in which Blanco argues that the association of women’s writing with lowering standards is part of a broader critical tradition which blames women writers and readers for any short-comings in Spanish literature (121). Blanco quotes, for example, the literary critic José Montesino who, in his *Introducción a una historia de la novela* (1955) asserts that women as reading and writing subjects were ‘responsible for arresting the development of the Spanish novel’ (121). Full reference in bibliography.

7). Thus, the association of Galicia with feminine attributes, such as sentimentality was used as a tactic to prevent challenges from Galician nationalist movements. However, as literature is so closely tied to the Galician nation and used as a tool for cultural resistance, it was also used to challenge the perception of Galicia as sentimental and feminine. As such, literary historians such as Ricardo Carballo Calero attempted to virilise Galician literature, including the image and work of the nineteenth century female author Rosalía de Castro, considered a metonym for Galicia. In his literary history *Historia da literatura Galega contemporánea* (1963), for example, Carballo Calero is adamant that Rosalía de Castro was unique, unlike other women writers of her time and that her work ‘non pode ser considerada feminina’ (182). Though Carballo Calero’s literary history was written and published during Franco’s dictatorship, it is still indicative of the perception of women writers critics had, and a perception that is still present in the twenty-first century Galician literary field. Much like the literary fields in the wider Spanish nation-state, the implications of this national politics was that women writers were not seen as being appropriate contributors to the national literary canon and were omitted from literary histories and literary institutions; with the exception of Rosalía de Castro, who was figured as a writer with masculine qualities in order to fit her into this literary history.

Often, in a hierarchy of discourses, the politics of nationalism overshadows all other concerns, including the representation of women and feminist politics. In his book chapter ‘Nationalism, Gender, and the Narrative of Identity’ (1992), for example, Radhakrishnan defines nationalism as ‘the binding and overarching umbrella that subsumes other and different political temporalities’, and questions why it is so difficult for nationalist and feminist or women’s politics to find common ground (78). Radhakrishnan’s view of national politics as an overarching umbrella is taken up by the Galician feminist academic Helena González in her book *Elas e o paraugas totalizador* (2005). González uses Radhakrishnan’s perception of national politics to ‘explicar as condicións nas que se desenvolve a literatura galega de muller recente como conformadora dun discurso literario nacional e xenérico, xa que concreta unha forma de pensamento crítico de xénero e vencéllao a unhas condicións históricas determinadas’ (20).¹⁶ Though González is discussing the specific context of Galician

¹⁶ ‘explains the conditions in which recent Galician women’s literature is progressing as complicit in a national, generic literary discourse that already summarizes one form of critical and gender thinking and is linked to particular historical conditions’.

literature, this notion could be applied to other autonomous communities in the Spanish nation-state to explain why women writers have traditionally been omitted from national literary histories, national literary institutions, such as the *Real Academia Galega* (RAG) and the national canon.

There is one area in which women writers appeared to have more visibility: the media. However, this too presented challenges for women writers. Laura Freixas states, for example, that there are ‘dos ideas que funcionan como un círculo vicioso: las mujeres triunfan en lo comercial y mediático, y fracasan en la calidad y el prestigio’ (2000, 41). The idea that Freixas puts forward here is that women writers are perceived as being commercially successful and media-friendly, however, this perception is also coupled with the idea that commercial success and being present in the media is equal to low quality work and a lack of prestige. Thus, through this association, the work of women writers is continually associated with unprestigious and low quality texts. The irony is that the more women writers who are commercially successful and appear in the media, the more this seems to reinforce this notion. It is only in recent years with writers such as Almudena Grandes who, as shall be discussed later in this thesis, manage to successfully negotiate the border between commercial success and prestige, that these ideas have been somewhat dispelled.

In the post-1975 literary fields two opposite, but parallel politics arose in the Spanish nation-state, one of perceived equality and integration, as evidenced in the media, and another of segregation and exclusion, evidenced by the low number of women writers in literary institutions, university curriculums and literary prize winners’ lists. Thus, as mentioned above, writers in the Spanish nation-state, both male and female, have to contend with national and social politics when embarking on their literary careers and have to make decisions that will condition the way in which they are received by the reading public. These decisions include, choosing the language in which to write, choosing a genre in which to write and deciding where to position themselves in this complex literary environment. Women writers face additional challenges and decisions, such as having to overcome the gendered politics and patriarchal notions of literature that surround their work.

Such challenges and decisions are discussed by Helena González Fernández in her book *Elas e o paraugas totalizador: Escritoras, xénero e nación* (2005). She states,

for example, that ‘[q]ueda claro que escribir sendo muller implica unha posición dobre marcada, mesmo aínda que non se participe dos discursos e das prácticas feministas’ (55).¹⁷ What González Fernández refers to her is the fact that women writers are marked by their national identity and the politics that entails as well as by their gender. This includes those women writers who do not consider themselves feminists. González Fernández states that in addition to genre and language choice women writers face five additional choices that she expresses in binary form. The first choice relates to the content of a text, she states that ‘os textos *deben ter ou non* o feminino como fonte referencial’ (55).¹⁸ Thus women writers must decide if they want to mark their texts as feminine. The second tension is ‘a escritura *debe/non ten por qué* estar directamente comprometida co xénero’ (55).¹⁹ In this case women writers must decide if they want gender to be a marker of their work. The third choice is ‘a escritora *debe/non ten por qué* respectar a gramática patriarcal’ (55).²⁰ In this case, González Fernández explains that one of the choices women writers must make is whether to uphold the sexist grammar structures of their language or not. The fourth choice involves deciding whether to identify as feminist or not and how a writer should present themselves in public. She states that, ‘a escritora *debe manifestar/non ten por qué* unha militancia feminista determinada. A “conduta” pública é relevante na valoración dos seus textos’ (55).²¹ Thus, here González Fernández alludes to the tensions regarding identifying as feminist as well as how the mediated image of an author can affect the reception of their work. The final tension González Fernández mentions, is not a choice but concerns how a woman writer and her work is perceived. She states that ‘o importante é que *a autora sexa muller/que o escrito por unha muller sexa “bo”* é valor fundamental nun texto’ (55).²² What González Fernández possibly discusses here is the importance place on the gender of the author in feminist criticism, which has traditionally studied ‘women writers’ and ‘women’s writing’ and the idea that the work of a woman writer must be ‘good’ in order to have value and in order to

¹⁷ ‘It remains clear that being a woman writer implies a position that is doubly marked, even if the writer does not participate in feminist practices and discourses’.

¹⁸ ‘Texts *must/need not* have the feminine as a referential source’. Emphasis in the original.

¹⁹ ‘The writing *must/need not* be directly committed to gender’.

²⁰ ‘The woman writer *must/need not* respect patriarchal grammar’.

²¹ ‘The woman writer *must/need not demonstrate* a determined feminist militancy. Public conduct is relevant in the valorisation of her texts’.

²² ‘What is important is that the author is a woman/that texts written by a woman are “good” is a fundamental factor in a text’.

be studied. Thus, González Fernández explains the added tensions and decisions that women writers face. Although she is largely referring to Galicia, her comments could be applied to the wider Spanish nation-state.

There are a small number of academic studies that deal with the relationship with the publishing industry and women writers in the Spanish nation-state. Christine Henseler's *Contemporary Spanish Women's Narrative and the Publishing Industry* (2003), for example, looks at the visual and verbal representations of the female body in texts as well as in the promotion of their work. Her case studies are women writers from the late twentieth and early twenty-first century central Spanish literary field, including Almudena Grandes and Lucía Etxebarria. In the introduction, Henseler outlines the strategies that women writers in the nineteenth and early twentieth century Spanish nation-state used to achieve success. Henseler argues that one factor in the success of women writers in the nineteenth century was their personality and/or personal background. She partly attributes the success of Emilia Pardo Bazán (1851-1921) to her prolific production, aristocratic background, and ambitious and intelligent personality (2003: 4-5). In addition, the success of Concha Espina (1869-1955) is partly due to her 'talent, ambition, and sense of adventure' (2003: 4-5). A further factor that conditioned the success of nineteenth century writers, according to Henseler, was the various other roles these women played in the literary field, as writers and teachers. Henseler states, for example, that Carmen de Burgos's (1867-1932) professional reputation as a teacher and journalist allowed her to achieve recognition, as did the aforementioned Concha Espina and Mercè Rodoreda (1909-1983). However, one of the main ways in which women achieved success was through winning literary prizes: Concha Espina, for example, won the National Prize for Literature; Rosa Chacel (1898-1994) won the Cervantes prize in 1985; Mercè Rodoreda won the Victor Català Prize in 1954; Carmen Laforet (1921-) won the Nadal prize in 1945; and Ana María Matute (1926-) also won the Nadal Prize.²³ Henseler argues that winning these prizes led to visibility, recognition and prestige for all the women writers mentioned above.

Henseler also discusses the strategies of women writers in the mid-late twentieth century Spanish nation-state. The Nadal prize was a major factor in the success of women writers at this time. Four women writers won the prize in the 1950s

²³ It is worth noting that Mercè Rodoreda did not win a literary prize for her novel *La plaça del diamant* as this work is one of the most acclaimed texts in Catalan literature.

alone.²⁴ Henseler then goes on to discuss two distinct generations of women writers. The first generation is described as the ‘best-sellers cultos’ (9). This, according to Henseler, included writers such as, Esther Tusquets (1936-2012), Lourdes Ortiz (1943-), Montserrat Roig (1946-91), Carme Riera (1948-), Cristina Fernández Cubas (1945-), Soledad Puértolas (1947-), Rosa Montero (1951-) and Rosa Regás (1954-) (2003, 9). For these writers, it was the power of their name recognition and the literary quality of their work that led to their success (2003, 9). This is in stark contrast to the second generation of writers that Henseler discusses, which includes Luisa Castro and Lucía Etxebarria and is associated with ‘selling-out’ by the press (2003, 10). Henseler states that ‘for these writers, the mass media and the promotional demands of the industry are a natural part of their lives [...]’ (10). Henseler also draws attention to the fact that the success of one woman writer and the strategies they use can have an impact on other women writers. For instance, Henseler states that ‘*Las edades de Lulú* by Almudena Grandes allowed the lesser-known Mercedes Abad to find a place more easily in the world of female erotic literature’ (18). Thus, in the introduction, Henseler provides a comprehensive overview of strategies women writers used to achieve success in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. She also demonstrates a shift in strategy to a greater use of the mass media and marketing strategies. However, as shall be demonstrated in subsequent chapters of this thesis, literary prizes as well as playing other roles in the literary field, are still popular strategies of women writers in the twenty-first century Spanish nation-state.

In the main body of her monograph, Henseler discusses female sexuality as a marketable technique, particularly in the cases of Almudena Grandes and Lucía Etxebarria, who both wrote in the erotic literature genre and were often associated with the characters of their books. However, while Henseler acknowledges that women writers have a certain amount of agency when it comes to promoting their work, she focuses on the mediated identities that are imposed on writers by the media and critics. In the case of Almudena Grandes, for example, Henseler states that ‘[a]s Grandes entered the world of literary promotion, she was attributed several identities as journalists, television talk-show hosts, and radio announcers approached her and her work according to what they thought Grandes’ strongest selling point might be’

²⁴ Elena Quiroga (1950), Dolores Medio (1952), Luisa Forellad (1953) and Carmen Martín Gaité (1957).

(2003, 96). This is reiterated in the interviews present at the end of Henseler's book, in which she states that 'while an author can have a certain amount of agency in determining the plight of his or her future, Obligado believes that most books are born with a predetermined destiny. Before books arrive in stores, publishing houses already know (with a slight margin of error) whether they will sell' (2003, 133). Thus, while Henseler attempts to grant women writers in the central Spanish literary field agency through the interviews at the end of her book and through acknowledging the strategies that writers use to try to shift the market to their advantage, the language and arguments discussed throughout her monologue seem to express that in reality, women writers have a limited amount of agency and often their identities are imposed upon them by the media and literary critics. The one exception in Henseler's book is Lucía Etxebarria, who, as shall be discussed in Chapter 4, seems to be able to manipulate the media and literary critics to her own advantage.

While Henseler's book provides crucial background into the development and success of women writers in the nineteenth and twentieth century Spanish nation-state, as well as providing ground-breaking analysis of the use of paratexts, such as book covers, in relation to the promotion of women writers and their work; her book has limitations in terms of relevance for this thesis. Firstly, Henseler's book, much like Freixas's text, was written before the global economic down turn and the introduction of the *Ley de Memoria Histórica* impacted on the literary fields in the Spanish nation-state.²⁵ In addition, in the twelve years since the publication of Henseler's book, the writers who featured as case studies have, in some cases, completely changed their literary trajectory and publishing strategy. The most notable example, and most relevant for this thesis, is Almudena Grandes, who has moved away from erotic fiction and into the historical fiction genre with an epic series of novels on the Spanish Civil

²⁵ The economic crisis led to a decline in the demand for books and consequently, the level of book sales. This decline, which began with the economic downturn in 2008 has persisted into 2012 and beyond. As the Federación de Gremios de Editores en España states in their report 'el sector ha visto disminuida su factoración en un 10, 9%. [...] Las causas de esta evolución [...] son variadas y de diversa índole. Por una parte la crisis económica que estamos viviendo y que provoca una reducción del consumo y de la demanda interna'. However, as mentioned in the report, the economic crisis was not the only factor contributing to the decline; other factors include the rise of e-books and a change in the Spanish education system (FGEE, 2013). In terms of the *Ley de Memoria Histórica*, the release of previously unseen documents relating to the Spanish Civil War has led to renewed interest in the topic, particularly as a subject of fiction and writers have been able to capitalize on the popularity of the topic. This is evidenced by the case of Almudena Grandes in the final chapter of this thesis.

War and its aftermath.²⁶ This raises questions of how writers, such as Grandes have changed their promotional strategies and if/how the reception of their work has altered in the face of these changes in trajectory. Henseler also discusses these women writers at the beginning of their literary careers and writers such as Grandes and Etxebarria went on to have long and prolific careers in the central Spanish literary field. This raises further questions about how these women writers, who achieved success early in their careers, have managed to sustain this level of success and prestige.

In terms of Galicia, Nogueira, Lojo and Palacios' *Creation, Publishing and Criticism: the Advance of Women Writers* (2010), provides a unique view of the situation of women writers in the twenty-first century Galician publishing industry. The edited volume is a comparative study of publishing and criticism in relation to Galician and Irish women writers in the poetry, fiction and drama genres. It contains the personal experiences and reflections of writers, publishers, critics and theatre professionals. Though the volume acknowledges the relative lack of women writers in Galicia, it also acknowledges the rise in the number of women writers in the Galician literary field since the 1980s and, as such, the objective of the book is to discuss 'the strategies deployed by various cultural agents in the face of the advance of women authors' (2010, 1). Nogueira et al.'s volume expresses the different opinions in relation to this subject. Mercedes Queixas Zas, for example, attributes the rise of women writers in Galicia to the changing social roles of women and women winning literary prizes (90-93). Francisco Castro states that no strategies were needed to promote or deal with women writers in Galicia as 'they are of value on their own' (99). Finally, Ramón Nicolás argues that it was the appearance of women writers in anthologies such as *Narradoras* (2000) that led to their visibility and success (133-134). A further strategy mentioned is that women writers in Galicia also create their own spaces, such as Chus Pato and Lupe Gómez, who self-published the poetry books *Urania* (1991) and *Pornografía* (1995) respectively (2010, 10). Furthermore, Nogueira et al. argue that the support that women writers received from feminist criticism and feminist journals, such as *Festa da Palabra Silenciada*, were key factors in the success of women writers. Thus, this edited volume demonstrates the similarities between strategies used by women writers in the central Spanish and Galician literary fields,

²⁶ The case of Almudena Grandes will be discussed in-depth in Chapter 4.

such as winning literary prizes, as well as strategies that are particular to the Galician literary field, such as support from feminist critics.

This edited volume asks some pertinent questions in terms of women writers, publishers, marketing and criticism. In her chapter ‘Galician Fiction: A Genre with a Gender?’ Mercedes Queixas Zas asks the following questions:

What sequence of acts brings us to the fiction of a woman writer? Do we learn of her via the publisher’s catalogue and in-house promotional campaigns or through media attention, or in the blush of success from a literary prize? Do the media give the reading public access to the creative work, and to the full personality and thinking of women writers? Or is the information they provide biased, curtailed or conditioned in terms of gender roles? Why do we still read interviews with women writers in which the interviewer’s biggest concern is what the writer’s children think of their mother’s success, penalizing the work itself by not considering its creative intelligence and how it is penned? (2010, 90).

Thus, Queixas Zas raises many issues that are relevant to this thesis, such as the way in which women writers achieve visibility and the role of the media in the promotion of women writers and their work. However, in her article, though Queixas Zas expands on the role of literary prizes in the success of women writers she does not address issues related to this topic. For instance, Queixas Zas makes reference to a plethora of women writers associated with Galician children’s literature, but she does not comment on the fact that despite the proliferation of women in this genre only one woman has won the national prize for children’s literature, Fina Casalderrey. . Similarly, in her book chapter ‘Women in Children’s Literature Today: A First Person Account’, Paz Castro, who handles communications and foreign rights at the publishing house Kalandraka, asks:

What factor finally determines that an initial project will eventually fall into the hands of readers? Who intervenes in the dialectical process of transformation? Where can we pinpoint the text’s ability to transcend time and space? How is this pre-book tested for maturity before it is launched into the marketplace? Why does one particular work appear in a publisher’s catalogue and not another? (2010, 101).

Thus, Castro also raises relevant issues and questions about how a work is chosen by publishers as well as how a book is marketed to the public. However, Castro too never really expands on these points and beyond stating that international book fairs are fertile ground for finding new talent and gauging public opinion on writers, she concludes that a writer's success depends on the way a writer's work fits with an editorial philosophy, the editor having a good relationship with its writers, and having 'a pinch of audacity' (2010, 106). Therefore, this edited volume asks all the right questions, but does not discuss them in detail or elaborate on the possible causes of a woman writer's success.

One reason for the lack of in-depth analysis regarding the multiple strategies used by various agents in the Galician literary field on the part of the writers, critics and publishers is the short length of certain contributions. Several chapters offer only brief reflections of two or three pages, which do not allow the author to elaborate fully on the questions they raise; while lengthier essays usually involve textual analysis, rather than an examination of the Galician publishing industry. Furthermore, although there are contributions from academic critics, there is no analysis of the self-reflections of critics and publishers, nor is there a discussion of the possible biases present in the contributions. Ramón Nicolás, for example, who argues that *Narradoras*, which was published by *Xerais*, was a key factor in the visibility of women writers, works for *Xerais* as the director of the *Biblioteca das Letras Galegas*.²⁷ An additional factor is that the chapters are largely self-reflections and, as such, can only offer a limited glimpse into the Galician publishing industry. Thus, while the book is useful in terms of providing an overview of the tensions in the Galician publishing industry and strategies publishers have used to promote women writers, such as producing anthologies of women's writing, it does not offer an in-depth discussion of all the issues relevant to this thesis, such as to what extent women writers have agency in the promotion of their work and whether this varies depending on genre. Similar to Henseler's monograph, Nogueira et al's edited volume does grant women writers a certain amount of agency by publishing their self-reflections, while at the same time situating them within the wider publishing industry. However, there is a limited amount of analysis of their reflections.

²⁷ This issue will be discussed further in Chapter 1.

In the Basque literary field Ana Urkiza's *Zortzi unibertso zortzi idazle* (2006) interviews eight Basque women writers: Aurelia Arkotxa (1953-), Yolanda Arrieta (1963-), Itxaro Borda (1959-), Mariasun Landa (1949-), Miren Agur Meabe (1962-), Laura Mintegi (1955-), Lourdes Oñederra (1958-), and Arantxa Urretabizkaia (1947-).²⁸ Each interview is framed by a page detailing the author's accomplishments as well as a short analysis of their literary persona by the editor, Ana Uriza, who is also a Basque writer. For instance, Urkiza defines Laura Mintegi by her honesty and commitment to politics (172-173), while Mariasun Landa is categorized by magical realism and ability to use words economically (68-69). The interviews contain four sections, where writers answer questions on their origins and inspirations for becoming a writer, as well as their reasons for writing in Basque; their work; their experience as a woman writer and the difference between the real and mediated author;²⁹ and their opinions on Basque literature and the Basque literary field. Within these chapters, the strategies that women writers have used to achieve success are discussed. Arantxa Urretabizkaia, for example, discusses the Durango book fair as a place to achieve visibility. Language choice and displaying a commitment to the national project is also a factor in the success of Basque women writers. In addition, writing in genres such as children's literature before migrating to other genres is another strategy used.³⁰ Finally, Yolanda Arrieta states that International Women's Day on the 8th of March is also a way for women writers to achieve visibility. Thus, Urkiza's book, while acting as a promotional strategy in itself, looks in-depth at the personal experiences of Basque women writers.

However, much like Nogueira et al.'s edited volume, beyond the introductions that Urkiza writes for the authors, there is no analysis of similar strategies or experiences of the writers. Mari Jose Olaziregi's edited volume *Writers In Between Languages: Minority Literatures in the Global Scene* (2009) combines the self-reflections of authors, both male and female, with scholarly articles. The majority of the essays, both self-reflections and critical, discuss the relationship between

²⁸ The reasons for and the issues involved in the publication of this book will be discussed in Chapter 2.

²⁹ This refers back to Dyer's argument mentioned in the introduction to this thesis relating to the fact that famous figures have a mediated identity, or a persona that is presented to the public through the media and other promotional materials, such as book websites and press releases; and a real identity or the real person that exists outside the literary or film world.

³⁰ This strategy will be discussed in-depth in the case of Mariasun Landa in Chapter 2.

language, nation and identity and, in particular, focus on why writers choose to publish their work in Basque. Of interest to this thesis are Rikardo Arregi Díaz de Heredia's chapter 'I do not know who "I" is', where he discusses the numerous identities that a writer assumes, such as linguistic identity, national identity, identity as a writer and personal identity (2009, 40). Also of interest is Alfredo J. Sosa-Velasco's chapter 'Memory, Past and Writing in the Global Scene: Bernardo Atxaga's *El hijo del acordeonista* and Carme Riera's *La mitad del alma*' implies that the numerous literary prizes Riera has won and the translation of her work into several languages have helped the writer achieve visibility and success (2009, 235). Mariasun Landa's personal reflections in her chapter 'Identity, Language, Creation (An Autobiographical Vision)' will also prove useful for this thesis, but this article will be discussed further in Chapter 2. However, many of the critical essays are based on textual analysis rather than an analysis of the inner workings of the Basque publishing industry. In addition, the focus of the edited volume is on language and identity, therefore omitting other issues such as the agency that writers have in the promotion of their own work. Thus, many of the approaches to granting agency to women writers in the Spanish nation-state is through reflections by the authors themselves.

These four texts raise questions for my own thesis. Given the previous focus on representations of the female body, female sexuality, and the role of literary prizes in helping women writers achieve success, the question remains of what other marketing strategies are used by women writers and how these strategies are conditioned by the different literary fields within the Spanish nation-state. For instance, the literary field in Galicia will have different sources and levels of funding than the literary field in central Spain and as such, what works for one writer in one region, does not necessarily work for another in a separate region. Though some strategies have been mentioned in the texts above, such as creating their own literary spaces, a more in-depth discussion is needed on how these strategies can help women writers achieve success. Furthermore, although the texts above grant agency to women writers through publishing their self-reflections of their experiences in the literary field, they also focus on other forces that impact on the careers of women writers rather than how women writers themselves have an impact on their own success. In addition, as the texts were written, with the exception of Nogueira et al.'s edited volume, about women writers in the nineteenth, twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, there

needs to be a discussion of how women writers have achieved success in recent years and, also how they have sustained long literary careers. A further question is how the choices women writers make in their literary careers affect the reception of their texts. The context of the twenty-first century has also provided many opportunities and brought about many changes for women writers in the Spanish nation-state. As such, this thesis will need to address this socio-political environment and incorporate into the analysis of how it affects the reception of women writers as well as the way in which they promote their texts. Finally, as the above studies have focused on just one of the autonomous communities, this thesis will undertake a comparative approach to examine similarities between the strategies that women writers in different autonomous communities use, as well as their differences.

Thus, this thesis will be a comparative study of the marketing of women writers in the central Spanish literary field as well as the literary fields in Galicia, Catalonia and the Basque Country and how the choices these writers make in terms of genre, politics and promotion affects their reception in the media and by critics. In terms of marketing, the strategies that women writers sometimes use in an attempt to guide the reading of their work, such as associating themselves with canonical writers, following literary trends, manipulating the media, manipulating popular tropes, causing controversy and the creation of a mediated identity will be discussed. In terms of a writer's mediated identity, the way in which these identities are constructed will be examined through the analysis of each author's personal websites, interviews with the press, press packets, and the prologues and epilogues in their texts. That said, the novels themselves will not be analysed and therefore, the analysis will be limited to the mediated identities of the authors and the paratextual elements women writers use to promote their work. This thesis will also look at the extent to which women writers are able to construct their own mediated identities and the extent to which it is constructed by the media and public perception of the author. In addition, it will also look at the role of feminism in the construction of mediated identities and the way in which women writers are received. Finally, this thesis will examine the situation of women writers in the context of the twenty-first century. This includes the current political climates in the autonomous communities where renewed calls for independence mean that writing in Catalan and Basque has become increasingly important and has implications for writers, such as Maria de la Pau Janer who want to

write in Castilian. It also includes the economic climate, in particular the global financial crisis which began in 2008 and which has meant a decline in book sales leading to the necessity for more aggressive promotional campaigns when a new book is released. In addition, it will look at the literary trend of historical fiction that has come out of the introduction of the *Ley de Memoria Histórica* in 2007 and how these trends have affected women writers in terms of choice of genre.

Methodology and Literature Review

Choosing a methodology and framework within which to discuss the situation of women writers in the twenty-first century Spanish nation-state is complex. Firstly, as I had chosen to study the situation of women writers in the different literary fields of Galicia, Catalonia, the Basque Country and central Spain, a framework was necessary that could explain the position of these individual literary fields as well as the inter-dependent relationships that exist between them. Secondly, as I had chosen to analyse the marketing strategies and campaigns of my chosen case studies as well as their subsequent reception, I needed a framework which would allow me to move away from the traditional notion of textual analysis and broaden the definition of what is meant by the term 'text'. In terms of explaining the socio-political contexts surrounding women writers and the factors that condition their reception, there are two theorists/theories used frequently by academics: Itmar Even-Zohar's Polysystem Theory and Pierre Bourdieu's theories of 'field' and 'capital'. Thus, this chapter will provide an overview of the above-mentioned theories, as well as an analysis of their relevance to this thesis. In terms of reading the marketing campaigns and reception of my case studies as texts, I turned to Cultural Studies as it allows for a broader definition of what constitutes a text. Within the realm of Cultural Studies, Richard Dyer's theories on the construction of what he calls, 'star images' and his subsequent methodology for analysing these images have proved useful as the method of analysing paratextual elements to assess how they affect a star's reception can be applied to my case studies. Gerard Genette's discussion of paratexts, which broadens the scope of literary analysis to include paratextual elements allows this thesis to discuss the promotional materials that surround women writers. In Christine Gledhill's application of the theory of negotiation has also been helpful in providing a framework for seeing the literary fields in the Spanish nation-state as sites of negotiation between writers, publishers, readers and critics. It is worth noting, however, that although the theory of negotiation is related to Gramsci's theory of hegemony, and I will provide a discussion on Gramsci's work below, as well as using his discussion on popular culture as it pertains to the case of Maria de la Pau Janer, the theory of hegemony will not be the main approach underpinning this thesis. . Thus, this chapter will begin with an overview of Even-Zohar and Bourdieu's theories, before moving onto a discussion

of Cultural Studies and the methodologies of Dyer, Gledhill and Genette. It will end with an outline of the four chapters in this thesis.

As mentioned above, one popular framework that academics in the Spanish nation-state use to try to understand the complex relationship between the autonomous communities, such as Galicia, Catalonia and the Basque Country is Itmar Even-Zohar's Polysystem Theory. Even-Zohar first introduced this theory in the 1970s and it has been used widely by academics, particularly those studying purportedly 'minority literatures', such as Galician and Basque. Even-Zohar's theory is a scientific approach to literature that aims to detect 'the laws governing the diversity and complexity of phenomena rather than the registration and classification of these phenomena' (1990, 9). Thus, Even-Zohar moves beyond textual analysis to an examination of the rules and norms that condition literary production. Even-Zohar defines a literary system as 'the network of relations that is hypothesized to obtain between a number of activities called "literary," and consequently these activities themselves observed via that network' (1990, 27). Even-Zohar uses the term 'polysystem' to describe societies that have two or more literary systems, thus, it can refer to the multiple literary fields that exist within the Spanish nation-state, or applied to the wider context of European literature, or even world literature. According to Even-Zohar, 'these systems are not equal, but hierarchized within the polysystem. It is the permanent struggle between the various strata [...], which constitutes the (dynamic) synchronic state of the system' (1990, 14). Here Even-Zohar highlights the power structure of a polysystem and accounts for its ever-changing, developing environment. In addition, Even-Zohar states that 'as a rule, the center of the whole polysystem is identical with the most prestigious canonized repertoire. Thus, it is the group which governs the polysystem that ultimately determines the canonicity of certain repertoire' (1990, 17).³¹ Thus, in terms of literature, a polysystem is a set of linked, individual literary systems that are constantly negotiating their positions in relation to each other.

³¹ In this context 'canonized' means 'those literary norms and works [...] which are accepted as legitimate by the dominant circles within a culture' (1990, 15) and 'repertoire' 'designates the aggregate of rules and materials which govern both the making and use of any given product' (1990, 39).

Even-Zohar schematizes his notion of the literary system by building on and developing Roman Jakobson's theory of communication.³² For Even-Zohar, the 'addresser' becomes the 'producer', or in the case of the literary system, 'writer', the 'context' becomes 'institution', the 'code' becomes 'repertoire', the 'contact/channel' becomes 'market', the 'message' becomes 'product' and the 'addressee' becomes 'consumer', or in the case of the literary system, 'reader' (1990, 30). The effect of the schema, is that it demonstrates the multiple components that exist in literary production and makes clear that although the 'product' or 'book' may be the most visible element of book production, it is not necessarily the most significant aspect of it. Thus, it allows not only textual analysis, but also an analysis of the author, as well as other cultural agents, such as publishers and literary institutions. This opening up of the literary system also allows for the inclusion of genres that are typically omitted from literary analysis. Even-Zohar states, for example, that with polysystem theory, '[...] literature for children would not be considered a phenomenon sui generis,³³ but related to literature for adults; translated literature would not be disconnected from original literature; mass literary production (thrillers, sentimental novels, etc.) would not simply be dismissed as "non-literature" in order to evade the recognition of its mutual dependence with "individual" literature' (1990, 13). Thus Even-Zohar's approach is linked to cultural studies approaches to literature, which expand the meaning of the text and the genres of literary production to be studied.

With regard to the Spanish nation-state, as mentioned above, Even-Zohar's theory has proved extremely popular in its autonomous communities, particularly in Galicia. In her monograph, *Galicia, A Sentimental Nation: Gender, Culture and Politics* (2013), Helena Miguélez-Carballeira underlines just how popular the theory became. She states, for example, that,

[i]n the academic sphere, analyses of Galician culture – which has always gone hand in hand with the concept of nation-building – went from following the

³² Roman Jakobson (1896-1982) was a Russian-American linguist and literary theorist. Throughout his career he was a leading academic in the arenas of literary theory, poetics and semiotics. One of his most well-known theories is his theory of communication, which states that for communication to be possible there must be an addresser, a message, an addressee, as well as a contact or channel through which the message can be sent, a code, and a context for the message (1987, 66). For an in-depth discussion of Jakobson's life, work and his approaches to literature, see *Language in Literature* (1987), edited by Krystyna Pomorska and Stephen Rudy. The chapter 'Linguistics and Politics' (pp. 62-94) contains Jakobson's theory of communication. Full reference in bibliography.

³³ Sui generis – meaning 'unique' or 'of its own kind'.

methodologies of traditional literary studies in a positivist and interpretive vein to embracing, in an almost wholesale way, the concepts and methods provided by Itmar Even-Zohar's polysystem theory (178).

Miguélez-Carballeira goes on to explain that Even-Zohar's theory was used in two different contexts: in literary historiography, such as in Dolores Vilavedra's *Historia da literatura galega* (1999) and González-Millán's *Literatura galega e sociedade, 1975-1990* (1994) and *A narrativa galega actual* (1996); and in the context of translation, in González-Millán's essay 'Cara a unha teoría da traducción para sistemas literarios "marxinais". A situación galega' (1994).³⁴ I would add that, more recently, Even-Zohar's theory has been used by the feminist Galician academic Helena González Fernández in a discussion on the position of women in the Galician literary system as well as using it to discuss Galician literature in general as being marked by notions of gender and the nation (2005, 46-81). Thus, polysystem was widely used by Galician academics in the late 1990s and early 2000s and by certain Catalan and Basque academics to try to explain the complex relationships between the multiple literary fields in the Spanish nation-state.

However, certain Galician academics, such as Joseba Gabilondo and Helena Miguélez-Carballeira, have challenged the use of Even-Zohar's polysystem theory. In his 2009 article 'Towards a Postnational History of Galician Literature: On Pardo Bazán's Transnational and Translational Position', Gabilondo criticises the Galician literary histories mentioned above, as well as literary histories from the central Spanish literary field which use polysystem theory, stating that the theory is used to frame and uphold linguistic exclusivity, that is, defining a literature by the language in which it is written. He states that, '[...] their main political and epistemological assumption is that a language creates a tradition that coincides with the geopolitical limits of a state or an autonomous region that might still become a state. The latest refashioning of this paradigm, by which each national language becomes a 'literary system' [...], only give sociological depth to a still fundamentally nationalist paradigm [...]' (2009, 251). Thus, Gabilondo does not use polysystem in his own work, but instead uses Bourdieu's

³⁴ Polysystem theory has also been used by Basque and Catalan academics in the context of translation. In the case of Basque translation see, 'Basque Writing in the Iberian Context: Brief Notes on the Translations of Basque Literature' (2009) by Mari Jose Olaziregi. In the case of Catalan translation see Obiol Izquierdo's essay, 'Una autocrítica' in Alex Broch et al., *70-80-90: Literatura Dues dècades des de la tercera i última* (València: Quaderns, 1992), pp. 91-112.

notions of field, habitus and rules of the literary field to explain the complex relationships that exist between literature, politics and the nation (2010, 40-41). He states, for example, that 'Bourdieu's notion of a field with these two hierarchical principles of organization can help explain the interaction between the political and artistic fields that is so characteristic of nation building in modernity' (2010, 41). Similarly, Miguélez-Carballeira favours Bourdieu over Even-Zohar and states that 'If [...] cultural policy, however defined, is a balancing exercise between "the desirable and the possible" then the Bourdieusian question of who stipulates what is desirable and limits what is possible, and to what effects, becomes paramount to any contemporary understanding of the Galician cultural field' (2013, 179). What follows then is a discussion of Bourdieu's theories of field and capital and their use in analysing literary fields in the Spanish nation-state.

The term 'field' is used by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu to denote 'a structured space with its own laws of functioning and its own relations of force independent of those of politics and the economy, except, obviously, in the cases of the economic and political fields' (Johnson: 1993, 6). Thus, according to Bourdieu, each 'field' has its own *modus operandi* that is autonomous from other cultural and social fields. Indeed, in terms of having its own set of rules, Bourdieu asserts that the literary field operates on an 'inverse economy' where often the fewer books a writer sells, the greater the prestige they receive (1996, 142). As such, economic success 'may well signal a barrier to specific consecration and symbolic power' (1993, 8). In addition, in *The Rules of Art*, Bourdieu also gives a specific definition for the literary field:

The literary (etc.) field is a force-field acting on all those who enter it in a differential manner according to the position they occupy there (whether, to take the points furthest removed from each other, that of a writer of hit plays or that of an avant-garde poet), and at the same time it is a field of competitive struggles which tend to conserve or transform this force-field' (1996, 232).

In other words, writers within the literary field receive different levels of recognition and prestige depending on decisions authors make about their literary careers, such as the genre in which they write.

However, in terms of the literary fields³⁵ within the Spanish nation-state, while, as shall be discussed later on in this thesis, they have their own ‘laws of functioning’; the autonomy of literature from political and economic forces is an on-going debate. Academics such as Buckley (1996), Gracia (2001), Moreiras (2002) and Vilarós (1998), for example, argue that there has been a separation of literature and politics in the Spanish nation-state; while Martín-Estudillo and Spadaccini (2010) and Méndez (2010) posit that literature and politics are intrinsically linked due to the dependency the literary fields in the Spanish nation-state have on political institutions to fund book production and the effect that previous political events, such as Franco’s dictatorship have had on the topics authors write about and the way in which they perceive and present their view of the world. Considering the immense popularity of Civil War narratives and narratives regarding the construction of memory with both writers and the reading public,³⁶ Martín-Estudillo, Spadaccini and Méndez have a strong case and as such, any concept of ‘field’ with relation to the Spanish nation-state, must acknowledge the possibility that politics has had a significant influence on its writers and literature. Thus, within this thesis, the term ‘field’ is used to denote ‘a structured space, with its own laws of functioning’, which continually negotiates its relationship with other fields. That is, the political and economic fields.

Success, defined in the *Collins English Dictionary* as ‘the attainment of wealth and fame’, in Bourdieusian terms is the acquisition of cultural, symbolic and economic capital; and/or symbolic power. Capital is a resource, which allows a person - in terms of this thesis, a writer - to negotiate or maintain their position within a social hierarchy, in this case, the literary field. Thus, cultural capital, according to Randal Johnson, ‘concerns forms of cultural knowledge, competences or dispositions’, which give people an advantage over their peers (1993, 7). While Bourdieu discusses cultural capital in terms of reception, in other words, from the point of view of the audience where cultural capital is the knowledge needed to decipher cultural artefacts, it can also be used in relation to authors.

³⁵ In this thesis, the plural ‘fields’ is used as within the Spanish nation-state there exist three autonomous communities – Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque Country - previously referred to as ‘historical communities’, which have their own language and literature; and therefore have their own ‘structured spaces’ separate to the that of the central Spanish literary field.

³⁶ This topic will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 1.

In the literary fields of the Spanish nation-state, as in other literary fields, there are specific competences or dispositions, in other words, individual characteristics, which give writers an advantage over their colleagues. In a *TedTalk*³⁷ on feminist Bertsolaris, for example, the female Basque Bertsolari and writer Uxue Alberdi describes the typical characteristics of a Basque Bertsolari: ‘hombre, gipuzkoano, de la izquierda abertzale, heterosexual, de clase media-alta e intelectual’ (www.youtube.com).³⁸ Although Alberdi is referring specifically to Basque Bertsolaris, these characteristics could be applied to writers throughout the Spanish nation-state. Many writers in central Spain, Galicia, Catalonia and the Basque Country, for instance - including the case studies in this thesis - are left-wing, from the middle to upper middle class and have a university degree or are academics.³⁹ However, as a large number of writers within the Spanish nation-state have these characteristics or cultural capital, they must be combined with other competences, such as knowledge of marketing, ability to engage with the media;⁴⁰ and other forms of capital, such as symbolic capital, in order to achieve prestige and recognition.

Prestige is ‘the esteem authors have in the literary field based on the value that is attributed to their literary work’ (Verboord: 2003, 263). The idea that there are certain characteristics that a writer must have in order to achieve prestige implies that there are characteristics that have a negative impact on an author’s reception. Such characteristics include the gender of the writer, the writer’s age and the writer’s physical appearance. In Henseler’s book on women writers and the Spanish literary market, the writer Paula Izquierdo laments that her work is often reduced to her physical appearance and this has affected the way she has been promoted in the past

³⁷ TED is a non-profit organisation, which was founded in 1984 and is dedicated to the dissemination of ideas. The spreading of ideas usually takes the form of, what the company’s website describes as, ‘short, powerful talks (18 minutes or less)’, also known as TED Talks. These talks are broadcast on the internet and cover a wide range of topics from science to global issues in over 100 languages. For more information, see the following website: <https://www.ted.com/>.

³⁸ Full reference in bibliography.

³⁹ Examples, aside from the case studies in this thesis include: the Basque writer Kirmen Uribe (Biscay, 1970), who was born into a fishing family, and obtained a degree in Basque Philology as well as a graduate degree in comparative literature; the Galician author Manuel Rivas (*A Coruña*, 1957), who has a degree in Ciencias de información and is one of the founders of Greenpeace in Spain; and Esther Tusquets (1936-2012), who was born to wealthy family in Barcelona, studied philosophy, literature and history at the Universitat de Barcelona and taught literature and history, in addition to being a writer and director of the publishing house Lumen.

⁴⁰ In the case of some authors, such as Lucía Etxebarria, manipulation of the media is also a profitable skill. In other words, such writers have the ability to feed the media specific images of themselves in order to achieve greater visibility.

and has also affected the way she now attempts to promote herself through writing a series of weekly, intellectual pieces on European writers for the literary supplement *El Cultural* (135-136). The effect an author's physical appearance has on the reception of their work will also be discussed in terms of the Catalan writer Maria de la Pau Janer in Chapter 4 of this thesis. Writers who were part of 'Generation X', such as Lucía Etxebarria, for example, were reviewed negatively as they were portrayed as young and inexperienced by the press.

Symbolic capital, according to Randal Johnson, 'refers to degree of accumulated prestige, celebrity, consecration or honour and is founded on a dialectic of knowledge (*connaissance*) and recognition (*reconnaissance*)' (1993, 7).⁴¹ Thus, in order to have symbolic capital, writers must be known and recognized by their peers and the public, but they do not necessarily have to sell a lot of books in order to achieve this. Symbolic capital, therefore, is a non-economic form of capital. Examples of symbolic capital include: homages paid to authors, inter-textual references to authors, academic studies of an author's literary work, and life-time achievement awards or other prizes, which do not come with a monetary reward. In terms of literature, the notion of symbolic capital is strongly linked to what is called 'high-brow' literature,⁴² in other words, literature not intended for mass consumption, but rather a smaller audience which has the cultural capital to decode it. This sits in direct opposition to commercial literature, which is seen as pandering to the tastes of the reading public. Thus, the acquisition of symbolic capital indicates that the author has a certain degree of autonomy within the literary field.

Economic capital is the monetary reward that writers accumulate from their work being received positively by the public and can be accrued by, for example, writing a best-selling book or winning a lucrative literary prize. As mentioned above, economic capital, while leading to commercial success, does not often lead to the acquisition of prestige. This is evidenced in both Chapters 1 and 4 of this thesis, where the association of Lucía Etxebarria and Maria de la Pau Janer with commercial literature, marketing gimmicks and an interest in the economic gains from having a literary career has a negative impact on their reception. However, this relationship

⁴¹ Emphasis in the original.

⁴² For a discussion on 'High-brow', 'low-brow' and 'middle-brow' culture, see for example J. Shelley Rubin's monograph *The Making of Middlebrow Culture* (1992). This subject is also addressed in more depth later on in this thesis.

between commercial success and cultural capital or prestige is not necessarily the same in all contexts. Antón Figueroa, in his analysis of Galician literature as a national literature, argues that the acquisition of economic capital can be viewed positively in autonomous communities such as Galicia, Catalonia and the Basque Country, if a writer displays a commitment to the relative national project. Figueroa states that, '[e]conomic gain or celebrity, which writers such as Suso de Toro and Manuel Rivas have achieved, is not perceived as a paradox with the militant's characteristic indifference towards material success; the umbrella of the nation, in Galicia, can be invoked to cover and conceal any contradiction between creating art and making money' (2011, 49). There is also evidence of this notion in Chapter 4 of this thesis, in the case of Almudena Grandes, who, through careful construction of a mediated authorial image and marketing campaign that played on national politics, was able to achieve both economic and symbolic capital as well as literary prestige. Thus, there are ways in which the acquisition of economic capital can impact positively on the author's overall reception.

This key notion of literary prestige has been analysed in detail by Marc Verboord, who in his 2003 article 'Classification of authors by literary prestige', attempts to empirically classify 205 authors from around the world and create a more objective international canon. Verboord explains, for example, that '[i]nstead of asking experts who have their own interests in the literary field [...] a more objective perspective was established by consulting literary encyclopaedias, lists of award winners, and electronic bibliographies' (279). Taking the view that the position an author has in the literary field 'is indicated by the relationship the author has with institutions in the literary field' (263) and that prestige is the value bestowed upon an author by these institutions, Verboord's criteria for classifying the chosen authors includes: the number of academic studies about an author's work, the number of literary prizes an author has won, the number of words afforded to writers in literary encyclopaedias and the reputation of an author's literary publishing house (263). Within literary prizes and encyclopaedias, Verboord also includes the number of popular literary prizes an author has won as well as the number of popular literary encyclopaedias they appear in as criteria. As Verboord's study was part of a study on Dutch reading habits, the authors selected were ones that were reasonably well-known to the public, such as Gabriel García Márquez and Toni Morrison. In addition, half of

the authors chosen were Dutch authors owing to the study being conducted with Dutch readers. Verboord also selected authors whose work was in the narrative genre. Verboord thus calculated the prestige of 205 authors during the period 1980-2000 and then ranked them accordingly. The top ten authors in Verboord's study were: Gabriel García Márquez, Günther Grass, Toni Morrison, Philip Roth, Salman Rushdie, Margaret Atwood, Hugo Claus, Mario Vargas Llosa, Isaac Singer and Albert Camus (277).

However, although Verboord intends the empirical canon to be more objective, he does not take into account the discriminatory practices or politics of literary prizes, nor does he take into account the fact that academics also have their own interests in the literary field and therefore their choices are also biased. Verboord includes literary prizes from the Spanish nation-state, for example, such as the *Premio Nacional*, the *Premio Planeta* and the Galician literary prize the *Premio Xerais*. However, he does not take the context or individual aims of these prizes into account. The aim of the *Premio Nacional*, for example, as shall be discussed later in this thesis, is to promote a unified, multi-lingual nation and, as such, awards prizes to novels written in Basque, Galician and Catalan, as well as Castilian. These politics and the possible implications they could have for Verboord's empirical calculations are not discussed. Furthermore, in choosing authors that are already well-known to the public, Verboord is choosing authors who have already been canonised. In the early sections of his article, Verboord states that 'the classification of authors in the literary field is a socially determined process' (262). In addition, he asserts that the personal characteristics of an author can influence readers' and critics' perception of them (263). In addition, Verboord even discusses Bourdieu's notions of 'position', 'disposition' and 'position-taking' and how they are inter-dependent in terms of how a writer is received.⁴³ However, in the construction of his purported more objective canon, he does not take into account the socio-political environment or marketing strategies that can condition what awards an author receives, whether they are studied by academics and whether they are selected for encyclopaedias.

⁴³ 'Position' is the position writers occupy in the literary field. 'Disposition' refers to the individual characteristics of an author, such as age and gender. 'Position-taking' are the choices writers make about their careers, such as which language/genre to write in and which politics to follow.

The various approaches to literature and literary texts discussed thus far are intricately linked to a broader field of study, known as Cultural Studies. Cultural Studies was a term first used by Richard Hoggart in 1964 when he founded the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCB). It is not a unified theory, but a diverse field of study that encompasses many different approaches and theories; from feminist theory to film studies. Many academics who utilize cultural studies as a theoretical base use Marxist methods of analysis; exploring relationships between cultural forms and the political economy (Hollows: 2005). Cultural studies is a useful tool for analysis as, in terms of literature, it does not focus solely on one agent of literary production, but examines both textual and extra-textual elements of the literary production process. As Joanne Hollows states in her article ‘Feminismo, estudios culturales y cultura popular’ (2005), ‘Los estudios culturales analizan las complejas relaciones entre instituciones, industrias, textos y prácticas culturales, y por lo tanto, aunque las cuestiones de representación son centrales, no son su única preocupación’ (16). In relation to feminist cultural studies, Hollows adds that ‘[...] los estudios culturales feministas no han establecido simplemente una ecuación entre la significatividad de la cultura popular con cuestiones de representación y análisis textual. Los estudios culturales feministas también aportaron ideas – y recibieron a su vez aportaciones – en los debates generales sobre cómo analizar y teorizar la cultura [...]’ (2005, 16). Thus, cultural studies allows for a broader form of literary analysis that moves feminist literary criticism and theory forward, searching for new answers to still unanswered questions and expanding the definition of the term ‘text’. It also links culture to the economy and this will be a key idea in the later discussion of the use of the author as a marketing strategy.

In expanding the definition of the ‘text’ and therefore expanding the materials that could be analysed, an interest developed in what are now called ‘paratexts’. Paratexts is a term that was first coined by Gérard Genette, firstly in his book *Palimpsestes* (1981) and later developed in his work *Paratexts* (1987). According to Genette, paratexts are verbal or other productions, such as an author’s name, a book’s title or a preface, which surround the text and are used to present the text to the reading public (1997, 1). In *Paratexts*, Genette states that, ‘[m]ore than a boundary or a sealed border, the paratext is, rather, a threshold, or [...] a “vestibule” that offers the world at large the possibility of either stepping inside or turning back’ (1997, 1-2). Thus,

according to Genette, paratexts are the initial door to any given text and can affect the reception of an author's work. Indeed, in *Le pacte autobiographique* (1975), Philippe Lejeune asserts that paratexts are 'a fringe of the printed text which in reality controls one's whole reading of the text' (45). Genette states that a paratext is made up of two components: peritext and epitext. The peritext is anything that is printed and published with the original text, but does not make up part of the central narrative. This includes the book cover, the title, prefaces and epilogues, chapter titles, notes, author's note and illustration. The epitext is anything that appears after the initial production of the book, but potentially before the intended audience reads the book. This includes elements such as, interviews with the author and other promotional materials. Genette makes clear, however, that '[...] something is not a paratext unless the author or one of his associates accepts responsibility for it, although the degree of responsibility may vary' (1997, 9). With this definition, Genette excludes elements such as book reviews from the definition of 'paratext' as the author and their agents do not have, or have a very limited degree of control over them. Thus, in terms of marketing this thesis will include an analysis of the paratextual elements women writers in the twenty-first century use to promote their texts and in terms of reception, this thesis will use book reviews and profiles of authors to determine the efficacy of these paratextual elements in relation to an author's reception. The main paratextual elements focused on will include, the title of the book, images of the author on the cover, placement of the author's name on the front cover, prefaces, prologues and epilogues, author's notes and promotional materials such as authors' websites, press releases and interviews.

One popular paratext that has been studied in relation to how readers perceive a text is the book cover. Prominent studies have been published on this particular paratextual element, such as, the edited volume *Judging a Book by its Cover: Fans, Publishing, Designers and the Marketing of Fiction* (2007). In this edited volume the approaches to the book cover are discussed, along with elements that appear on the front cover of a book that make a book more popular, such as stating whether the book has won a prize. In addition, it discusses how intertextuality, such as turning a book into a film affects the reception, while the final section of the book looks specifically at how a book cover affects the reception of a book. Of particular interest is the final essay in the volume, Pamela Pears' 'Images, Messages and the Paratext in Algerian Women's Writing', which explores how the use of certain images on the front covers

of texts by Algerian women writers affected the reception of their texts. In a Spanish context, Henseler's book on women and the publishing industry, mentioned above, analyses the representation of the female body in the book covers of books by women writers, such as Christina Perri Rossi, Almudena Grandes and Lucía Etxebarria. While these texts are useful in terms of approaches to book covers they only focus on one paratextual element. In addition, the focus is on the relationship between paratextual elements and the text, rather than the links between paratextual elements and an author's mediated identity.

One of the key concepts of cultural studies, particularly feminist cultural studies, is that of culture as negotiation. In her chapter 'Pleasurable Negotiations' (2006), Christine Gledhill states that 'arguments which support the notion of a specific, sociohistorically constructed female cultural space come from diverse contexts and traditions and do not yet form a coherent theory. A range of concepts have been drawn on, including subcultural reading, cultural competence, decoding position, and so on. A notion frequently deployed in various contexts is that of "negotiation"' (113). 'Negotiation' is a model of meaning production and one that 'conceives cultural exchange as the intersection of processes of production and reception, in which over-lapping but non-matching determinations operate. Meaning is neither imposed, nor passively imbued, but arises out of a struggle or negotiation between competing frames of reference, motivation and experience. This can be analysed at three different levels: institutions, texts and audiences – although distinctions between levels are ones of emphasis rather than of rigid separation' (Gledhill: 2006, 113-14). If we apply this theory of negotiation to literature then, we begin to see literature in relation to the economy. The term 'negotiation', for instance, denotes an economic idea of literature; that is, the idea of literature as a business rather than as a romantic ideology. In terms of literary criticism, we see that the meaning of a text does not come solely from the author, the reader, nor from the text itself, but rather from a complex process of negotiation that involves all three agents as well as additional agents such as publishers, editors and translators. Furthermore, rather than give each agent a specific role, the theory of negotiation blurs the lines between institution, text and audience, allowing the author, for example, to be read as a text and to offer a reading of their text as an audience member.

In addition to broadening the scope of the analysis of institutions, texts and audiences, the theory of negotiation also allows a more in-depth analysis of the literary criticism that surrounds the literary sphere and, using Antonio Gramsci's concept of 'cultural hegemony', it offers a view of literature that is fluid rather than static.⁴⁴ Gledhill, for example, states that 'a theory of "negotiation" as a tool for analysing meaning production would draw on a number of tenets of neo-marxism, semiotics, and psychoanalysis, while at the same time challenging the textual determinism and formalism of these approaches in the ideological analyses of the 1970s. In place of "dominant ideology" – with its suggestion either of conspiratorial imposition or of unconscious interpellation – the concept of "hegemony", as developed by Antonio Gramsci, underpins the model of negotiation' (2006, 114). Cultural hegemony understands culture as a key instrument of political and social control. Gledhill states that hegemony 'describes the ever shifting, ever negotiating play of ideological, social and political forces through which power is maintained and contested. The culture industries of bourgeois democracy can be conceptualized in a similar way: ideologies are not simply imposed – although this possibility remains an institutional option through mechanisms such as censorship – but are subject to continuous (re-)negotiation' (2006, 114). This '(re-)negotiation' can be seen in the long careers of the case studies chosen for this thesis, not least in the career of the central Spanish writer Almudena Grandes.

Hegemony is defined as the 'ascendency or domination of one power or state within a league, confederation, etc.' (CED: 2007). The most common use of hegemony in terms of academic analysis is Gramsci's theory of hegemony. Gramsci uses the theory of hegemony as a tool of Marxist political analysis. Terry Eagleton, in his monograph *Ideology: An Introduction* (1998) states that 'Gramsci normally uses the word hegemony to mean the ways in which a governing power wins consent to its rule from those it subjugates – though it is true that he occasionally uses the term to cover both consent and coercion together' (112). Eagleton goes on to define the term 'hegemony'. He states that '[v]ery roughly then, we might define hegemony as a whole range of practical strategies by which a dominant power elicits consent to its rule from

⁴⁴ Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) was an Italian Marxist theoretician and politician. He was a founding member of the Communist party in Italy and was imprisoned under Mussolini's fascist regime. He is best known for developing the concept of 'cultural hegemony' which will be discussed above in more detail.

its' subjugates. To win hegemony, in Gramsci's view, is to establish moral, political and intellectual leadership in social life by diffusing one's own 'world view' throughout the fabric of society as a whole, thus equating one's own interests with the interests of society at large' (115-11). Eagleton also states that the term hegemony is linked to the following questions: 'how do we combat a power which has become the "common sense" of a whole social order, rather than one which is widely perceived as alien and oppressive?' and 'how is the working class to take power in a social formation where the dominant power is subtly, pervasively diffused throughout habitual daily practices, intimately interwoven with 'culture' itself, inscribed in the very texture of our experience from nursery school to funeral parlour?' (114). Thus, Eagleton questions how to overcome an oppressive power that is completely ingrained into the daily practices of a culture and widely accepted as the norm by citizens. Similar questions will be asked in this thesis, such as what strategies can women writers in the literary fields of the Spanish nation-state use to achieve success and overcome patriarchal and/or sexist perceptions of women writers as inferior to their male counterparts?

As regards this notion of hegemony and the literary sphere more specifically, Robert Clark in *The Literary Encyclopedia* states that the main agents in the process of hegemony 'are the intellectuals, pundits and presenters who staff the educational apparatus, the cultural institutions, and the entertainment and news media. These agencies co-opt or marginalize new tendencies, ensuring an adaptive continuity to the ideas of the ruling class and disseminating a view of society that weds the majority to its scheme of values' (no pagination). These ideas put forward by Robert Clark are particularly pertinent to my analysis in terms of what they say about the various agents within the field, and also how new tendencies may be co-opted in order to promote and ensure adherence to a specific set of values. Thus, in terms of women writers in the twenty-first century Spanish nation-state, this thesis will examine the extent to which women writers achieve success and gain prestige through reinforcing hegemonic ideas and, conversely, how women writers can achieve a certain level of success through engaging in counter-hegemonic activities, such as exposing the inner workings of the literary field or creating a parallel literary field that follows a specific feminist politics and has its own hegemonic discourse.

In line with recent developments in Spanish women's studies, this thesis will focus on the agency of women writers rather than their subordination or submission to patriarchal modes of operation. As Xon de Ros and Geraldine Hazbun state, for example, '[...] the general outlook was moving from a focus on women's oppression and subordination, highlighting how their achievements had been excluded and ignored by historiography, to an emphasis on women's agency, their resistance tactics and their strategies to counter discrimination, as well as a re-evaluation of their experiences' (3). The way academics have placed emphasis on the agency of women writers and re-evaluated their experiences is through giving voice to women writers and asking the authors to reflect on their personal experiences in the literary fields of the Spanish nation-state and career decisions they have made, such as which genre to write in, have been influenced by external forces, such as the popularity of a certain genre, or the experiences of other women writers. One such example, is the final chapter in Christine Henseler's book *Contemporary Spanish Women Writer's and the Publishing Industry* (2003). It is entitled 'Autobiographical Sketches: Female Authors Speak Out' and contains brief reflections on the central Spanish literary field from eight women writers including Rosa Montero (Madrid, 1951), Marta Sanz (Madrid, 1967) and Espido Freire (Bilbao, 1974).

In terms of Galician literature, the edited volume *Creation, Publishing, and Criticism: The Advance of Women's Writing* (2010) discusses strategies employed by cultural agents, such as writers, publishers, critics and theatre professionals, in relation to the rise of women writers in Galicia and Ireland. The essays in the book are personal reflections by the cultural agents mentioned above. In the Basque Country, the book *Zortzi unibertso zortzi idazle* (Eight Universes, Eight Writers: 2006) aims to give agency to women writers operating in the Basque literary field and features in-depth interviews with eight women writers, discussing how they became writers, their experiences within the literary field and any problems they have encountered. Finally, the edited volume *Writers Between Languages: Minority Languages in the Global Scene* (2009) has five chapters dedicated to the self-reflections of Basque authors, why they write in Basque and their relationship with the literary field; three of whom are women writers. The ten subsequent chapters are academic studies on language and identity in Basque and Catalan literature. That said, emphasizing the agency of women writers is important, there are limitations to the above-mentioned approaches. Firstly,

the self-reflections of authors are subjective and, as shall be discussed in later chapters in this thesis, writers are not always aware of their own influence or the constructs that surround them and may also deliberately deceive them in their interviews. Secondly, although the aforementioned books contain valuable insights into the inner workings of the Spanish, Galician and Basque literary fields, the author's reflections are not followed by objective analysis or discussion of similar themes or influences related to the experiences of women writers, nor do they assess the efficacy of strategies women writers use to counter discrimination or achieve success in the literary fields of the Spanish nation-state. One exception is Henseler's analysis of the way in which Lucía Etxebarria uses the female body to promote her work and challenge the patriarchal discourse that exists in the central Spanish literary field. Thus, this thesis aims to objectively analyse the strategies that women writers use to gain recognition as well as the efficacy of these strategies in terms of reception and how an author's work is received.

An understanding of the ways in which these women writers negotiate their position, and the strategies they employ, needs to take on board also theorizations coming from star studies, which provide us with important insights into stars and/or celebrities are marketed and promote their work. In *Stars* (1979), Dyer convincingly posits that stars are constructed images that are different from the actor's real personality and, as such, are only expressed through the films they appear in and the publicity that surrounds their work. According to Dyer, these images are constructed across a range of media texts, which Dyer groups together under the following categories: promotion, publicity, films and criticism and commentaries. Promotion refers to the 'texts produced as part of the deliberate creation/manufacture of a particular image or image-context for a particular star'. These types of texts include press hand-outs and public appearances. Publicity, is anything that 'is not, or does not appear to be, deliberate image-making' and includes information that the press 'finds out', information that a star 'lets slip' and radio and television interviews. In terms of films, Dyer states that this refers to films that are used as vehicles for stars and built around their particular star image. Criticism and commentaries refers to the film reviews and profiles of stars that appear after the initial promotion and film-making of a star. It is worth noting, however, that Dyer understands criticism and commentaries as part of both the construction and reception of the star's image. He states, for

example, that ‘Criticism and commentaries are oddly situated in the star’s image. They are media products, part of the cinematic machine, yet it is commonly held that they are to be placed on the side of the audience – the consumers of media texts – rather than that of the industry – the producers of media texts’ (1998, 62). As the star images are constructed across a range of media, Dyer refers to them as ‘mediated identities’. These constructed images or mediated identities can be read as texts and analysed for any meanings they convey.

This methodology can be adapted and applied to women writers of the twenty-first century Spanish nation-state. Authors are expected to participate much more readily in the promotion of their work and, as such, create mediated identities through which they communicate with the reading public. While the ‘films’ section of Dyer’s methodology partly relevant to this thesis as authors do insert themselves within the narrative of their books, as is the case with Almudena Grandes in Chapter 4, or become associated with certain characters, this is something that only happens in a minority of cases and as such, will only be discussed very briefly within this thesis. There are differences, however, between the Hollywood stars described in Dyer’s work and famous writers. Hollywood stars, for example, as Dyer himself states, are models of consumption and promote the capitalist society in which we live (1998, 10); writers, meanwhile, as mentioned above, operate on an inverse economy where the economic interests of its cultural agents are disguised behind the notion that profit is not a writer’s main objective. There are certain writers, including two of the case studies in this thesis, whose mediated identity and marketing campaigns attempt to expose the inner workings of the literary field in which they operate, including the interest that authors have in achieving economic success and thus this subject will be discussed in those relevant chapters. Thus, while writers cannot be considered in exactly the same way as cinema stars, Dyer’s analysis of how paratextual elements create or reinforce mediated identities is relevant to this thesis.

In a Spanish context, the academic Chris Perriam, in his monograph *Stars and Masculinities in Spanish Cinema: From Banderas to Bardem* (2003) also reads film stars as texts to examine the way in which they embody certain ideologies and, in the context of the Spanish nation-state, how they may sometimes be read as embodying the nation (6). The framework Perriam uses is to have six leading men as case studies and analyses the construction of their star personae in print media and on the web (1).

The framework regarding the relationship of stars to the nation will be useful when discussing the expectation for authors to represent or participate in an autonomous communities' national project. In addition, the methodology of focusing on a small pool of actors can be applied to my thesis on women writers in the Spanish nation-state. Perriam discusses Dyer's approach, but also discusses McDonalds' approach to the analysis of stars and their mediated identities a number of years later. McDonald understands Hollywood's production of stars as part of a wider Star System that he describes as an 'organised interrelationship of elements or features' (2000, 1). He therefore looks at the way in which the images of stars are constructed as well as analysing the promotional materials such as magazine articles, interviews and (auto)biographies which help to reinforce these images. However, while I intend to use the methodologies mentioned above, I also want to expand the analysis to how the constructed identities of writers can affect the reception of their texts.

In her article 'Auteurism and Commerce in Contemporary Spanish Cinema' (2008), Núria Triana-Toribio takes a different approach and discusses 'directores mediáticos' or media-friendly directors who, she states, 'first and foremost understand the need to treat marketing as an integral part of production' (260). She adds that there is an 'increasing importance of the auteur as a *commercial* strategy for organizing audience reception, as a critical concept bound to distribution and marketing aims [...]' (261).⁴⁵ Finally, she asserts that 'today, even these modernist corrections, discussions or deconstructions of the romantic roots of auteurism need/ to be taken another step forward toward reconceptualising them within industrial and commercial trajectories'. Thus Triana-Toribio discusses how certain Spanish film directors recognise the importance of marketing in achieving success and use the media to their advantage. In terms of media-friendly directors, she states that they are media-friendly because 'they offer and use a recognizable public persona (image), which is an integral part of the release campaign of each film. But they are *mediáticos* too through their use of technologies such as the internet and in their particular ownership of official homepages' (2008, 262). This is directly applicable to the marketing and reception of women writers in the twenty-first century Spanish nation-state. In recent years, writers – both male and female – have been called upon to play a bigger, more visual role in the promotion of their work and, as is the case with auteurs, the constructed images

⁴⁵ Emphasis in original.

and mediated identities authors and other cultural agents create are increasingly being used as part of marketing strategies. Triana-Toribio's arguments will be particularly useful when discussing the cases of Almudena Grandes and Lucía Etxebarria in the final chapter of this thesis as they too use the media to successfully market their work.

In *Star Authors: Literary Celebrity in America* (2000), Joe Moran defines authors as 'the intertextual creations of promotion and publicity' (66). Moran also applies Dyer's theories to American authors and examines how mediated identities have replaced the 'real' personalities of famous writers. He then looks at how this has blurred the lines between high-brow and commercial literature. In addition, Moran discusses poststructuralist arguments which suggest that authors are trapped by the promotional aspects of literary production and Bourdieu's contrasting 'field' theory, which suggests that a writer's identity is a negotiation between the norms that condition the construction of their identity and their own agency. Moran says of Bourdieu that '[w]hile arguing that they are always constrained by specific conditions within the field of cultural production – and are thus unavoidably situated within the struggle for cultural and/or economic capital – he also maintains that authors can alter the nature of the field by their actions, statements and works' (67-68). Thus for Moran, and Bourdieu, although the conditions of the field of cultural production are constrictive, authors can achieve a certain amount of agency and, Moran suggests, alter the field as a result.

Moran also argues that literary celebrity reaffirms notions of the author being 'the only authoritative source of textual meaning' (59). He states that '[...] this is precisely how literary celebrity functions, reformulating authorship within the literary marketplace and using it as the repository of all kinds of conflicting cultural meanings and values' (60). Thus, according to Moran, the constructed identity of the author can alter or give meaning to the author's work. In addition, Moran argues convincingly that the author as literary celebrity is a construction and negotiation between the author, the reader and cultural intermediaries, such as the press and publishers⁴⁶ and it is this constructed identity that becomes the repository of meaning rather than the real person.

⁴⁶ For an in-depth discussion on cultural intermediaries see 'The Work of Cultural Intermediaries and the Enduring Distance between Production and Consumption' (2002), by Keith Negus. Full reference in bibliography.

In his book chapter ‘The Reign of Hype: The Contemporary Star System’ (2006), Joe Morgan also analyses star or celebrity authors. In particular, he looks at the implications that change in the publishing industry, such as more visual promotional strategies, has for writers and the negotiation between commercial and ‘high-brow’ literature. With regard to promotional strategies, he states that:

The increasing importance of book publicity in promoting authors’ “personalities” is therefore a symptom of the continuing integration of literary production into the entertainment industry, making authors and books part of the cultural pervasiveness of celebrity as a market mechanism of monopoly capitalism – the celebrity in this case being anyone whose name and fame have been built up to the point where reference to them, via mention, mediatized representation or live appearance, can serve as a promotional booster in itself. In this context, stardom becomes wholly self-fulfilling; the visibility of the author’s celebrity name is used to bankroll products, making it harder for unknown or first-time authors and their work to gain recognition’ (328).

While Morgan is making reference to the American literary field here, this could also be applied to the literary fields in the Spanish nation-state. Here too, the promotion of literary production has become more visual with the use of book trailers and more interviews with authors on television and radio. In particular, it could be applied to the case of Lucía Etxebarria in the central Spanish literary field, whose mediated identity, as shall be discussed in Chapter 4, goes beyond her text and serves to promote her work, without any reference to it. Morgan makes interesting points regarding unknown or first-time authors and, for this reason, this thesis will include both authors who have had long literary careers as well as those who have had shorter literary careers, or switched roles within the cultural fields.

For the purposes of this thesis I have chosen eight case studies: two women writers from the central Spanish literary field and two women writers from each of the autonomous communities previously referred to as ‘historical communities’ (Galicia, Catalonia and the Basque Country). It is necessary to include two writers from the central Spanish literary field in order to provide a complete picture of the situation of women writers in the Spanish nation-state, as well as to demonstrate the tensions that exist between what have been termed ‘stateless nations’ and central Spain. The eight women writers chosen are as follows: Almudena Grandes and Lucía Etxebarria

(Central Spain), María Xosé Queizán and María Reimóndez (Galicia), Mariasun Landa and Laura Mintegi (Basque Country), and Carme Riera and Maria de la Pau Janer (Catalonia). These women writers have been chosen as they have had relatively long literary careers, are politically active, whether this be feminist politics or actual participation in political events and parliaments, and they all use specific marketing strategies to promote their work. I have chosen writers who are politically active in order to examine the influence that politics has on literature in the Spanish nation-state, as well as the effect it has on the reception of the authors. In the specific case of Maria de la Pau Janer, this thesis will examine how changes in a writer's political outlook can impact negatively on their reception.

Following the methodology laid out by Dyer, this thesis will analyse texts such as, author websites, interviews in the press and press hand-outs to examine how the mediated identity of each author is constructed, both by the author themselves and by the media. This thesis will also analyse the paratextual elements of the chosen authors' novels to determine how an author attempts to direct the readers' interpretation of their text. However, this thesis aims to avoid a literary analysis of the novels proper. Finally, this thesis will discuss how and if the case studies' constructed and mediated identities affect the way in which their work is received. This thesis argues that it is possible for women writers to achieve both economic success and literary prestige through the careful management and marketing of their work and mediated identity. It also argues that although gender and age are a factor in the reception of women writers, it is changes to language use and political agenda and ideology that ultimately affect the reception of a writer. This thesis aims to analyse concrete strategies women writers can use to obtain visibility and recognition within the complex and ever-changing literary fields in the Spanish nation-state and also aims to show how women writers are able to manipulate the media to their own advantage and, to a certain extent, steer the reception of their work into a particular direction. This thesis will begin with an analysis of the literary careers of the Galician women writers María Xosé Queizán and María Reimóndez.

Chapter 1: Constructing a Feminist Room of their Own: The Marketing and Reception of María Xosé Queizán and María Reimóndez

María Xosé Queizán (Vigo, 1939) and María Reimóndez (Lugo, 1975) are two self-identified feminist writers from Galicia. Queizán has had a prolific fifty-year career in Galician literature, beginning in 1965 with her novel *A orella no buraco* (An Ear in the Hole), and, as shall be discussed later in this chapter, is a pioneer in the field, paving the way for future generations of Galician women writers, such as Reimóndez. Reimóndez, who began her career in 2002 with her poetry anthology *Moda Galega* has quickly risen through the ranks of Galician literature, winning numerous literary awards including the prestigious *Premio Xerais de Novela*⁴⁷ in 2014 with her novel about female journalists in war zones, *Dende o conflito*.⁴⁸ However, though these two writers share a common ideology, and a publishing house,⁴⁹ the reception of their work could not be more different. While Reimóndez has enjoyed much attention from the press, particularly since her *Premio Xerais* win, Queizán's work has largely been met with silence. Helena Miguélez-Carballeira states for example that, 'o sistema recibira daquela cunha acollida inhóspita ou cun silencio enxordecedor' (2007, 75).⁵⁰ Though the twenty-first century has seen an increased awareness of Queizán through reviews of her latest novels on literary blogs and the publication of two books containing in-depth analyses of her work;⁵¹ this reception

⁴⁷ The *Premio Xerais de Novela* is awarded by the major Galician publishing house *Xerais Editorial*. The prize was created in 1984 and is currently worth 10.000 euros.

⁴⁸ Reimóndez has won numerous awards for literature, translation and journalism including: the *Premio de novela Mulleres Progresistas de Vigo* with *O Caderno de Bitácora* (2004), *Premio de narrativa Arcebispo Xoán de San Clemente* with *O Club da Calceta* (2007), *Premio Plácido Castro de tradución* for her translation of *A historia de Mary Prince, unha escrava das Illas Occidentais* (2009), *Premio Frei Martín Sarmiento* 2010 with *Lía e as zapatillas de deporte*, *Premio de Xornalismo Dora Vázquez* for her article «Desobediencia», *XIV Premio de Novela por Entregas de La Voz* for *A dúbida* (2014) and the *Premio Xosé María Álvarez Blázquez á mellor autora do ano 2014* (<http://www.mariareimondez-escritora.com/premios-2/>).

⁴⁹ Both writers are published by *Xerais*.

⁵⁰ 'The system received her with inhospitable acclaim or with a deafening silence'. Unless otherwise stated, all translations are my own.

⁵¹ The two books are: *Cara a unha poética feminista: Homenaxe a María Xosé Queizán* (2011), which consists of critical studies of her work, interviews with the author and homages; and *Feminismo e innovación en la narrativa gallega de autoría femenina – Xohana Torres, María Xosé Queizán, Carmen*

tends to be localized in her home town of Vigo and traceable to her publishing house, *Xerais*.⁵² Indeed, Queizán is rejected by Galician cultural institutions, such as the *Real Academia Galega* (RAG), as is evidenced by the silence surrounding a campaign to obtain Queizán a seat at the academy in 2011. That being said, Reimóndez has also encountered negative reactions to her work outside the supportive environment of *Xerais*, demonstrated by the rejection of her feminist translation of the Whitbread award-winning book, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (2004) in 2011 and the anti-feminist coverage of the incident by the international press. Thus, this chapter will examine how Queizán and Reimóndez negotiate this complex space and have created and work within a “feminist room of their own”. In addition, it will look at the reception of the authors within and outside this feminist literary community, analysing the controversial events mentioned above. This chapter will begin with an overview of the place of women writers within the Galician literary field and how they have achieved visibility in the twenty-first century.

The situation of women writers in the Galician literary field is extremely complex. Galician women writers have a role model in the form of Rosalía de Castro (1837-1885),⁵³ who is considered the central figure of Galician literature and a symbol of the Galician nation. Castro’s most famous works are her works of poetry *Cantares Gallegos* (1863) and *Follas Novas* (1880), which have had an enormous impact on the Galician literary landscape and have inspired many Galician women writers to follow in her footsteps, beginning their literary careers in poetry.⁵⁴ In addition, poets such as Marica Campo and Xohana Torres, demonstrated the inspiration Castro has been for them through inter-textual references in their work. In her poem ‘Lendo a Rosalía’, for example, Campo states ‘[...] eu teño sobre a mesa/a vida que nos deches: *Follas Novas*, *Cantares* [...]’ (2002, no pagination),⁵⁵ thus portraying Castro as her foremother who has left a poetic legacy for Campo to follow. In terms of Torres, at the end of her emotive poem ‘Ti es para min esa barca...’⁵⁶ exclaims ‘¡Ti es para min

Blanco y Teresa Moure (2013), which analyses Queizán’s work as part of one of two generations of Galician feminist writers who have contributed to the changing face of Galician literature.

⁵² It is worth noting that the *Xerais* publishing house is also based in Vigo.

⁵³ See for example, Kathleen N. March’s essay ‘Rosalía de Castro como punto de referencia ideolóxico-literario nas escritoras galegas’ (1986). Full reference in bibliography.

⁵⁴ As in the case of María Reimóndez, for example.

⁵⁵ ‘I have on the table/the life you left us: *Follas Novas*, *Cantares* [...]’ and ‘you are to me, the earth from a grave, completely free of footprints!’

⁵⁶ ‘To me, you are that boat...’

a terra dunha tumba/ cumpridamente limpia de pisadas!’⁵⁷ (quoted in Bermúdez: 2000, 168). Silvia Bermúdez, in her article ‘Sen a ansiedade de influencia?: Rosalía de Castro, Harold Bloom e as poetas galegas do século XX’ (Without the Anxiety of Influence?: Rosalía de Castro, Harold Bloom and Twentieth-Century Galician Women Poets: 2000), suggests that in Torres’ final exclamation the poet is referring to Castro’s fantasmal presence beyond the grave (139). However, this line could also refer to the patriarchal reading of Castro, which saw her as angelic and untouchable, as well as the new ground still to tread in terms of feminist readings of her work. Bermúdez also refers to two other female Galician poets in her article, Pura Vázquez and Luz Pozo Garza, both of whom have written poems engaging with Castro’s legacy (*Teu nome Rosalía*, 1971 and *Falando a Rosalía*, 1985 respectively). The fact that Campo, Torres, Vázquez and Pozo Garza all use Castro’s given name to refer to her suggests a familiarity that the poets feel exists between them and the canonical author and one that is indicative of the wider practice in the Galician literary field to refer to Castro, even in academic articles, as ‘Rosalía’; although it is worth noting that the academics who refer to Castro in this way are usually Galician.⁵⁸ Thus, Castro and her work have had a profound influence on Galician literary production and women’s writing in particular. She is a canonical author, but one with whom women writers can relate and dialogue; a strong foremother and a springboard for future generations of women writers.

However, the high status afforded Castro within the Galician literary field has not necessarily translated to success for other women writers and continuing her poetic legacy can arguably lead to invisibility. In an analysis of the poetry genre in Galicia, for example, the writer and journalist Fran Alonso states that ‘women, poetry and publishing in Galician [are] three syntagms, three unmistakable references to minoritization’ (2010, 35). What Alonso alludes to here is that women writers are often omitted from literary spaces and struggle to get published. In addition, literature in the Galician language struggles against other languages such as Spanish and English for recognition within Galicia and in the wider literary market. Finally, poetry, as is the case in other autonomous communities, is far less likely to be published than other

⁵⁷ ‘To me, you are the earth around a grave/ completely free of footprints’

⁵⁸ See, for example, the contributions of Helena González Fernández, María do Cebreiro Rábade Villar, Dolores Vilavedra and Margarita García Candeira in *Canon y subversión: La obra narrativa de Rosalía de Castro* (2012).

high-profile genres, such as the narrative genre. Thus, to be a woman poet who writes in Galician could possibly equal invisibility within the literary field.

Indeed, although Xosé Fernández Ferreiro proclaimed that ‘Galicia é terra de poetas, non de prosistas’ (quoted in González-Millán, 1987), in the twentieth century the focus shifted to narrative as cultural producers began to realize the important role that narrative can play in the normalization process. In her essay ‘Remapping Galician narrative for the Twenty-First Century’ (2011) Hooper observes that ‘the general consensus in Galicia is that only once a healthy narrative genre exists will Galician culture be normalized’ (276). In this context ‘normalized’ means producing literature in every genre so that the Galician literary field can compete with other literary fields, such as the central Spanish literary field, which boasts landmark narrative texts, such as *Don Quixote* and the Catalan literary field, which has its own narrative sub-genres of historical and crime fiction. It is worth noting too that the academic González-Millán defines the narrative genre as ‘un xénero privilexiado’ (1994, 161). Narrative is a privileged genre because, as Patrick Parrinder argues in *Nation and Novel: The English Novel from its Origins to the Present Day*, ‘The prose of fictional narrative is more readily translatable than poetry or verse drama’ (2008, 15). By this, Parrinder does not mean that narrative is more translatable into other languages, but perhaps more readily accepted by the general reading public. Indeed, Fran Alonso, in his book chapter ‘Women, Poetry and Publishing’ states that although there is a high level of poetic production in Galicia, only half of the print runs sell and he states that, ‘30% of bookstores that sign up to receive all new books from a given publisher refuse, as a rule, to include poetry books’ (2010, 36). Thus, in book shops at least, narrative is preferred over poetry.

However, Castro’s influence is not as strong for women writers who choose to write narrative in Galician as her narrative work is in Castilian and, as Hooper points out ‘excluded from the Galician metanarrative’ (2003, 103). Thus, to achieve success in the narrative genre, Galician women writers had look to a different foremother. While having a foremother to use as a literary model is not strictly necessary, debates in feminist circles have often focussed on the need for identifying literary forebears as a strategy of justifying and strengthening their own position within the literary field. This position was most famously argued by Gilbert and Gubar in their ground-breaking work *The Madwoman in the Attic: the Woman Writer and the*

Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination (1979) where they argued that a woman writer ‘can begin [her] struggle only by actively seeking a female precursor who, far from representing a threatening force to be denied or killed, proves by example that a revolt against patriarchal literary authority is possible’ (1979, 49). Though Gilbert and Gubar were writing in the 1970s, when feminist literary criticism was finding its feet and their argument has since been advanced and nuanced by others⁵⁹, what still holds, in relation to Galician women writers, is the notion of looking back to identify literary forebears.

In Galicia, this was problematic for women writers in the latter half of the twentieth century seeking to enter the narrative genre as their precursor was Francisca Herrera Garrido (1869-1950). Although Garrido was the first woman to write a novel, *Néveda* (1920), in Galician, and was the first woman writer to be elected as a member of the *Real Academia Galega* (RAG) in 1945,⁶⁰ women writers have not identified with her in the same way as they have with Castro. Though Garrido was also inspired by Castro (Camiño Noia: 2000, 247), her work does not display the same proto-feminist characteristics as Castro’s, with the eminent Galician literary historian Ricardo Carballo Calero describing her as ‘conformist’ (1986, 11) and ‘unha Rosalía a medias’ (1963, 495); in other words, only half the writer Castro was. In addition, in a special issue of the feminist literary journal *Festa da Palabra Silenciada*,⁶¹ dedicated to Garrido, the academic Camino Noia asserts that ‘infelizmente non podemos solidarizarnos coa ideoloxía que se desprende da obra da Francisca Herrera Garrido nen coa visión da muller que nos ofrece’ (1986, 2).⁶² In a separate article, in the Galician literature journal *Grial*, Blanco analyses Herrera Garrido’s 1916 essay ‘A muller galega’ and, indirectly, demonstrates why subsequent generations of women felt unable to endorse Herrera Garrido. Blanco observes that Herrera Garrido advocates anti-suffragism, anti-feminism and Christian values that emphasize a patriarchal view

⁵⁹ See, for example, the edited volume *Gilbert and Gubar’s The Madwoman in the Attic After Thirty Years* (2011) for analyses of the effect their work has had on literary criticism and new approaches critics have taken to literary criticism due to their influence.

⁶⁰ It is worth noting that although Garrido was elected to the RAG, due to delays in her inaugural speech being sent to the RAG member tasked with writing a response, she was not sent an official invitation until 1950 and died before she could assume the post.

⁶¹ An analysis of this journal, its origins, the significance of its title and its relation to Queizán’s career will be discussed further on in the chapter.

⁶² ‘Unhappily we cannot support the ideology one deduces from the work of Francisca Herrera Garrido nor with the vision of women that she offers us’.

of women (1986, 149-155). Herrera Garrido's ideological views were in stark contrast to those of other women writers, such as Emilia Pardo Bazán, who campaigned for women's rights (1986, 147). Thus women writers contributing to feminist journals, such as *Festa da palabra silenciada*, found they could not identify with Herrera Garrido's out-dated views of women.

What this shows is that for women writers looking for a female forebear in narrative fiction, it is not just a case of someone who has produced a work in the genre, but also a case of compatibility between the ideological stance of both forebear and contemporary writer. What is also demonstrated is the tension between the texts and writers accepted into the traditional canon and feminist canon theory. As discussed in the introduction to this thesis, while the traditional canon recognises authors and texts that comply with the accepted set of rules of the literary field or, in this case, patriarchal norms; feminist canon theory seeks to challenge those patriarchal norms through alternative readings of male-authored texts, adding to the traditional canon, developing a counter canon and/or critiquing the notion of canon altogether.⁶³ Thus, though Garrido is deemed an appropriate forebear in the traditional canon as her writing upholds patriarchal views of women, she is excluded from the Galician feminist canon for the same reason.

The lack of a narrative foremother left a significant gap in the history of Galician women's writing, as the second woman to write a novel in Galician is María Xosé Queizán in 1965. This significant time lag reinforced the strong identification of Galician women writers with poetry.⁶⁴ Miguélez-Carballeira states, for example, that the critical establishment found it difficult to accommodate women writers who produced works of narrative as 'prose subverts the engrained identification of women with poetry' (2010, 126). The significance of this is that women writers became

⁶³ There are many examples of such approaches in the Galician literary field. In terms of alternative readings, see Queizán's re-reading of Eduardo Pondal's work in *Misoxinia e racismo na poesía de E. Pondal* (1998). In terms of the development of a counter-canon see Helena González Fernández's article '*Festa da Palabra Silenciada*, ou The Dinner Party á galega' (2013) and María Camino Noia Campos's article '*As escritoras canónicas na Festa da Palabra Silenciada*' (2013). In terms of adding to the canon, see *Canon y subversión: La obra narrativa de Rosalía de Castro* (2012) which reads the Castilian language narrative works of Rosalía de Castro as part of her overall corpus.

⁶⁴ Attempts have been made to rectify the perceived gap in the literary history of Galician women writers. Hooper (2003) suggests that a 'lost generation' between 1885 and 1916 of Castilian-language writers, such as Sofía Casanova (1861-1958), who could fill the gap, while the edited volume *Canon y subversión: La obra narrativa de Rosalía de Castro* (2012) analyses, as the title suggests, Castro's novels and their significance for the Galician literary canon.

synonymous with poetry, and as such, were expected to produce work solely in this genre. As Galician women writers had been defined as poets, it was difficult for them to break into the narrative genre and achieve success.

A possible turning point for Galician women writers in the narrative genre came at the beginning of the new millennium. In 2000, *Xerais* published an anthology of 25 stories by women writers collectively called *Narradoras*.⁶⁵ This collection of stories granted visibility to the contributors, but also worked towards the image of Galician women writers as narrators, rather than just poets. Literary critics and scholars, such as Ramón Nicolás and Dolores Vilavedra have outlined the importance of this book in helping Galician women writers achieve success in the literary field. Nicolás states, for example, that *Narradoras* is ‘[...] utterly key to the subsequent growth of fiction by women authors’ (2010, 133). The main reason Nicolás gives for the importance of the book is that it brought together different generations of Galician women narrative writers, effectively creating a female genealogy for this genre (134). Meanwhile, Vilavedra states that ‘o libro provocou un efecto de bola de neve que demostrou a eficacia deste tipo de estratexias de planificación cultural para facer visíbeis as escritoras’ (Cuññas, 2010).⁶⁶ Thus, Vilavedra argues that the strategy of publishing the work of women writers together in one volume to grant them increased visibility is useful for Galician women writers. Indeed, the publication of *Narradoras* led to great literary futures for many of the contributors, such as Rosa Aneiros, who, along with An Alfaya is now published by *Xerais*. Aneiros also won the *Premio Xerais* in 2009.⁶⁷ Other contributors who obtained literary awards after the publication of the book include Dolores Ruíz and Inma López Silva who won the *Premio Blanco Amor de Novela*⁶⁸ in 2004 and 2007 respectively, Leticia Costa who won the *Premio Merlín*

⁶⁵ Contributors to the volume were: Rita Abraldes, An Alfaya, Rosa Aneiros, Ana María Arellano, Mónica Bar Cendón, Marica Campo, María Canosa, Uxía Casal, Laura Caveiro, Leticia Costas, Beatriz Dacosta, Inma López Silva, Paula Mariño, Isabel Freire, Pilar Fernández, María García Yañez, Mónica Góñez, Ánxela Gracián, María Lado, Eva Moreda, Begoña Paz, Medos Romero, Dolores Ruíz, Rosa María Vidal and Luisa Villalta.

⁶⁶ ‘The book provoked a snowball effect that demonstrated the efficacy of this type of cultural planning strategy in making women writers visible’.

⁶⁷ See note 1 in this chapter for information on the *Xerais* prize.

⁶⁸ The *Premio Blanco Amor* was created in 1981 by the Concello de Redondela in homage to the Galician writer and journalist Eduardo Blanco Amor (1897-1979), whose novel *A esmorga* (1959) is considered instrumental in the renovation of Galician narrative. The prize is currently worth 12,000 euros. In its thirty-four year history there have only been three female winners of the prize, Úrsula Heinze in 1993 and the two writers mentioned above.

*de Literatura Infantil*⁶⁹ in 2014 and Ánxela Gracián who won the *Premio Plácido Castro*⁷⁰ for her translation of Jules Verne's *La Isla Misteriosa* and is the vice-president of the *Asociación Gallega de Literatura Infantil y Juvenil*. Thus, with the support of *Xerais*, women writers managed to gain visibility and, in some cases, kick-start their literary careers.

However, the writer and editor Francisco Castro insists that no specific strategies to promote Galician women writers have been employed by the Galician literary field. Speaking of women writers he states that, '[i]f they started to publish, and continue to publish, it was by doing exactly what male writers have done: winning literary prizes, sending compelling new works to publishers and constructing new texts that rise to the high standard of those already published' (2010, 96). While the intention of Castro appears to be to demonstrate that women writers are treated equally to men in the Galician literary field, the overall tone of the piece is patronizing. It is certainly true that women writers have won literary prizes; in terms of narrative, the *Premio Xerais de Novela*. However, the *Premio Xerais de Novela* was created in 1984 and the first female winner of the prestigious award only arrived in 2001 when Marilar Aleixandre won with her novel *Teoría de caos*. That said, since Aleixandre's win seven other women writers have been awarded the prize, making an equal number of male and female winners since 2000.⁷¹ The date of Aleixandre's win being one year after the publication of *Narradoras* would suggest the book had some part to play in increasing the visibility of women writers in the twenty-first century – although it is worth noting that Aleixandre was not a contributor to this volume. Castro's statement, however, patronizingly implies that the success of women writers in winning this prize is due to them producing a high standard of work that they purportedly were not producing previously. Later in his article, Castro also dismisses the significance of the book and states, somewhat sarcastically, that '[w]hether or not this literary body of

⁶⁹ The *Premio Merlín de Literatura Infantil* was created in 1986 by *Xerais* publishing house in order to encourage the creation of literature for children. The prize is currently worth 10,000 euros with ten women writers winning the prize over its twenty-nine year history: Úrsula Heinze (1986), Palmira González (1987), Gloria Sánchez (1990), Fina Casalderrey (1991), Lola González (1992), Marilar Aleixandre (1994), An Alfaya (1997), Mar Guerra Cid (2008), Teresa González (2010) and Leticia Costas (2014).

⁷⁰ The *Premio Plácido Castro* was created in 2001 by the *Fundación Plácido Castro* in association with the *Asociación de Tradutores Galegos*. The prize is currently worth 3,000 euros.

⁷¹ The female winners of the prize, aside from Aleixandre are: Inma López Silva (2002), Teresa Moure (2005), Rexina Vega (2007), Rosa Aneiros (2009), Iolanda Zuñiga (2010), María Lorenzo Miguéns – with her father Manuel Lorenzo Baleirón (2012) and María Reimóndez (2014).

work “will indubitably mark the future of Galician literature” is one of those affirmations which we as editors often write in cover blurbs and which, with time, prove to be somewhat excessive’ (2010, 97). Thus Castro, reduces the importance of the book to an empty advertising strategy on the part of the publisher, *Xerais*.

On closer inspection, the tension between Nicolás and Castro’s views regarding *Narradoras* is due to a difference of publishing houses and reflects the tensions of competing agents within the Galician literary field. Nicolás, for example, directs the online *Biblioteca das Letras Galegas* collection for *Xerais* publishing house, while Castro is the New Projects Coordinator for *Editorial Galaxia*. Thus, Nicolás is keen to promote his employer’s literary endeavours, while Castro does not want to promote the works of rival publishing houses. What both men fail to mention are the strategies employed by feminist critics and academics to promote women’s writing, such as the creation of the feminist journal *Festa da Palabra Silenciada* (1983), which shall be discussed later in the chapter. In addition, they do not mention changes in society, both in Galicia and in Europe in the latter stages of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century in terms of equality for women in the workplace. The brevity of their reflections, published in the edited volume *Creation, Publishing and Criticism: The Advance of Women’s Writing* (2010) along with Castro’s assertion that ‘[w]omen authors simply shone on their own’ (96), speaks volumes and demonstrates the need, even in the twenty-first century, for feminist criticism and feminist approaches to literature in order to counteract patriarchal readings of women’s writing and the place of women writers within the Galician literary field.

In terms of how Galician women narrators are defined, Vilavedra states that those women writers who have begun their careers in the twenty-first century are ‘a primeira xeración de narradoras de literatura galega’ (quoted in Cuíñas, 2010). While Vilavedra acknowledges women writers from the late twentieth century who had produced narrative works, she states that ‘non houbo xeración anterior, escritoras como María Xosé Queizán, Marina Mayoral ou Úrsula Heinze, primeira gañadora do Premio Blanco Amor en 1994, foron pioneiras,⁷² case francotiradoras’ (2010).⁷³

⁷² A pioneer, in military terms, is ‘one of a group of foot soldiers detailed to make roads, dig entrenchments etc., in advance of the main body’ (dictionary.com).

⁷³ ‘There was no previous generation, writers such as María Xosé Queizán, Marina Mayoral or Úrsula Heinze the first winner of the *Premio Blanco Amor* in 1994, were pioneers, almost Franco shooters’.

Helena González Fernández refers to this group of women writers in a similar way. In her academic work *Elas e o paraugas totalizador: Escritoras, xénero e nación* (2005), she refers to the women writers in the latter half of the twentieth century as ‘zapadoras’ or sappers,⁷⁴ which she defines as ‘*mulleres (e/ou feministas), galegas (e/ ou nacionalistas) e escritoras, [que] puxeron en marcha as estratexias para construír un espazo de seu [...]*’ (2005, 25).⁷⁵ The use of militaristic terms by both González Fernández and Vilavedra, such as sniper, pioneer and sapper to describe late twentieth century writers such as Queizán is interesting and clearly defines this group of authors from the next, who Vilavedra simply terms ‘narradoras’. The image these military terms conjure are of writers who are at war with and fighting against the Galician literary field, whereas the statement that writers, such as Reimóndez are the first generation of Galician narrative writers would indicate they are comfortably situated within the literary field. However, what Vilavedra and González Fernández fail to mention is that the aforementioned pioneers –Queizán, Mayoral and Heinze– still produce literary works and are now as much a part of the Galician field as Reimóndez or the other female *Xerais* prize winners mentioned.

Thus, this chapter will examine Queizán’s role as a pioneer and a creator of space for women writers and how she has used this image and space to market her work. This chapter will also examine if her image and reception has changed over time and look specifically at the marketing and reception of her work in the twenty-first century. Finally, in terms of Queizán, this chapter will look at how the writer still pushes the boundaries of the Galician literary establishment and how this is received, such as in the publication of her latest book, *Son noxento*⁷⁶ (2015), a story told from the point of view of a paedophile. Regarding Reimóndez, this chapter will look at her image as part of Queizán’s legacy, the marketing and reception of her work, but will also examine the reception of her other roles in Galician cultural production, such as translation and how she, like the ‘pioneers’ before her, is still creating space for Galician women writers. Finally, this chapter will argue that although women writers have made considerable gains in the Galician literary field, much of their reception is

⁷⁴ A sapper is ‘a soldier employed in the construction of fortifications, trenches, or tunnels that approach or undermine enemy positions’ (dictionary.com).

⁷⁵ ‘*Women (and/or feminists), Galicians (and/or nationalists) and writers who put strategies into place for constructing a space of their own [...]*’.

⁷⁶ ‘I am disgusting’

localised to the specific feminist literary community and the publishing house *Xerais*. While this is not necessarily a negative aspect, as I argue, it is demonstrative of work still to be done in the battle for a more equal literary field.

María Xosé Queizán

As mentioned above, Queizán is a pioneer in Galician literature, particularly in terms of Galician women's writing. Queizán began her career in the narrative genre, rather than poetry, with her novel *A orella no buraco* (An Ear in the Hole: 1965), thus, to paraphrase Miguélez-Carballeira, subverting the association of women with poetry. The novel, which tells the story of a man who lives on a bench and keeps warm by placing his ear in a hole in the bench, places Queizán within the *Nova Narrativa*⁷⁷ generation of writers and it is this novel/ generation of writers that academics such as Vilavedra, Hooper and Moruxa refer to when situating Queizán within the Galician literary field.⁷⁸ The novel is Queizán's only novel that is considered to not be concerned with gender and sexuality (Hooper: 2011, 283) and is also one of the few books of Queizán's that is not published by *Xerais*.⁷⁹ The publishing house concerned is *Galaxia*, which, as Hooper states is 'the publishing house most closely linked with the Galician literary establishment and the post-civil war renaissance of Galician literature' (2011, 283). Thus, in the case of *A orella na buraco*, the prestigious status of the publishing house Galaxia gives the book, and Queizán, added cultural capital. In addition, the image of Queizán as a pioneer and forerunner of contemporary Galician literature leads to critics favouring her first, ground-breaking work rather than her subsequent feminist endeavours. Furthermore, while in terms of the canon, with her first novel, Queizán adheres to the rules of the literary field and those of the *Nova Narrativa* generation whereas some of her later work challenges taboos and patriarchal structures of the Galician literary field.

For other academic references and analyses of Queizán's other works, we must look at specific feminist spaces and the work of feminist academics. In the edited

⁷⁷ *Nova Narrativa* was a particular style of writing favoured by Galician writers, such as Carlos Casares, Xosé Luís Méndez Ferrín and Queizán from the 1950s to the 1970s and was influenced by the French *Nouveau Roman*.

⁷⁸ See for example, Vilavedra (2010), as well as references throughout Hooper and Moruxa (2011).

⁷⁹ It is worth noting that *Xerais* was not founded until 1984 and it was therefore impossible for Queizán to be published by them in the 1960s.

volume *Breve historia feminista de la literatura española VI* (2000), María Camino Noia makes reference to not only *A orella no buraco*, but also Queizán's other narrative works, such as her second novel *Amantia* (1982), which was also heralded as her first feminist fictional work by feminist critics (249-50). In addition, Camino Noia also situates Queizán within a female literary tradition from Francisca Herrera Garrido (1868-1945) to one of the youngest writers at the time, Navia Franco Barreiro (1973-) (2000, 249-50). In the same volume, Mónica Bar Cendón, discussing female Galician playwrights, devotes the final section of her chapter to Queizán, particularly her play *Antígona, a forza do sangue* (1989) (230-234). Bar Cendón also refers to Queizán's stance as feminist and adds that this in addition to her prolific literary career makes for 'un caso insólito en la literatura gallega' (230). Bar Cendón's reference to Queizán as a 'caso insólito' suggests that the national literary canon is incompatible with overt feminist stances and that feminist writers do not usually go on to have long-standing literary careers. It is worth mentioning, however, that this volume was published in the year 2000 before the aforementioned increase in recognition for Galician women writers.

Also in the same volume, Helena González Fernández in her chapter on Galician women poets, discusses Queizán's poetic work and her influence on the Galician literary sphere. González Fernández argues convincingly that Queizán's commitment to feminism and making feminism compatible with the Galician national project, her use of irony as a deconstructive strategy in her poetry and her projects to revindicate silenced or forgotten writers make her, 'La figura más destacada de la literatura feminista gallega [...]'. She adds that 'María Xosé aborda una escritura volcada hacia afuera, comprometida, rabiosa y a menudo cáustica' (2000, 206). The familiarity with which González Fernández refers to Queizán is reminiscent of the way in which writers refer to Rosalía de Castro and therefore suggests a high level of respect.⁸⁰ In addition, the violent language used to describe Queizán's approach to literature is in line with González Fernández's above-mentioned reference to Queizán as a 'zapadora'. It is worth noting here, however, that González Fernández situates Queizán within a specific feminist literary tradition and not within the literary

⁸⁰ It is also worth noting that González Fernández in 2013/14 coordinated a project to digitize *Festa da Palabra Silenciada* and has also contributed to the feminist journal and is therefore in personal contact with Queizán.

sphere as a whole. This reinforces the notion of Queizán's feminist stance being incompatible with the national canon, while being accepted by the feminist literary canon.

In more recent years, there have been two publications that have studied Queizán's work: *Cara a unha poética feminista: Homenaxe a María Xosé Queizán* (2011) and *Feminismo e innovación en la narrativa gallega de autoría feminina: Xohana Torres, María Xosé Queizán, Carmen Blanco y Teresa Moure* (2013). In the former edited volume, which is in Galician and published by *Xerais*, various academics engage with Queizán's work and feminist position from different analytical perspectives. Although the work is academic, the tone of the volume is familiar and contains photographs of the author at various events and with various friends and colleagues. In the latter and more sober monograph, written by Marisol Rodríguez Rodríguez from the University of Auckland, the themes of maternity, alternative sexualities and the search for identity are discussed in relation to Queizán's narrative. While both publications are welcome and much-needed in terms of making visible Queizán's contributions to the Galician literary field, they also demonstrate the closely connected and perhaps subjective Galician literary community in contrast with the foreign academic community reading Queizán's work at a distance.

Continuing with the notion of reception, the academic Kirsty Hooper draws attention to the fragmented reception of Queizán's work. She states that, '[f]or many years Queizán was the most canonical (i.e., the most read, reviewed and studied) of contemporary female, novelists, but note the changing pattern of publication of her novels. She is now strongly linked with *Xerais*, but *Xerais* does not publish all her works, and even those that they do publish receive differing treatment' (2011, 282). Hooper goes on to discuss lack of reception of two of Queizán's works, the civil war narrative *Amor de Tango* (1992), based on real events from her home town of Vigo, and *A semellanza* (1988), which Hooper aptly describes as the story of 'a young man coming to terms with his homosexuality in a hostile society' (283). Hooper suggests that the author's gender and the reluctance of Galician scholars and critics to talk about gender and homosexual characters and themes, has contributed to the silence surrounding these two works. Hooper notes in particular that *A semellanza* did not even receive critical attention from feminist critics who usually respond to Queizán's work.

On a more optimistic note, Queizán's *Amor de Tango* has been discussed by the academic John Patrick Thompson in his article 'A Tango of Lost Democracy and Women's Liberation: María Xosé Queizán's Feminist Vision in Amor de Tango' (2008). In addition, *A Semellanza* is discussed in Bar Cendón's book chapter 'Ousadías sexuais na escrita de María Xosé Queizán' (2011), while Rodríguez Rodríguez (2013) provides a thorough, in-depth discussion of the novel in terms of identity formation through the theories of Robert J. Stoller, Gayle Rubin and Judith Butler (1976-2011). Though Hooper does refer to Thompson's article in her book chapter, what she does not mention is the language that Thompson uses to describe Queizán's approach. In the abstract, for example, when discussing cultural heritage he states that 'María Xosé Queizán aggressively reveals the reactionary elements that this heritage contains and proposes a new nationalist canon, ideology and praxis' (2008, 343). The use of the word 'aggressively' reinforces the image of Queizán created by other academics such as González Fernández and Vilavedra when they described Queizán with military vocabulary. The image these words conjure is of a soldier in battle and paint quite a violent picture of Queizán in terms of her approach to the Galician literary field. *Amor de Tango* is also the subject of a literary review by Kathleen N. March in 1993, a year after the book's publication. In the review March discusses the quality of Queizán's language stating that it is 'quiet, descriptive, yet controlled Galician' and also refers to her 'taking a stand' for Galician democracy (1993, 806). March's use of the word 'democracy' rather than feminism would suggest that March is trying to move Queizán beyond her association with feminism. In addition, March's review softens the image of the militaristic feminist conjured by the academics mentioned above, although the fact that this review was written in 1993 and the others in the twenty-first century could be an indication of why March chooses to portray Queizán in less violent terms.

The militaristic descriptions of Queizán mentioned above, as well as the mixed reception of her work, necessitates a discussion on the strategies Queizán uses to carve out new spaces for herself and other women writers within the Galician literary field. In 1983 Queizán created the feminist literary journal *Festa da Palabra Silenciada*. The poignant title - Celebration of the Silenced Word - reveals the objective of the journal to give visibility to writers, particularly women writers, who had previously been ignored and also has clear feminist implications as it challenges the established

Galician literary canon. An additional objective of the journal was to also re-vindicate women writers whose reception and authorial image had been skewed by patriarchal readings such as the legacy of Rosalía de Castro, which is discussed in the first issue. The importance of this feminist journal cannot be understated, since as well as creating a space for her own work to be reviewed, Queizán also published unpublished work of women writers, such as the poem ‘Penélope’ (1992) by Xohana Torres, which has since been published and whose final line ‘Eu tamén navegar’ (I also to navigate) has become a feminist motto and has been used intertextually by other Galician women poets.⁸¹ In this journal, Queizán also introduced feminist theories from French and British theorists, such as Simone de Beauvoir and Virginia Woolf respectively. It is worth noting that the quotes that appear from these works in the journal were often the first time these important feminist texts had been translated into Galician. Thus, Queizán is a pioneer in this respect for effectively creating a Galician feminist ‘room of their own’ where women writers could operate and achieve recognition.

Perhaps the most significant factor in the literary field in which Queizán operates is her home town, Vigo. Queizán has strong ties to the city and, most interestingly, the majority of her reception by the press is localized to Vigo. In the daily Galician periodical *Faro de Vigo*, for example, Javier Mosquera makes clear just how strong these ties are. He states, ‘María Xosé Queizán está unida a Vigo no sólo por nacemento sino por un amor a la ciudad que le ha llevado a declarar que no podría vivir en otra ciudad de Galicia’ (*Faro de Vigo*, 10/03/13).⁸² Indeed, Queizán started her career by writing articles for the Vigo-based daily periodical *El Pueblo Gallego*. In 1959, Queizán created *El Teatro de Arte y Ensayo de la Asociación de la Prensa de Vigo* and after formative trips to Paris and Santiago de Compostela, Queizán returned to Vigo in 1979 to work as professor of Galician language and literature in the *Instituto de Bachillerato Alexandre Bóveda de Vigo*. In addition, Queizán is also the director of the *Galería de Arte “Roizara” de Vigo* and the Vice-president of the *Concello*

⁸¹ ‘Eu tamén navegar’ was used intertextually by Chus Pato in her poetry book *Fascinio*, in which she references both Rosalía de Castro and Xohana Torres. The line reads as follows: ‘extranjera en mi propia historia/en mi propio paisaje/en mi propia lengua// yo también/ OCEANO’ (quoted in González Fernández: 2000, 217). Torres also used the phrase as her inaugural speech when entering the *Real Academia Galega* in 2001. It was further used as the name of a prize awarded by the *Xunta de Galicia* in 2008 to recognize the efforts of people and organizations working to prevent violence against women in Galicia. The prize was worth 5,000 euros.

⁸² ‘María Xosé Queizán is linked to Vigo not only through birth, but also through a love for the city that is such she has declared she couldn’t live in any other city in Galicia.’

Municipal da Muller de Vigo.⁸³ In addition, the publishing house *Xerais*, that has published the majority of Queizán's work since the 1980s when it was founded, is based in Vigo. Queizán also works with the *Consello de Mulleres in Vigo* and has helped to create a theatre community in the city. Thus, Queizán has gained prestige through her close ties to and role in creating many of the influential institutions of the city and has carved out a place for herself within the cultural elite.

In addition, Queizán is one of the key figures in creating the strong feminist background that Vigo has. In 1978, Queizán created her own women's group in Vigo called *Feministas Independentes Galegas* (FIGA) and it is this group that edits the above-mentioned feminist journal, *Festa da Palabra Silenciada*.⁸⁴ This strong feminist background continued into the late twentieth century. As Martínez-Quiroga states in her chapter on María Reimóndez's novel *O club da calceta*:

Vigo holds a tradition of fostering the creation of associations in which women demand their rights both as workers and feminists. A good example is the "Asociación de Mulleres Dorna" which was created thirty years ago in the working-class neighbourhood of Coia (Martínez-Quiroga: 2015, 52).

This feminist tradition in Vigo has persisted and is evident in the twenty-first century with the recent establishment of a Chair of Feminist Studies in Vigo in the year 2000, called the *Cátedra Caixanova de Estudos Feministas*. As the name suggests, the chair is funded by the *Caixanova* bank and receives 36,061 euros annually to give lectures and conduct research. Thus, Vigo as a Galician feminist centre, and one which has support in the community, is the perfect platform for Queizán, who self-identifies as feminist, to work from.

However, Queizán's prestige in Vigo is also indicative of her reception being a double-edged sword. In 1998, for example, the *Asociación de Escritoras e Escritores en Lingua Galega* (AELG) in conjunction with the *Consello da Cultura* awarded Queizán their highest accolade, the letter 'E' and, as part of the ceremony, a park in Vigo was also named after her. To signify that the park was named after Queizán a small sign was erected and a stone engraved with an extract from one of Queizán's

⁸³ As shall be discussed later on in this section, it is the *Consello de Mulleres de Vigo* who led the campaign to get Queizán elected as a member of the RAG in 2011.

⁸⁴ Interestingly, the word 'figa' in Galician is the name of an amulet that guards against witchcraft and the evil eye.

poems 'Fóra de min' from *Fóra de min* (1994) was placed at the location.⁸⁵ A Magnolia tree was also planted in reference to the aforementioned poetry extract. The detailed planning of the ceremony and the high honour given to Queizán in 1998 is indicative of the prestige she had accrued within Vigo up to this point. That being said, the park is a narrow strip of land situated on Isaac Peral Street, a busy main road in the city and is overlooked by large blocks of flats. In addition, in 2013, land bordering the park was used to build a tunnel for the high-speed AVE trains. Thus, this park in Vigo is indicative of Queizán's reception as it demonstrates that while Queizán is recognized in her home town, by a small minority, her reception has its limits. It also demonstrates the complexity of Queizán's reception and literary persona in that she is rendered both visible and invisible at the same time.

Outside of Vigo, *Xerais* and the feminist literary community, Queizán is not recognised by key institutions, such as the *Real Academia Galega* (RAG). In 2010, Olga Gallego, a female member of the *Real Academia Galega*, passed away leaving a vacant seat. On the 14th of September 2010, the *Concello Municipal da Muller* announced that they would support Queizán as a candidate for the seat. However, in order to get a seat, a person needs the recommendations of three existing members of the institution. As such, on the 30th of September 2010, a general letter was sent to all academics of the *Real Academia Galega*, from the *Concello Municipal da Muller* making a case for Queizán and encouraging academics to give Queizán their support. At this time the *Concello Municipal* also launched an online public petition. Despite there being hundreds of signatures on the public petition and the campaign receiving extensive press coverage, not a single member of the *Real Academia Galega* gave their support to Queizán. On the 29th of June 2011, after almost a year of campaigning, the *Concello* sent a second letter to all academics of the *Real Academia Galega*, further outlining their argument and imploring them to support Queizán as a candidate. However, María Xosé Queizán, received no response from the *Real Academia Galega*.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ The text engraved on the stone is as follows: 'Escribo para ti/As letras son vínculos de amiga, pontes/Ponte como queiras para lerre/Ponte para o íntimo encontro/Ponte a miña conciencia/E déixame a túa/Ponte debaixo da magnolia'.

⁸⁶ It is worth noting that the president of the RAG at this time was Queizán's ex-husband and writer Xosé Méndez Ferrín.

On the 15th of September 2011, Queizán sent a well-informed letter⁸⁷ to the *Concello Municipal da Muller*, in which she thanks all those who have supported the campaign, but asks them to stop campaigning as it is now obvious that ‘non se ía producir tal ingreso’ (‘It would not produce such an entrance’: 2011). In the letter, Queizán also states that she never wanted to be a member of the RAG and, in anticipation of comments that this statement was only made because it was now certain she would not be accepted as a member, she adds, ‘[...] tampouco me importa que non o crean’ (‘[...] nor does it bother me if you don’t believe me’: 2011). In addition, Queizán references two other high-profile women writers from late nineteenth and early twentieth century Galician literature, who were also not granted places in the RAG: Emilia Pardo Bazán and Rosalía de Castro. Queizán also makes her opinion of the RAG clear when she states that ‘Nesa Casa [...] predomina o imaxinario masculino’ (In this house [...] the masculine imaginary dominates’) and adds that it ignores both male and female authored feminist theory, stating that ‘[o]s libros onde se amosa esa herdanza intelectual, non deben figurar nas bibliotecas nin nas mentes dos ilustres académicos’ (2011).⁸⁸ At the end of the letter she adds a strongly worded message for Galicians: ‘Pretendín demostralle á cidadanía que me propuxo que a Academia será o ultimo que cambier na sociedade. Aínda que vaian introducindo algunha muller a conta gotas como quen regala unha flor’ (2011).⁸⁹ However, while Queizán is intent on distancing herself from the institution, she adds that ‘teño un vínculo coa Academia co que sempre me identificarei: a lingua galega’ (2011).⁹⁰

It has been necessary to include many of Queizán’s quotes above to properly demonstrate her position in this case. In her letter, Queizán clearly sets herself against the RAG, which she asserts is patriarchal, unwilling to accept feminists or feminist approaches to literature and equality and in which dominates a ‘masculine imaginary’. This reinforces the notion mentioned earlier in this chapter regarding the tensions between the national literary canon and the feminist literary canon. Queizán’s overt

⁸⁷ The letter can be accessed on the blog of the *Xerais* Director Manuel Bragado, Brétemas, which is at the following web address: <http://bretemas.blogaliza.org/2011/09/15/carta-de-maria-xose-queizan-ao-consello-municipal-da-muller-de-vigo/>

⁸⁸ ‘The books which relate this intellectual heritage, should not appear in the libraries or in the minds of the illustrious academics’

⁸⁹ ‘I am trying to show the people that I propose that the academy will be the last thing that changes in society. Though they are introducing some women little by little like those who present a flower as a gift’

⁹⁰ ‘I have one link to the Academy with which I will always identify with them: the Galician language’

feminist stance and the image of her as a pioneer, an agent for change and perceived aggressive attitude in her approach to literature and politics has rendered her incompatible with the RAG's more conservative approach and, as such, has led to the silence that surrounded the *Consello de Vigo's* campaign for her inauguration within the institution.

Queizán also demonstrates solidarity with her feminist supporters, and further authorizes her position as a feminist writer through her extensive references to feminist theory throughout the letter. In addition the writer further demonstrates her connection to Vigo, referring to the *Concello Municipal da Muller de Vigo* as 'Concello da miña cidade' (2011).⁹¹ Finally, Queizán makes clear exactly which issues preoccupy her: 'as literarias, as culturais, e o activismo feminista' (2011).⁹² This letter is significant in terms of analysing Queizán's authorial persona as it gives an excellent summary of Queizán's image and how she portrays herself. In other words, it demonstrates her commitment to feminist activism, while also incorporating dedication to the Galician language and to some extent a form of national identity. She also further demonstrates the close link between herself and her home town of Vigo. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, she demonstrates her stance against central, and what she perceives as patriarchal, literary and cultural institutions, such as the RAG. It is worth noting that the day after Queizán sent this letter to the *Concello Municipal da Muller de Vigo*, she then sent it to the director of *Xerais*, Manuel Bragado, who subsequently posted it on his blog. What this shows is that the intended recipients of the letter were her supporters, but also the public as well as showing the support that Queizán receives from her publishing house *Xerais*, particularly one of the highest-ranking members of the company and the authority Queizán that has.

Thus, this section of the chapter has demonstrated Queizán's fragmented reception, the tensions and incompatibility between the Galician national and feminist canons and the portrayal of Queizán as a pioneer and, at times, even a violent, military figure. What is often not mentioned by critics and academics is the fact that Queizán still produces literary texts and continues to push the boundaries of Galician literature, while working alongside women writers she has helped inspire and for whom she has

⁹¹ 'Council of my city'

⁹² The literary, the cultural, and feminist activism'

created space. The most recent example of this is the publication of her latest book *Son noxento* (2015). The novel, narrated by internal monologue, tells the story of a paedophile and how his actions led to his subsequent incarceration. Throughout the novel the main character frequently uses expletives. Assuming that the subject matter, as well as the use of swear words will shock readers, Queizán appears to provide an explanation in a short prologue. However, unlike other writers discussed in this thesis, Queizán offers no justification for the way she has written the book. She states that, '[s]ei que non só o comportamento, senón o vocabulario do libro é abominable. [...] As palabrotas e blasfemias que ten o Noxento na punta da lingua, conforman un discurso eticamente indigno' (2015, 1).⁹³ Queizán's acknowledgement that the novel's discourse is 'ethically shameful' indicates that she intends to provoke the reader into reacting. Her denouncement of the main character's wife as also being shameful for being complicit in his actions and the statement that readers will find themselves laughing when reading certain parts of the novel are sure to spark discussion and debate, demonstrating how her work continues to court controversy in the twenty-first century as well as in the twentieth.

María Reimóndez

María Reimóndez is a well-known, prize-winning cultural producer from Galicia. 'Cultural producer' is used here to define Reimóndez as although she has a prolific writing career, and has produced work in all genres from children's literature to poetry, this is not her sole occupation. Reimóndez also works as an activist and a professional translator and includes these roles as part of her mediated identity. This is made plain on her website, where, on the home page, Reimóndez has three icons to choose from: writer, translator, and activist. The 'translator' icon is central in its position on her website, possibly to reflect the fact that this is her main source of income, if not her primary occupation. This identity choice is economically motivated as translation is, according to Reimóndez, her most stable source of income. As demonstrated by the other icons on her homepage, as well as working as a translator,

⁹³ 'I know that not only the behaviour, but also the vocabulary in the book are abominable. [...] The swearwords and blasphemies that Noxento has on the tip of his tongue shape a discourse that is ethically shameful'.

Reimóndez is a writer and activist⁹⁴ and I would add to these labels, journalist and academic. Thus, Reimóndez has multiple labels that she applies to herself and that others can potentially apply to her. What Reimóndez does is overtly manipulate these labels as part of her promotional strategy, creating the image of a diverse and committed cultural producer.

In terms of prizes, Reimóndez has been awarded prizes for all aspects of her work, the most notable of which is the *Premio Xerais de Novela*, which she won in 2014 for *Dende o conflito* (From the Conflict).⁹⁵ Reimóndez also defines herself as a feminist and feminism pervades both Reimóndez's literary and non-literary work. While her self-identification as feminist and her use of feminism in her work and, in particular, her translation strategies are supported by the major Galician publishing house *Xerais*, outside of this area her feminist strategies are not so positively received and, as we shall see in this section, have led to controversy and conflict.

In terms of criticism and reception of her work, critics generally receive Reimóndez's work positively and mention her status as a feminist and the role of women within her work. Unsurprisingly, the majority of reviews are of the novel with which she won the *Premio Xerais*, *Dende o conflito* (2014) and these reviews are largely positive too. It is worth noting that although many of the reviews are published in newspapers, there are also a significant number of reviews published on critics' or writers' blogs. In addition, many of the critics who consistently produce reviews of Reimóndez's work, such as Ramón Nicolás, are also writers who are published by *Xerais*. Even the director of *Xerais*, Manuel Bragado Rodríguez, has a blog entitled *Brétemas*, on which he advertises Galician literature. The use of blogs raises the question of competing realms of literary criticism; print reviews and online reviews and the competing levels of cultural capital that surround them. While print and online

⁹⁴ This section of Reimóndez's website is further divided into three areas of activism: feminism, support of the Galician language, and information regarding her NGO *Implicadas No Desenvolvemento* (IND), which she founded in 1998 and works on the basis that investing in equality for women is to invest in the well-being of the whole community. In 2008, IND women the *Eu tamén navegar* prize for its fight against gender violence.

⁹⁵ Other prizes Reimóndez has won include: *Premio de novela Mulleres Progresistas de Vigo* (2003), *Premio narrativa de Arcebispo Xoán de San Clemente* (2007), *Premio Plácido de tradución* for her translation of *A historia de Mary Prince, unha escrava das ilas Occidentais* (2009), *Premio Frei Martín Sarmiento* (2010), *Premio de Xornalismo Dora Vázquez* for her article 'Desobediencia' (2012), *Mellor libro de ensaio/investigación de 2013 for Feminismos* (2013), *XIV Premio de novela por Entregas de la Voz* (2014) and *Premio Xosé María Álvarez Blázquez* for author of the year (2014) (www.mariareimondez.com).

reviews for established newspapers and magazines have more authority than blogs, the blogs of authoritative figures, such as that of Manuel Bragado, could allow blogs to carry more cultural capital and offer an alternative source of promotion for women writers who struggle to achieve success and visibility.

As in other literary fields in the Spanish nation-state, critics are also keen to demonstrate their knowledge of world literature, in particular, French writers. As such, in one review of Reimóndez's award-winning novel *Dende o conflito* in the daily periodical *El Progreso*, the critic Juan Antonio Pinto Antón makes reference to the French writer Daniel Pennac, who wrote both children's literature and literature for adults, with one of his most famous works being a non-fiction book entitled *Comme un roman* (1992), or in English, *The Rights of the Reader* (2006) (2014). As the subject of *Dende o conflito* is female journalists in war zones and Reimóndez makes reference to several real-life female journalists who have worked in places, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, several critics also reference the names of these female journalists in their reviews and as such situate Reimóndez within this female genealogy (Peña Presas, 2014; Blanco, 2014). What is particularly interesting is the amount of space that Reimóndez is afforded in the press as most of the reviews of her work are on a full-page spread. These features are significant because, as scholars have demonstrated, paratextual elements are key in the messages conveyed about a text. In his book chapter 'How Books are Positioned in the Market: Reading the Cover' (2007), Angus Phillips asserts that paratextual elements, such as the cover of a book convey messages about the contents of the text and can influence which book a reader buys (9). In a similar way, the amount of space afforded a writer in a newspaper review or article can also convey prestige. Therefore, a full-page review of Reimóndez's work could indicate that the critic holds a certain amount of respect or reverence for Reimóndez and this, in turn, could influence a reader to purchase her book.

In addition to paratextual elements contributing to a writer's positioning within a literary field, writers often have their own strategies, which they employ to position themselves within a given literature. Reimóndez, for example, although she is often defined by others as a writer, she actually states that her main occupation is translation. Since she graduated with a degree in interpreting and translation from the University of Vigo in 1997 she has worked as a freelance translator and interpreter and has translated 20 books into Galician from English, German and Castilian, with the

majority of the translations being published by Xerais.⁹⁶ Between 2000 and 2003 Reimóndez was Professor of Interpreting at the University of Vigo and she is also the founder of *The Galician Association of Professional Translators and Interpreters* (AGPTI). As mentioned above, in 2009 Reimóndez won the *Premio Plácido Castro de Tradución*⁹⁷ for her translation of *The History of Mary Prince* (1831) and the book was subsequently published in 2010 under the title *A historia de Mary Prince*.

Much like her work as a writer, feminism is also prominent in her work as a translator. Indeed, in her paper ‘Translating Shashi Deshpande’s “Hear Me Sanjaya”: or On How Kunti was Made to Speak Galician’ (2003), Reimóndez explains that she approaches her translation projects using a feminist-postcolonial theoretical framework, that challenges sexist and ethno/euro-centric translation practices, portrays the translator as a reader and re-writer and enables the translator to analyse both the source text and their own interpretation of it (500-515). Though Reimóndez describes her approach as ‘subversive’, and indeed, can be read as such, it is also in-line with general trends in translation studies which diverge from traditional, essentialist notions of translation regarding ‘fidelity’ to the source text and aim to grant more agency to translators. In her book chapter ‘Theory and Practice of Feminist Translation in the Twenty-First Century’ (2010), for example, Lina Fisher states that, ‘Feminist translation in the twenty-first century, in my view, is the practice of basing one’s approach on advances made in the fields of translation, linguistics, literature and reader-response theories’ (67).

In theory, feminist-postcolonial translation theories discuss translation as a form of violence, as a facilitator of colonization and view translation as a metaphor of the colony (Basnett: 2002, 5). In addition, these translation theories also move past the negative connotations associated with translation in a postcolonial context and instead see the space between the original text and the translation as a site for re-negotiation (Basnett: 2002, 6). In practice, feminist-postcolonial translation strategies include: the use of non-sexist, gender-inclusive language or the use of the feminine as the generic

⁹⁶ In total 15 of Reimóndez’s translations have been published by *Xerais*, 2 by *Galaxia*, 2 by the *Biblioteca Virtual de Literatura Universal en Galego* and one by *Edicións Positivas*.

⁹⁷ The *Premio Plácido Castro* was created in 2001 and is awarded by the *Fundación Plácido Castro* for the best translation of universal literature. The winner receives 2000 euros and while the work of previous winners was published in the *Biblioteca Virtual de Literatura Universal en Galego*, winners’ work is now published by *Rinoceronte*.

form; replacing words denoting women that are used in a pejorative sense; consciously choosing to translate postcolonial texts and/or texts written by women; and the use of notes to explain specific cultural contexts unfamiliar to the target reader, though this final strategy is not specific to feminist and postcolonial translation practices. One of the strategies used in Galicia is the use of non-sexist, gender-inclusive language.

In terms of Galicia, the translator and academic Olga Castro states that there are at least five gender-inclusive strategies translators can use. The first is neutralization or generalization in which the translator selects gender neutral words such as ‘persoal doente’ rather than the masculine ‘profesores’ or ‘persoal médico’ rather than the masculine ‘os médicos’ (112). The second strategy is feminization or specification, where the translator includes the feminine through the use of the ‘@’ symbol as in ‘estimad@s coleg@s’, the use of a forward slash as in ‘nen/a’, the use of parentheses as in ‘nen(a)’ or the use of duplication as in ‘nenos e nenas’ or ‘autor o autora’ (112-113). The third strategy is the use of neologisms, in other words the creation of new feminine words where previously they did not exist, such as ‘pilota, xuíza’ (113). The fourth strategy is what Castro calls ‘Elección en contrapunto’ where the translator alternates the gender of nouns and adjectives that appear as gender neutral in English, but where a gender must be chosen in languages such as Galician. The fifth and final strategy Castro discusses is the subversive use of the feminine, such as using the feminine version of the noun or adjective as the norm, making it ambiguous to which gender the author is referring. Castro uses the example of Toni Lodeiro, who wrote a healthy living guide in Castilian, explaining in his prologue that ‘Para entendernos – Suelo generalizar indistintamente en femenino y en masculino, para que cuando leas, por ejemplo, “nosotras” no debes entender que solo me refiero a mujeres, es una generalización igual cuando decimos “nosotros” englobando a hombres y mujeres’ (2008, 12). Thus, as Castro demonstrates, there are many strategies a translator can use to challenge patriarchal language usage.

Reimóndez too, in the article mentioned above, discusses the different levels of intervention a translator can use in their work and the subsequent results. Reimóndez thus, translates *Hear Me Sanjaya* three times, each time taking a more interventionist approach. *Hear Me Sanjaya*, is the story of Kunti, who has the same name as a character from the ancient Indian epic poem the *Mahabharata*, the importance of which has been compared to that of the Bible, the works of Shakespeare,

the *Iliad* and the *Qur'an*. The choice of name for the narrator is not coincidental as the book reveals itself to be a retelling of the stories that feature in the canonical poem. In the first translation of the text, Reimóndez uses non-sexist language and ensures that the conversational tone of the source text is preserved in the translation. It is worth noting, for reasons that will become clear later in the chapter, that Reimóndez defines this approach as 'minimum intervention' (2003, 509). In the second translation, Reimóndez adds explanation tags, embedded within the text to make, for example, family relations explicit. In the third and final translation, Reimóndez uses parallel texts by having two columns. In the left-hand column is the first translation, while in the right-hand column Reimóndez uses a narrative style she decides is appropriate for the text to provide explanation of the Mahabharata, utilizes bold lettering to emphasize Kunti's rewriting, thus granting more visibility to the narrator's voice over the canonical text and presents the excerpts of the canonical text that appear in the book in italics. In this last translation, as Reimóndez points out, she is not only drawing attention to Kunti's voice, but also her own role as translator; making her own creative efforts part of Deshpande's work. Reimóndez concludes that the third translation would be the best option for the Galician reader. What this demonstrates is the decision-making process involved in translation as well as the different levels of intervention a translator can use when translating a text. In addition, this also shows that Reimóndez is explicit about her stance as a feminist translator and about her feminist-postcolonial approaches to texts. Most importantly, Reimóndez makes clear where she has altered the text and the ways in which she has done so.

However, despite Reimóndez's impressive Curriculum Vitae and overt feminist approach to translation, she became embroiled in a legal dispute in 2008 after her contract for her translation of the British author Mark Haddon's novel *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (2003) was terminated amid claims she had changed the gender of characters and surreptitiously imposed a feminist ideology on the story. This was followed by extensive international media coverage of the incident, which although the story was announced to the press by Reimóndez herself, concluded with Reimóndez being portrayed, as shall be demonstrated below, as an untrustworthy feminist extremist who had altered the text according to a personal feminist ideology or as Reimóndez herself has termed it, paraphrasing Gilbert and Gubar, 'the madwoman in the translation attic' (2009, 81).

In 2004 Reimóndez entered into a verbal agreement with *Xerais* to translate Mark Haddon's *The Curious Case of the Dog in the Night-Time*. As yet, *Xerais* did not have translation rights to the book, but according to Reimóndez this is common practice in Galicia.⁹⁸ However, in February 2007 when Reimóndez delivered the final text to *Xerais*, it was found that the rights had recently been sold to another Galician publishing house, specializing in translations, *Rinoceronte Editora*. *Xerais* struck a deal with *Rinoceronte* to consider Reimóndez's translation. An agreement was reached with *Rinoceronte*, Reimóndez signed a contract, however, the editor, Moisés R. Barcia, was unhappy with Reimóndez's translation of the book, particularly her use of the non-sexist language strategy 'elección en contrapunto' mentioned above.⁹⁹ Similarly, Reimóndez was unhappy with changes suggested by Barcia, which sought to neutralize Reimóndez's use of non-sexist language. Reimóndez refused to put her name on the cover of a translation that was in conflict with her previously outlined feminist-postcolonial translation politics and *Rinoceronte* subsequently terminated Reimóndez's contract, publishing the altered translation under Barcia's name. Reimóndez released a press statement online, which is no longer available, making public the details of the affair. This spawned a series of articles in the national and international press and sparked a court case where Reimóndez accused *Rinoceronte* of an illegal cancellation of her contract, while *Rinoceronte* accused Reimóndez of a breach of the same contract.

This incident has been discussed in detail in terms of the 'conflicting attitudes in Galicia towards theories of translation and ideology' and 'its implications for the discourse of normalization' (Castro, 2009; Reimóndez, 2009; Baxter, 2010; Miguélez-Carballeira, 2013). However, what I would like to examine is the media reception of this incident and the particular response to Reimóndez as a feminist. The press featured a whole spectrum of responses from writers and journalists with many articles portraying Reimóndez, as we shall see below, as the 'Madwoman in the translation attic' (Reimóndez: 2009, 81). *Rinoceronte*'s press statement, for example, begins with

⁹⁸ '[...] the practice of not buying the rights of a book before its translation is commissioned is fairly common in Galicia, where the number of translations remains low and translation policies vary widely from one publishing house to another' (Reimóndez: 2009, 76).

⁹⁹ In Reimóndez's translation words such as 'the sergeant' and 'the scientists' were translated as masculine: 'o sarxento' and 'os científicos'; words such as 'a windsurfer' and 'dentist' were translated as feminine: 'unha surfeira' and 'a dentista' and words, such as 'the police' and 'publishers' were translated as neutral: 'a policía' and 'a editora'.

the title '*Rinoceronte e o feminismo túzaro e malintencionado*' [Rinoceronte and the sullen and malicious feminism] (quoted in Reimóndez: 2009, 79). It then states that the quality of Reimóndez's translation was inadequate and alluded to 'o pobreza e inexactitude iniciais do texto' [the poverty and initial inaccuracies of the text] throughout the statement (2009, 79). *Rinoceronte* also states that the tone used by Reimóndez in their correspondence was 'groseiro e agresivo' [rude and aggressive] while theirs was 'flexible e conciliador' [flexible and conciliatory] (2009, 79). They also claim that Reimóndez's aim was to 'causar a maior dano posible a única editor galega especializada en tradución' (2009, 79).¹⁰⁰ In addition, though *Rinoceronte* admits that part of the agreement with Reimóndez included costs for corrections being taken out of her fee for the translation and that they had given her '10 páxinas con correccións en vermello en todas as liñas' [ten pages with corrections in red on every line] they were keen to add that they were paying her twenty percent more than they usually paid and had donated five percent of their profits to Reimóndez's NGO *Implicadas no Desenvolvemento* in 2006 (2009, 80). Finally, *Rinoceronte* states that 'por fortuna para os lectores, a tradución finalmente publicada d'O'¹⁰¹ curioso incidente do can á media noite fíxose ex novo, cun nivel de calidade equiparable ao dos outros títulos da editorial e libre dos ideoloxemas que subrepticamente intentou coar Reimóndez' (2009, 80).¹⁰² With this press statement, *Rinoceronte*'s aim is clearly to present the publishing house as charitable, fair and accommodating, while portraying Reimóndez as an angry feminist who wanted to dupe readers with her translation.

Critical responses to the dispute in the Spanish press were quite extreme and revealed hostility towards feminist approaches to translation. One such response came from the Catalan journalist and novelist Quim Monzó. Monzó – who is well-known for his use of irony – has a column in the Spanish daily *La Vanguardia* in which he regularly comments on, what he believes to be, absurdities of the Spanish language. In his 2012 article 'Que no se me ponga adelante', for example, he discusses the use of the verb 'reinventarse', which does not actually exist in Spanish, while in 2011 his article 'Manda huevos y huevas' addresses the issue of a company being threatened

¹⁰⁰ 'To cause as much damage as possible to the only Galician editor specialising in translation'

¹⁰¹ Capital 'O' in the original text

¹⁰² 'fortunately for the readers, the final translation published of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* was new, with a level of quality comparable to the other titles of the publishing house and free of ideologies that Reimondez surreptitiously tried to include'.

with a fine for contravening the Ley de Igualdad by using ‘programador’ instead of ‘programador/a’ in a job advertisement. In this case Monzó refers to the forward slash and the letter ‘a’ used after the masculine form of a noun in an attempt to include women as ‘aberraciones lingüísticas’ (*La Vanguardia*, 2011). It is unsurprising, therefore, that Monzó was intrigued by Reimóndez’s case.

In his article ‘Las estrategias de traducción estrategias son’, in which he uses his typical ironic style, Monzó stated that ‘me gustaría desde aquí enviar un mensaje de ánimo a Reimóndez. Ella ha hecho lo que ha hecho para llevar la narrativa de Haddon a caminos mejores de los que había decidido su autor, hombre al fin y al cabo’ (2008). He goes on to compare Reimóndez to the eighteenth-century writer and translator Claude de Lognes d’Autroche who spent his life re-working humanity’s great works such as Virgil’s *Aeneid* and Milton’s *Paradise Lost*. D’Autroche wanted to ‘correct’ these great works by editing the ‘choses faibles ou inutiles’ and adding ‘beautés nouvelles’. The source of Monzó’s reference to d’Autroche is the *Livre des bizarres* (1965), a dictionary comprised of, according to the book’s preface, ‘lunaires, incompris ou monstrueux, souvent rejetés par les sociétés qui les ont vu naître [...]’ (no pagination) although Monzó does not make clear if he thinks d’Autroche and Reimóndez are lunatics or misunderstood. He does state, however, that ‘Pasada por su tamiz, la literatura actual se hubiese visto libre de la deriva masculina de muchos de sus autores’. He adds, in what appears to be a sarcastic tone, that it is a shame ‘que el afán de Reimóndez por remodelar la narrativa contemporánea encuentre obstáculos que no merece’ and exclaims at the end that ‘Daría un ovario por poder leer las novelas de Henry Miller – por ejemplo – convenientemente trabajadas por las manos hábiles de la traductora María Reimóndez!’ (2008). What Monzó does here, in his sarcastic commentary of the situation, is disparage the feminist translation practice of subverting male-authored texts and deliberately glosses over the profound political implications of feminist translation. The image Monzó conveys here is of an egotistical translator whose aim is to improve upon male-authored works through her own translations. In addition, the phrases ‘pasado por su tamiz’ and ‘libre de la deriva masculina’ give the impression that Reimóndez is a man-hating feminist on a crusade to censor and exclude the male gender from literature entirely.

In an article for the Galician newspaper *Galiciaé*, the Galician writer Santiago Jaureguizar states the facts of the case before highlighting the support Reimóndez has

received from fellow feminist writers María Xosé Queizán and Lucía Etxebarria. ‘A tradutora xa atopou o apoio de María Xosé Queizán, que entende que o feminismo debe ir alén o uso desas estrambóticas arrobas que serven para masculino/feminino’ (2008).¹⁰³ Jaureguizar is referring here to the use of the “at” (@) sign at the end of nouns to denote either a masculine or feminine ending. As it states in the Real Academia Española’s article 2.1 on the gender of words ‘ha comenzado a usarse en carteles y circulares el símbolo de la arroba @ como recurso gráfico para integrar en una sola palabra las formas masculina y femenina del sustantivo, ya que este signo parece incluir en su trazo las vocales *a* y *o*: l@s niñ@s’ (lema.rae.es). In her article ‘Cuerpos hablados, cuerpos negados y el fascinante devenir del género gramatical’ (2015), Mercedes Bengoechea discusses the importance of the arroba as part of strategies to grant agency and visibility to women. Bengoechea also explains that the ‘@’ sign, in addition to being used as an identity marker, is also used to maintain anonymity (8). Bengoechea’s paper demonstrates that the arroba debate is multifaceted, complex and one that still has relevance in terms of identity formation in the Spanish nation-state. What is striking is that Jaureguizar not only dismisses the complex arroba debate as ‘estrambótico’, but also reduces the entire Galician and central Spanish feminist endeavour to this one semantic argument.

Further on in his article Jaureguizar states, ‘Tanto Queizán como Etxebarria defenden o dereito dunha tradutora a transformar unha obra segundo a súa ideoloxía, sen ter en conta o seu autor, Mark Haddon. Nese caso, xa me explicarán que diferenza ese poder que se arrogan co que o goberno franquista lle outorgaba aos seus censores’ (2008).¹⁰⁴ In this quote Jaureguizar adheres to an out-dated, essentialist notion of translation where the author is the creator of meaning and the translator should remain faithful to the source text. Similarly to Monzó, Jaureguizar equates feminist translation strategies with censorship, although Jaureguizar’s reference is less subtle and attempts to de-legitimize these feminist endeavours by comparing them to censorship under Franco. Finally, Jaureguizar states, ‘O que me estraña é Reimóndez non traducira *The curious incident of the dog in the night time* como *A curiosa incidencia da cadela a*

¹⁰³ ‘The translator has already garnered the support of María Xosé Queizán, who understands that feminism must go beyond the use of those bizarre “at” signs that serve for masculine/feminine.’

¹⁰⁴ ‘Both Queizán and Etxebarria defend the right of a translator to transform a work according to their ideology, without taking the author, Mark Haddon, into account. In this case, they have yet to explain to me what difference there is with this power that they claim and that the Francoist government allocated to their censors.’

medianoite. Con dúas arrobas' (2008).¹⁰⁵ Much like Monzó, Jaureguizar chooses to ridicule Reimóndez's project rather than engage seriously with the ideological clash between Reimóndez and *Rinoceronte* and also further reduces the arroba debate. Finally, Monzó and Jaureguizar's articles reveal the underlying patriarchal values that govern the literary field as well as the resistance to strategies attempting to make the Spanish language more inclusive.

What is particularly revealing as regards Reimóndez's positioning within the Galician literary field is not so much her use of feminist translation strategies *per se*, but rather the extreme responses to the use of these strategies. As stated in Reimóndez's article on the translation of *Hear Me Sanjaya* the use of non-sexist language is not considered to be a subversive translation strategy and Reimóndez understands it to be a level of 'minimum intervention'. The fact that Reimóndez did not translate the title in the way Jaureguizar suggests she should have, indicates that her approach to this text was not a radical feminist one, merely a gender inclusive one and one that is apt for the book. As Castro states, the subject of the book is a young boy with Asperger's syndrome and therefore, '[...] the novel does not directly address issues of women's empowerment, but yet equality could be considered an underlying value' (44). Similarly, in her 2014 paper 'Translation in the Feminine: Theory, Commitment and (Good) Praxis', where she discusses Reimóndez's case, prominent Galician academic Manuela Palacios conveys surprise at the treatment the translator has received and states on a number of occasions that Reimóndez's approach is 'moderately feminist' even putting the phrase in italics to emphasize the fact. The over-reactions to this 'moderately feminist' translation is concerning as it suggests that a more radical feminist strategy would be received with even more hostility. In addition, it forces feminist academics wanting to defend Reimóndez into a position where they downplay Reimóndez's feminist translation strategy.

In her 2014 article on translation in Galicia, Palacios discusses why Reimóndez may have been received with hostility. She states, for example, that '[t]he nascent translation industry in Galicia is still marred by a bad praxis that exposes the power imbalance among the various actors involved in the translation process' (87). Thus, in the case of Reimóndez, although her approach was legitimate, an unwillingness to

¹⁰⁵ What I find strange is that Reimóndez did not translate *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time* as *The Curious Incidence of the Bitch –female dog - in the Night Time*. With two "at" signs.

employ non-sexist translation strategies by *Rinoceronte* led to her contract being terminated. Her subsequent treatment in the press indicates the power and prestige of *Rinoceronte*, as well as the fear and mistrust with which feminism is still viewed by certain literary critics. Indeed in her article ‘Feminist Translation? No Way! Spanish Specialist Translators’ Disinterest in Feminist Translation’ (2014), Bengoechea explains how translation courses and textbooks reinforce anti-feminist translation strategies. She states that ‘translatology has magnified the alleged egocentric role of feminist translation at odds with the ideology of equivalence’ and has fostered a fear of feminist translation, viewing it as extreme radicalism (no pagination). This reinforces the idea of out-dated translation strategies supporting ‘fidelity’ to the text being promoted in the Spanish nation-state and a rejection of progressive feminist strategies.

My analysis in this section has largely focused on Reimóndez’s position within the literary field as a translator, as this is particularly revealing for what it tells us about how women writers negotiate different roles within the Galician literary field. The Reimóndez case demonstrates the increasing flexibility of the Galician literary field and the roles that women can occupy within it. In particular, Reimóndez’s case shows how a feminist woman writer and translator can achieve success with a strong literary persona and the support of a prestigious publishing house, such as *Xerais*. However, Reimóndez’s case also demonstrates how reactions to women occupying new roles and taking new approaches to literature can often be negative. Thus, while there have been significant developments in the visibility and success of women writers in the twenty-first century Galician literary field, there are certain sections of the literary field where traditional, and often patriarchal, notions of literature and translation persist. Rather than these traditional and/or patriarchal notions being used to silence Reimóndez’s voice, the flexibility and complexity of the Galician literary field allows Reimóndez to perform multiple roles and thus respond to such patriarchal approaches in her role as an academic. In addition, the controversy caused by her feminist approaches to translation and the subsequent negative reactions, only affords Reimóndez more space in the media and academic journals. Thus, through having a strong literary persona and through occupying several roles within the literary field and social fields, Reimóndez has been able to successfully negotiate her position in

Galician literature, while also exposing some patriarchal notions of literature that still exist.

In conclusion, this chapter demonstrates the complex literary environment that Galician women writers must negotiate to achieve visibility. In addition, this chapter shows how Queizán has paved the way for both herself and other women writers within the Galician literary field, while also carving out a separate feminist space in which to re-vindicate the voice of women writers who have been forgotten or ignored. Furthermore, though Queizán is a pioneer, this chapter has also proved her continued relevance in the Galician literary field and her efforts to push boundaries and provoke reactions from readers. In terms of Reimóndez, this chapter has demonstrated the flexibility with which women writers can now operate in the literary field in terms of occupying multiple roles and losing the engrained association with poetry. In addition, it has shown how more women writers are winning prizes gaining recognition within the literary field. However, this chapter has also demonstrated that *Xerais* publishing house has had a large part to play in the visibility of women writers and that outside this site other publishing houses are not always supportive, particularly of overt feminist writers. Finally, this chapter has shown the difference in meaning between Queizán being described as aggressive by feminist critics, where it is taken to mean that the writer is assertive and pushes for change; and Reimóndez being portrayed as aggressive by *Rinoceronte* and press critics, where the meaning implied is that the writer is a ‘madwoman’. It also shows that although feminist writers are able to push boundaries with their own narrative fiction, it is not as well received in the field of translation. As has been discussed in this chapter, this is possibly due to commercial and economic factors, such as the publishing houses who own the rights to translations, and cultural factors, such as an adherence to the notion of the ‘original’ text and fidelity to the original. In the next chapter on the marketing and reception of women writers in the Basque literary field, the strategy of carving out a separate space will be explored further as well as how the prestige of different genres can affect an author’s reception. In addition, it will also examine further how the politics of the nation and national identity can affect reception, but also be used as a strategy for women writers to achieve visibility.

Chapter 2: ‘The Personal is Political’¹⁰⁶: The Marketing and Reception of Mariasun Landa and Laura Mintegi

Mariasun Landa (Errenteria,¹⁰⁷ 1949) and Laura Mintegi (Lizarra,¹⁰⁸ 1955) are two well-known writers in the Basque Country. Although Basque is Mintegi’s second and Landa’s third language,¹⁰⁹ both writers boast impressive thirty-year careers in the Basque cultural field: Mintegi in journalism, literature, academia, and, until recently, politics; Landa in children’s literature, self-translation, education, and, more recently, literature for adults. As the Basque cultural field is relatively compact compared to other cultural fields mentioned earlier in this thesis, the multiple roles that Mintegi and Landa play within the Basque cultural field such as writer, translator, critic and even politician, are indicative of the situation of Basque writers in general and raise intriguing questions regarding identity, nation and the role of the author in cultural production. However, as shall be discussed later on in this chapter, Landa’s attempts to reflect on her latest text *Inurrien hiztegia* (The Ant’s Dictionary: 2013) and justify its position in the literary field through referencing international writers, architects and philosophers with similar approaches to cultural production were rejected by critics. The rejection of Landa commenting on her own text is one indication that the rapid expansion of the Basque literary field in the twenty-first century has led to more separate and defined roles for cultural producers. This chapter will also examine the complex linguistic situation in which Landa and Mintegi both operate and how the justification of their personal linguistic choices of authors form part of their marketing campaigns. Finally, this chapter will argue that the willingness of Basque nationalists

¹⁰⁶This quote is the title of a well-known women’s liberation article published in 1970 and written by Carol Hanisch. The article is a discussion of women who consider themselves apolitical in contrast to those who are more politically active. The main subject of the piece is that ‘personal problems are political problems’ and the validity of arguments and opinions of apolitical and politically motivated women (Hanisch: 2006, 4). In this chapter, it is used to refer to the specific Basque literary context and how the personal choices of authors are politicised.

¹⁰⁷ Errenteria is situated in the north-eastern region of Guipúzkoa in the Basque Country.

¹⁰⁸ Lizarra is part of Navarre (Chartered Community of Navarre), which is a separate autonomous community from the Basque Country and is divided into three linguistic zones: 1. Zone where the majority speak Basque 2. Mixed zone 3. Zone where the majority speak Castilian. Lizarra (or Estella in Castilian) is situated in the mixed zone.

¹⁰⁹ The reason why Landa and Mintegi learned Basque at a later stage in their lives, as well as the effects of learning Basque at a later stage on the reception of both authors as well as their reasons for eventually learning the language will be discussed further on in the chapter.

to disassociate the Basque nationalist left with the violence of ETA has led to a patriarchal, gendered reading of Mintegi's image and the portrayal of her in the media as the serene 'cara amable' of Basque politics. This chapter will begin with an overview of the Basque publishing industry and the place of women writers, particularly Landa and Mintegi, within it.

The number of books published in Basque has increased exponentially since the 1970s. Between 1976 and 1994, for example, an average of 660 books per year were published. Since 1994, that average has risen to 1450 books per year and, in spite of the economic crisis mentioned in chapter one, has remained at this level through to the present day. Aside from a general increase in book production noted across the Spanish nation-state in 1996, there are a number of factors, specific to the Basque literary field, to explain the growth of Basque literary production: new educational models, government grants and literary prizes, and translation. The passing of the *Statute of Autonomy* (1979) and the *Law of the Normalization of the Use of the Basque Language* (1982) led, among other things, to the creation of bilingual education models. There are currently three educational models in the Basque Country: models A, B and D. In model A, all lessons are taught in Castilian, with the exception of Basque language classes. In model B, some lessons are taught in Basque and others in Castilian, with the lessons in Castilian usually being mathematics and reading and writing in Castilian. In Model D, all lessons are taught in Basque, with the exception of Castilian language classes. According to enrolment statistics for the 2014-2015 academic year, 60.89% of students in the Basque Country were following Model D.¹¹⁰ As students across the Spanish nation-state have to purchase their own school books, the high number of children attending lessons predominantly in Basque gives Basque children's literature an almost guaranteed readership. Indeed, the majority of books published by the Basque literary field are school textbooks and the Basque Country produces the largest percentage of children's literature in comparison to other autonomous communities.¹¹¹ Indeed, Landa began her career in children's literature in 1982, writing books for the children at the *Ikastola* where she worked at the time.

¹¹⁰ It is worth noting that the percentage of children in model D in primary education is around 70%, while this figure decreases to around 50% in secondary education.

¹¹¹ Children's literature is 30.51% of book production in Basque in comparison with 19.77% in Catalan, 13.09% in Valencian, 12.67% in Galician and 6.26% in Castilian.

Thus, as regards the role of the education sector in the Basque literary field, there is strong support for education in Basque and therefore books written in Basque.

Further support for Basque literature comes from the *Euskal Jaurlaritza* (Basque government), which heavily subsidises literary production through grants and prizes. The most important grant is the ‘Ayuda a la producción editorial en Euskera’, which awards grants to aid publishers with the production of literary works in Basque. Though it is unclear when the *Euskal Jaurlaritza* introduced this support, statistics indicate that in the year 2000 the Basque government awarded a total of 438,738 euros worth of grants to Basque publishers to cover 100% of publishing costs and continues to fund literary production. In 2014, for example, the *Euskal Jaurlaritza* awarded 511,800 euros worth of grants to aid publishers with the production of Basque literary works. These grants were divided between nineteen publishing houses in total, who were awarded grants of between 1,678 euros and 130,499 euros. The list of grant recipients included some of the most well-known and prolific Basque publishing houses, such as *Elkar*, *Erein* and *Pamiela*. Though the amount awarded has risen rather than fallen, the grants now only cover up to 70% of publication costs, which would indicate that publishing houses are less dependent on the government for funding. However, these figures demonstrate just how important these grants still are for the production of Basque literature and I would argue that these grants, out of necessity, skew the healthy publication statistics mentioned above.

In terms of prizes, since 1997, the *Euskal Jaurlaritza* has held the annual *Premios Literarios Euskadi*. The prize has seven categories, which include the prize for literature in Basque and the prize for children’s literature in Basque. The prizes are not awarded to publishing houses, rather to individual authors. The winner of each category is awarded 18,000 euros. Though the focus is on literature written in Basque, there are also prizes for literature and essays written in Castilian, but whose author originates from the Basque Country.¹¹² This is significant as it demonstrates that Basque literature is not defined by language. As is the case with other literary prizes in other literary fields, there is a huge disparity between the number of female and male winners. Since the beginning of the prize there have only been two female winners of the *Premio Euskadi* for literature in Basque, Lourdes Oñederra (2000) and

¹¹² The remaining prizes are as follows: Literary translation into Basque, Illustration of a literary work, and Essay in Basque.

Itxaro Borda (2002); and only one female winner of the prize for children's literature, Miren Agur Meabe, although the writer has won the award three times (2002, 2007, 2011). Thus, these facts demonstrate the importance of prizes within the Basque literary field and that women are less successful at winning these awards. Based on this information I would argue that, albeit unwittingly, the Basque literary prize system is inherently sexist and reinforces patriarchal norms.

Further evidence of sexism in Basque literary production can be found in the translation of literary works into Basque. Translation is a central component of the Basque literary field. According to Manuel López Gaseni, translation into Basque is a fundamental factor in 'la creación de un lenguaje literario autóctono, la aportación de repertorios literarios de los que la literatura vasca carecía previamente, y la renovación de determinados modelos que comenzaban a resultar caducos' (2008, no pagination). In addition, the theorist Itmar Even-Zohar, speaking of literary systems in general, states that translation from other literatures into the target language is necessary,

[...] (a) when a polysystem has not yet been crystallized, that is to say, when a literature is 'young', in the process of being established; (b) when the literature is either 'peripheral' (within a large group of correlated literatures) or 'weak,' one or both; and (c) when there are turning points, crises, or literary vacuums in literature (1990, 47).

Thus, translation is needed to aid the development of literatures trying to establish themselves, to grant authority to 'peripheral literatures' and to enhance a literature by filling any gaps. In the Basque case this relates to literary classics or canonical texts that come to define a literature and create a literary language.

In addition, the issue of literary genre is also a central concern in the creation of a national literary field. Though the first text in Basque was a book of poems, *Linguae Vasconum Primitiae* (1545), by Bernat Etxepare, subsequently the Basque literary field was dominated by pastoral texts. In addition, as Olaziregi observes, the Basque literary field faced obstacles such as the difficulty of publishing in Basque, prohibitions on publishing, and lost publications (2008, 3). It was not until the nineteenth century with the *Euskal Pizkundea* (Basque Renaissance, 1876-1936) and the publishing of novels in Basque that Basque literature would truly establish itself. It was during this period, for example, that the first novel in Basque was published,

Auñemendiko Lorea (1898)¹¹³, a historical novel by the priest Domingo Agirre (1864-1920). Indeed, Jean Haritschelhar describes Agirre as ‘[e]l verdadero creador de la novela vasca’ (2008, no pagination), while Olaziregi states that ‘[l]a influencia de Domingo Agirre fue crucial en la evolución de la novela vasca pues será el modelo costumbrista fijado en sus novelas *Kresala* (El salitre, 1906) y *Garoa* (El helecho, 1912) el que perdurará hasta mediados del siglo XX’ (2011, 69). Thus, the history of Basque literature demonstrates that genre is a key issue in the perceived development of a literature and the publication of novels being perceived as a marker of a literature’s ‘maturity’. This is due to novels and prose gaining more prestige as a genre in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In the case of Basque literature, as has been demonstrated in this paragraph, the publication of novels began in the late nineteenth century.

Given the perceived importance of the novel, and narrative more broadly, in establishing literary maturity, projects emerged in the Basque Country, from the late twentieth century onwards, which attempted to build this literary maturity in a Basque context. One such case in point is the project to establish a set of formative literary texts that could be integrated into the Basque literary field, in 1989 the Basque government made an agreement with the *Euskal Itzultzaile, Zuzentzaile eta Interpretelen Elkarte* (EIZIE, Association of Translators, Correctors and Interpreters of Basque Language)¹¹⁴ to translate international classic works into Basque. The result of this agreement is the collection *Literatura Unibertsala* (Universal Literature), which, at the time of writing, consists of 166 titles including works by William Shakespeare, Mark Twain and Mary Shelley. There have, so far, been three stages to this project. The first stage (1990-2002) saw 100 translations published, largely by the publishing house *Ibaizabal*. The second stage (2002-2010) saw 52 translations published by the publishing houses *Elkar* and *Alberdania*. The third stage (2011 onwards) has seen 14 translations published so far with a total of 50 translations expected at the end of this phase from publishing houses *Erein* and *Igela*. A similar project was also started in 1991 called *Pentsamenduaren Klasikoak* (Classics of Thought). This collection was funded by the BBVA Foundation as well as the banks of Bizkaia, Guipuzkoa and Araba in collaboration with the University of the Basque

¹¹³ *The flower of the Pyrenees*.

¹¹⁴ The EIZIE was created in 1987.

Country (EHU) and the University of Deusto with the aim of translating works of philosophical, scientific and political theory into Basque. The collection, which is freely available online,¹¹⁵ currently consists of 130 texts and authors translated include Plato, Albert Camus and Charles Darwin. Thus, importing and translating foreign texts into the target language, in this case Basque, is a key strategy in establishing literary maturity. In addition, the translation of classic or canonical works are perceived as important in terms of adding to the prestige of a literature. What the initiatives mentioned above reveal is the fact that various state, quasi-state, and private agencies within the Basque Country hold significant power in the shaping of the Basque literary field. These initiatives, far from being value-neutral, in fact set down boundaries and norms: by selecting who gets translated, and who doesn't. Thus, these translation initiatives effectively establish a literary canon and a set of norms.

What is striking about these two collections from a gender perspective is the lack of women writers and thinkers.¹¹⁶ In the first and second phases of the *Literatura Unibertsala* project, for example, 10% of the works translated are by female authors. It is worth noting that of the 14 works translated since 2011, 50% of these are authored by women, although it remains to be seen whether this parity continues. The figures are similar in the *Pentsamenduaren Klasikoak* collection. Only 3% of the works translated are authored by women (Hannah Arendt, Rachel Carson, Eve Curie and Dian Fossey) and, although the project has been running since 1991, the first female theorist/thinker was not translated until 2007.¹¹⁷ It is also worth noting that although Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* (1927) and Simone de Beauvoir's *La sang des autres* (1945) were among the first set of works translated (in 1993 and 2000 respectively), and are therefore defined under the title of "universal literature", their works of feminist theory do not appear in either of the classic collections. Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (1929) has been translated into Basque, but by an independent contemporary art company called *Consonni*, which, according to its website, operates 'con los feminismos como hoja de ruta'.¹¹⁸ Thus, these two collections reinforce the patriarchal and sexist notions of women as second-class citizens and their work as

¹¹⁵ <http://www.ehu.eus/ehg/klasikoak/>

¹¹⁶ Although this is possibly indicative of the patriarchal nature of the purported canon rather than of the Basque translation project itself.

¹¹⁷ This was *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (1963) by Hannah Arendt.

¹¹⁸ <https://www.consonni.org/es/consonni>

second rate.¹¹⁹ The notable absence of feminist thought from the *Pentsamenduaren Klasikoak* collection and its appearance in a specific feminist space indicates that feminist thought, as has been evident in previous chapters in this thesis, is not accepted by central literary and political institutions and omitted from canonical collections, such as those mentioned above.

These gender-biased collections, which have helped shape what is seen as the norm within the Basque literary field, also have implications for the representation of women writers in book reviews. The Basque publishing house *Susa* has a database of reviews of literature in Basque.¹²⁰ In total there are 6325 reviews dating from 1922 to the present day. The majority of these reviews are published in newspapers,¹²¹ although 20% of reviews are now published on blogs, indicating the significant role new technology has played in the visibility of Basque literature. It is also worth noting that the majority of reviews are of novels. This is unsurprising as around 60-70% of Basque literature published is prose and is the genre with the most prestige in the Basque Country and internationally. In the 1980s, on average, 58 reviews were published per year, of which, 90% had male-authored works as their subject (of which 10% were translations) while only 7% had female-authored works (of which 1% were translations).¹²² In the 1990s, the average number of reviews published per year increased to 103, almost double the number published in the 1980s. During this period, 80% of criticism reviewed male-authored works (of which 15% were translations), while still only 7% reviewed female-authored works (of which 1% were translations). Between the year 2000 and 2014 an average of 295 reviews were published per year with 76% of these concerning male authors (of which 14% were translations) and 20% concerning female authors (of which 6% were translations). These figures paint a bleak picture in terms of the representation of women writers. Though there has been an increased interest in works by women writers since the turn of the century, these figures show the prestige that foreign works, particularly those authored by men, have

¹¹⁹ This is discussed by feminist theorists, such as Elaine Showalter in *A Literature of Their Own: From Charlotte Bronte to Doris Lessing* (1977). In a Spanish context, this is discussed by Stuart Davis in *Writing and Heritage in Contemporary Spain: The Imaginary Museum of Literature* (2012). For an opposing view and an examination of the limitations of feminist canon theory see E. Dean Kolbas's *Critical Theory and the Literary Canon* (2001).

¹²⁰ This can be found at the following web address: <http://kritikak.armiarma.eus/>

¹²¹ Newspapers listed on the website are: *Argia*, *Berria*, *El Diario Vasco*, *El Correo*, *Gara*, *Egunkaria*, *Deia*, *El País*, *Aizu!*, *Irunero*, *Zeruko Argia*, *Egin* and *Hegats*.

¹²² All figures regarding book reviews have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number.

within the Basque literary field and how they can hinder the visibility of women writers. Finally, the percentages of male and female translators for the *Literatura Unibertsala* project stand at 82% and 18% respectively.

If the above paragraphs have illustrated how the Basque government, and other quasi-state bodies, have a significant influence on the Basque literary field in terms of translation into Basque, a further important role has been in pioneering (and thus, sanctioning) translations from Basque into other languages. Given that the main objective of the literary projects mentioned above has been to encourage people to read works in Basque, it is unsurprising that the Basque government has given much less financial support to this area of literary promotion and dissemination. In the *Premios Euskadi*, for example, there is no prize for translation from Basque into another language. Instead, authors who win the literature and children's literature prizes are awarded an extra 4,000 euros if they can find a publisher willing to produce their book in translation. In his book *Ese idioma raro y poderoso: once decisiones cruciales que un escritor vasco está obligado a tomar* (2012), the writer Iban Zaldúa expresses his frustration with this process. He states that '[...] ese dinero debería gastarse precisamente en encontrar editorial y traducción para la obra, y de ello no debería encargarse el autor [...]' (111). For Zaldúa then, it is the government and not the writer who should find a translator and publisher for Basque works.

Recognising the need for the dissemination and promotion of Basque literature in the international literary world, in 2008 the Basque government created the *Etxepare* Institute, similar to other quasi-state bodies such as the *Instituto Cervantes* and the *Institut Ramon Llull*, to promote the international dissemination of the Basque language and culture. In 2015, the *Etxepare* Institute created grants for the translation of Basque literature¹²³ and also introduced the *Etxepare-Laboral Kutxa* Translation Prize, although the funding is significantly lower than that for translations into Basque.¹²⁴ In addition, in April 2015, the institute created a competition for international translators to visit the Basque Country, learn the language and possibly

¹²³ The *Etxepare* Institute has allocated 39,000 euros worth of grants to fund the translation of works in Basque or in Castilian, but whose author is Basque, into another language. The grants only cover the cost of translation and not publication costs (<http://www.jusap.ejgv.euskadi.eus/r47-bopvapps/es/bopv2/datos/2015/04/1501571a.pdf>).

¹²⁴ The translation prize is worth 4,000 euros and 'rewards the quality of the translation itself and the publisher's promotional strategy'. As such, the publisher and translator share the prize (<http://www.etxepare.eus/en/etxepare-laboral-kutxa-translation-prize>).

translate a Basque work into a language other than Castilian.¹²⁵ However it is worth noting that the institution's main aim is to promote the Basque language and, as such, encourages people to learn to speak, read and write in Basque, rather than to experience Basque culture in other languages.¹²⁶

In addition to the significant role that the Basque government has in shaping the literary field, there, however, are also other factors at play. One such factor is the position of Basque writers within the wider Spanish literary field, and one way in which Basque writers are able to get their work noticed in the wider literary market is through the *Premios Nacionales de Literatura*. The *Premios Nacionales de Literatura*, established in 1977, are awarded annually by the central Spanish government. The prize of 20,000 euros is awarded to one writer from each of the following categories: essay, drama, children's literature, poetry, 'poesía joven' and narrative. The prizes are open to any writers in the Spanish nation-state including those who write in languages other than Castilian, such as Galician, Catalan and Basque. Writers of languages other than Castilian, in addition to their submission in the original language, are also required to submit a copy translated into Castilian. In the history of the prize, three Basque writers have won the *Premio Nacional de Narrativa*: Bernardo Atxaga (1989), Unai Elorriaga (2002) and Kirmen Uribe (2009) with Basque works that were subsequently published in Castilian (*Obabakoak*, *Sprako tranbia* and *Bilbao-New York-Bilbao*, respectively). In addition, Mariasun Landa was awarded the prize for children's literature with her book *Krokodriloa ohe azpian* in 2003. This particular prize is a launch pad for authors and their works to gain international recognition.¹²⁷ Over the 26 years since winning the prize Atxaga's *Obabakoak* has been translated

¹²⁵ The full title is 'Convocatoria de selección de traductores de ámbito internacional a fin de que realicen estancias en el País Vasco para aprender euskera' (<http://www.etxepare.eus/es/convocatoria-de-seleccion-de-traductores-de-ambito-internacional-a-fin-de-que-realicen-estancias-en-el-pais-vasco-para-aprender-euskera>).

¹²⁶ Its main target is university students and the institute now has native speakers teaching language classes in 29 universities around the world including the UK, Italy, France, Germany, Poland, Hungary, Latin America and the USA. In 2015, five new language assistants have been announced: one in Paris, two in the United States, one in Cuba and one in the UK. In addition, there are now 5 chairs of Basque Studies in New York, Chicago, Frankfurt, Liverpool and Nevada-Reno. The University of Nevada also has a Basque Studies centre that was founded in 1967. Originally, studies were conducted on Basque as an integral part of the sheep industry, but has since widened its scope and although research still focuses largely on anthropological subjects the centre also produces translations of Basque books into English as well as research on Basque literary history. For more information see the Basque Studies Centre website at the following address: <http://basque.unr.edu/>

¹²⁷ In the 12 years since winning her prize, Landa's *Krokodriloa ohe azpian* has been translated into 6 languages, as far afield as Russian, Korean and Slovakian. Landa's other works have been translated into a total of 17 languages, making Landa and Atxaga the most translated Basque authors.

into 26 languages, among them English, French, Italian and Romanian. It is worth noting, however, that the books were translated into these languages from Castilian and not Basque. This fact illustrates that it is the Castilian language version that provides these Basque writers with the access to an international translation market, and not the Basque version.

However, as Sally Perret discusses in her article 'In the Name of the Nation? The National Award in Narrative Literature, and the Democratization of Art in Spain (1977-2013)' (2015), the *Premios Nacionales de Literatura* have their own agenda to promote a cohesive, inclusive, multi-cultural, multi-lingual Spanish nation-state, rather than promoting the works as part of their respective, separate literary fields. This is evidenced by the fact that during the past decade three of the prize-winners have been from Galicia and the Basque Country. In 2002, for example, the Basque writer Unai Elorriaga won with *SPako tranbia* (A Tram from SP). A year later, in 2003, the Galician writer Suso de Toro won with *Trece badaladas* (Thirteen Chimes) and in 2009 another Basque writer, Kirmen Uribe, won the award with *Bilbao-New York-Bilbao*. The decision to award the *Premio Nacional de Narrativa* to novels written by Galician and Basque writers and in their original languages was not without controversy. In 2003, the literary newspaper *El Cultural* published an excerpt of Elorriaga's text in Castilian, with an introductory paragraph explaining the controversy surrounding his win. The article stated that when Elorriaga won 'estalló la polémica, ya que muchos sospecharon que algunos miembros del jurado no habían podido leerlo, a pesar de que parte del libro, traducido apresuradamente al castellano, les había sido entregado' (2003). These comments reflect the suspicion with some view literary prizes in Spain and also demonstrate the tensions involving language, literature and identity that still exist within the Spanish nation-state. However, in spite of the prize's inclusive aim, as regards multilingualism, on the issue of gender inclusivity there is a different picture, since there have been relatively few female winners. In its 38 year history, there have only been two female winners (Carme Riera, 1995 and Carmen Martín Gaité, 1978).

Within this complex field with multiple agents and competing forces, Basque women writers have had to negotiate a space. Early research on the subject of women writers has focused on identifying Basque women authors as an object of study. The academic from the Basque centre in Reno, Linda White, for example, in her chapter

‘Escritoras vascas del siglo XX. Aproximación Histórica’ (2000) dispels what she sees as a commonly-held myth that women writers in the Basque Country do not exist and produces a list of 124 Basque women writers from the twentieth century. The reasons White cites for the perpetuation of the myth that Basque women writers do not exist are the publication of names, in that when the names of writers are published, particularly in newspaper articles, the author’s initials are used rather than their full name, making it difficult to tell whether the writer is male or female (266). In addition, White cites a lack of scholarly works about Basque women writers as another cause of the continuing myth (267). Although White’s arguments may not all still be relevant today, her chapter had an important role in starting the debates on Basque women’s writing.

Since White’s essay at the beginning of the twenty-first century feminist research of Basque literature and Basque women writers has burgeoned, particularly within the Basque Country itself. Although Amaia Álvarez in her 2005 article ‘Euskal emakume idazleen lekua literaturaren historian. Dorrearen arrakalak agerian uzten’¹²⁸ was still asking ‘Non daude emakume idazleak? Idazten dute emakumeek euskaraz?’ (37)¹²⁹; by 2013, academics at the University of the Basque Country, such as Álvarez and Gema Lasarte, who White mentions in passing are all producing research on Basque women writers. Lasarte, in particular, has a prolific body of work on Basque women writers and has discussed topics such as, the crime novels of Itxaro Borda, feminine characters in Basque literature, the construction of female identities in the work of Mariasun Landa, motherhood and male characters in the work of women writers.¹³⁰ In addition, outside the Basque Country, in Catalonia, project MUNCE¹³¹ headed by the University of Barcelona, looks at, among other subjects, the representation of women in the detective fiction of Itxaro Borda. Thus, the study of

¹²⁸ ‘The Place of Basque Women Writers in Literary History’

¹²⁹ ‘Where are the women writers? Do women write in Basque?’

¹³⁰ See for example, Lasarte’s articles ‘Martzelina, Iholdi, Teresa...Pertsonaia femeninoa euskal eleberrigintza garaikiden (1975-2000)’ (Jakín, 2006) and ‘Género eta sexuaren berridazketa: Itxaro Borda eta polizia eleberrien kasua’ (Euskera, 2013). Full references in bibliography.

¹³¹ MUNCE - *Mujeres y Novela Criminal en España (1975-2012): Autoras, figuras de poder, víctimas y criminales* – is a multi-faceted research project whose objective is to create a database of crime novels authored by women writers in the Spanish nation-state during the dates mentioned above, as well as to analyse these novels from the perspective of feminist studies, women’s studies and gender studies. (www.ub.edu/munce/content/qué-es-munce).

and interest in Basque women's writing is growing and is fertile ground for any researcher interested in feminist approaches to literature.

However, while there has been development in feminist research, there is also a sexist undercurrent that still pervades Basque literature in the twenty-first century, which replicates that of the awarding of literary prizes and the representation of women writers in book reviews. The book *Bost idazle* (2005)¹³², for example, supposedly a representation of Basque literature, contained in-depth interviews with five Basque writers, all of whom were men.¹³³ As late as 2010, the academic and member of the *Euskaltzainia* (Basque Royal Academy), Gorka Aulestia, published a literary history looking at Basque writers from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present day, entitled *Escritores euskéricos contemporáneos*. As is the case with *Bost idazle*, all twenty-three writers discussed in the book are men. In the prologue, Aulestia explains that the brevity of the book necessitated making difficult choices and names various 'important' authors he had to omit from the book. While the majority of these are men, Aulestia does mention the woman writer Arantxa Urretabizkaia. Aulestia says of the omissions that 'no fue ésta nuestra primera intención, pero en esta vida, a menudo, nos vemos obligados a aceptar que los planes quedan incompletos, debido a causas ajenas a nuestra voluntad, como quedó incompleta la Sinfonía "Unfinished" (La Inacabada) de Schubert' (2010, XII). Aulestia's attempt to explain his choices do not actually deal with the issue of why he has not included these authors and, more specifically, why he has not included any women writers. In addition, in comparing himself to Schubert's unfinished work, Aulestia is setting up his book as a masterpiece even with the omissions mentioned above.

In the case of *Bost idazle* there was a prompt reaction from Basque women writers and an opposing book of interviews with eight women writers was published, by the same publishing house, in 2006 entitled *Zortzi unibertso, zortzi idazle* (eight universes, eight writers). The fact that both books are published by the same publishing house is a possible indication of the size of the Basque literary field, in that, there are not many publishing houses that would publish these works. In addition, it could also

¹³² Five writers.

¹³³ The five writers are: Bernardo Atxaga, Koldo Izagirre, Ramon Saizarbitoria, Anjel Lertxundi and Joseba Sarrionandia.

be an indication of a publishing house wishing to demonstrate that it is not sexist, or wishing to capitalize on the gender discourse that could ensue. The editor of the book, Basque writer Ana Urkiza makes clear in the introduction that the book is a direct response to *Bost idazle* and intended as a form of righting the balance. She states that ‘[t]ras la lectura de *Bost idazle*, me pregunté si, realmente, las mujeres no tenían cabida en aquella lista de escritores’ (2010,7)¹³⁴ and adds that the objective of the book is to ‘dar a conocer la existencia de mujeres escritoras que se han de incluir en el canon de la literatura vasca, y decir cuáles son; y, por otro lado, despertar inquietud en torno al canon de la literatura vasca, prestando voz a las cuestiones habituales’ (2010, 8). However, the book goes beyond merely righting the balance. With the title, for example, Urkiza seems to suggest that there are more women writers worthy of canonization (eight instead of five) and are not merely writers, but have created eight separate literary universes. In addition, the in-depth interviews, which Urkiza splits into four sections: the writer (as a person, woman and creator), their work, the woman (referring to their public persona) and Basque literature (specifically the canon and literary criticism) are subversive and, as a unit, create a ground-breaking text in Basque.

In spite of Urkiza’s attempt to correct the gender imbalance in the Basque literary canon, however, the book was largely received with silence. The two reviews that were published, were done so a year after the book’s publication by Mikel Ayerbe in the daily periodical *Berria* (2007) and Iban Zaldúa in *El País* (2007). In his review, Ayerbe argues that a comparison of *Bost idazle* and *Zortzi unibertso zortzi idazle*, should not be a competition between men and women, but rather that Urkiza’s text should be seen as complementing Etxeberria’s. He states that ‘Lehenak, euska literaturan esangurasuak diren bost idazle aurkezten ditu. Bigarrenak, aldiz, beste zortzi’.¹³⁵ Zaldúa, meanwhile, draws attention to the silence that has surrounded the book, pointing out that while *Bost idazle* was reviewed six times in its year of publication, *Zortzi unibertso, zortzi idazle* was not reviewed once. In addition, he suggests that had Urkiza kept the all-male canon suggested in *Bost idazle* and added women writers to it creating, as Zaldúa terms it, a ‘unisex counter-canon’, then the

¹³⁴ The following quotes are taken from the 2010 Castilian translation of the book by Gerardo Markuleta. Full reference in bibliography.

¹³⁵ ‘In the first book, five writers that are meaningful to Basque literature are presented. In the second book, there are another eight’.

book would have been received more positively. What Ayerbe and Zaldúa's reviews demonstrate is that they both disagree with the objective of Urkiza's book and the gender imbalance she is trying to address, while simultaneously reinforcing patriarchal and sexist norms. It is worth noting too that although Zaldúa suggests that the inclusion of male writers in Urkiza's book would have improved the work, there is no corresponding suggestion in any of the reviews of *Bost idazle* that the inclusion of women writers would enhance the text.

As stated in the introduction, both Landa and Mintegi learned Basque later in life, in the case of Landa, when she was in her early twenties, and in the case of Mintegi, when she was in her teens. The reasons that Landa and Mintegi both give for eventually learning the language, besides a commitment to the national project, is that they regretted not being able to communicate with their grandparents, in particular, their grandfathers. In her book chapter 'Identity, Language, Creation (An Autobiographical Vision)' (2009), for example, Landa states that:

In my diaries I always find a reference to a good resolution to learn Euskara, that secret marginalized language, just as we have always taken sides in favour of the small David in his struggle against Goliath. Or perhaps it was because I was never able to speak with my grandfather. I would sit together with him, we would play cards, but I do not remember having been able to maintain a conversation with him. I now dare term the feeling as one of lacking something, a feeling of frustration with respect to a language that one loves but one does not know how to love, a "linguistic wound", and intimate suffering that is not exempted from a certain feeling of guilt. That is why learning Euskara, that affectionate language, was the main outstanding debt I carried over from my childhood and youth (69).

This extended quote is necessary to demonstrate the inter-connected political and deeply personal reasons for Landa wanting to learn Basque. The inability to learn Basque due to the oppression of the language under Franco's dictatorship left Landa unable to converse with a beloved family member. This left Landa with a personal and political determination to learn the language. Mintegi has a similar story. In the book of interviews with Basque women writers, entitled *Zortzi unibertso, zortzi idazle* (2006), Laura Mintegi explains that her father lost his Basque during the Civil War and was not able to speak it at all afterwards. She then explains that it was her grandfather who first motivated her to learn Basque. She states that, '[g]ogoratzen dut

nire aitaren aitak, aititak, nik hamar urte nituela, garaiko 25 pezeta ematen zizkidala esaldi bat euskaraz esateagatik, eta nik, loritoaren antzera errepikatzen nuela paga lortzeko. Dirutza zen 25 pezeta 60ko hamarkadan' (176).¹³⁶ Thus, it was a relationship with their grandfathers that prompted Mintegi and Landa to learn Basque, whether the motivation was emotional or monetary. Both writers also blame Franco's dictatorship and the oppression of the Basque language during this time, for not being able to learn Basque sooner, or to have been taught Basque by their parents. This puts Mintegi and Landa in a different position to women writers from a different generation, starting their careers in the twenty-first century, who did not experience the Civil War and have grown up with the freedom to choose which language they want to speak and learn in.

Mariasun Landa

Over the course of her career Mariasun Landa has written over thirty children's books¹³⁷, two books for adults and has won many literary prizes¹³⁸ including both the Basque and Spanish national prizes for children's literature, as well as a nomination for the Hans Christian Anderson medal, considered to be the Nobel Prize of children's literature.¹³⁹ Landa's self-translation allows her to comfortably operate in both the Basque and Spanish literary fields and, as mentioned above, along with the well-known Basque author Bernado Atxaga, Landa is one of the most translated writers from the Basque Country.¹⁴⁰ In addition, Landa's work has been extensively studied in comparison to other women writers, the majority of the academic studies being written by the above-mentioned Gema Lasarte and Mari Jose Olaziregi. A thematic

¹³⁶ I remember my father's father, my grandfather, I was ten years old when he offered me 25 pesetas to speak in Basque and I copied him like a parrot in order to get paid. 25 pesetas was a fortune to a ten year old in the 1960s.

¹³⁷ A comprehensive list of all Landa's books can be found on her website: www.mariasunlanda.net

¹³⁸ Prizes Landa has won are as follows: the Lizardi award for *Txan Fantasma* (1982), the Premio Euskadi de Literatura Infantil y Juvenil for *Alex* (1991), the Antonio Maria Labaien award for *Krokodiloa ohe azpian* (2002), the Premio Nacional de Literatura Infantil y Juvenil for *Krokodiloa ohe azpian* (2003). She has also been on the IBBY (International Board on Books for Young People) honour list twice (1992 and 2006) and has recently received two awards for her overall contribution to Basque literature and the cultural development of the Basque Country; the Dabilen Elea prize in 2011 and the Eusko Ilaskuntza-Laboral Kutxa (Humanities, Culture, Arts and Social Sciences Award) in 2014 respectively.

¹³⁹ It is worth noting that in the list of nominees for the Hans Christian Anderson Medal, Landa's nationality is listed as Spanish, although her entry is in Basque. This seems to reinforce the image of a cohesive, multicultural, multilingual Spain, as mentioned with regards to the Spanish national prize for literature.

¹⁴⁰ Her work has been translated into languages such as, Polish, Slovakian, Italian, Korean, Russian and Breton among others.

analysis of Landa's literature appears in Mari Jose Olaziregi's 1999 dissertation *Intimismoaz haraindi: emakumezkoek idatzitako euskal literatura* (Beyond Intimacy: Basque Literature Written by Women), a version of which appears in the 1999 issue of the journal *CLIJ: Cuadernos de Literatura Infantil y Juvenil* under the title 'Mariasun Landa o la poética de la ternura'. When Landa was nominated for the Hans Christian Andersen Medal a further thematic analysis appeared in *CLIJ* in 2007 by Anabel Sáiz Ripoll under the title 'La literatura de Mariasun Landa'. However, Landa's eminence does not exempt her from controversy or from the silence that often surrounds women's writing and children's literature in certain cultural spheres, such as the media and this section seeks to examine particular instances in Landa's career when this has been the case.

Despite Landa writing and publishing over thirty children's books, the majority of the reviews that appear in the media are of her two books for adults.¹⁴¹ Where reviews of her children's books do exist, they are situated in academic spaces created specifically for this genre, such as *Cuadernos del Minotauro* and *Cuadernos de Literatura Infantil y Juvenil* (CLIJ).¹⁴² The relative dearth of reviews on her children's literature in mainstream media is indicative of the prestige that literature written for adults enjoys over the relative lack of prestige children's literature has. Indeed in her article 'Children's Literature – A Cinderella Story' (2014), Irina Rata states that children's literature 'is constantly ignored by the world of literary critics and academics, and even by the popular opinion, being continually compared to popular literature; it is dismissed as too simple, and often assimilated with genre literature' (26). Other academics agree that children's literature is a marginalized genre and has largely been ignored by critics as it is difficult to define and often underestimated (McCulloch, 2011; Nodelman, 2008, Bator, 1983). Thus, due to the lack of prestige that children's literature has in the literary field, Landa's children's books are not reviewed by mainstream critics and as such, Landa's work is not discussed outside specific spaces created for the genre of children's literature.

¹⁴¹ There is one review of her children's book *Amets uhinak* (Dream Waves: 1981) by V. Otegi in *Egin* (1981).

¹⁴² It is worth noting however, that the reviews and studies of her work that appear in this journals are afforded a significant amount of space. The review of *Krokodriloa ohe azpian* that appeared in *Cuadernos del Minotauro* in 2004 featured on a two-page spread, while the studies of her work in *CLIJ* in both 1999 and 2007 were 14 pages each and the author's name appeared on the cover of the issue; thus indicating the writer's prestige in this field.

That being said, critics are not completely ignorant of her work in children's literature and the majority of reviews of her two books for adults, *La fiesta en la habitación de al lado* (2007) and *Inurrien hiztegia* (The Ant's Dictionary: 2013), are framed by her earlier career in this literary genre. The critic Alex Gurrutxaga in *Berria*, for example, when reviewing her most recent book *Inurrien hiztegia* states that Landa is 'Traiektoria luze eta oparoko idazlea da' (21/07/13).¹⁴³ He then adds that '*Haur eta gazte literatura* deiturikoan jardun du nagusiki, eta helduentzako lehen lana gaztelaniaz argitaratu zuenez gero, hauxe du lehen euskal obra espreski helduentzat idatzia' (21/07/13).¹⁴⁴ In a review in *El Diario Vasco* for the same book, Javier Rojo alludes to Landa's previous work by stating that 'Haur eta gazte literaturak inposatzen dizkion mugak gainditu nahirik, azken urte hauetan helduentzako liburuak egitea ere erabaki du' (2013).¹⁴⁵ In an earlier review for *La fiesta en la habitación de al lado*¹⁴⁶ Rojo states that 'Mariasun Landa haur eta gazte literaturan dugun idazlerik inportanteenetako bat da. Alor horretan ezaguna da eta askotan frogatu du bere kalitatea' (*El Correo*, 2008).¹⁴⁷ The critics thus portray Landa as an established writer within Basque children's literature, demonstrating their awareness of Landa's prolific career and previous work.

Returning for a moment to the reception of Landa's literature for adults, critics try to situate her within particular groups or generations of writers, depending on the subject matter of her books. In a content-based approach to Landa's *Inurrien hiztegia*, for example, the critic Igor Estankona analyses Landa's work in relation to other literature written about ants (*Deia*, 29/06/13). Within the review he mentions Eduardo Galeano's short story *Las hormigas*,¹⁴⁸ Mark Twain's reference to ants as hypocrites in his non-fiction work *A Tramp Abroad* (1880) and two Basque writers Julen Gabiria

¹⁴³ The translation is as follows: 'A writer with a long and bright literary trajectory'. Unless otherwise stated, all translations from Basque into English are my own.

¹⁴⁴ 'She has worked primarily in children's literature, her first book for adults was in Castilian, so this is her first work for adults in Basque'.

¹⁴⁵ 'Trying to overcome the limitations imposed by children's literature, in more recent years she has also published literature for adults'.

¹⁴⁶ The Basque translation of the book is entitled *Festa aldemeneko gelan* (2014) and was translated by Jesus Mari Lasara.

¹⁴⁷ 'Mariasun Landa is one of the most important writers we have in children's literature. She is well-known in this area and has often proved her quality'.

¹⁴⁸ Eduardo Galeano (1940-2015) was a prize-winning writer and journalist from Uruguay who is considered to be one of the most distinguished writers in Latin American literature. The short story mentioned above can be accessed at the following web address: <http://www.lamaquinadeltiempo.com/contempo/galeano05.html>.

and Unai Elorriaga who also mention ants in their work. In a literary-format approach, Alex Gurrutxaga situates Landa within a group of writers who are famous for their short stories, such as the Argentine writers Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1936), Adolfo Bioy Casares (1914-1999) and Julio Cortázar (1914-1984) as well as Basque writers Jon Mirande (1925-1972), Karlos Linazasorro (1962-), Joseba Sarrionandia (1958-) and Iban Zaldúa (1966-) (*Berria*, 2013). In relation to Landa's autobiography, Beñat Sarasola in his review for *Berria*, references other high-profile Basque writers who have produced autobiographies, such as Txillardegi, Jose Ramon Goikoetxea and Harkaitz Cano.¹⁴⁹ These approaches, both individually and collectively, situate Landa's work within an internationally renowned genealogy of writers, which gives her work prestige and allies her with the great names of the short-story and autobiographical genres. At the same time these approaches justify the critics' position within the Basque literary field. Their references demonstrate knowledge of not just Basque literature, but (Latin) American literature too, certifying the critics as experts in their field. It is worth noting that all the references chosen are men, reinforcing the sexist ideas mentioned above that male-authored works carry more weight and prestige than those authored by women.

However, the literary tradition within which media critics position Landa, is completely different to the cultural tradition in which Landa chooses to situate herself, as I will analyse below. It is worth noting here that authors themselves are often unaware of their literary heritage and of their own influences. The publication of Roland Barthes' essay 'The Death of the Author' in 1969 led to, as Andrew Bennett explains, 'a radical skepticism towards the integrity of a subject's thoughts, meaning and intentions, or of a subject's ownership of these thoughts, meanings and intentions' (2004, 9). In other words, the author cannot always be the agent who gives meaning to their text, especially, as Bennett points out, when their texts can survive long after their death and be read by different generations of readers (2004, 7). That being said, while on the surface this case appears to be a simple clash between the author's intentions to create a specific literary reading of her text and the expectations of critics to set writers within a national and/or linguistic canonical framework, it is actually

¹⁴⁹ Txillardegi (1929-2012) is the pseudonym of José Luis Alvarez Emparanza who was a Basque linguist, politician and writer and one of the founding members of the Basque terrorist group ETA. Cano (1975-) works as a radio, television and comic scriptwriter. He has also published works of poetry, short stories and novels as well as translating works into Basque, such as the work of Allen Ginsberg.

decidedly more complex. What the case of Landa and the reception of *Inurrien hiztegia* demonstrate are important structural changes occurring within the Basque literary field. Whereas before, writers in the Basque literary field were required to perform multiple functions, such as writer, reader, critic, academic and translator; the rejection of Landa's epilogue indicates that critics are keen to assert their authority within the literary field and begin to distinguish between the role of writer, reader and critic. In addition, it also demonstrates the keenness of critics to portray Basque writers as producers of quality texts that can compete in an international market as well as how Landa has underestimated her own authority in the literary field and that she did not need to justify her book of short stories.

Landa uses the prologue and epilogue of *Inurrien hiztegia* to situate herself within a group of famous writers, philosophers and architects noted for their brevity, humour, irony and playfulness. In the prologue, for example, entitled 'Hormiaviso' (2014, 110), Landa explains that the book is a dictionary that has been invaded by ants. The ants have eaten the dictionary and replaced it with their own stories, thus rendering the book completely useless. As Landa states, 'Ya no sirve para consultar palabras o aplicarlas. Ni para que hojas y flores se sequen entre sus páginas. Ni guardar cartas de amor. Ni mucho menos dinero B' (2014, 11).¹⁵⁰ The extended quote here, as will become evident later, is necessary to convey the humorous tone of the book. Further on in the prologue, Landa continues to explain what the book is not and states 'Ni un *Tractatus* de Wittgenstein frustrado' (2014, 11). The *Tractatus* (1921) is a philosophical work by the Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) and, as the blurb of the book states, '*Tractatus* employs a notoriously austere and succinct literary style'.¹⁵¹ Thus, Landa distances herself from solemn works, such as the *Tractatus*, emphasizing the humorous tone of her own work. Landa ends the prologue with the following lines, 'Quizás ha tenido el deseo / de ser como el Gato de Cheshire, / Que al desaparecer nos dejaba una sonrisa' (2014, 11). Once again, Landa emphasizes the objective of the book to make the reader smile, while simultaneously associating herself with one of the great names of literary nonsense and word play, Lewis Carroll (1832-1898).

¹⁵⁰ 'Dinero B' is money a person hides from the tax office. All quotes in this sections are taken from the 2014 Spanish version of the text, which Landa translated herself.

¹⁵¹ <http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/tractatus-logico-philosophicus-ludwig-wittgenstein/1116749320?ean=2940013189850#productInfoTabs>

Though Landa uses the prologue to set the tone of the book as a humorous, playful text, in the epilogue the writer justifies the format of her text as a series of short stories by referencing other cultural producers who have been critically acclaimed for this particular style of writing. Landa states, for example, that '[e]ste diccionario que no lo es tiene un mentor cuyo apellido empieza por la letra M: Monterroso, Augusto' (2014, 113). Augusto Monterroso (1921-2003) was a Honduran writer famous for the ironical and humorous style of his short stories. His is also credited with writing one of the world's shortest stories, *El dinosaurio* (1959).¹⁵² In addition to Monterroso, Landa also references the French writer Georges Perec (1936-1982) when listing the different names used to describe short stories. At the end of the list she states, '(Escribiendo esto, confieso que me ha sentido Georges Perec)' (2014, 113). Perec is noted for his experimental word play, lists, attempts at classification and constrained writing. One of his most famous works is *La disparition* (1969), which is a lipogram written without using the letter 'e'.¹⁵³ Finally, in the penultimate point Landa writes to justify her book of short stories, Landa makes clear that it is not the book's fault if it is consumed as '*fast literature*' and references the German-American architect Ludwig Mies Van der Rohe (1886-1969) known as one of the pioneers of modern architecture and is noted for his 'skin and bones' architecture and the aphorism 'less is more' (2014, 114).¹⁵⁴ Thus, Landa employs the prologue and epilogue both to set the tone of the work as both humorous and a serious work of literature. In addition, she situates herself within an internationally renowned group of cultural producers who are famous for similar projects. This justifies, not only Landa's book of short stories, but also her position within the literary field.

The use of a prologue and epilogue by an author to justify their work is not a new concept and it will be discussed in a later chapter of this thesis in the case of the central Spanish author Almudena Grandes. There are several times when Landa's reference to Monterroso is taken on board by the press. Landa's book is mentioned, for example, in a list of Basque books to read in 2013 and the synopsis makes it clear

¹⁵² Monterroso's story, including the title, is nine words long and is as follows: 'Cuando despertó, el dinosaurio todavía estaba allí'. It is worth noting that Landa makes an intertextual reference to Monterroso, in her chapter 'Monterroso (Augusto)', which is as follows: 'Eta dinosauria esnatu zenean, inurriak han zeuden' (When the dinosaur woke, the ants were still there) (2013, 80).

¹⁵³ For a thorough and in-depth analysis of George Perec's life and work see David Bellos's book *Georges Perec: A Life in Words* (1995). Full reference in bibliography.

¹⁵⁴ For more in-depth explanation of Van der Rohe's architectural style see Claire Zimmerman's book *Mies Van de Rohe, 1886-1969: The Structure of Space* (2009). Full reference in bibliography.

that the book is a 'tribute to maestro Augusto Monterroso' (2013, 10). In addition, Txani Rodríguez states that '[...] vamos a centrarnos ahora en *Inurrien hiztegia* un libro que tiene la obra de Augusto Monterroso como inspiración' (2013). However, unlike Grandes's association with Galdós, which goes unquestioned as the following chapter will show, certain critics do not understand why Landa felt the need to justify her work, or to try and guide the reader to a specific interpretation of her text. The critic Alex Gurrutxaga states, for example, that '[...] ez dut uste beharrezkoa denik bere obra nola irakurri behar dugun esatea [...]' (*Berria*, 2013).¹⁵⁵ In addition, the critic Javier Rojo, when discussing the epilogue in Landa's work states simply 'Excusatio non petita' (*El Diario Vasco*, 2013), from the Latin saying *excusatio non petita, accusatio manifesta* (He who excuses himself, accuses himself).¹⁵⁶ The above statements demonstrates that literary critics in the Basque Country are keen to authorize their position within the Basque literary field. In addition, these quotes show the risks involved with prologues and epilogues, such as these extra-textual elements being badly received by critics, having a negative impact on a book's reception and creating the opposite meaning to what is intended.

In 2007 Landa caused further controversy when she published her autobiography *La fiesta en la habitación de al lado* in Castilian. Releasing the book in Castilian caused controversy for many reasons. Firstly, it was the switch from Basque to Castilian and in particular that although she had written thirty children's books in Basque, she chose to write her first book for adults in Castilian. The Basque writer Iban Zaldúa sums up the sentiment at the time: '[...] se esperaba mucho de su primera novela para adultos - era una demanda que se le había hecho muy a menudo - , y fue una decepción para muchos que ese primer intento [...] lo hiciera en español' (2012, 24). The 'decepción' Zaldúa refers to is that in the years leading up to the release of Landa's autobiography, Landa was repeatedly asked by journalists if she would be publishing a book for adults. In the year 2000, for example, Teresa Sala asks, '¿ha pensado en escribir para los adultos?' (*Euskonews*, 2000) and in 2007, just before the publication of her autobiography, *Noticias de Guipuzkoa* asks the author '¿No se ha planteado escribir una obra específicamente para adultos? ¿No ha apuntado alguna

¹⁵⁵ I do not believe that we need to be told how to read her work.

¹⁵⁶ 'He who excuses himself, accuses himself' (www.latindictionary.org).

idea, algún hilo?' (2007). In both these interviews she makes reference to her autobiography (although in 2000 it is just an idea and in 2007 this idea has become more concrete) however, she does not explicitly state in which language she will write/has written the work and, as all her other works were written in Basque, critics and readers assumed her autobiography would be in Basque too. Thus, when this eagerly anticipated book was published in Castilian, Basque critics felt betrayed and it appeared as though Landa did not think that Basque literature for adults was a legitimate space in which to publish her work.

Landa's choice to write her autobiography in Castilian and the subsequent reception of this language choice is indicative of the tensions in the Basque literary field about language usage as well as the expectations that the field has of its authors. In a paper given at the international symposium 'Writers in Between Languages: Minority Literatures in the Global Scene' held in May 2008, Landa attempts to justify her language choice. She states that 'I do not think it is any coincidence that it is an autobiographical narration that evokes my youth in which I had still not learned Basque, and which I felt I could only write in Spanish, the language which lived inside me at the time' (2009, 72). Landa's reflections are demonstrative of the linguistic situation under Franco, that is, that Basque, Catalan and Galician citizens had limited language choices and were forced to only speak in Spanish. She adds that, '[...] when it is a question of children's literature and literature for young people, that voice within me has spoken in Euskara. When I speak to an adult audience and when it is an autobiography, that voice usually speaks in Spanish and in French' (2009, 72-3). What is appealing to Landa then, is verisimilitude and this is linked to her language choice. This justification of what Kortazar also calls 'verisimilitude' (2010, 137) is similar to the justification given by a famous Basque oral poet, or Bertsolari, called Xavier Silveira when he published his novel *A las ocho en el Bule* (2007) in Castilian in the same year. The novel is about the effects of street violence with the justification for writing in Castilian being that 'those who participated in street violence portrayed in his book spoke Spanish in order to avoid being identified by speaking in Basque' (2010, 137). Both explanations of language use are rejected by Kortazar and Zaldua. Zaldua states, for example, that:

La controversia puso en duda las razones que ambos autores esgrimieron al elegir una lengua que no fuera el euskera, es decir, el hecho de que ambos hubieran

‘vivido’ en otra lengua los mundos que intentaban reflejar en sus libros, pues, según eso mismo, tampoco sería posible una novela escrita en lengua vasca - ni una en español - situada, por ejemplo, en Oregón, en el Japón de la era Tokugawa o en la Roma imperial. De hecho, según esa misma lógica, Mariasun Landa tendría que haber escrito su novela en francés, pues fue en ese idioma en el que *vivió* su estancia en París a finales de los años sesenta, como cuenta en su libro (2012, 24).

While Zaldúa’s opinion is well-founded, if a little pedantic, and it is possible that Landa and Silveira’s justifications were part of a marketing campaign to limit the controversy of switching languages, it is clear that any artistic or personal reasons for language choice are quickly overshadowed by linguistic politics. The linguistic politics present in this case are that once writers have made a commitment to write in a particular language, such as Basque, the expectation from the literary field and the reading public is that they will continue to write in the chosen language. Therefore, any change in language use is received negatively, often whether it is justified or not.

What is interesting about Landa’s case is that while there was controversy over the publication of her autobiography in Castilian, there is no mention of her other publications in Castilian released in 2007 and 2008. In 2007, for example, she wrote a short story ‘El hada y el deseo’, which formed part of the collection *A las buenas y a las malas*, edited by Teresa Duran. Landa published the story as a short book in Basque in 2012 under the title *Maitagarria eta desioa* and there is no mention on her website that it was first published in Castilian. In 2008, Landa wrote a short story ‘Mosquitas muertas’ for publication in a book celebrating International Women’s Day on the 8th of March entitled *Historias del 8 de marzo*, edited by the *Bilbao Bizkaia Kutxa Fundación*. The eight contributors were all women and all from the Basque country and all the stories are written in Castilian.¹⁵⁷ Finally, Landa also released a children’s book in 2008, written in Castilian and published with Macmillan Iberia, entitled *El invierno de la cigarra Vanesa*. The lack of debate in the Basque and Spanish press and academia surrounding the publication of these works in Castilian would suggest that there is a hierarchy where genres and language choice are concerned and that it is more polemical for a Basque writer to publish a novel or

¹⁵⁷ The eight contributors were: Espido Freire, Luisa Etxenike, Karmele Jaio, Mariasun Landa, Toti Martínez, Nerea Riesco, Maria Eugenia Salaverri and Arantxa Urretabizkaia.

autobiography in Castilian rather than a children's book or short story. It seems that books for adults are more publicly marketed and more attention is paid to these books and the political contexts that surround them. In addition, although this is a Basque case it is indicative of the situation in the wider Spanish nation-state.

In terms of the autobiography, the fact that it is a genre associated with truth-telling makes it possibly even more political than the novel. In his 1977 essay 'The Veto of the Imagination: A Theory of Autobiography', Louis A. Renza outlines the debate that surrounds the analysis of autobiographies. He asks, for example, 'is it an indeterminate mixture of truth and fiction about the person writing it? Is it based essentially in fact rather than self-invention? Or is it a fully fledged "literary" event whose primary being resides in and through the writing itself: in the "life" of the signifier as opposed to the life being signified?' (1). Thus, as well as being associated with truth-telling, autobiography also blurs the lines between reality and fiction. In the context of the Spanish nation-state this is even more relevant due to the increasing popularity of 'autoficción',¹⁵⁸ where authors mix real events and characters from their lives with fictional ones.¹⁵⁹ Furthermore, with the introduction of the *Ley de memoria histórica* in Spain in 2007 and the subsequent boom in historical fiction as well as a theoretical discourse on memory, autobiographies and autobiographical fictions published in the Spanish nation-state are read closely. Thus, Landa's autobiography is inserted into this discourse of memory and identity and is subjected to the issues and tensions that surround it. As such, it is politicised more than her previous work.

The differing reactions to Landa, and to her use of language, thus relate to the perceptions of Landa as a writer. Zaldua, Kortazar and other literary critics clearly see Landa as a Basque writer. Thus, when she wrote her autobiography in Castilian it appeared as though she had switched languages. This negotiation between languages is one that Landa herself has explicitly commented on. While it is certainly true that Landa has written the majority of her work in the Basque language, she also self-translates her work from Basque into Castilian and according to Landa, this gave her

¹⁵⁸ This term was first coined by the Russian writer Sergio Dubrovsky, on the blurb of his 1977 book *Fils*.

¹⁵⁹ See for example, the edited volume *La obsesión del yo: la auto(r)ficción en la literatura española y latinoamericana* (Iberoamericana, 2010) and Manuel Alberca's essay 'La autoficción, ¿futuro o pasado de la autobiografía española?', in *Autobiografía y literatura árabe* (2002), ed. by Miguel Hernando de Larramendi. Full references in bibliography.

a dual identity as both a Basque and Spanish writer. She states that '[...] as I was the self-translator of my own work into Spanish, they [critics] considered I was simultaneously included in two literary systems, which, in the eyes of many, also turned me into a Spanish authoress' (2009, 73).¹⁶⁰ Landa equates the use of two languages to a person who has two residences. She states that '[m]y attitude when I translate myself, is similar to that of a person who has two residences: both are his or her property, both are necessary, he or she comes and goes between both of them, and in both of them, there is shelter and pleasure' (2009, 73). The image Landa conjures is not of a writer that necessarily crosses borders or fields, but rather a writer who has one foot planted firmly in each literary field. Thus, although Landa sees her language situation as diglossic and her use of Basque is a debt and almost an obligation she carried over from childhood, she sees both languages as hers and feels she can move between the two as and when she chooses. Thus, Landa is a writer that clearly operates in both languages and should therefore be no surprise that she would write a book for adults in Castilian. It is worth noting that Landa has since published her first novel for adults in Basque entitled *Inurrien Hiztegia* in 2013.

Secondly, although Landa usually self-translates her work, her autobiography was translated into Basque by Jesus Mari Lasa and published simultaneously. The academic Jon Kortazar highlights that '[w]hen the book appeared, some media reviewed only the Basque version without reporting that it was a translation. This was not due to lack of knowledge or confusion' (2010, 134). The issue with the translation is that for Landa, who, as mentioned above, self-translates her Basque work into Castilian, to leave the translation into Basque in the hands of another person added to the sense of betrayal felt by critics. The one review that did acknowledge that the Basque version was a translation praised the work of Lasa and emphasized that the translation was of the same quality as the original. Beñat Sarasola states '[l]iburuaren jatorrizko bertsoa, nire harridurarako, gazteleraz idatzita dago, baina Jesus Mari Lasaren itzulpena hain da bikaina (*dorpehitzaren erabilera alde batera lagata*) ezen sarritan ematen baitu Landa bera dela hitz horiek idatzi dituen' (*Berria*, 16/12/07).¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰ The edited volume in which this chapter appears, is published in English. Landa's chapter was translated from Basque by Andrés Krakenberger.

¹⁶¹ 'The original version of the book, to my surprise, is in Castilian, but Jesus Mari Lasa's translation is (apart from some clumsy word usage) so good it's as though the writer did it herself'.

This emphasizes the role of agents in the Basque literary field to encourage people to read texts in the Basque language, rather than Castilian or French.

Finally, the book was initially received with scepticism by critics as the subject matter was a young girl living in Paris during 1968 and there had already been a plethora of books and memoirs published on similar subjects owing to it being the fortieth anniversary of the 1968 student uprisings in Paris. The journalist and literary critic for the Spanish daily periodical *ABC*, Juan Ángel Juristo, for example, states that '[c]onfieso que tenía todas las prevenciones del mundo cuando comencé a leer esta suerte de narración [...]. [...] Pensé "una narración más donde se nos cuenta la vida de una joven en el París del año 68"' (*ABC*, 2008). The reception of the book raises some key issues regarding language choice, perceptions of language, hierarchical literary genres and choice of subject matter. Thus, Landa was seen as capitalizing on a popular trend and this critique is a way of dismissing the quality of her work.

To conclude this section then, Landa's choice to begin her literary career in children's literature means that her work has only achieved visibility in specific spaces created for the criticism, study and recognition of the genre. However, it is clear from the reviews of her work for adults that critics are aware of her work in children's literature and also think her books are of a high standard. This has culminated in critics and journalists practically begging the writer to produce a text for adults. The production of her first book for adults in Castilian and its subsequent reception demonstrate that debates about writers' commitments to the Basque language and nation as well as what constitutes Basque literature are still ongoing. The reception of Landa's prologue and epilogue in *Inurrien hiztegia* shows the changing nature of the Basque literary field and how roles such as writer and critic are becoming more defined and solidified. As critics in the Basque Country seek to authorize their own position within the Basque literary field a writer's use of a prologue and epilogue to justify the content and format of a piece of work and guide the reading of the text does not receive the positive reception it has in other areas of the Spanish nation-state, such as the case of Almudena Grandes in central Spain. Finally, Landa's situation within the Basque literary field demonstrates the complex negotiations that occur between writer and critic.

Laura Mintegi

Laura Mintegi, like Landa, has enjoyed a fruitful career in the Basque cultural field having published five novels between 1986 and 2006.¹⁶² Mintegi's work is defined by the themes of existentialism, politics, gender politics, sexual politics, love and desire, and philosophy. Her novel *Bai...baina ez* (Yes but no), for example, is a story about love and relationships between boys and girls while on a school trip to Mallorca. Her novel *Sisifo maite minez* (Sisyphus in love) as the title suggests, and *Nereak eta biok* (Nerea and I) also has love as their themes. *Nerea eta biok* also discusses the experiences of women in prison, while *Legez kanpo* (Illegal) discusses the theme of torture. *Ecce Homo*, discusses politics and gender politics as well as how politics pervades all areas of life. These themes have been picked up on by academics and analysed in several studies of Mintegi's work. In two articles, 'Atxaga's *Lone Woman* and Mintegi's *Nerea eta biok*: Two Different Views of the Basque Political Prisoner' (1999) and 'Love, Language, and Lyricism: Basque Women Writers Urretabizkaia, Mintegi and Oñederra' (2003), the academic Linda White analyses Mintegi's novel *Nerea eta biok* (1994), though as the titles of the articles suggest, in the first article White discusses female political prisoners and in the second, discusses the theme of love. It is worth noting that White also translated *Nerea eta biok* into English (*Nerea and I*), which was published in 2005. An analysis of the theme of desire in Mintegi's *Nerea eta biok* is also present in Joseba Gabilondo's article 'Terrorism as Memory: The Historical Novel and Masculine Masochism in Contemporary Basque Literature' (1998).

The themes mentioned above are also present in Mintegi's literary persona. The writer portrays herself as an educated, well-read person, particularly in works of philosophy. Mintegi is one of the eight women writers in the book of interviews *Zortzi unibertso zortzi idazle* and it is in this interview with writer Ana Urkiza that she solidifies her literary persona. She states, for example, that although between the ages of 10 and 12 she was reading the quaint adventure novels of Enid Blyton (1897-1968) and Emilio Salgari (1862-1911), by 15 she had moved on to the works of influential philosophers such as Miguel de Unamuno (1864-1936), Artur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855), Albert

¹⁶² These five novels were: *Bai...baina ez* (1986), *Legez kanpo* (1991), *Nerea eta biok* (1994), *Sisifo maite minez* (2001) and *Ecce homo* (2006).

Camus (1913-1960) and Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980) (2006, 179). Mintegi also makes intertextual references to Nietzsche's *Ecce Homo* (1888) in her novel of the same title and Camus's *Le mythe de Sisyphe* (1942) in the title of aforementioned book, *Sisifo maite minez*. Much in the same way that Landa and Grandes make reference to eminent authors in their work, Mintegi's references to these renowned philosophers add weight and prestige to her work. In addition, critics who are aware of the reference, note this in their reviews and thus Mintegi's name is mentioned alongside the names of Camus and Nietzsche, adding further prestige to her work. In her introduction to Mintegi's interview, Ana Urkiza also refers to Mintegi as a 'truth seeker' (2006, 172), which enhances Mintegi's image as an existentialist and, as shall be discussed later in this section, a future politician.

Until 2012, Mintegi was also the head of the Basque PEN club, an international NGO that promotes literature and freedom of expression.¹⁶³ Mintegi is known for her political activism and the theme of politics is present in all her work, as well as being acknowledged by critics. It is no surprise then, that Mintegi made the leap from writer and cultural producer to politician in 2012, when she became the spokesperson for the left-wing nationalist party *EH Bildu*. What is curious about her switch from writer to politician is that once she took on the role as spokesperson her literary work was all but forgotten. As shall be discussed later, her role as a writer was used to construct a particular image of her as a politician, but her works were no longer discussed in-depth. In 2012, in one lone review of her first book of short stories *Ilusioaren ordaina* (1983), Aritz Galarraga states 'Apenas aipatu da hautes lasterketan sartu zenetik, baina gauza ezaguna da lehendakarigai baina lehen Mintegi idazle genuela' (*Argia*, 2012).¹⁶⁴ Similarly, when Mintegi stepped down from her role as politician and returned to work as a university professor, Mintegi's political blog was deleted. This would suggest that though the roles of writer and politician complement each other they are incompatible and a person cannot be both a cultural producer and a politician. This is possibly due to the fact that literature is associated with creativity, asking questions and often challenging political structures, whereas politics is associated with practicality, certainty and giving answers.

¹⁶³ www.pen-international.org

¹⁶⁴ 'It has hardly been mentioned since she entered the electoral race, but it is well-known that before running for president Mintegi was a writer.' This review can be accessed on the Basque review database *Armiarma*, with full reference in the bibliography.

As mentioned above, however, her role as writer was used in her political campaign. In 2002, an addition to the *Ley de partidos políticos* meant that previous members of illegal or dissolved political parties could not stand as election candidates. As the law states, ‘no podrán presentar candidaturas las agrupaciones de electores que, de hecho, vengan a continuar o suceder la actividad de un partido político declarado judicialmente ilegal y disuelto, o suspendido [...]’ (*El Mundo*, 29/06/02). Following this amendment, the Basque left-wing nationalist party *Batasuna* and its affiliates *Herri Batasuna*, *Euskal Herritarrak* and *Sozialista Abertzaleak* were made illegal due to alleged association to the Basque terrorist group ETA, a decision that was ratified by the European courts in 2009. Any attempts to reform the party under a different name, or of individual MPs attempting to stand for different parties were blocked by the Spanish government and whole lists of Basque left-wing election candidates were rejected. This meant that the Basque left-wing had to find candidates from outside the political sphere. As such, when the left-wing nationalist party *EH Bildu*, a coalition of four pro-independence left Basque parties, *Eusko Alkartasuna*, *Alternatiba*, *Aralar* and *Sortu*, was established in 2011 the candidates chosen were university-educated and politically aware, but from diverse career backgrounds such as doctors, nurses, lawyers, psychologists, teachers and writers. The previous mayor of San Sebastian, for example, member of *EH Bildu* Juan Karlos Izagirre, had a background in the medical profession and until recently the party’s spokesperson was none other than the Basque woman writer, Laura Mintegi.

When Mintegi stood as candidate for *EH Bildu* in 2012, the party’s website was keen to assert her suitability for the role as spokesperson, while distancing her from previous political campaigns. Her profile on the *EH Bildu* website, for example, does not mention Mintegi’s political experience until the final paragraph. First, there is a paragraph about where she lives, clarifying that although she is originally from Navarre, she has since resided and still resides within the Basque Country proper. The second paragraph is on her university training, her role as president of the PEN Club – an NGO, which is not associated with political parties – and her role in the *Euskaltzaindia* (Basque Real Academia) where she is an ‘académico correspondiente’.¹⁶⁵ This is followed by a paragraph on her literary work and the

¹⁶⁵ *Académicos correspondientes* are chosen for being outstanding researchers. They are not in a decision making role within the institution.

literary prizes she has won. There is then a paragraph about projects or political, social and cultural movements she has supported, such as the *Grupo de Apoyo a Egunkaria* among others.¹⁶⁶ Finally, at the very bottom of Mintegi's profile is a short paragraph stating that the writer was on the European parliament election list for *Herri Batasuna* in 1987 and 1989 and that she was a candidate for the left-wing coalition *Amaur* in 2011. The focus on Mintegi's educational and literary background rather than her experience in politics is consistent with other candidates for *EH Bildu* who are also not politicians. It is worth noting that Mintegi, even when she is elected as spokesperson for *EH Bildu* is not referred to as a politician, but always as writer or spokesperson.

In 2012, Mintegi became the spokesperson for the left-wing Basque nationalist (abertzale) party *EH Bildu*. *EH Bildu* is a coalition of four pro-independence left-wing Basque parties: *Eusko Alkartasuna*, *Alternatiba*, *Aralar* and *Sortu*. As the title of spokesperson (bozeramaile, portavoz) suggests the role involves speaking on behalf of another or on behalf of a party, however, in the coverage following the announcement of Mintegi's appointment, the media chose to focus on the physical appearance and character of the author labelling her the 'nice face' of left-wing Basque politics. The major daily periodical ABC, for example stated that 'Laura Mintegi [...] ha sido calificada como "la cara amable" de la izquierda "abertzale"' (2012). *El Correo* headed an article with 'Mintegi, la cara amable que lleva a la izquierda abertzale a su cota más alta' (2012) and started the article with the sentence 'Laura Mintegi la candidata "técnica" y "amable" de la coalición independentista *EH Bildu* [...]' (2012). One of the most popular daily periodicals in Spain, *El Mundo* went further, heading one article 'Cara amable del giro abertzale' following it up with 'Con voz dulce y sonrisa perenne, es capaz de ponerse un "blazer" fuscia [...]' (2012). What this demonstrates is the different type of reception Mintegi receives when she changes her role from writer to politician. Though the mediated identities of authors play a significant role in the way they are received, this is combined with an analysis of their work. The analysis of politicians by the press is dealt with in a different way, often

¹⁶⁶ *Egunkaria* was a newspaper founded in 1999 and was the only monolingual newspaper in the Basque language. The newspaper was shut down in 2003 and several of its employees were arrested, having been accused of warning members of ETA about forthcoming police raids. After investigations and legal proceedings, which culminated in 2010, the five accused employees of *Egunkaria* were acquitted.

with extreme media attention as regards appearance. Thus, Mintegi must negotiate this complex interplay between different public personae.

Some of the articles referencing her physical appearance and general manner of being were extremely subjective and personal. In *El Confidencial*, for example, who also used the title ‘L. Mintegi, la cara amable de la izquierda abertzale’ the article quotes those closest to Mintegi as saying she is ‘sensata, serena, con capacidad de diálogo y tendencia a perderse en divagaciones’, however this appears in stark contrast to a quote later in the article describing her as ‘defensora a ultranza del euskera’ (2012). In a separate article in the daily periodical *Naiz*, which comes across as being an homage to an old friend, the journalist Iñaki Iriondo states that Mintegi ‘es concienzuda y severa consigo misma. Sonríe con naturalidad y es extremadamente cariñosa, educada y amable’ (2012). Although, Iriondo too alludes to a contrasting reading of Mintegi’s image when he adds that her image is ‘una apariencia que algunos políticos y periodistas no parecen perdonarle, pues siempre se empeñan en reseñar que hay un pasado de lobo bajo su piel’ (2012).¹⁶⁷ Thus, rather than Mintegi being chosen as spokesperson for her left-wing political stance, it would seem she has been chosen because she looks passive, in the sense that, despite her alleged ‘pasado de lobo’, she does not look aggressive or violent, but calm. In addition, it would seem that she has been chosen precisely because she is not a politician, but rather a writer who is not associated with violent acts. The turn-around alluded to above is *EH Bildu*’s change of appearance and keenness to avoid associations with ETA and any violent images an association with the name may conjure up.

However, although Mintegi is portrayed as the peaceful, ‘cara amable’ of left-wing nationalist politics in the Basque Country, the association with ETA is never far away and it is difficult to shake off. In 2013, an investigation was opened by the senior prosecutor Juan Calparsoro, to determine whether comments Mintegi made regarding ETA assassinations were praising terrorism. Under an amendment to anti-terrorism laws introduced in the year 2000, any praise or justification of terrorist acts can result in a one- or two-year jail sentence.¹⁶⁸ *El País* reported that Mintegi was being

¹⁶⁷ This personal approach that journalist have used in describing Mintegi is possibly due to the fact that the Basque cultural and political fields are relatively small and writers, journalists, politicians and even readers are friends, neighbours and known to each other.

¹⁶⁸ The amendment is as follows: ‘El enaltecimiento o la justificación por cualquier medio de expresión pública o difusión de los delitos comprendidos en los artículos 571 a 577 de este Código o de quienes

investigated as she ‘calificó los crímenes de ETA y en concreto el asesinato del socialista Fernando Buesa¹⁶⁹ en 2000 como “muertes por causa política” que podían haber sido evitadas’ (2013). In an article that appeared in the daily periodical *El Mundo*, Mintegi stated that she was speaking in defence of the victims of ETA’s activities and that the meaning of her words had been distorted. She states that ‘en el Parlamento todo el mundo fue consciente del sentido profundo de mis palabras y que era precisamente una reacción ante lo que me pareció una frivolidad respecto a las víctimas y salí reivindicando la memoria de las víctimas. Y lo sabe todo el mundo en aquel Parlamento. Las interpretaciones posteriores han falseado el sentir de mis palabras y lo saben’ (23/03/13). Mintegi’s case highlights the ongoing tension between the Spanish government and Basque nationalist politics as well as the stringent anti-terrorist laws in operation in the Spanish nation-state. This case also demonstrates the continued association between ETA and nationalist politics and further attempts to ban left-wing nationalist parties and politicians.

Mintegi was also involved in another polemic case involving ETA. In May 2013, Urtza Alkorta was sentenced to five years in prison for alleged collaboration with ETA. On a bridge in Ondarroa, hundreds of people surrounded Alkorta in what is known as a ‘muro popular’, essentially blocking the woman’s arrest. The controversy arose when Mintegi was reported to be present at the ‘muro popular’. The national press portrayed this as Mintegi interfering in a police operation and attempting to use her political power to force the police to back down. The daily periodical *El Mundo*, for example, reported an overheard conversation where Mintegi stated ‘Tengo el teléfono particular de la consejera y la voy a llamar’ (2013), while *El País* stated that her presence at the event and *EH Bildu*’s subsequent branding of the Basque police (*Ertzaintza*) as merely a branch of the Spanish police had created a rift between *EH Bildu* and other parties in the Basque government.¹⁷⁰ While the mode of activism was peaceful, the portrayal of Mintegi in this case as a powerful politician who is willing to stand up to the police, is directly at odds with the media portrayal of

hayán participado en su ejecución, o la realización de actos que entrañen descrédito, menosprecio o humillación de las víctimas de los delitos terroristas o de sus familiares se castigará con la pena de prisión de uno a dos años [...]’ (noticias.juridicas.com/base_datos/ Penal/Io7-2000.html).

¹⁶⁹ Buesa (1946-2000) was a politician and member of the *Partido Socialista de Euskadi*. He was killed by a car-bomb set by ETA in the year 2000.

¹⁷⁰ ‘La actitud de *EH Bildu* en Ondarroa abre una brecha con el resto de los partidos’ (*El País*, 15/05/13).

her as a passive, feminine, 'cara amable' of *EH Bildu*. In addition, there is once again an allusion to Mintegi defending ETA and its members. What this case demonstrates, particularly regarding the media reception of the incident, is the media backlash that can occur when a woman acts directly against patriarchal representations of her character and asserts her authority.

In conclusion, in terms of the strategies women writers use to achieve success, the case of Mariasun Landa has demonstrated that carving out a niche in children's literature, or another underrated genre can allow a writer to build their career without challenges and comfortably occupy space in two languages, such as Basque and Castilian. While, initially, the lack of prestige that genres such as children's literature carry can affect a writer's reception, it can also be a gateway into purportedly more prestigious genres such as fiction for adults or the autobiography. What Landa's case has also demonstrated is the complex negotiation that occurs between writers and critics in attempts to give meaning to a text. This, as has been evidenced in this chapter, is particularly relevant in the Basque literary field where critics are trying to justify their position and authority. Finally, Landa's case has also shown that language is also a fundamental factor in reception, particularly when issues of national identity and commitment to the national project exist.

The case of Laura Mintegi demonstrates that in literary fields that are closely tied to politics, such as the Basque literary field, political activism or displaying commitment to national/ pro-independence politics can be a useful tool in achieving positive reception and prestige. Mintegi's case also shows that any change in role, such as Mintegi's switch from writer to politician, also brings about changes in the way in which these figures are then treated by the press, such as an increased focus on physical appearance. The next chapter, on the marketing and reception of Catalan women writers, will further examine the role of language in the reception of writers, as well as the complex relationship purportedly 'peripheral' literary fields have with the central Spanish literary field. In addition, it will also analyse further how a woman's physical appearance is used in the evaluation of her work.

Chapter 3: Literary vs. Popular: The Cases of Carme Riera and Maria de la Pau Janer

Carme Riera (Palma de Mallorca, 1948) and Maria de la Pau Janer (Palma de Mallorca, 1966)¹⁷¹ are two best-selling, multiple prize-winning authors who occupy space within both the central Spanish and Catalan literary fields and have numerous similarities linking their literary careers. Both authors, for example, have won the prestigious Catalan literary prize the *Premi Ramon Llull*,¹⁷² their novels frequently use Mallorca as a setting or contain Mallorcan characters¹⁷³ and, in 2015, both authors published novels that re-tell popular folk tales from the point of view of the, previously silent, female protagonist.¹⁷⁴ However, in spite of their similarities, the reception of Riera and Janer is markedly different. Riera, for example, has enjoyed a prolific forty-year literary career and comfortably occupies spaces of authority and prestige in both literary fields as a member of the *Real Academia Española* (RAE), president of the *Centro Español de Derechos Reprográficos* (CEDRO), *Catedrática de la Literatura Española de la Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona* and member of the *Reial Acadèmia de Bones Lletres de Barcelona*. In addition, Riera is celebrated for her contribution to Catalan literature and Spanish academia, as well as her dedication to writing, as is evidenced by the plethora of research on her work discussing themes such as language and identity (Schumm, 1995; Rivero-Navarro, 2011; Rodgers, 2003),

¹⁷¹ The implications that are presented with both case studies being from Mallorca will be discussed further on in this chapter.

¹⁷² The *Premi de les Lletres Catalanes Ramon Llull* was created in 1981 and is awarded by the publishing conglomerate *Planeta*. The aim of the prize is to stimulate the creation and diffusion of literature written in Catalan and the prize currently stands at 60,000 euros (www.planeta.libros.com – full reference in bibliography). Riera won the prize in 1989 with *Joc de miralls* (Mirror Images), while Janer received the award in 1999 with her novel *Lola*. The role of the publishing house *Planeta* should also be acknowledged here. As *Planeta* awards the *Ramon Llull* prize, one of the most important attributes of the prize is that the novel is immediately translated into Spanish and heavily marketed in this literary field.

¹⁷³ Riera's best known work *Dins el darrer blau* (In the Last Blue: 1994), for example, tells the story of a group of Jewish people trying to escape Mallorca during the Spanish Inquisition. The protagonists of her subsequent novel *Cap al cel obert* (Toward the Open Sky: 2000) are from a rich Mallorcan family and her work of autobiographical fiction, *Temps d'innocència* (Times of Innocence: 2013), has 1950s Mallorca as its setting. In terms of Janer's work, her novels *Màrmara* (1994), *Natura d'anguila* (1995) and *Pasiones romanas* (Roman Passions: 2005) are all set in Mallorca (Mallorca and Rome in the case of *Pasiones romanas*), while one of the protagonists of *Orient, occident. Dues històries d'amor* (East, West. Two love Stories: 1998) is a journalist from Mallorca.

¹⁷⁴ Riera's novel is *La veu de la sirena* (2015), which is a modern re-telling of Hans Christian Andersen's *A Little Mermaid* (1837). Janer's novel is *Cuando seas libre* (2015), a modern interpretation of the story of Scheherazade from *Arabian Nights*.

self-translation (Pujol, 2011; Stewart, 2010) and historical memory (Santana, 2011; Bieder, 2008; Sosa-Velasco, 2009). Janer, however, who has only recently returned to the literary field in 2015 after a five year hiatus, has come to be defined by the commercial, prize-winning nature of her literary career. As such, the quality of her work has been harshly criticized by the media; criticism that, as shall be discussed below, often uses aggressive language and attacks her physical appearance. In addition, beyond a discussion of her work in Sandra Schumm's book *Mother and Myth in Spanish Novels: Rewriting the Maternal Archetype* (2011) and an analysis of her novel *Orient, Occident. Dues històries d'amor* (1998) in German (Schönberger, 2002), there is a distinct lack of academic interest in Janer's work, but she receives a significant amount of attention in more general media, particularly, as shall be discussed later, when there is controversy surrounding her work. Thus, rather than compare these two authors this chapter shall contrast them, the choices they have made in their literary careers and how this has affected their reception.

The difference in reception, I argue, stems from the way the choices the two writers have made in their careers, such as what genre and which language to write in and in the construction of their mediated identities. Riera, is part of the 'best-sellers cults' generation of writers, but also has an academic career which has helped her gain recognition and prestige. This is coupled with prize-winning and producing a diverse literary corpus in many different genres. In addition, as shall be discussed further on in this chapter, Riera has clearly defined uses in her work for both the Spanish and Catalan languages. Her mediated identity thus promotes authority and reinforces the image of Riera as an intellectual. Janer, on the other hand, has mainly used commercial literary prizes, as well as her job as a television and radio presenter on popular Catalan programmes, such as *Els Matins*,¹⁷⁵ to enhance her visibility and market her identity and her work. This is despite also working as *profesora titular* in Catalan philology at the *Universitat de les Illes Balears*, a detail that is rarely mentioned by either Janer or the press. This commercial identity, coupled with the controversy surrounding her *Premio Planeta* win in 2005, her decision to switch

¹⁷⁵ *Els Matins* is a popular morning news programme on TV3 that discusses current events from different perspectives and points of view. The show consists of two distinct sections: firstly the news is presented by the host and then there is a debate of the events in a magazine programme that takes place during the second half of the programme. The show is watched by thousands of Catalan viewers and the current hosts are Lúdia Heredia and Núria Solé (www.ccma.cat/tv3/els-matins/programa).

languages from Catalan to Spanish, and her decision to work for the right-wing political party, the *Partido Popular* (PP) in Mallorca in 2007, despite previously being firmly associated with left-wing tendencies, has led to Janer being perceived as indecisive, inconsistent and lacking in prestige. Thus, this chapter will discuss the way in which Riera and Janer present themselves to the public through analysis of promotional interviews, with a particular focus on their approaches to language usage. This chapter will then analyse how the public perceptions of the two authors affect the differing receptions the writers receive. Finally, this chapter will discuss the tensions between commercial and literary fiction in the Catalan literary field and the wider Spanish nation-state. This chapter will begin, however, with a discussion of the complex Catalan literary field and its relation to the central Spanish literary field.

The Catalan literary field is the second largest in the Spanish nation-state, after Madrid, producing 28.6% of all books published in the Spanish nation-state and 47.9% of translations. The recent report 'El sector del libro en España 2012-2014' confirms this when it states that '[...] la producción editorial española está liderada por las comunidades de Madrid y Cataluña. Ambas presentan una estructura editorial que podría calificarse de proyección global en contraposición al resto de comunidades autónomas [...]' (2014, 19). Thus, publishing houses in Catalonia are leaders in the Spanish and Catalan literary fields and are able to compete within the global literary market. Indeed, some of the biggest and most prestigious publishing houses of the Spanish nation-state are based in Barcelona, such as the major conglomerate *Planeta*, which houses publishers such as *Destino* and *Edicions 62*, and *Tusquets*, which publishes best-selling and prestigious Spanish-language writers such as Almudena Grandes. Though the majority of books published are in Castilian, on average approximately 10,000 new titles are published annually in Catalan, almost ten times more than the number published in Galician or Basque. It is worth noting, however, that Catalan book production is heavily subsidised by the *Generalitat de Catalunya*, as well as quasi-government bodies, such as the *Institut Ramon Llull*. In 2015, for example, the *Generalitat de Catalunya* awarded approximately 130,000 euros per quarter in grants to aid book production in Catalan.¹⁷⁶ In addition, the *Institució de les Lletres Catalanes* also received the majority of its funding (1,195,804.01 euros), from

¹⁷⁶ www.gcat.cat. Full reference in bibliography.

the Catalan government.¹⁷⁷ In terms of the *Institut Ramon Llull*, in 2014 the organisation awarded approximately 84,000 euros in grants for the promotion of literature in Catalan outside Catalonia, along with approximately 211,000 euros in grants for the translation of Catalan-language literature into other languages.¹⁷⁸ Thus, aided by state funding, Catalan language book production has achieved significant prestige and capital within the Catalan and broader Spanish literary field and, incidentally, was one of the most translated languages in the Spanish nation-state in 2013 alongside English, French, German and Greek.

However, despite the cultural crossover between the Spanish and Catalan literary fields, and the apparent ease with which publishing houses seem to move between the linguistic borders of Catalonia and central Spain, these linguistic borders are, in fact, fraught with controversy. The association of the Catalan language and literature with the Catalan national project, as discussed in the introduction to this thesis, has meant that Catalan literature has traditionally been understood as literature written only in Catalan.¹⁷⁹ The reality, however, is not so clear-cut and the debate as to which writers and books are to be included under the title of ‘Catalan literature’ is one which has continued to the present day.¹⁸⁰ Franco’s dictatorship, which imposed Castilian upon people such as those in Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque Country, and attempted to prohibit them from speaking Catalan, Galician and Basque, left a legacy whereby Castilian has negative connotations for the majority of these citizens and one which has strengthened the association between the Catalan language and its cultural identity. However, Franco’s dictatorship also produced a post-war generation of writers originally from Catalonia, who had only ever written in Castilian and continued to do so after the dictatorship ended. This includes well-known authors such as Juan Marsé (Barcelona, 1933), and Rosa Regàs (Barcelona, 1933). Despite the fact that these writers often incorporate Catalan themes or have Catalan cities, such as Barcelona, as the settings for their books, they are seen as operating, as Kathryn Cramer puts it, ‘al otro lado de la puerta’ and are often perceived as traitors. As such,

¹⁷⁷ www.gcat.cat.

¹⁷⁸ www.llull.cat. Full reference in bibliography.

¹⁷⁹ In recent years, the notion of defining literatures by linguistic singularity has been challenged by postcolonial and post-national approaches to literary history. See for example, King, 2010 and Hutcheon, 2002.

¹⁸⁰ This is evidenced by the debate, discussed in the introduction to this thesis, surrounding Catalan culture being invited to the Frankfurt book festival in 2007.

similar to writers from other autonomous communities, they are often called upon to justify their linguistic choices (Crameri: 2005, 19). One such example is Juan Marsé, who after a prolific fifty-five year career is still asked for an explanation regarding his choice to write in Castilian. In a recent interview with *La Vanguardia*, for example, he states, ‘estoy harto de explicar por qué no escribo en catalán’ (Sagarra, 12/02/2015). Marsé’s case demonstrates how writers from Catalonia are often expected to produce work in Catalan and support the Catalan national project.

The relative exclusion of writers from Catalonia who choose to write in Castilian, sits in stark contrast to the openness with which the Catalan literary field appears to have received writers from other countries who wish to write in Catalan. Perhaps the greatest success story is that of Najat el Hachmi (Morocco, 1979), a Moroccan immigrant who has lived in Catalonia since she was eight years old. El Hachmi published her first novel, *Jo també sóc catalana*, in 2004 and has since risen through the ranks of Catalan literature winning the prestigious literary *Ramon Llull* prize in 2008 for her novel *L’últim patriarca* and the *Premi BBVA Sant Joan* in 2015 for her novel *La filla estrangera*. While El Hachmi’s career has not been without problems – Kathryn Crameri in her book chapter ‘Hybridity and Catalonia’s Linguistic Borders’ (2014), for example, has highlighted El Hachmi’s ‘struggles to be accepted as a Catalan speaker and writer without constant reference to her Moroccan identity’ (292) and warns against upholding El Hachmi as a model for integration – her case shows how the Catalan language can be inclusive and, as Crameri states, ‘act as a bridge’, between identities (2014, 275), rather than exclusive as has been demonstrated in the paragraph above.

Although it could be argued that part of El Hachmi’s success within the Catalan literary field can be attributed to her not using any Castilian in her work at all, it is possible for a writer to successfully occupy space with both the Catalan and Castilian literary fields. A case in point is Joan Margarit (Sanaüja, 1938). Margarit is a poet who began his literary career writing in Castilian in the 1960s, switching to Catalan in the 1980s, before finally releasing bilingual editions of his work from the late 1990s onwards. Margarit is critically acclaimed in both Catalan and Spanish spaces and as the academic Diana Cullell has stated in her article ‘Crossing Borders: Identity and Culture in Transition in Joan Margarit’s Bilingual Poetry’ (2014), he has managed a ‘successful transition from one space to another whilst retaining his success in both’

(95). Cullell attributes Margarit's success to a multitude of factors including: the extra-literary scaffolding that surrounds his work, such as explanations of why he first wrote in Castilian; support from well-established publishing houses and poetic figures; and his adherence to dominant poetic trends in Spanish literature (103). Perhaps the most significant factor, however, is the marketing of Margarit's bilingual editions of his work, not as being written in one language and translated into the other; but rather, as being two independent sets of poems written at the same time in both languages. This pleases readers in both languages as neither feels they are receiving a weaker version. What Margarit's case demonstrates is that it is possible for writers from Catalonia to achieve success in both the Catalan and Spanish literary fields with the appropriate use of paratexts to explain the reasoning behind any language choice, a carefully-constructed marketing campaign and support from literary institutions, such as publishing houses.

In terms of women writers, the Catalan literary field boasts a large genealogy of women writers from Isabel Villena (Valencia, 1430-1490) in the middle ages, Dolors Monserdà (Barcelona, 1845-1919) and Caterina Albert Paradís¹⁸¹ (L'Escala, 1869-1966) in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, through to Mercè Rodoreda (1908-1983), Montserrat Roig (1946-1991) and the aforementioned Carme Riera in the late twentieth century and beyond. However, Catalan women writers have suffered a similar fate to their Galician and Basque counter-parts, often being omitted from Catalan literary histories and the national literary discourse (Dupláa: 2000, 19). Much work has been done to combat this oversight including, most recently, the creation of the *Lletres i Dones* conference and seminar cycle by the Catalan government in association with the *Institut Català de les Dones*. This cycle has previously consisted of seminars in homage to women writers, such as Quima Jaume (Cadaqués, 1934-1993) as well as a celebration of the twentieth anniversary of Carme Riera's *Dins el darrer blau* (1994).¹⁸²

Though efforts have been made to promote and recognize women writers this is not necessarily reflected in the literary market. The Catalan best-seller lists are

¹⁸¹ Caterina Albert Paradís is more commonly known by her pseudonym Víctor Català.

¹⁸² Information about the programme can be accessed at the following web address: <http://www.lletrescatalanes.cat/es/programes/calaix-de-lletres/lletres-i-dones>. Full reference in bibliography.

overrun with foreign translations and, though *La Diada de Sant Jordi*¹⁸³ does much to promote Catalan literature, of the top ten best-selling books at the festival in 2015, only three were women.¹⁸⁴ In addition, the top five Catalan literary prizes, the *Premi Ramon Llull*, the *Premi Sant Jordi*,¹⁸⁵ the *Premi Carlemany*, the *Premi Josep Pla* and the *Premi BBVA Sant Joan*¹⁸⁶ all demonstrate a dearth of women writers among the winning novelists.¹⁸⁷ Thus, although there have been significant steps forwards in terms of inclusion of women writers in the Catalan literary field, women still remain on the periphery of Catalan literature.

Regarding the two women writers used as case studies for this chapter, it may seem unusual to use two Mallorcan writers as representatives of the situation of women writers in Catalonia. However, both writers operate within the Catalan literary field, at least at the beginning of her career in the case of Janer, and used Catalan as their primary literary language. As such the close linguistic, cultural, historical and social contexts of Mallorca and Catalonia make these writers part of one larger Catalan literary field. In addition, it is worth mentioning that Mallorcan writers have often played a significant part in Catalan literature, most notably the figure considered to be the father of Catalan literature, Ramon Llull (1232-1316). In his inauguration speech at the Frankfurt book fair, Quim Monzó explains the significance of Ramon Llull for Catalan literature. He states that, '[...] the initial impetus that gave Catalan literature a preferential place in Europe during the middle ages was born of Ramon Llull [...]. Ramon was a philosopher, storyteller and poet. He was from Mallorca [...]. [...] in

¹⁸³ *La Diada de Sant Jordi* is a Catalan festival similar to Valentine's Day. On this day it is customary for men to buy women roses and women to buy men books – although nowadays books and roses are bought for both sexes. *La Diada de Sant Jordi* takes place annually on the 23rd of April and coincides with world book day. As books are a key feature of the day, book stalls line the streets of Catalonia, well-known authors come to sign copies of their work and it is a huge commercial event.

¹⁸⁴ The three women were: Sílvia Soler, Milena Busquets and Pilar Rahola. Although it is worth noting that Busquets was on both the Catalan and Castilian best-seller lists with her book *També això passarà* and in Spanish translation, *También esto pasará*.

¹⁸⁵ The *Premi Sant Jordi* is one of the most prestigious Catalan literary prizes. Created in 1947, the winning author's work is published by *Edicions Proa*, while the author receives 60,000 euros.

¹⁸⁶ The *Premi Carlemany* was established in 1994 by the Government of Andorra in association with the *Fundación Encyclopèdia Catalana* and the publishing houses *Proa* and *Columna*. The award currently stands at 42,000 euros. The *Premi Josep Pla* was created in 1968 and is associated with the publishing house *Destino*. The prize is modest in comparison with the others mentioned above, currently standing at 6,000 euros. The *Premi Sant Joan* was created in 1980 and is associated with the publishing house *Edicions 62*, which publishes the winning book. The prize currently stands at 60,000 euros.

¹⁸⁷ There have been 10 female winners of the *Ramon Llull*, *Josep Pla* and *Sant Jordi* prizes, 4 female winners of the *Carlemany* prize and 6 female winners of the *BBVA Sant Joan* prize, with its most recent female winner being Najat el Hachmi, as mentioned above.

the mid-13th century Ramon Llull constructed a rigorous and shapely language, the same language we will still speak and write, in a vibrant and corrupted way' (2007, no pagination). The importance of Ramon Llull and other Mallorcan writers, such as Janer's father Gabriel Janer Manila, to the Catalan literary field provides an added layer of complexity to the Catalan literary discourse and the definition of what it means to be a Catalan writer as well as what counts as Catalan literature.¹⁸⁸ As demonstrated in the introduction to this thesis, the issue of whether Castilian-authored texts can be part of the Catalan literary corpus has been discussed in-depth by academics such as Stewart King (2002 and 2005). However, the fact that Janer and Riera both occupy spaces within the Catalan and Spanish literary fields and are from Mallorca, rather than Catalonia proper adds a level of interest to the careers of these writers in terms of how they have negotiated this complex literary, political and national situation. This makes them perfect case studies for the aims of this thesis.

Thus, Catalan literature is a prestigious literature that is able to compete on the global market. The Catalan language is strongly associated with Catalan literature and national identity, a fact which, despite call for a re-definition of Catalan from academics such as King and Cramerí, may not change due to the renewed calls for Catalan independence since 2012. The links between the Catalan language, literature and national identity means that a writer's language choice and any change in language choice are taken very seriously by critics and the reading public. As such, the boundaries that lie between Spanish and Catalan literature are fraught with controversy that can have a negative impact on an author's reception. However, writers can achieve success in both literary fields through careful marketing of their work and clear explanations for their language choices, as has been demonstrated in the case of Joan Margarit. Thus, the chapter that follows will discuss the way in which Riera and Janer market their work, explain their language choices and attempt to navigate the complex literary fields in which they operate.

Carme Riera

¹⁸⁸ It is worth noting that Valencian authors and poets have also played a significant part in shaping Catalan literature. One such person is the fifteenth century Valencian poet Ausiàs March (c.end of 14th century-1459).

As mentioned in the introduction, Carme Riera is a respected, prize-winning writer and academic. Riera is also bilingual and uses both Catalan and Castilian in her writing, but has separate uses for these languages. For instance, Riera uses Catalan in her literary work and self-translates some, but not all, of her novels and short stories into Castilian. In addition, she uses Castilian for her academic books and articles, although despite being in Hispanic Studies, much of her academic work has a Catalan connection. Riera's primary research focus, for example, is the poetry of the *Generación del 50*,¹⁸⁹ in particular Carlos Barral (1928-1989), Jaime Gil de Biedma (1929-1990) and José Agustín Goytisolo (1928-1999), who were all from Barcelona and defined as the 'Escuela de Barcelona' within the *Generación del 50*. In recent coverage of Riera's appointment as head of CEDRO, the Spanish daily periodical *La Vanguardia* explains Riera's linguistic choices. It states that 'Riera ha declarado que escribe en catalán en los relatos porque es la lengua que tiene más interiorizada y refleja mejor su mundo infantil mientras lo hace en castellano [en] todo lo que tiene que ver con el ensayo' (Anon, 2015a). Thus Riera places Castilian in a functional and intellectual role, while she perceives Catalan as a language that facilitates her imagination. It could be said then that when Riera self-translates into Castilian, the language is again used in a functional role, to facilitate communication with a wider audience.¹⁹⁰ However, though Riera has different uses for Castilian and Catalan, the writer maintains that Castilian is a part of the Catalan identity. She states, for example, that, 'la lengua castellana también es de los catalanes, sería estúpido renunciar a semejante tesoro [...]' (*La Vanguardia*, 2013). Riera, therefore, creates a literary persona that is in favour of linguistic duality and using both languages in literature, although with clear 'compartments' for each language, in line with the postcolonial and post-national views of language and literary identity mentioned above.

Riera's linguistic duality makes her literary career difficult to place within a single, national literature and is therefore often situated at the border of both the

¹⁸⁹ The *Generación del 50* refers to the group of writers born in the 1920s and who began publishing in the 1950s. Notable referents, beyond those mentioned above, include: Carmen Martín Gaité (Salamanca, 1925-2000), Ignacio Aldecoa (Vitoria, 1925-1969) and José Manuel Caballero (Jerez de la Frontera, 1926-).

¹⁹⁰ It is worth noting here that Riera has very specific views regarding translation. In her article 'L'autotraducció com a exercici de recreació' (1997) Riera admits that she has only self-translated a few of her novels and states that 'per a mi la literatura és intraduble' (no pagination), as it is impossible to translate a work without losing some of the meaning and/or lyricism of the original. Riera concludes that '[l]a traducció és sempre una mancança' (no pagination).

Catalan and Spanish literary fields. In an interview with *La Vanguardia*, for example, Riera states that ‘[e]n Madrid me asocian al catalanismo, y en Catalunya paso por españolista, incluso he sido insultada; pero eso me encanta, soy outsider de dos lugares’ (Anon, 2015b). However, although Riera refers to being insulted and being an outsider, the awards and accolades bestowed upon her tell a different story. Among other awards, Riera has won the prestigious Catalan *Premi Ramon Llull* (1989), the *Premi Josep Pla* (1994) and the *Premi Sant Jordi* (2003), along with the Spanish *Premio Nacional* (1995) and the *Premio Anagrama de Ensayo* (1988) for her academic work *La escuela de Barcelona: Barral, Gil de Biedma, Goytisolo: el núcleo poético de la generación de los cincuenta*. In addition, as mentioned above, Riera was granted the ‘n’ seat in the RAE in 2013 as well as the *Premi Trajectòria* in 2014 for her ‘vida dedicada a la literatura y su divulgación’ (*El País*, 12/09/2014). Thus, in spite of how she presents herself as an outsider, Riera is revered and respected in both the Catalan and central Spanish literary fields for both her literary and academic work. In other words, rather than being situated at the margins, on the outside of these literary fields, she has one foot firmly planted in each.

Riera’s duality does not only apply to her language choices. In the edited volume *Movable Margins: The Narrative Art of Carme Riera* (1999), for instance, Mirella Sirvodidio aptly summarizes Riera’s literary persona when she states that:

[...] she is a scholar, creator, professor, and provocateur, the explicator of canonical texts, on the one hand, and literary “terrorist” on the other, hurling firebombs into the sacred temples of culture. She is both classical and contemporary, both Majorcan and Continental, both “major” and “minor”. And the prose styles she commands range from the lyrical to the self-mocking, from the ludic to the learned (9).

The violent language used by Sirvodidio to describe Riera and her career is reminiscent of the similarly militaristic language used to describe the Galician feminist authors mentioned in chapter one of this thesis. However, while the word ‘zapadora’, used to describe the Galician writers conjures images of soldiers following orders and working within the system, the use of the word ‘terrorist’ here conjures images of anarchism and of Riera being a pioneer of Catalan literature by attacking it from the outside. Interestingly, Sirvodidio does not describe Riera as Majorcan and Spanish, or Majorcan and Catalan, but rather as Majorcan and Continental, thus she does not

situate Riera in just one literary field and alludes to her dual identity. Thus, through varying the use of language, textual subject and indeed her literary identity, Riera creates this flexible persona that covers almost all aspects of literature and eludes definition.

Indeed, Kathryn Everly in her book *History, Violence and the Hyperreal: Representing Culture in the Contemporary Spanish Novel* (2010) states that '[...] throughout her literary career, the Mallorcan author has effectively evaded categorization and refused to be labelled as any one kind of contemporary writer. She deftly handles feminist narrative, the historical novel, the detective genre and the epistolary novel, among others' (47). This refusal to be categorized either by geographical location, linguistic choice, or genre gives Riera the ability to move freely within both the central Spanish and Catalan literary fields, while also giving the writer cultural capital. Riera's evasion of attaching strict labels to her literary persona is, for Servodidio, both welcome and subversive as she states that the process of defining and situating authors, women writers in particular, within the literary field 'resonates with the overtones of familiar patriarchal structures: a woman (writer) most certainly should be "put in her place", should "know her place" and so on' (1999, 7.). Thus, by refusing to be categorized, Riera is subverting the norms of both the Spanish and Catalan literary fields and challenging patriarchal power structures.

That being said, although Riera has continued to change style and genre throughout her literary career and has no one marketing strategy specific to a particular genre, with her last two novels *Natura quasi morta* (2011) and *Temps d'innocència* (2013), Riera still experiments with different genres, but also follows popular literary trends. *Natura quasi morta*, for instance, is an example of crime fiction, which although a global literary phenomenon is an extremely popular trend in Catalan language literature and has a special significance within this literary field. Stewart King explains the popularity of crime fiction in Catalonia when he states, '[f]ollowing two centuries of the persistent imposition of Castilian (Spanish) in Catalonia, at the beginning of the twentieth century many Catalans were illiterate in their own language, while those that could read the language belonged to a well-educated class who preferred to read so-called high literature. To overcome this division, writers saw in the crime genre a popular form which could potentially attract readers, perhaps lacking confidence to read more "serious" works, to attempt more popular, less intellectually

threatening novels in Catalan'.¹⁹¹ Thus, crime fiction was used as tool to encourage the public to read in Catalan.¹⁹² This genre has only increased popularity and boasts writers such as Eduardo Mendoza, Andreu Martín, Alicia Giménez Bartlett, among others, with the most famous author of the genre being Manuel Vázquez Montalbán who wrote the *Carvalho* series of novels.¹⁹³ It is worth noting however, that Riera did not have a positive experience writing in the genre and has made explicit that she would not be writing another crime novel.¹⁹⁴

In addition, *Temps d'innocència* is situated within the realm of *autoficció*. This genre of literature, named by Serge Doubrovsky in 1977, is a combination of the autobiography and literary fiction and has also become a popular literary trend in the Spanish nation-state.¹⁹⁵ The effect of producing work in popular genres is that Riera's work reaches a wider audience and gives her added prestige as Riera demonstrates her adaptability as a writer.

Further to her recent work being situated within popular literary genres such as crime fiction and autobiographical fiction, Riera has also promoted two of her recent novels, the aforementioned *Natura quasi morta* and her most recent novel *La veu de la sirena* (2015) using the common marketing technique, that has been employed by other case studies in this thesis, associating herself with famous male writers, such as Manuel Vázquez Montálban (Barcelona, 1939 – Thailand, 2003) and Hans Christian Anderson. In interviews to promote *Natura quasi morta*, for example, Riera states that she read the novels of the Swedish crime fiction writer Henning Mankell (Stockholm, 1948) and the American crime novelist Donna Leon (New Jersey, 1942).¹⁹⁶ It is worth noting here that the Catalan translations of Mankell and

¹⁹¹ <http://internationalcrimefiction.org/2015/05/24/crime-fiction-in-catalan-1-the-origins/>

¹⁹² A more in-depth discussion of crime fiction and the genre's prestige within the Spanish nation-state will follow later in the chapter.

¹⁹³ The *Carvalho* novels are a series of over twenty novels and short stories, whose protagonist is the fictional private detective, Pepe Carvalho. These novels and short stories also featured social commentary on the political and cultural situation of Spain during the latter half of the twentieth century.

¹⁹⁴ In an interview with *La Vanguardia* where she is asked what she learned from writing a crime novel she states 'Nada. Me ha costado un enorme esfuerzo. Yo soy barroca y aquí la escritura tenía que ser directa, rápida, dirigida a la eficacia de la intriga. No volveré a escribir nunca más una novela negra' (2011).

¹⁹⁵ See for example Toro's *La obsesión del yo: la auto(r)ficción en la literatura española y latinoamericana* (2010) and Saboga's article in *El País*, 'El Yo asalta la literatura' (2008), which provides a selected bibliography of Spanish autobiographical fiction works by notable authors such as Mario Vargas Llosa, Carlos Fuentes, Esther Tusquets and Soledad Puértolas.

¹⁹⁶ The interview can be accessed at the following web address:

Leon's work are also published by *Edicions 62*, the same publishing house that published *Natura quasi morta*. Furthermore, Riera states that the protagonist of the novel, Manuela Vázquez, is named after the aforementioned famous Catalan crime fiction novelist, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, in homage to his literary legacy (*La Vanguardia*, 2011). By associating herself with these crime fiction writers, Riera acknowledges the history of the genre, paying tribute to its popular figures, while simultaneously situating herself among the great names of crime writers. Riera's in-depth research into the genre also gives her added cultural capital as it demonstrates her commitment to literary development and ensuring her work is of a high standard and that it follows the rules of the genre. Thus, this portrays the novel as a well-researched piece of crime fiction that acknowledges its forebears and following their tradition while offering something new. It is possible that Riera is attempting to entice readers who are fans of Leon, Mankell and Montalbán to also read her work.

Similarly, with her novel *La veu de la sirena*, Riera associates herself with the famous author of folk tales, Hans Christian Anderson. As stated in the introduction to this chapter, *La veu de la sirena* is a re-telling of Anderson's *The Little Mermaid*. The connection between the two stories is made explicit using what Gérard Genette calls the 'paratext' of the novel, such as the front cover. Riera's book, for example, contains both her modern interpretation of the story and a famous 1930s Catalan translation of Anderson's folk tale by Josep Carner and Maria Marient. Thus, as Anderson's story is present alongside Riera's, Anderson's name appears on the front cover in the bottom right-hand corner, with Riera's name in a larger typeface situated in the top left-hand corner. The effect of this is that Riera's name is associated with Anderson's in the press promotion of the book, giving the author cultural capital. The Catalan daily periodical *Ara*, for example, states in a presentation of the book that 'l'escriptora Carme Riera [...] reescriu la història de la sireneta de Hans Christian Anderson' (2015b). Similarly, *La Vanguardia* states that '*La veu de la sirena* es una versió libérrima del célebre cuento de Anderson' (Cabré, 21/03/2015). It is worth noting however, that this marketing campaign was most likely not orchestrated by Riera as in an interview with *Diario de Mallorca* Riera states that the publishing house *Edicions 62* approached her and asked her specifically to write the story. When the

<http://www.lavanguardia.com/cultura/20110227/54120190212/carme-riera-nunca-volvere-a-escribir-novela-negra.html>.

journalist Rosa Ferriol Palma asks where she got the idea to re-write Anderson's classic tale she states, 'Mis dos editoras. Silvia Querini y Pilar Beltrán de *Edicions 62* me pidieron hacer esta versión. Me lo pensé y finalmente acepté' (Ferriol Palma, 2015). This is demonstrative of Riera's reputation as being both a classic and contemporary writer as well as *Edicion 62*'s commitment to promoting both contemporary and classical literature.¹⁹⁷

In terms of reception, Riera has written an impressive number of works in Catalan, which have been translated into several languages and is respected both in the Catalan and central Spanish literary fields. This is evidenced by her being awarded the Premio Nacional de las Letras Españolas in 2015. The judges stated that she had been given the award for 'la altísima calidad de su obra en catalán y castellano en la que se combina la creación literaria con la investigación y divulgación, una obra polifacética de repercusión universal' (*Huffington Post*, 2015). In addition, in the central Spanish press, announcements of Riera's most recent novel *La veu de la sirena*, were preceded by an elaborate biography of the author, detailing some of her most prolific literary achievements. In the literary supplement for *La Vanguardia, Culturas*, for example, Riera is described as 'una de nuestras primeras espadas' and 'una narradora de fuste que ha construido libro a libro una de las trayectorias más sólidas de nuestra literatura (y no tan sólo de pluma de mujer) [...]' and also lists all the different events she attends, including meetings at the RAE (2015). The image of Riera that the journalist and author of the article, María Ángeles Cabré, portrays is of an authoritative woman who is a key player in central Spanish literature, a writer who is not relegated to a female literary ghetto, but occupies a prestigious position in the established literary canon.¹⁹⁸

One of the subtle ways in which Riera's authority in the literary field is projected is through the promotional pictures, which accompany interviews and articles about the author. In the majority of the photographs, which appear at the head

¹⁹⁷ The *Edicions 62* website states, for example, that ' *Edicions 62* ha estat pionera, a Catalunya, en la incorporació d'escriptors contemporanis de tots els camps i procedències, i ha promogut també, per mitjà de col·leccions específiques, la difusió dels clàssics universals de la literatura i del pensament i dels clàssics de la literatura catalana' (*Edicions 62* has been a pioneer in Catalonia through the incorporation of contemporary writers from all fields and backgrounds and it has also promoted, by way of specific collections, the diffusion of universal classics of literature and thought and Catalan literary classics: <http://www.grup62.cat/editorial-edicions-62-64.html>).

¹⁹⁸ It is worth noting however, that Cabré is also from Catalonia and therefore would already be familiar with Riera's work.

of the articles, Riera stares directly at the camera, often with her arms folded. In addition, other photographs portray the writer speaking, reading or writing, possibly in an academic role. While standing with the arms folded is often interpreted as a defensive stance, it can also be seen as an authoritative stance, portraying power. The photographs which denote Riera speaking, reading and writing are a demonstration of Riera in active position, thus subverting the common identification of women as passive and listeners rather than doers. In addition, staring straight ahead the camera, often without smiling, could possibly represent Riera as challenging the norms of both the central Spanish and Catalan literary fields. Finally, there are several pictures of Riera holding her books, also with her arms crossed and this shows Riera in defence of her literature and the way she writes. The paratextual information revealed by an analysis of promotional pictures of Riera is important as usually, as shall be demonstrated in the case of Maria de la Pau Janer, women writers are not often portrayed as powerful and authoritative and the pictures used are often ones where the writers have been caught off-guard. Thus, these paratexts or pictures of the author, are used by the press to portray Riera as a powerful, authoritative figure, with a long literary history. This demonstrates that the press is willing to reinforce the literary persona Riera has created.

What Riera's case demonstrates is that it is possible for a bilingual writer to use both their languages, provided the reasons behind the language usage are justified and, in the case of Riera, each language has a clearly defined role to play in the writer's career. In addition, cultural and symbolic capital can be acquired through academic success, which can be translated into prestige and authority in the creative literary field. It is also preferable if a bilingual writer produces their creative work in Catalan and uses Castilian for practical purposes, such as their job in academia or translation. Riera's case also demonstrates that visual images are also able to convey meaning and present a writer as authoritative. In addition, Riera's role in multiple literary institutions, such as the *RAE* and *CEDRO*¹⁹⁹ gives her added authority. In working for institutions such as the *RAE* and *CEDRO*, Riera is now in a privileged position, in that she is now part of the group of academics who make and enforce the norms of the literary field. This demonstrates that writers can have different levels of authority in

¹⁹⁹ CEDRO is the Centro Español de Derechos Reprográficos and it handles the intellectual property rights of Spanish writers and editors.

different literary fields. Furthermore, Riera shows that, if negotiated carefully, the literary field can be flexible and allow an author to work in a number of literary genres, a number of languages and in academia too. Similar to the case of María Xosé Queizán, Riera has demonstrated that a woman writer can have a long career, building and maintaining prestige and authority throughout their time as a writer and can also still remain relevant in the twenty-first century literary field.

Maria de la Pau Janer

Janer's literary career²⁰⁰ and persona are defined by the collection of well-known prizes she has won.²⁰¹ In an article on fourteen successful women writers in the Spanish nation state, for example, Miguel de Rus describes Janer as 'una autora especialista en ganar premios' (2010) and the journalist Isabel Obiols has described Janer's career as a 'carrera con premios' (*El País*, 2005). Janer uses these prizes to move her career forward and, as shall be discussed in this chapter, reach greater numbers of readers each time. This in contrast to other women writers in this thesis who use paratextual elements, such as websites, prologues and epilogues, and social media to promote their work and enhance their careers. In addition, they also use prestige and cultural capital gained from working in journalism or academia to move their careers forwards. Surprisingly, as mentioned in the introduction, Janer does not capitalize on the academic aspect of her literary persona. The courses she teaches at the *Universitat de les Illes Balears* are *Literatura Catalana y Universal para la Educación Primaria* and *Literatura Universal Catalana para la Educación Infantil*, thus she is discussing Catalan literature in a similar role to Riera. One reason for Janer not using this aspect of her persona to promote her work is that as these courses are

²⁰⁰ Janer, as well as being a writer, has an extensive media presence owing to her work presenting various programmes on Catalan radio and television including the daily news programmes *Stròmboli* and *Bon dia, Catalunya* and the literary programmes *Ex libris* and *Els llibres de la vida*. She currently hosts a programme about sex on *Catalunya Ràdio* entitled *Les mil i una nits*.

²⁰¹ The prizes are: *Premi Narrativa Andròmina* (1989) for *L'hora dels eclipsis*; *Premi de la crítica Serra d'Or* for the best children's book published in Catalunya (1990) for *L'illa d'Omar*; *Premi d'investigació Valeri Serra i Boldú* (1991) for 'Introducció a les rondalles del cicle de l'espòs transformat', *Premi Sant Joan de Novel·la* (1993) for *Màrmara*, *Premi Carlemany* (1995); *Premi Prudenci Bertrana* for book of the year (1995) for *Natura d'anguila*; *Premi Ramon Llull* (1999) for *Lola*; and the *Premio Planeta* (2005) for *Pasiones Romanas*. It also worth noting that Janer was also a finalist in the following prizes: *Premi Sant Jordi* (1997) for *Orient, Occident*; *Dues històries d'amor* and *Premio Planeta* (2002) for *Las mujeres que hay en mí*.

associated with children's education Janer may think that they will not garner as much prestige as Riera's academic career has; although as the case of the Basque writer Mariasun Landa has shown that it is possible to create success and prestige from a career in children's education. Finally, though many of the other case studies in this thesis have won literary prizes, they have not won as many lucrative prizes as Janer, nor have they used the prizes to enable a switch in languages and to reach a wider audience.

As mentioned above, in addition to being a writer and an academic, Janer has a supplementary career in television and radio. Furthermore, as shall be discussed later on in this chapter, Janer also entered politics in 2007 and stood for the local elections in Mallorca. Thus, similar to the case of Laura Mintegi in the previous chapter, Janer also has to negotiate multiple public personas. Unlike Mintegi, however, who was first a writer and then a politician, Janer attempts to negotiate these different roles and personas at the same time. However, these personas are not always compatible. In television and radio, for example, a presenter's persona must be very visual or vocal. In terms of television, there is a focus on physical appearance and beauty with particular attention paid to the age of the presenter. In the edited volume *Gender and Popular Culture* (2012), for example Katie Milestone states that 'in Britain in 2010, there was a scandal at the BBC about the "putting out to grass" of female newsreaders and presenters who were considered "too old" to be the acceptable face of the corporation' (no pagination). Though Janer has always appeared on relatively serious morning shows, news shows, and news discussion programmes, within the hierarchies of culture television is not as prestigious a medium as literature and therefore does not give a well-known public figure, such as a writer, cultural capital. Regarding the literary persona of writers, although writers are becoming more visible and more accessible to the public, there is still, as mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, a particular expectation of how writers should behave and what they should look like. In this case and in contrast to her television career Janer's age and physical appearance can lower her cultural capital and it is possible that critics will not take her seriously. Politics requires a different persona still, as although there is a focus on the visual, as has been evidenced in the case of Laura Mintegi, it also requires seriousness and practicality, which, as shall be discussed later on in this chapter, is not necessarily

conveyed by Janer's other mediated identities. These multiple mediated identities could confuse the message Janer wants to send and demonstrate indecisiveness.

Unlike many of the other women writers discussed in this thesis, Janer does not have her own personal webpage where she projects a specific image of herself and, as such, the only profile that exists of Janer is on the *Planeta* website and a rudimentary website on mallorcaweb.net that is not updated.²⁰² In addition, she does not associate herself with any writers from her own or previous literary generations, nor does she situate herself within a particular literary tradition. In short, Janer lacks a literary brand and a specific literary persona that she controls. In this section I argue that this lack of a brand leaves the writer open to negative criticism and allows critics to impose an authorial persona on her. This is evidenced by the events surrounding Janer's winning the *Premio Planeta* in 2005.

The *Premio Planeta* is one of, if not *the* most notable prize that Janer has won over the course of her literary career due to the monetary award that accompanies it. The *Premio Planeta*, created in 1952, is a commercial award, with a lucrative 601,000 euro prize, that aims to 'situar a los autores españoles galardonados en unos niveles de difusión y de popularidad jamás alcanzados.'²⁰³ Indeed, one of the most successful novels of the *Premio Planeta*, *No digas que fue un sueño* (1986) by Catalan writer Terenci Moix sold approximately two million copies. Although Janer's *Pasiones romanas* (2005) only sold around 500,000 copies this is still, on average, more than five times the amount sold by a best-seller that has not won the award. It is worth noting that since the year 2000, there have been seven female winners and eight male. In addition, ten of the finalists have been women writers, in comparison to five men. Thus, since the beginning of the twenty-first century, women writers have had immense success in this particular prize. It is also worth noting that although the *Premio Planeta* is a Castilian language prize, the publishing house that awards the prize, *Planeta*, is based in Barcelona and many of the previous winners and current judges are from Catalonia; demonstrating the crossover between the two literary fields.²⁰⁴

²⁰² <http://www.planetadelibros.com/maria-de-la-pau-janer-autor-000002179.html> and <http://www.mallorcaweb.net/mpaujane/obra.htm> respectively.

²⁰³ <http://www.premioplaneta.es/historia/premio.html>

²⁰⁴ In the judges panel for the 2005 *Premio Planeta*, the year Janer won, for example, four out of eight judges were from Catalonia, including Marsé and Regàs. In addition to half of the judges' panel being

Though the emphasis of the *Premio Planeta* is on commerciality and potential sales, reviews of winning and second-place novels in the twenty-first century are often positive and demonstrate an acceptance of the *Premio Planeta*'s aim to produce highly consumable literature for the masses. In a review of Alfredo Bryce Echenique's winning novel *El huerto de mi amada* (2002), for example, Joaquín Marco, writing for *El Cultural*, states that:

El huerto de mi amada es la novela más cuidada y mejor escrita de Bryce, que recurre a todos los ingenios, al registro oral y al lenguaje poético para conjurar los demonios de una Lima horrible. El multimillonario *Planeta* ha ganado con este libro (2002).

This article is indicative of the positive reviews that the prize-winning texts receive, although the statement that *Planeta* 'ha ganado con este libro' would suggest that Marco thinks the winning novels are not usually of this quality. In addition, in a review of Clara Sánchez's winning novel *El cielo ha vuelto* (2013), Ángel Basanta, writing for the same literary supplement, states that the book is '[u]na novela destinada al gran público lector, como es habitual entre las galardonadas con este premio, escrita en un estilo sencillo y directo, coloquial' (2013). In this review, Basanta indicates an understanding of the nature of the prize and confirms that Sánchez's novel fits neatly into this category of commercial literature. Similarly, in a review of Marcela Serrano's runner-up novel *Lo que está en mi corazón* (2001), Joaquín Marco, writing for *El Cultural*, states that '[e]l libro, de estilo correcto, se mantiene en la línea del best-seller hispanoamericano, dirigido a una clase media lectora femenina que parece ya demandar esta clase de producto, cercano al guión cinematográfico para filmes de clase B' (2001). Though this review is of a slightly more condescending tone than Basanta's, Marco still re-iterates the best-selling characteristics of the prize and the suitability of Serrano's book within this category. Thus, although the prize is not associated with literary quality, critics are largely tolerant of *Premio Planeta* novels and, at times, as has been demonstrated above, are even enthusiastic about certain texts.

Catalan, the award ceremony was held, as it is annually, at the Palau de Congressos de Catalunya in Barcelona and was attended by numerous Catalan politicians, such as '[...] el "conseller en cap" de la Generalitat, Josep Bargalló, el alcalde de Barcelona, Joan Clos, y el president de CiU, Artur Mas' (*Europa Press*, 2005).

Moving on from the broader context of the *Premio Planeta*, it is now necessary to analyse reactions to Janer's writing. In his book *La hora crítica* (2008), for example, literary critic and lecturer in Spanish language and literature, José Belmonte Serrano, severely criticizes Janer's style of writing, her use of the Spanish language and questions Janer's motives for becoming a writer. Concerning the style of writing, Serrano, at the beginning of his review, compares Janer's style to that of the famous romance novelist Corín Tellado (Asturias, 1927). He states, for example, that '[l]a principal diferencia entre esta novela de la mallorquina Maria de la Pau Janer y cualquiera de las miles escritas por Corín Tellado es que esta última ha creado un estilo a conciencia, marca de la casa, sin trampa ni cartón' (Serrano: 2008, 101). Thus, the reference Serrano makes to Corín Tellado here is used to undermine Janer's work, rather than to praise the writer and set her within a specific literary tradition, as has been the case with other writers discussed in this thesis. His statement that Tellado had created her own brand, and, reading between the lines, that Janer had not, reinforces the notion that critics find it hard to place Janer's work and that an author must have a brand or something that defines them in order to achieve success in the literary field. In addition, this demonstrates the need for critics to compare contemporary writers to their predecessors, even if their styles are different. In other words, writers in the Spanish nation-state are never read on their own terms, but rather constantly compared with other writers, either from the Spanish nation-state or international, hence the attempt by some authors to negotiate this situation and propose their own literary genealogy, as has been evidenced in previous chapters. In addition, the phrase 'sin trampa ni cartón', though used positively when referring to Tellado, implies that Janer is pretending that her work is of a high standard when it is really at the same level as Tellado's. The effect this has is to discredit thoroughly Janer's work.

Serrano's criticism continues as he compares the quality of Janer's work to that of a soap opera. He states, for example, that '*Pasiones romanas* es un relato con un argumento y unos recursos propios del folletín que, sin embargo, en vez de decantarse por la lección de los grandes genios del género, nos sabe a culebrón venezolano' (2008: 101). In this quote, Serrano uses the colloquial and pejorative word for soap opera, 'culebrón', rather than the more commonly used 'telenovela' reinforcing his negative criticism of Janer's work and his opinion that the novel is of low quality. The use of 'folletín' also seems to be pejorative. Although the word could refer to the

nineteenth century trend where novels appeared in fragments in daily newspapers, it is more likely to be referring to the commercial style of the novel. As Elisa Martí-López in *The Cambridge Companion to the Spanish Novel: From 1600 to the Present* (2003), states:

[...] more often than not, *folletín* is used to describe not so much the method of publication of a novel, but rather its type – its content and style. In this sense, *folletín* is used to designate the tradition of melodramatic novel writing associated with popular and mostly female readership. More generally, *folletín* stands for commercial literature, that is, for novels created mechanically by the new publishing industry to secure a wide and immediate success among unsophisticated readers (*folletín* is thus often denounced as an example of the commodification of literature) (65-66).

Thus, the word ‘folletín’ is associated with mass-produced, low quality novels published for the masses. Although Serrano states that Janer’s novel does possess some of the qualities of this mass-produced literature, his suggestion that Janer has not mastered this, what he considers to be a low-quality genre, is a further attempt to discredit Janer and undermine her work.

After criticising Janer’s writing style, Serrano then critiques her use of language. He states for example:

Maria de la Pau Janer, que no parece muy avezada en el idioma castellano, ni conoce los más elementales resortes de su sintaxis, ha pretendido adobar su novela con una buena dosis de pensamiento. [...]. Hubiera sido mucho más honroso y honesto ser consciente de sus limitaciones y no adentrarse por caminos ignotos (2008, 101).

Serrano’s suggestion that Janer seems to be inexperienced in using the Spanish language, the use of the word ‘pretendido’ and the final sentence of the passage quoted above gives Serrano’s piece a patronising tone. In addition, the statement about Janer’s purported linguistic inexperience is possibly a reference to Janer switching languages from Catalan to Castilian. The phrase ‘hubiera sido mucho más honroso y honesto’ suggests that Serrano thinks Janer is dishonest and has tried to deceive readers in some way, while also reinforcing his opinion that Janer’s work is not of a high literary quality, as stated in the first section of Serrano’s review. In the final section of his review Serrano continues to show concern for the public and their reading experience

when he states that '[l]o peor de una obra así es, a la postre, el dinero que se gasta uno a cambio de prácticamente nada. Y lo que es más grave aún: las horas consumidas tan estúpidamente, sin derecho a reclamar daños y perjuicios por este atropello' (2008, 102). Here, Serrano uses emotive and aggressive language to further dissuade readers from purchasing Janer's novel and convince them that the novel is of low quality. Thus, in this review, Serrano seeks to discredit Janer's work and give the impression that Janer is not welcome in the central Spanish literary field. However, he does this without an actual literary judgement and at the end of the review the reader has no knowledge of what the book is about or where Janer has actually gone wrong.

In a review of Janer's *Planeta* prize-winning novel *Pasiones romanas* (2005) for the Spanish daily periodical *El País*, the literary critic, academic and writer, Fernando Castanedo criticizes Janer's writing style, while simultaneously revealing his own allegiances to the classical literary tradition.²⁰⁵ He begins by stating that Janer's novel is 'un homenaje a la neutralización' due to the highly descriptive nature of her book, which Castanedo claims diffuses suspense and anticipation (2005). According to Castanedo, Janer is paying 'homage' to French *nouveau roman*²⁰⁶ authors such as Alain Robbe-Grillet,²⁰⁷ whom Castanedo states 'ya nadie lee' and who create, in Castanedo's opinion, 'dispépticas novelas en las que, como recuerda el tópico, un personaje tardaba cien páginas en bajar las escaleras' (2005). What Castanedo creates here is an image of Janer's novel as an uninteresting, overly descriptive work that uses purportedly out-dated stylistic techniques which no one wants to read. What is interesting about this critical piece is that it uses Robbe-Grillet and the *nouveau roman* writing style to de-legitimize and ridicule Janer's work. Usually, as is evident in other chapters of this thesis, well-known writers and writing

²⁰⁵ Castanedo (Melilla, 1965) is a literary critic for the cultural supplement of *El País*, *Babelia*, has given talks on literature at Duke University, Wellesley College and Smith College, and has produced a number of prose, theatre and children's literature works, including his best known novel *Triunfo y muerte del general Castillo* (1999), which is now in its fourth edition.

²⁰⁶ *Nouveau roman* was a style of writing that emerged in France in the 1950s. In *A Dictionary of Critical Theory*, Ian Buchanan aptly describes the *nouveau roman* style as 'an experiment in writing' and one that 'constantly pushed the boundaries of intelligibility by deliberately flouting the norms of realism, character, plotting and so on' (2010, 347).

²⁰⁷ Robbe-Grillet (1922-2008) was a French writer and filmmaker as well as being one of the figures most commonly associated with the Nouveau Roman style of writing along with Nathalie Sarraute (1900-1999), Michel Butor (1926-) and Claude Simon (1913-2005). Acclaimed by critics such as Roland Barthes, Robbe-Grillet was voted into the *Académie Française* in 2004, although he was never formally received by the academy due to him refusing to adhere to the strict reception procedures of the institution. His most famous works include *Le Voyeur* (1955) and *La Jalousie* (1957).

styles are used to authorize a contemporary writer's work and to situate them within long-standing literary traditions in order to increase their prestige. In this case, however, Castaneda rejects the *nouveau roman* writing style, Robbe-Grillet's work and Janer's work along with them.

However, a side-by-side comparison of Janer's *Pasiones romanas* and Robbe-Grillet's *La Jalousie* reveals that they are, in fact, markedly different in style. In the first paragraph of *La Jalousie*, for example, Robbe-Grillet's absent third-person narrator describes the column and veranda of a building:

Now the shadow of the column – the column which supports the south-west corner of the roof – divides the corresponding corner of the veranda into two equal parts. This veranda is a wide, covered gallery surrounding the house on three sides. Since its width is the same for the central portion as for the sides, the line of shadow cast by the column extends precisely to the corner of the house – but it stops there, for only the veranda flagstones are reached by the sun, which is still too high in the sky (Howard: 2008, 3).

This extra-long quote is necessary to demonstrate some of the fundamental characteristics of the *nouveau roman* style including: the absence of characters and innovations in viewpoint and narrative voice. This intricate description of the column and veranda is cinematic, reminiscent of film noir establishing shots. Meanwhile, the detailed information regarding the column and veranda seems to be employed as a parody of literary description, intent on confusing the reader and questioning its use as a literary device. The subsequent paragraph begins with the sentence 'Now A... has come into the bedroom by the inside door opening onto the central hallway' (Howard: 2008, 3). Though a person has now been introduced to the story, the tone of the sentence, and indeed the remainder of the paragraph, is that of a running commentary, rather than the introduction of a character, and demonstrates the absence of a plot, another common feature of the *nouveau roman* style. Thus, *La Jalousie* breaks with and questions popular narrative construction and omits character and plot, focusing instead on describing actions and inanimate objects, leaving the reader outside the story.

Unlike *La Jalousie*, in the opening paragraph of *Pasiones Romanas*, the reader is immediately introduced to a character. The first line of the novel states 'Aunque ha llegado al aeropuerto con tiempo suficiente, este hombre no subirá al avión' (2005, 1).

This statement is then followed by an intricate description of the man, whose name the reader later finds out is Ignacio, and every move, thought, decision and phone call he makes as well as people he sees, from the taxi to the airport terminal. Contrary to Castanedo's assertion that this high level of description diffuses the suspense and anticipation usually found in novels, I would argue that it increases suspense as the reader, with the knowledge that Ignacio will not make it to his plane, begins to analyse these details for any reason why this event will not take place. Each time Ignacio answers the phone, stands in a queue or makes eye contact with someone in the airport and then continues on his way without incident, the reader is drawn further into the story by the impending sense of doom that surrounds the character. Thus, in contrast to *La Jalousie* and the nouveau roman style, Janer's *Pasiones romanas*, although it is descriptive, is plot and character driven and the descriptions serve the specific purpose of creating intrigue and heightening anticipation.

Castanedo continues his review with an outline of the plot and characters, which is followed by the statement that 'En *Pasiones romanas* no hay ni pasiones ni romanas. Hay algunos personajes de Palma de Mallorca que en cuanto intentan apasionarse resultan inmediatamente neutralizados por un narrador castrante y tedioso [...]' (2005). Thus, Castanedo reiterates his argument that the book neutralizes suspense, and in this case, character development, while criticizing the main narrative voice in the story. His criticism of the narrator continues when he states 'Para colmo de males resulta que el narrador también filosofa y que no está dispuesto a perdonar página sin una perla de su sabiduría [...]' and references lines from the novel followed by his own question and exclamation marks, such as in the following examples: '"viajar en tren es algo parecido a existir y no existir" (¿?)' and '"mañana quiere decir futuro inmediato, lo que sucederá cuando nos despertemos, pasada la noche" (¡!)' (2005). The question and exclamation marks here are used to express Castanedo's frustration on reading these phrases and seems to suggest that Castanedo thinks they are of little value and superfluous to the plot. The sarcastic tone of this section as well as the use of phrases such as 'to add insult to injury' further emphasizes Castanedo's opinion that reading *Pasiones romanas* is a tedious, frustrating experience.

At the end of his review Castanedo reinforces his previously stated opinions on Janer's novel and further criticizes the *Premio Planeta* and the literary value of Janer's text. He states, for example, 'Neutralizados los personajes; victorioso el gran

narrador; la autora huyendo con unas hermosísimas sacas llenas de euros; al final el que peor parado sale en esta refriega de opereta es el lector' (19/11/2005). In relation to the rest of the review, the description of Janer as 'el gran narrador' seems ironic on the part of Castanedo. In addition, Castanedo's reference to the monetary prize Janer received as 'unas hermosísimas sacas llenas de euros' indicates resentment that Janer has won the prize with this particular novel and portrays Janer as a shallow character who is only interested in money rather than literary excellence. Castanedo ends his review with the following statement:

El narrador del *Quijote* pidió a quienes le leyeran que le diesen las gracias no por lo que había incluido, sino por lo que había dejado fuera de su libro. El narrador de *Pasiones romanas* no ha seguido su ejemplo y el lector que se atreva con este material de construcción se las verá y deseará para encontrar algo que agradecerle (19/11/2005).

Castanedo's paraphrasing of Cervantes's foundational epic *Don Quijote de la Mancha* demonstrates Castanedo's commitment to classic literature and works from the traditional Spanish canon. In addition, unlike the rest of his review, it authorizes his own position as a critic and is used in an attempt to legitimate his critique of Janer's text. In addition, the reference to Janer's work as an 'unfinished work' or a 'work in progress' is an attempt to discredit Janer's novel. Finally, Castanedo's inference that in not following the model of *Don Quijote* the reader will struggle to find Janer's text enjoyable is a further attempt to discredit Janer's work and persuade the reader to ignore *Pasiones romanas*.

This review and the other views mentioned above demonstrate how the tensions between popular/commercial fiction and literary fiction have affected Janer's reception. Popular/commercial fiction is often dismissed by the literary field due to its mass popularity and economic success. As has been discussed in the introduction to this thesis, Bourdieu in *The Field of Cultural Production* (1983) states that:

the literary field is the economic world reversed; that is, the fundamental law of this specific universe, that of disinterestedness, which establishes a negative correlation between temporal (notably financial) success and properly artistic value, is the inverse of the law of economic exchange (1993, 164).

Thus, the literary field classifies works that are not financially successful as literary while mass-market, commercially successful works are classified as having less value and prestige. In the case of Janer, winning the *Premio Planeta*, which is a commercial award, with a lucrative 601,000 euro prize, that aims to ‘situar a los autores españoles galardonados en unos niveles de difusión y de popularidad jamás alcanzados’,²⁰⁸ has meant that although Janer achieved commercial success, the value and quality of her work was questioned. In his book chapter on the Galician literary field, Antón Figueroa argues that such tension between commercial and literary fiction is not present in Galicia where ‘the umbrella of the nation [...], can be invoked to cover and conceal any contradiction between creating art and making money’ (2011, 49). This observation could be applied to Catalonia too, where Janer’s work and strategy to win prizes in order to achieve success was more positively received due to her apparent commitment to the Catalan language. Thus, Janer is received negatively by critics in the central Spanish state as they appear to uphold the literary laws discussed by Bourdieu that enforce an inverse literary economy.

The aforementioned lack of academic studies of Janer’s work could also be accounted for by the perception of commercial literature having less literary value and therefore, not being an adequate subject for study. In addition, Janer’s age could be a factor, as she is relatively young and most of her corpus is in Catalan. However, when analysing the literary field I would argue that we must take into account the argument of those such as in the influential philosopher, theorist, politician and journalist Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) who made a compelling case for the value of commercial literature. In his notebooks on literature, for example, he states that:

[...] commercial literature must not be disregarded in the history of culture. Indeed, it has enormous value precisely in this respect because the success of a work of commercial literature indicates (and it is often the only indication available) the ‘philosophy of the age’, that is, the mass of feelings and conceptions of the world among the ‘silent majority’ (Forgacs and Nowell-Smith: 2012, 348).

²⁰⁸ <http://www.premioplaneta.es/historia/premio.html>

Thus, for Gramsci, popular literature has historical significance as it reflects trends of a particular time. These views, first put forward by Gramsci, have since been influential in the development of cultural studies approaches to the literary field.

Indeed, the field of Cultural Studies, developed by British academics in the late 1950s as mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, has done much to promote the value of popular culture and its suitability for academic study. However, in his essay 'Caught between Cultural and Literary Studies: Popular Fiction's Double Otherness' (2010), Michael Butter argues that commercial literature is often overlooked by Cultural Studies academics. He states, for example, that:

[i]f literary studies either considers popular fiction unworthy of scholarly attention or tries to turn it into a high literary fiction, cultural studies tends to ignore popular fiction, because the discipline has always had the objective of moving the scope of cultural artefacts worth studying beyond literature, of extending the notion of 'text' to comprise all signifying systems (201).

If this is applied to the case of Janer, then, her negative or lack of reception is possibly due to her work being firmly situated within what has been termed 'middlebrow' culture;²⁰⁹ in other words it is not literary enough for literary studies academics and is not far enough outside literature for cultural studies academics.

That being said, there is a genre of popular fiction that is studied by academics in both Catalonia and central Spain, particularly in terms of women writers and that is crime fiction. The popularity of crime fiction in the Spanish nation-state cannot be overstated, with works of crime fiction frequently topping the best-seller lists in the twenty-first century in addition to being extensively studied by academics. In terms of women writers, academic interest in the genre has spawned a research project entitled *Mujeres y Novela Criminal en España (1975-2012)* (MUNCE)²¹⁰ in which the representation of women, as detectives, victims and murderers is analysed. As has been mentioned above, Carme Riera has even made a contribution to this popular

²⁰⁹ 'Middlebrow' is a term that came into use in 1930s America and is utilised to describe what Joan Shelley Rubin in her book *The Making of Middlebrow Culture* (1992) calls, the 'genial middle ground' between refined art of highbrow culture and the lack of cultivation associated with lowbrow culture (xii). Associated with commercialism, consumerism and the corruption of taste by commercial interest, middlebrow culture has traditionally derided by academics, although Rubin's book attempts to 'redress both the disregard and the oversimplification of middlebrow culture [...]' (xiii).

²¹⁰For more information, please see the MUNCE website, which can be accessed at the following web address: <http://www.ub.edu/munce/>

genre, with her novel *Natura quasi morta* (2011). The prestige and attention afforded this particular genre of popular fiction is also discussed by Gramsci. He sets the genre apart from other popular fiction, arguing that it is an exception to the rule. The interest in crime fiction, or what Gramsci defines as ‘The Detective Novel’, is, according to Gramsci, due to the fact that ‘[p]eople have always been interested in “judiciary” activities and still are’ (Forgacs and Nowell-Smith: 2012, 369). Thus, the inherent interest people have in criminal activity and intrigue give weight to this genre and authorize it as an object of academic study.

While it may seem that the ambiguity surrounding Janer’s literary identity is a significant factor in the reception Janer receives, the author herself does not believe this to be the case. In an interview with *El Mundo* after winning the *Premio Planeta*, Janer demonstrates that, in her opinion, gender was the fundamental factor in the negative reception she received. She states that, ‘Estoy segura de que si fuese un hombre no hubiese sucedido nada de lo que ha pasado’ (08/11/05). While this may be partly true, I would argue that it is the way in which Janer managed her switch from Catalan literature to Spanish literature that negatively impacted on her reception. If, for example, Janer’s case is compared with that of another Catalan writer, Alberto Sánchez Piñol (Barcelona, 1965), who chose to switch languages from Catalan to Castilian in 2012, the argument mentioned above becomes evident. Although Sánchez Piñol’s literary career is relatively short in comparison with Janer’s,²¹¹ there are a number of comparisons that can be drawn between the situations of Janer and Sánchez Piñol. Much like Janer, the majority of Sánchez Piñol’s previous work was in Catalan.²¹² In addition, Sánchez Piñol had been received positively by the Catalan literary field and the writer had shown a commitment to writing in Catalan. Similar to Janer, he too switches languages and, in December 2012, published a book called *Victus*, in Castilian. *Victus* is a six-hundred-page novel about the war of Spanish succession, in particular the assault on Barcelona at the end of the war on the 11th of September 1714. However, as shall be discussed below, unlike Janer who received extremely negative reviews, Sánchez Piñol was left relatively unscathed and *Victus*

²¹¹ Prior to his career as a writer, Sánchez Piñol was an anthropologist. After publishing a book of short stories, *Les edats d’or* in 2001, Sánchez Piñol released his first novel *La pell freda* in 2002, which was an international success and has been translated into 24 languages, including English (*Cold Skin*, 2006).

²¹² With the exception of a book he co-wrote with the Italian writer Marcello Fois, *Compagnie difficili* (2000), which was published in Italian.

was heralded as ‘una gran novela’ and will now become a trilogy, with the second instalment, *Vae Victus*, released in November 2015.

Despite the success of the novel, before the book was released Sánchez Piñol expected a negative reaction to his decision to publish *Victus* in Castilian. In one interview with *El Economista* before the release of the novel, for example, he states that with the novel *Victus* ‘recibiré bofetadas de todos los lados’ (2012). Furthermore, in an interview with *El País*, Sánchez Piñol states that he understands if the reading people have of *Victus* is ‘una lectura de deserción moral’ (2012). The use of the term ‘deserción moral’ demonstrates that Piñol sees a switch in languages as a moral and important decision and his anticipation of the reception of the novel shows he is also aware of the risks involved in switching languages. Indeed, his novel was published just three months after a renewal of the Catalan bid for independence. At an independence rally on the 11th September 2012 Catalonia’s national day, 1.5 million people brought Barcelona to a standstill. Furthermore, at the annual football match between Real Madrid and Barcelona, commonly known as *El Clásico*, the crowd held up red and yellow cards to create a massive *senyera*, or Catalan flag and there were chants for independence (*The Guardian*, 2012).²¹³ Thus, Sánchez Piñol’s expectation that his book and his decision to switch languages would be received negatively is well-founded. However, rather than criticising the novel, *Victus* became part of the discourse on nationalism and national identity due to the book’s theme regarding the conquest of Barcelona in 1714, during the War of Spanish Succession. The Catalan newspaper *Plantada*, for example, stated that ‘*Victus* és una novella gran [...]’ and adds that it is because the book ‘és una novel·la catalana que transcendeix el fet nacional. I és catalana, tan nostra, tan sincera i tan dolorosa, perquè, sobretot, no és indulgent’ (13/10/12).²¹⁴ Thus, in this case, the fact that the subject matter of the book is about the events on and surrounding the 11th of September 1714 – a key moment in Catalan history and for Catalan society that marked the beginning of a particularly harsh period when the Catalan language and institutions were prohibited and that has shaped Catalonia as we understand it today – means that in spite of the language in

²¹³ Video footage of the event is available on Youtube at the following address: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P8lNo5usnnU>.

²¹⁴ ‘*Victus* is a grand novel [...]’, ‘it is a Catalan novel that transcends the national project. And it is Catalan, definitely ours, so sincere and painful and above all, not indulgent’.

which it is written, the novel is still seen as being inherently Catalan.²¹⁵ It is worth noting that Piñol's book was published close to both the events at the football stadium mentioned above and the 300th anniversary of the historical event and it is a possibility that this was part of Piñol's marketing strategy.

However, as Sánchez Piñol still expected a backlash against his decision to write in Castilian, in interviews before the release of *Victus*, he attempted to justify his decision to switch languages. In an interview with *El País*, for example, he states that, '[e]mpecé la novela hace unos 10 años en catalán, claro, pero a las 100 páginas vi que no tiraba y la aparqué; hasta que un día traduje la primera página al castellano y fluyó' (2012). Thus, Sánchez Piñol is keen to demonstrate that he wanted to and attempted to write the novel in Catalan first. The impression that Sánchez Piñol gives here is that the decision to write *Victus* in Castilian was accidental, or, at least, out of his control. This idea is reinforced by a radio interview he gave in which he simply stated that the novel, 'me salió en español' (2012). Furthermore, later in the interview with *El País*, he states that 'no gano nada con el cambio de lengua: ni me ha presentado a un premio galáctico ni he saltado de editorial' (2012). Sánchez Piñol's statement is very revealing, not least because it appears to be an indirect reference to Maria de la Pau Janer. The statement is revealing because it suggests a writer's motives for switching languages and the way in which they frame these motives are a fundamental factor in the reception of their work. While Sánchez Piñol did stand to gain a significant amount of money from publishing his novel in the larger Spanish literary field, the way in which he framed the switch of languages and the positive way in which the novel was received would suggest that critics and the reading public believed his explanation that he was not motivated by monetary gain. If this notion is applied to the case of Maria de la Pau Janer, it could be argued that her *Premio Planeta* win gave the impression that she had switched languages for the monetary rewards she would receive and thus subverting the rules of the literary field. In this way, her change of language usage could be seen as a betrayal. It could be argued therefore, that it was her motives for publishing in Castilian, rather than her gender, which ultimately resulted in the negative reception of her work.

²¹⁵ The events of 11th September 1714 are a central topic of discussion in Catalan historical and cultural discourse. For more information see Santiago Albertí's book *L'onze de setembre* (2006) and Oriol Junqueras i Vies's article 'L'onze de setembre de 1714 en la cultura catalanista del segle XIX' (1998). Full references in bibliography.

In addition to Janer's motives for switching languages, Janer's linguistic politics are unclear and this may also be a contributing factor to the negative reception she received. In an interview with *El Mundo*, Janer is asked if she has received any criticism because of her change in language, to which she replies, 'no he tenido ningún problema porque tenía muy clara mi decisión' (2005a). It seems therefore, that Janer did not face the same 'moral dilemma' as Sánchez Piñol. However, her decision seems far from clear. In an interview with *La Nación*, for example, Janer is asked if she will return to writing in Catalan. Janer states that '[d]ecidí llegar a muchos más lectores, y no tengo por qué dar un paso atrás. Seguiré escribiendo en castellano y versionándome yo misma al catalán' (2005). While Janer does dutifully produce a Catalan version of her work, considering Riera's argument mentioned earlier in this chapter that any translation is a second-rate version of the original, it is understandable that Catalan readers and critics would take offence to Janer's remarks. In saying that she has decided to reach many more readers, she implies that the Catalan literary field is not a viable platform for reaching a wider audience. Ironically, her statement comes before Catalan Culture is invited to the Frankfurt book fair where Catalan literature, as discussed in the introduction, does reach a much larger audience. Furthermore, the phrase 'un paso atrás', a step backwards, gives the impression that Catalan literature does not have the same status as Spanish literature as well as indicating that Janer's career in Catalan literature was merely a stepping-stone to a larger audience and bigger monetary rewards. This is reiterated by the use of the word 'versionar', which usually means to produce something of less quality than the original. However, just under a month later, in the above-mentioned interview with *El Mundo* her view on language has changed slightly and she states that 'no considero la literatura catalana como literatura menor. Simplemente creo que tengo la suerte de dominar dos lenguas y de poder escribir en ambas' (2005a). In this statement, Janer does not dismiss Catalan, but rather she is proud to be able to write in both languages. Although Janer states that she has not had any criticism regarding her change of language, it could be argued that her lack of clarity concerning her linguistic stance has contributed to the negative reception of her work.

A further contributing factor to the reception Janer received could be the genre in which she chose to write. Though Janer does not make it explicit in which genre she writes, her work, as has been demonstrated by Belmonte Serrano's review, is often

associated with the romance genre or, 'la novela rosa' in Castilian. In the aforementioned interview with *El Mundo*, Janer is asked what she thinks of the 'novela rosa' genre and if she thinks *Pasiones romanas* is part of that genre. Janer replies that:

La novela rosa es un subgénero literario en el que prima un argumento sensiblero protagonizado por unos personajes absolutamente planos y con un hilo argumental muy pobre y previsible. Mi libro no tiene nada que ver con eso (2005a).

Janer's statement demonstrates that she sees the romance genre as an inferior one and attempts to distance herself from the genre altogether. Sánchez Piñol's *Victus*, on the other hand, is an example of historical fiction, which, as shall be discussed in the final chapter of this thesis, has become one of the most popular and prestigious literary genres in the Spanish nation-state, with an almost guaranteed audience. Therefore, the genre in which an author chooses to write is also a fundamental factor in the reception their work receives and Janer's refusal to identify with any genre weakens her position in the literary field.

In addition, as well as her work being associated with what Janer herself defines as a non-prestigious subgenre, the *Premio Planeta*, as discussed above, is also regarded with little reverence. Throughout the aforementioned interview Janer has to defend herself against comments and questions that portray the *Premio Planeta* and her work as commercial and as 'literatura basura'. One member of the public, for example, states that '[p]ara mí los *Premios Planeta* son a la literatura lo que las hamburguesas [son] a la comida', with another asking '[h]ubiese preferido ganar el *Premio Nacional de Narrativa* o el *Premio de la Crítica* a haber ganado el *Premio Planeta*, que cada vez está más desprestigiado?' (2005a). Thus Janer's work and the *Premio Planeta* are not associated with prestige or prestigious literary genres. However, Janer defends the prize as well as drawing attention to the different types of literary prizes. She states, for example, that:

No creo que esté más desprestigiado, simplemente es un premio polémico por su dotación y por su envergadura. Naturalmente que me encantaría ganar el *Nacional de Narrativa* o el de *la Crítica* pero son historias distintas. En realidad, hay tres tipos de premios: 1) los que dan las instituciones, que suelen ser a obras publicadas, 2) el que da la crítica que suelen partir de criterios que buscan la

experimentación o la innovación literaria y 3) los que dan las editoriales, que pretenden vender libros sin tener que renunciar a la calidad literaria (2005a).

Thus, what Janer alludes to here is that people criticise the *Premio Planeta* due to the large monetary prize that is awarded and the fame that writers achieve after winning the prize. However, she argues that the literary quality of her work is not compromised by the type of prize she enters. What Janer does not allude to, is the hierarchy of literary prizes that exists in the Spanish nation-state, nor does she address the fact that prizes that are awarded by critics have more prestige.

Furthermore, in the same year, Jaime Bayly's novel was also criticised harshly, suggesting it is the year in which she won the award, rather than her gender that impacted the reception she received. In 2005, the *Premio Planeta*'s runner-up was the Peruvian writer Jaime Bayly (Peru, 1965) with his novel *Y de repente, un ángel*. Similar to Janer, his work received extremely negative criticism. The literary critic for *El Cultural*, Joaquín Marco, for example, starts his review with the following statement, 'El escritor peruano Jaime Bayly (nacido en 1965) es sin duda uno de los valores hispanoamericanos que merecía ser seguido con atención' (2005a). Despite this positive opening statement, Marco follows it up with '*Y de repente, un ángel*, finalista del *Planeta*, sin embargo, no pasa de ser una novela hartamente mediocre, donde se adivina el ingenio más que el talento, porque su autor se ha sometido a la disciplina de una trama absurda, con personajes escasamente convincentes y situaciones que bordean el ridículo' (2005a). Marco also compares Bayly's work to the *folletín* narratives produced in the nineteenth century. He states that 'Dostoievski había elaborado excelentes novelas sobre esquemas folletinescos. Pero Bayly, además de no ser Dostoievsky, no justifica nada' (2005a). In an unusual statement, Marco suggests that the lack of quality in Bayly's novel is due to Bayly having written too many books. He states, for example, that 'Bayly ha publicado ocho novelas más. Este exceso de producción puede haber debilitado su capacidad crítica [...]' (08/12/2005). Marco closes his review with the statement that Bayly's novel 'no convencerá a nadie' (08/12/2005). Thus, in a similar way to Janer, Bayly's novel is reduced to the *folletín* genre and canonical authors, such as Dostoievsky is used to undermine Bayly's literary efforts.

One reason for the particularly negative criticism Janer and Bayly received could be due to the reaction of *Premio Planeta* judge and writer Juan Marsé. Marsé

commented on the quality of all the works entered for the prize, stating publically in the press that ‘ninguna de las novelas tenía suficiente calidad’ (*El Mundo*, 2005). Later he adds that the level was ‘bajo y en algunos tramos subterráneo’ (*Letralia*, 2005). With specific reference to Janer’s book *Pasiones romanas* he said that ‘el título con el que ganó el *Premio Planeta* Maria de la Pau Janer era “un bodrio tremendo”’ and that the novel had a ‘ritmo narrativo tan pormenorizado y tan meticuloso, que me empecé a impacientar’. The use of a colloquial word, such as ‘bodrio’ suggests that this is a visceral reaction on the part of Marsé rather than a professional literary review, however, it leaves the impression with readers that Janer’s book is boring and badly written, with the other entries being of a similar standard. The director of the *Biblioteca Nacional*, Rosa Regás, also a judge on the panel, was more diplomatic, but stated that she too ‘esperaba que el nivel (del *Planeta*) fuera más alto’ (*El Mundo*, 2005b). Marsé stated finally that ‘desde el punto de vista comercial, el *Planeta* funciona, pero desde la óptica literaria es más que dudoso’ (*El Mundo*, 2005b). What Marsé and Regás do here is call into question the value of the prize and the work of the entrants. Marsé in particular reduces the prize to a commercial stunt that is merely used to sell more books. Marsé’s comments, along with his resignation of his role as judge after only two years caused controversy at the 2005 *Planeta* prize and is possibly a contributing factor to the subsequent negative reception that both Janer and Bayly received.

However, I would argue that it is necessary to understand the situation of literary prizes and the roles that their judges play by taking into account James F. English’s arguments regarding their function in the literary field. English argues that authoritative figures questioning the value of prizes is all part of the way the literary field functions. He states, for example, that ‘Modern cultural prizes cannot fulfil their social functions unless authoritative people – people whose cultural authority is secured in part through these very prizes – are thundering against them’ (25). Thus, according to English, negative reactions that criticize the quality of the works entered for a literary prize can have the opposite effect of authorizing the prize and the prestige that is attached to it. It is worth noting here that Marsé is a previous winner of the *Premio Planeta*, having won the prize in 1978 with his novel *La muchacha de las bragas de oro*. Rosa Regàs also received the *Planeta* prize in 2001 for her novel *La canción de Dorotea*. Thus, in criticizing the quality of the texts they are judging, Marsé

and Regàs are attempting to authorize their own position, not only as judges, but also as writers and previous winners of the prize. Therefore, the reactions, such as those of Marsé and Regàs are also a part of promoting the prize. Though their reactions were negative, the subsequent controversy produced more articles in the press and led to more interviews with the authors and judges involved.

To conclude this section, as a comparison of Janer and Sánchez Piñol's work has demonstrated, when writers switch languages, there are multiple factors which contribute to an author's reception. These include: the motives that an author has for writing in a different language, the perception that the reading public and critics have of the author, the genre in which they write and any literary prizes that they win after changing languages. In the case of Janer, although gender becomes a factor in the negative responses to her work, that is, when critics comment on Janer's physical appearance; it could be argued that gender is not the initial factor used to evaluate or critique her work. The more likely explanation for the negative responses Janer received is one of the factors mentioned above. In addition, what Janer's case shows is that prestige and success cannot necessarily travel with the writer across linguistic borders as different literary fields have different rules and ways of evaluating their writers. Janer acknowledges this when, in an interview with *El Mundo* in 2002, she is asked if she thinks it is difficult to switch languages. Whilst Janer refuses to be drawn on the question of difficulty (or otherwise) of switching languages, she admits that '[e]s una decisión que hay que tomar en un momento determinado, sabiendo que es un nuevo campo, que es una decisión con sus riesgos' (2002).

The negative reception of Janer's work and her switching languages was only exacerbated by her decision to stand for election to represent the right-wing *Partido Popular* (PP) as the MP for Mallorca in 2007. Although she was listed as an independent candidate, this was a major political and ideological U-turn for Janer, who had previously been associated with a left-wing, Catalan nationalist agenda. In interviews, Janer was adamant she had been chosen by the PP for her 'moderación' and 'catalanismo' (2010). However, despite Janer's attempts to effectively market her change in politics, the news that Janer would be working for the PP was not received well, neither by Catalan nationalists, nor by other members of the PP. In the book *Contra el talante: Rajoy y la oposición a ZP* (2008), for example, Pilar Cernuda states that 'el anuncio de Matas de que había ofrecido a la Janer en las listas autonómicas

como independiente causó verdadero asombro' (154).²¹⁶ Similarly, in an article for the Spanish, right-wing daily periodical *ABC*, Enriqueta Arnau states that '[d]esde que la escritora María de la Pau Janer hizo pública su inclusión en las listas electorales del PP, se ha organizado en Cataluña una auténtica caza de brujas contra ella' (2007). The public's reaction to Janer's decision was also extremely negative as Cernuda states, 'en Mallorca, más de 2.000 papeletas fueron anuladas porque el nombre de la escritora había sido tachado' (2008, 156). Janer lost the election and left the *Partido Popular* soon after. Thus, Janer's decision to switch her political agenda was seen as surprising as both writers and politicians, as has been demonstrated in other chapters of this thesis, usually stick to one political ideology over the course of their career.

According to Arnau, the reason behind such negative reactions was that left-wing Catalan nationalists felt Janer had betrayed them. She states that '[l]os guardianes de las esencias nacionalistas han dictaminado que ha abandonado el recto camino del nacionalismo y debe ser castigada por ello. Por lo que se ve, de repente ha perdido la calidad literaria que tenía. Y es que, para algunos, una escritora es buena o mala en función de a quién vote' (2007). Though Arnau's article takes an anti-nationalist view, the point that a writer's political stance can affect the reception of their literary work, can be valid right across the Spanish nation-state, as has been evidenced by other case studies in this thesis. Cernuda, on the other hand, argues that it was Janer's persona that caused such negative reactions. She states that 'La Janer era tal vez muy inteligente para las cuestiones mediáticas, para ganar premios y conseguir aparecer en programas de televisión en los que le pagaban muy bien, pero su forma de ser la convertía en una pésima candidata política. Indisciplinada, soberbia, con un desmesurado afán de protagonismo y, sobre todo, irresponsable' (2008, 156). Thus, Cernuda adheres to this image of Janer as a person who does not have the traits one would expect in a politician. Cernuda's portrayal of Janer therefore seems to reiterate how literary critics perceived the writer, as all packaging and no substance. I would argue, however, that this type of negative reaction, the type that directly criticizes Janer's persona is due to the ambiguity that surrounds Janer's mediated identity. By not remaining loyal to one particular language, literature or political agenda, or offering what could be deemed a justification for such radical changes, Janer leaves herself open to negative criticism, such as that mentioned above. In addition, it is also

²¹⁶ It is worth noting that the use of the article 'la' in front of Janer is derogatory.

demonstrative of critics and academics trying not only to place Janer, but trying to suggest the writer should ‘know her place’.

The most vitriolic reaction to both Janer’s *Planeta* prize win and her change in politics, however, came from Catalan journalist Sergi Doria, in his article for the aforementioned Spanish daily periodical *ABC*. Throughout the article, Doria objectifies Janer while criticizing her physical appearance, persona, her style of writing and her language usage. In terms of her physical attributes, Doria repeatedly refers to Janer as ‘la ninfa’, describes her voice as being ‘como esos discos de vinilo que bambolean el tono deformado por el uso’ and compares her body weight to the ‘weight’ of her writing when he states ‘el peso de la estilizada ninfa y la anorexia de su prosa’ (01/07/2007). Referring to Janer’s election loss, Doria states that ‘a estas horas debe sentir envidia de la Munar, siempre tan peinada, cual princesa palmesana’ (01/07/2007). By saying that Janer she should be jealous of Maria Antònia Munar, president of the political party *Unió Mallorquina*, who beat Janer in the elections Doria is equating Janer and Munar’s worth and success to their looks. In other words, according to Doria, Munar beat Janer in the election because she was well-groomed and not for her political strategy. Similarly, Janer lost because she is not a ‘well-groomed princess’. Doria’s comments highlight the out-dated, patriarchal views of women that still exist in the Spanish media and in the Spanish literary field.

In terms of her writing and language usage, Doria states that ‘leer sus novelas y escrutar sus columnas es una lección sobre lo que no debe ser la escritura’ (2007). In addition, he mentions that Janer was not invited to the Frankfurt book festival with Catalan culture. He states that ‘criticada por escribir en castellano y por sus veleidades populares, Maria de la Pau quedó fuera de las listas del Institut Ramon Llull para la Feria de Fráncfort’ (2007). Finally, he states that ‘la Maria de la Pau se sentía cada vez más turista, una turista correteando hacia la estación término de su ambición’ (2007). Thus, with this set of criticism, Doria is pushing Janer to the margins of both Spanish and Catalan literature and is keen to demonstrate that her decision to switch languages has not been well received. Doria’s statement that Janer had been omitted from the Frankfurt book fair reinforces the idea that any change in language or politics from writers, such as Janer, that is not in support of the Catalan national project will be negatively received and the cultural agent will possibly be met with hostility or even punishment. In terms of women writers, this is also reminiscent of the idea that women

(writers) should know their place and not actively cross cultural, linguistic or political borders.

Regarding her persona, Doria defines Janer as a ‘planta trepadora que crece al sol que más calienta’ and as having ‘una sonrisa-rixtus’ (2007). In addition, after her political defeat, Doria states that Janer ‘habrá de buscar otra reencarnación’ (2007). The use of the phrase ‘planta trepadora’ attempts to reinforce the notion that Janer has no political or literary commitment and her aim is merely to gain money and fame. The use of the word ‘reencarnación’ conjures images of deception and disguise and is linked to this common idea among literary critics and cultural commentators that Janer lacks authenticity. Doria’s reference to Janer as having a ‘sonrisa-rixtus’ is a further reinforcement of Janer as being fake or lacking authenticity. Doria’s article then is the epitome of negative reception Janer has received regarding her work and change in political stance. This article also demonstrates how, in the absence of a clear marketing strategy, a writer’s persona can be constructed by others and projected onto them. Finally, this article, and the other articles mentioned above, demonstrate the reception an author can receive if they do not follow the unwritten, but accepted rules of the literary field.

It is worth noting that Marsé, Regàs and Doria, who have been among some of the harshest critics of Janer’s work are all from Catalonia, and Barcelona in particular. Although Janer has not received a direct negative reaction to her switching languages, I would argue that the backlash has been indirect and has targeted her physical appearance, in the case of Doria, and the literary quality of her work in the case of Regàs and Marsé. These particular negative reactions have been caused due to the fact that Regàs and Marsé chose from the very beginning of their careers to write in Castilian, whereas Janer began her career in Catalan and moved to Castilian later on. As such, Janer’s presence in the central Spanish literary field threatens the position of Regàs and Marsé. I would argue therefore, that their reactions to Janer’s work, in addition to authorizing their position in the central Spanish literary field are also reinforcing the literary quality of their work, while distancing themselves from Janer. Doria, on the other hand, works in Catalonia, at the *Universitat Oberta de Catalunya*, but also writes his essays and monologues in Castilian.²¹⁷ His work is also centred on

²¹⁷ *No digas que me conoces* (2015), *Ignacio Agustí, el árbol y la ceniza* (2013) and *Guía de Barcelona de Carlos Ruiz Zafón* (2008).

Barcelona. Thus, his negative reactions to Janer are possibly from the perception that Janer has betrayed Catalan literature and the language. What this could demonstrate is that the reception of a writer can also be dependent on the position of the critics in the central Spanish or Catalan literary fields and how these positions influence their perceptions of other writers entering or leaving their respective fields. In addition, it also shows the close links between the Catalan and central Spanish literary fields.

Thus, one of the main issues with Janer, as mentioned above, is that, unlike the other authors in this thesis, she does not project a clear and explicit identity creating ambiguity about where her loyalties truly lie and about where she should be situated in terms of the Spanish and Catalan literary fields. In addition, she does not associate herself with other authors of her generation or of previous generations, nor does she situate herself within a specific Catalan or Spanish literary tradition. The defining characteristics of Janer's authorial persona are the literary prizes she has won, which reinforce the perception of her as someone who is not committed to any literary or national project and only writes to achieve financial success. While other writers, such as Lucía Etxebarria play on this kind of perception and use it to their own advantage, Janer does not respond to such negative responses, which means the public only receives negative interpretations of the author and her work. The effect of this lack of branding is that the image of Janer that is projected is done so by other agents in the literary field, such as literary critics and is often negative and, due to her media presence, also criticizes her physical appearance. What this demonstrates is the need for a writer working within the Spanish nation-state to clearly define their particular brand of literature. As has been evidenced in other chapters in this thesis, in order to achieve both economic and critical success in the literary field, writers must have a well laid out literary project, be supportive of left-wing politics and or national politics and be able to situate themselves within a specific literary tradition, whether this be as a descendent of Galdós as will be discussed in the following chapter, as part of a feminist literary genealogy or otherwise. Writers who fail to take control of their own literary personas or who do not follow the unwritten rules of the literary field can find themselves negatively received by critics and ignored by academics.

However, Janer appears to have changed her literary persona in recent years. After a five-year hiatus from writing between 2010 and 2015,²¹⁸ Janer returned to the literary field in 2015 with a new novel, *Cuando seas libre*.²¹⁹ The novel, which was released on the 2nd of June in Castilian and the following day in Catalan,²²⁰ rewrites the story of the female character, Scheherezade from *Arabian Nights* and, according to Janer, transforms the character into a woman ‘de carne y huesos’ (*El Confidencial*, 09/06/2015). With this new literary offering, it is not only the character of Scheherezade that is transformed; so too is Janer’s literary persona. At the book launch, which was covered by various members of the press, Janer gives the book a specific theme, ‘la solidaridad de las mujeres’ and also has a particular goal she wants to achieve related to the solidarity of women. She states, for example, that ‘[a] menudo [...] se dice que las mujeres pueden ser las mayores enemigas de otras mujeres, y eso es verdad, y yo lo he vivido, pero también existe la mujer que comparte todo y se lo juega todo por la amiga, un tema poco tratado literariamente’ (*El Confidencial*, 09/06/2015). In choosing to re-write a popular and canonical work, as well as flesh out a female character and challenging popular perceptions of women, Janer is situating herself within a specific feminist literary tradition, although it is worth noting that Janer does not use the word feminist in her interviews regarding the text. It is also worth noting that unlike Riera’s re-telling, Janer cannot compare herself, or be compared to the author of *Arabian Nights* as the identity of the author is unknown. However, she still uses the canonical status of the work in her subsequent marketing strategy. Thus, Janer continues to occupy an ambiguous position within the literary field.

In conclusion, in terms of strategies that women writers use for success, this chapter has demonstrated that if a writer is bilingual and wishes to use both languages, then having separate, well-defined spaces in which a writer uses their languages is key. In addition, being an academic or member of a prestigious literary institution, such as the RAE can increase cultural and symbolic capital and equate to prestige. Similar to the case of María Xosé Queizán in Chapter 1, showing the ability to write

²¹⁸ It is worth noting that although Janer was absent from literature she maintained her presence in the media through hosting a late-night radio show in Catalan called *Les mil i una nits*, a reference to *Arabian Nights*, which discussed sensuality, eroticism, passion and other aspects of sex.

²¹⁹ Although not explicitly stated, this new book could be related to her radio programme *Les mil i una nits*, which also makes reference to the story of *Arabian Nights*.

²²⁰ The Castilian version is the original version.

in all or multiple literary genres adds to an author's prestige. Additional strategies include associating oneself with other famous writers and forebears and following literary trends. In addition, literary prizes are also a useful tool for increasing a writer's cultural and symbolic capital. However, what this chapter also shows is that the prestige of the prize, as well as the comments of the judges can affect the reception of winning texts. In addition, a writer's prestige and success cannot necessarily travel with the author across linguistic borders and into another literary field. Furthermore, switching languages or political ideology portrays a writer as indecisive and such decisions can receive negative reception, as is evident in the case of Janer. Finally, in negative literary reviews or profiles of the author, a woman writer's personal appearance is often used to discredit her or belittle her literary efforts. In the next chapter on the marketing and reception of women writers in the central Spanish literary field, the strategies of following literary trends and associating oneself with famous writers and forebears will be discussed in further detail, along with how a writer's physical appearance can affect their reception. In addition, it will look at the various media that can be used to promote an author's work, such as websites, social media and even celebrity versions of reality television shows. It also looks at two writers, Almudena Grandes and Lucía Etxebarria, who are media savvy and have carefully controlled, well-managed marketing strategies.

Chapter 4: ‘La Escritora Galdosiana’ and ‘La Reina de Corazones’: The Marketing and Reception of Almudena Grandes and Lucía Etxebarria

Almudena Grandes (Madrid, 1960) and Lucía Etxebarria (Valencia, 1966) are two writers who, as will be discussed in this chapter, have become highly successful and best-selling authors in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries through remarkable marketing campaigns, the construction of specific mediated images and careful negotiation of literary institutions, the media and readers. Their literature and success have drawn the attention of academics, including Christine Henseler, Silvia Bermúdez and Elena Torres, and as such their work and public personas have often been compared or discussed alongside each other in academic literature. While certain books by these two authors have similar characteristics – such as the erotic content and *Bildungsroman* style of Grandes’ *Las edades de Lulú* and Etxebarria’s *Beatriz y los cuerpos celestes* – academic analyses go beyond an aesthetic comparison of their work with topics ranging from the visual image of the author, their proximity to their readers, the use of the female body, the subject of sexuality and the erotic, and mother-daughter relationships (see for example Henseler: 2003; Bermudez: 2002; and Torres: 2008). However, as this chapter will argue, a significant point of comparison between these two authors can be seen in the way in which they manipulate their authorial persona or human brand.²²¹ Both authors are marketing savvy²²² and use this cultural capital to construct a unique authorial image that gives them the edge over other authors in the literary field.

Differentiating oneself from other authors in the literary field is essential for writers working within an ever more competitive central Spanish market. The economic crisis²²³ has meant that publishers have seen a steady decline in revenue

²²¹ A human brand is defined as any renowned person who is the subject of marketing communications efforts (Chuang & Ding, 2013 and Thomson, 2006).

²²² Torres (2008) states for example, that Grandes and Etxebarria are ‘escritoras que ven nacer y crecer sus carreras literarias en un momento en el que los medios de comunicación y las promociones forman ya parte natural de la industria cultural’ (195) and later in the chapter reminds us that Etxebarria’s initial work experience was in public relations and in advertising, both in the music industry (SONY) and in the culture industry (FNAC) (230).

²²³ The economic crisis is a global financial crisis that started in 2008 with the collapse of the global bank Lehman Brothers. This then evolved into the Dubai Sovereign Debt Crisis and the Eurozone Crisis. The Eurozone crisis hit Spain particularly hard as the housing bubble, or ‘*burbuja inmobiliaria*’,

since 2009.²²⁴ In this time of crisis, readers are reluctant to purchase books. In a 2012 report conducted by the *Federación Gremio Editores de España* (FGEE) it was revealed that although 63% of Spaniards read regularly, only 23% of those readers actually purchase books (www.federacioneditores.org). While the press sensationalised the story, focusing on illegal downloads,²²⁵ which is a severe problem in Spain, it is worth noting that the number of people visiting libraries in Spain has risen exponentially.²²⁶ This is unsurprising as the average price of a book in Spain in 2012 was 14.52 euros. It is also worth noting that the average price of the top-ten best-selling books in Spain in 2014 was 18.81 euros and the price of individual novels ranged from 6.90 to 25.62 euros. In this climate, editors are publishing fewer books so writers must compete to be published and sell a significant amount of books when they are. In addition to the precarious economic climate, writers must also compete with international competition. Foreign translations constitute over 20% of books published in Spain and the top-selling books in Spain between 2012 and 2015 have been imports, such as the hugely successful E. L. James trilogy *Fifty Shades of Grey* and John Green's *The Fault in Our Stars*.

In terms of women writers, since the new millennium women writers have increased their visibility and their hold on the central Spanish literary market. Whereas in 2000 feminist academics such as Iris Zavala published books and bibliographies that merely tried to prove that Spanish women writers even existed, by 2014 four of the top-ten best-selling books in Spain were authored by women indicating that women writers are now a central feature of the Spanish literary market, although not

which saw house prices rise by 44% between 2004 and 2008, burst and the country had to request a loan from the EU to deal with the fallout (BBC News, 2012). According to *The Economist* the current financial crisis is the worst recession for 80 years (Anon, 2013b). It has led to severe cut-backs in Spain, which in turn have led to some of the highest unemployment rates in Europe. At the height of Spain's economic problems the unemployment rate was 26.94%. This has since decreased to 23.7%.

²²⁴ According to statistics from the *Federación Gremio Editores de España* there was a 2.4% decline in revenue between 2008 and 2009, a 7% decrease between 2009-2010, a 4% decrease between 2010-2011, an 11% decrease between 2011-2012, and a 12% decrease in revenue between 2012 and 2013 (*Comercio Interior*, 2013, full reference in bibliography).

²²⁵ See for example, 'Yo leo, tú descargas, él piratea' in *El País* (2013), full reference in bibliography.

²²⁶ In 2006, for example, the statistics for library usage at the *Biblioteca Nacional de España* were 76,682 people. In 2007 this jumped significantly to 115,707 people and while these figures may be distorted by introduction of the *Ley de memoria histórica* discussed later in this chapter, the numbers continued to increase and at the beginning of the crisis in 2008 statistics for library usage stood at 148,938 people. The statistics can be accessed at the following web address: <http://www.bne.es/webdocs/LaBNE/Estadisticas/General.pdf>.

all of them are Spanish.²²⁷ The Spanish literary field also boasts numerous women writers, such as Almudena Grandes and Julia Navarro, who produce consistent best-sellers and are published by prestigious publishing houses, such as *Tusquets*. In addition, literary institutions, such as the Real Academia Española (RAE) have rapidly begun an inclusive process. In 2000 there was only one female Académico de Número²²⁸ in the RAE and in 2015 there are now seven.²²⁹ This figure may still seem low, however, considering that between the creation of the academy in 1713 and the year 2000 (387 years) only two women were elected to seats in the academy (Elena Quiroga, 1984 and Ana María Matute, 1998) and between 2002 and 2015 (13 years) seven women were elected to seats, this constitutes a significant change in the inclusivity of the institution. Although this is not a comprehensive study of the situation of women writers in the twenty-first century Spanish nation-state, it gives a small insight into the increased awareness and acceptance of women writers by readers and literary institutions.

That said, the place where women writers are still excluded, misrepresented and undervalued in Spain, is in the media. In December 2014, three of the major national daily periodicals (*El País*, *ABC* and *La Vanguardia*) published lists of the ten “best” books or novels of the year as chosen by journalists and critics from the respective newspapers. In the list published by *El País*, which included the Spanish Dictionary, only one woman writer featured, the Nobel Prize winning Polish poet Wislawa Szymborska. *ABC*’s also only included one woman writer and she too was from outside Spain, the Booker Prize winner Lydia Davis. *La Vanguardia*’s list also only featured one women writer, but this time it was the Spanish author Almudena Grandes. Earlier in 2014, the daily periodical *El Mundo* published an article on the twenty-five best novels published between 1989 and 2014. This list features three books authored by Rafael Chirbes, who won the *Premio Nacional de Narrativa* (2014)

²²⁷ *Dispara, yo ya estoy muerto* by the Spanish author Julia Navarro; *Fifty Shades of Grey* by the British author E. L. James; *Las Tres Bodas de Manolita* by the Spanish author Almudena Grandes; and *El juego de Ripper* by the Chilean-American writer Isabel Allende.

²²⁸ The RAE is run by *Académicos de Número* that each have a seat corresponding either to a capital or lower case letter of the alphabet. There are currently 46 *Académicos de Número* in the RAE. To become an *Académico de Número*, a person must be elected by majority vote and endorsed by three current *Académicos*.

²²⁹ The historian Carmen Iglesias (2002), the biochemist Margarita Salas Falgueras (2003), the writer Soledad Puértolas Villanueva (2010), the academic Inés Fernández-Ordóñez (2011), the writer Carme Riera (2013), the academic Aurora Egido Martínez (2014) and the poet and translator Clara Janés (2015).

and two books authored by Juan Marsé, but only one of the twenty-five books mentioned was authored by a woman, *El corazón helado* (2007) by Almudena Grandes. What these lists show is the stranglehold that large publishing houses have over the literary landscape as well as their success at promoting their own authors and getting them onto lists, such as the ones mentioned above. In addition these lists demonstrate that, particularly where women writers are concerned, translations of English-language or foreign language texts have more cultural capital and are perceived as better quality by book critics, especially those that have won a prestigious literary award, such as the Booker Prize or the Nobel Prize. These authors and their works are therefore afforded more visibility in the media and effectively drown out books authored by Spanish writers.

However, appearing in the media is an important part of book promotion and Lucía Etxebarria herself has discussed the consequences of having no media presence. She states that ‘[e]n todos los países crítica, reseñas y apariciones en prensa se citan por los compradores como factores determinantes en la compra. Un joven autor debe tener en cuenta que no aparecer en los medios de comunicación equivale a no existir, comercialmente hablando’ (2000, 304). Thus, women writers in the central Spanish literary field, must find a way to have a presence in the press in order to ‘exist’ commercially. One way to achieve a presence in the press is through having an authorial persona or brand that gains the attention of critics and journalists. While the creation and manipulation of an authorial image to market literary works is not a new concept to the literary field,²³⁰ it has become a vital marketing strategy in the twenty-first century. Ohlsson et al. state, for example, that ‘[a]s in other cultural fields, the commodities to be sold – books – are marketed using the “personalities” directly connected to them’ (2014, 32-33). Indeed, before the release of new books authors participate in interviews where they are asked questions about their lives and personalities. When promoting her latest novel *Las tres bodas de Manolita*, for example, Almudena Grandes was interviewed by the literary magazine *Qué Leer* and answered questions on her favourite films, her relationship with God, what she drinks while she writes, as well as the ultimate question, ‘¿Quién es Almudena Grandes?’

²³⁰ There is an entire body of research on the changes in the literary field in the late nineteenth century and the introduction of the author’s image as part of a literary marketing strategy. See for example, Ommundsen (2007), Stetz (1989) and Federico (2000).

(76-77). On the two-page spread, which starts with a huge picture of Grandes, there is a small text-box in the bottom right-hand corner of the second page with a description of the book. In addition, on the front covers of books, the name of the author is often as prominent, or more prominent, than the title of the book itself. This is true in the case of both Grandes and Etxebarria. This would indicate that it is the reputation or image of the author that initially sells the book and attracts readers, rather than its title or content.

A further way for women writers to obtain media interest in their work is the use of paratexts in the hype or marketing of the novel.²³¹ Paratexts are promotional material, such as websites and book trailers, that readers and critics come into contact with before the release of a book. In his book *Show Sold Separately* (2010) Jonathan Gray argues that ‘the promotional material that we consume sets up, begins and frames many of the interactions that we have with texts. More than merely point us to the text at hand, these promos will have already begun the process of textual meaning, serving as the first outpost of interpretation’ (48). Thus, paratexts can be useful tools in building visibility and recognition of texts and their authors. As will be demonstrated later in this chapter, a popular paratext that has been used by both Almudena Grandes and another of my case studies, the Basque writer Mariasun Landa, is to use the epilogue or author’s note to guide a critic’s or reader’s interpretation of the text. Thus, this chapter will analyse the way in which Grandes and Etxebarria construct and market their authorial personas as well as their use of paratexts to promote their work. It will then examine the prestige or symbolic capital they receive and the reception of their personas and works, particularly by the media.

Grandes and Etxebarria have different marketing strategies and constructed images, which in turn receive markedly different levels of prestige and reception. Grandes’s approach particularly with her latest literary project, for example, is conservative and careful. She writes in well-established genres, such as historical fiction and she uses well-worn tropes, such as the solitary Romantic author to construct her image. Specific to the marketing campaign of the series of historical fiction Grandes is currently writing, she has also constructed a canonical male genealogy that adds authority to her work and which she can trace forward to herself and her husband,

²³¹ According to Helgason, Karrholm and Steiner (2014), hype is ‘the branding of a single product, filling the semiotic sign of the title (or series title) with a promised reading experience’ (15).

the acclaimed poet Luis García Montero. In terms of prestige, she is published by the prestigious publishing house *Tusquets*, she has won nine literary prizes and is the focus of many academic studies. The result of her marketing campaigns and subsequent accrual of symbolic capital has been well received by the general public and press critics alike. Grandes was one of the best-selling authors of 2014 and has been on the best-seller list with all three of the books published under the collective title *Episodios de una guerra interminable*. Grandes's image is one of a well-established, well-supported and prestigious author, whose work appeals to the mass market and to the critical establishment.

In contrast to Grandes's conservative marketing strategy, Etxebarria's strategy is to accompany the release of each book with a promotional stunt, such as taking her latest book as her date to a film screening, or appearing on reality television. In addition, she also, as Tsuchiya (2002) states, 'commodif[ies] peripheral subjectivities' (77) to promote her work. In other words, she integrates modes of thinking, such as otherness, feminism and anti-establishmentarianism into her authorial persona and turns them into marketable, consumable products. These labels that are attached to her brand are also used to provoke reactions from readers and critics, whether these reactions are negative or positive, gaining her maximum exposure and ultimately leading to high numbers of book sales, though not necessarily critical acclaim. Etxebarria's attention-grabbing stunts gain the author a substantial amount of space in the press, online and in other media forms. Etxebarria has also received symbolic capital and prestige in the form of the *Premio Nadal* for her novel *Beatriz y los cuerpos celestes* (1998), the *Premio Primavera de Novela* for *De todo lo visible y lo invisible* (2001), and the *Premio Planeta* for *Un milagro en equilibrio* (2004). Thus Etxebarria creates an alternative authorial persona that elicits strong reactions from the public and the press, but that gains maximum exposure for her work. Etxebarria also demonstrates that an author does not necessarily have to be a competent writer in order to sell books, merely competent at marketing and framing their work.

The objective of this chapter then, is to demonstrate that writers can achieve success in the literary field if they have a strong brand and literary persona, regardless of whether this persona is renegade or conservative. In addition, this chapter will analyse the marketing strategies of both authors, who, although they are placed at opposite poles of the marketing spectrum, show that there are numerous techniques

that writers, particularly women writers, can use to promote their work, gain a media presence and the myriad opportunities that can be gained from them. This chapter will begin with an analysis of Grandes's marketing strategy of using well-worn tropes, writing in well-established literary genres, such as historical fiction, and building a well-supported authorial brand. It will also look at the reception of this strategy by the media. This will be followed by an analysis of Lucía Etxebarria's marketing strategy, such as the use of feminism as well as gimmicks and marketing stunts to promote her work. This will also demonstrate her transformation from an author who uses her body to promote her fictional narrative, to an author who inserts her literary persona into her fictional narrative, before finally becoming the text and being read as such by the public. Finally, it will discuss the media response to her marketing persona.

Almudena Grandes

In 2010 Almudena Grandes published *Inés y la alegría*, the first in a series of six historical fiction novels collectively entitled *Episodios de una guerra interminable*. The first three books of the series (*Inés y la alegría*, 2010; *El lector de Julio Verne*, 2012; and *Las tres bodas de Manolita*, 2014) have now been published, with three more to follow (*Los pacientes del doctor García*, *La madre de Frankenstein* and *Mariano en el Bidasoa* respectively). The novels span Spanish civil war and post-war history from the moment of Franco's victory in 1939 until 1964, the moment the regime celebrated 25 years in power. The novels focus on significant, and often not well-known moments of the anti-Franco resistance and the principal characters are fictional, but interact with real historical figures in actual events. Grandes's choice of genre is no accident as the popularity, and therefore large available readership, of historical fiction, particularly the subgenre of civil war and post-war fiction, is impossible to understate. While this sub-genre boasts novels such as Carmen Laforet's *Nada* (1944), Luis Martín-Santos's *Tiempo de silencio* (1961) and Carmen Martín-Gaité's *El cuarto de atrás* (1978), the success and international recognition of Javier Cercas's *Soldados de Salamina* in 2001 has led to an explosion of the genre with authors wanting to make their mark on history and capitalize on the rewards of writing historical fiction.

The popularity of the genre was enhanced by the introduction of the *Ley de Memoria Histórica* in 2007. The law, which was brought in by the left-wing government of José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, pertains to official records and the writing of history, with the aim of the law being to acknowledge and augment the rights of those persecuted during the Civil War and subsequent dictatorship, as well as the recuperation of their memories. In addition, the law aims to ensure that the documents related to this historical period are preserved and deposited in public archives.²³² The opening up of dialogue on the events of the civil war and subsequent dictatorship in Spain demonstrated a huge change for the country that had operated an unwritten “pacto de silencio” since 1977.²³³ This in turn increased the popularity of the historical fiction genre as there was public interest in anything that could shed new light on events, including works of fiction, which often contain references to real people and events. It is worth noting, that this literary trend also sparked a similar trend in academia with studies on memory and the civil war in contemporary Spanish fiction, an overview of which is helpfully provided in a recent article by Fernando Larraz, ‘La Guerra Civil en la última ficción narrativa española’ (2014).

However, such a high level of interest from the public and the willingness of writers to capitalize on the literary trend meant that by 2007, there was a saturation of the market. In 2008, for example, the academic Jo Labanyi observes how ‘[...] memory has become an industry generating public interest for economic ends’ (2008, 119) and in 2007 the writer Isaac Rosa releases his ironically titled *¡Otra maldita novela sobre la Guerra Civil!*, a satire of his 1999 historical fiction novel *La malamemoria*. The book is a reproduction of the novel with the addition of notes from a reader (also written by Rosas) who has boycotted and infiltrated the text, pointing out its weaknesses and laughing at the writer. In addition to satirizing the formula of Spanish historical fiction novels, the book also draws attention to the boom in historical fiction, particularly fiction associated with the Civil War and memory. Rosas states, ‘¿cuántas novelas de memoria en los últimos años? Según el ISBN, en los

²³² The full text can be accessed at the following web address:

<http://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2007-22296&tn=1&p=20100324&vd=#a1>

²³³ The idea of a “pacto de silencio” is rejected by the academic Jo Labanyi in her article ‘The Languages of Silence: Historical Memory, Generational Transmission and Witnessing in Contemporary Spain’ (2009), challenging ‘the notion that silence necessarily represents a lack of memory or conformism’, and examining ‘the ways in which silence can itself represent a form of witnessing and commitment’ (24).

últimos cinco años se han publicado 419 obras literarias (novelas, relatos y poesía) que incluían en su título la palabra “memoria”. En toda la década anterior, entre 1990 y 1999, sólo 289 títulos con “memoria”. Inflación de memoria, es evidente’ (2007, no pagination). What this means for writers looking to enter the historical fiction genre, such as Almudena Grandes is that although there is almost guaranteed interest in her work, there is no guarantee of commercial or critical success. Thus, first Grandes tests the water and releases a book prior to the publication of her *Episodios*.

In 2007, before beginning her series, Grandes published a separate historical fiction novel, entitled *El corazón helado*. The almost 1000-page novel, which tells the interlinking family histories of Álvaro and Raquel from the Spanish civil war, through the transition to democracy and into the present day, won the *Libro del año*²³⁴ prize awarded by the *Gremio de Libreros de Madrid* as well as the *VII Premio de novela Fundación José Manuel Lara*.²³⁵ The symbolic prestige Grandes accrued from this novel was accompanied by lengthy reviews, including an article from *El País* entitled ‘Novela de restitución’, which stated that ‘El corazón helado cumple no sólo un impulso de máxima ambición literaria sino de ratificación propia, como novelista y como ciudadana [...]’ (Jordi Gracia, 2007). The book which Gracia defines as an impulse of literary ambition, in hindsight, looks more like a test-run for the series of books Grandes intends to follow it. The warm reception the book receives as well as Gracia picking up on the restitution and ratification Grandes is attempting to give the Spanish nation shows Grandes has cemented her position within the realm of historical fiction and has a green light for future projects within the genre; future projects such as *Episodios de una guerra interminable*.

However, it is one thing to achieve success with one stand-alone novel and another to achieve success with an entire series of novels. In order to ensure success with her ambitious project, Grandes embarks on an aggressive marketing campaign. This begins with the paratext of an elaborate website that plays on the interest in historic memory, with facts about the real people, places and events that appear in the books; recipes from the time period, maps, and testimonies from eyewitnesses or

²³⁴ The *Libro del año* is awarded to ‘aquel libro [...] que los libreros encuentren relevante por desarrollar valores culturales, despertar la sensibilidad, estimular la imaginación, motivar la curiosidad, por la calidad de su edición, o simplemente por su calidad literaria’ (www.librosmadrid.es).

²³⁵ Almudena Grandes was awarded 150,000 euros for ‘la mejor novela en castellano por cualquier editorial en 2007’ (*El Mundo*, 2007).

family members of those who have died. In the promotional material for the third book in the series, *Las tres bodas de Manolita*, for example, two videos appear on the website of the testimony of Isabel Perales. As a child during the Civil War and as a daughter of imprisoned socialists, Perales was sent to a religious school where they were educated against socialism and forced to work, sewing table linens for restaurants. Grandes explains in the video that what she found interesting was that children would be held accountable for the actions of their parents and wanted to draw attention to this fact in her work.²³⁶ Grandes's use of real experiences is then picked up by the media and used to further promote the book. Grandes explains to the daily periodical *El País*, for example, how she found inspiration for the book through the real life stories of Isabel Perales and of Juana Doña, an activist whose husband, Eugenio Mesón, was imprisoned, shot and killed and who wrote an extended letter to her dead husband called *Querido Eugenio* (*El País*, 2014). The article in *El País* is headed by a picture of Grandes walking down the street arm in arm with Isabel Perales and the son of Juana and Eugenio, Alexis Mesón Doña. Thus, Grandes piques interest in her work with the promise of untold stories as well as indicating whose side she is on. Appearing arm-in-arm with descendants of socialists imprisoned under Franco demonstrates Grandes's overt left-wing stance and approach to this project.

This left-wing stance is continued with Grandes's inter-textual references throughout her series to the canonical author Benito Pérez Galdós (1843-1920). Readers cannot help but notice the reference Grandes makes to Galdós (1843-1920) in the title of her series. Galdós is well-renowned for his *Episodios Nacionales*, forty-six historical novels written between 1872 and 1912. They are divided into five series and span almost a century of Spanish history from c. 1805- c.1860. His novels are fictional accounts which insert characters invented by the author within historical events. He was also known for his attention to detail and his seeking out of survivors and eyewitnesses of battles, such as the Battle of Trafalgar. In addition, Galdós is credited with giving Spanish readers a new sense of national identity in a tumultuous Spain where the monarchy of Isabel the second had recently been overthrown (Urey: 2003, no pagination). If the subtle reference to Galdós is missed by readers and critics,

²³⁶ These videos 'El testimonio de Isabel' and 'Isabel y Almudena' can be accessed at the following web address: www.almudenagrandes.com.

Grandes openly states that she has followed Galdós's literary model both in the media and in the author's note at the end of the first book in the series *Inés y la alegría*.

In her author's note Grandes explains the use of the word 'episodios' in her series title. She states that, 'Su primera palabra no es fruto de una elección casual. Si he querido llamarlas "episodios" ha sido para vincularlas, [...] a los "Episodios nacionales" de Don Benito Pérez Galdós, que para mí es, como he declarado en muchas ocasiones, el otro gran novelista – después de Cervantes – de la literatura Española de todos los tiempos' (*Inés y la alegría*, Loc. 11559). Still speaking of Galdós, Grandes adds that '[...] si no hubiera empezado a leerle a los quince años lo más probable es que ni siquiera hubiera llegado a ser novelista' (loc. 11559). In an interview with the daily periodical *El Público*, Grandes states that she had originally wanted to make the inter-textual reference stronger and call her series *Nuevos episodios nacionales*, but that Franco 'fastidió el adjetivo para los restos' (Peio H. Riaño, 2009). Grandes's disdain for Franco in the above quote reinforces her left-wing political stance, while her comments on Galdós give the impression that the canonical author has been such a fundamental influence that the reader has to interpret her work through that of Galdós.

Grandes continues making inter-textual references to Galdós, while also setting herself within a male literary genealogy that includes the Mexican-Spanish experimental novelist Max Aub (1903-1972), who also wrote a cycle of novels about the Spanish civil war and the avant-garde poet Luis Cernuda (1902-1963).²³⁷ In a 'Nota de la autora' at the end of the first novel in the series Grandes states that '*Inés y la alegría* es, por tanto, la primera entrega de lo que pretende ser al mismo tiempo un homenaje y un acto público de amor por Galdós, y por la España que Galdós amaba, la única patria que Luis Cernuda reconocía como propia, querida y necesaria, cuando escribió un espléndido poema, "Díptico español", cuyos últimos versos he tomado

²³⁷ Max Aub's cycle of novels on the Spanish civil war are collectively called *El laberinto mágico* and were written between 1943 and 1968. They include the novels *Campo cerrado* (1943), *Campo abierto* (1951), *Campo del moro* (1963), *Campo de los Almendros* (1965) and *Campo Francés* (1968). Luis Cernuda was a member of the Generación del '27, also known as the Generación de la República, an influential group of poets, artists and filmmakers in Spain between 1923 and 1927. The group was also known as the Generación de la República. Other members of this generation include the poet Rafael Alberti (1902-1999), the poet and dramatist Federico García Lorca (1898-1936), the surrealist painter Salvador Dalí (1904-1989) and the filmmaker Luis Buñuel (1900-1983).

prestados como cita común de todos mis episodios' (Loc. 11572).²³⁸ In an interview with *La Voz de Galicia*, Grandes makes explicit the admiration these two writers had for Galdós. She states that 'es muy curioso cómo la generación de la República en ningún momento dejó de amar y de exaltar la figura de Galdós, el Ejército popular en las trincheras repartía ediciones populares de los *Episodios Nacionales*... Alberti editó a Galdós en Argentina, Cernuda escribió este poema, Max Aub escribió *El laberinto mágico* siguiendo el modelo de los *Episodios Nacionales*' (17/03/12). What Grandes creates with her inter-textual references is a tradition of left-wing writers returning to the legacy of Galdós and paying homage to the writer, while continuing the promotion of an ideal Spain. This helps to further vindicate Galdós's reputation and give authority and appeal to Grandes's work.

The creation of a genealogy and the continued comparisons that Grandes makes between Galdós's work and her own could come across as self-assured hubris on the part of Grandes, were it not for the multiple associations already made regarding Grandes and Galdós in the media as well as in academic literature. In 2002, for example, Rafael Conte in an article in *El País* compares Grandes to a number of 19th century authors, including Galdós (2002). In 2003, Fernando Valls suggests that Grandes is a descendent of Galdós when he asks "¿Y no son quizá Muñoz Molina²³⁹ y Almudena Grandes los más galdosianos?" Torres also states that '[...] Grandes' prose, with its long, carefully structured sentences, abundant in similes, carries nineteenth-century reminiscences, particularly of Benito Pérez Galdós [...]' (2008, 34). Conte, Valls and Torres's association of Grandes's work with nineteenth century-style prose and the nineteenth century author Galdós gives the contemporary author's work authority, while also confirm endorsing her as a prestigious candidate for academic study. This in turn validates the choice by the critics to review her work. It

²³⁸ It is worth noting that in the two stanzas of the poem Grandes includes at the beginning of her novels, Cernuda mentions Galdós twice. In the first part of the poem, 'No esa, más aquella es hoy tu tierra./ La que Galdós a conocer te diese, [...]' and in the second part of the poem, 'Sino esta España viva y siempre noble/ Que Galdós en sus libros ha creado'. The rest of the poem mentions Galdós and his writings throughout.

²³⁹ Antonio Muñoz Molina (Úbeda, 1956), is a well-renowned Spanish writer and has been a member of the RAE since 1995. In a recent review of Molina's novel *In the Night of Time* (2015), first published in Spanish in 2009 as *La noche de los tiempos*, *Financial Times* reporter Adam Feinstein compares Molina with Galdós when he states that, 'Philip Van Doren, a cold and charmless pragmatist, and Víctor, Ignacio's equally unprincipled brother-in-law, could both walk straight off the pages of a novel by Benito Pérez Galdós [...]' (*Financial Times*, 24/04/15). In addition, Molina himself has expressed his admiration for Galdós in an article for *El País*, where he states that 'Galdós es tan contemporáneo nuestro en su ciudadanía como en su literatura' (*El País*, 31/08/2013).

seems that Grandes has picked up on the critics' observations and has incorporated it into her work, adding to her authority and prestige as a writer and increasing the likelihood of her work being used as an object of study.

In addition, at no time does Grandes present herself as being equal to or greater than Galdós, nor does she merely use Galdós for the sole purpose of legitimating her work. The original press packet, which appeared on her website²⁴⁰ for the promotion of *Inés y la alegría*, is headed by a picture of Grandes and a statue of Galdós. The statue is one that sits in *el parque del Retiro* in Madrid, with Galdós seated and his legs covered by his blanket; illustrative of the writer in his final years. In the image, Grandes is seated at the feet of Galdós and leaning her left side on the statue, with her hands linked together on her knees. Grandes has her face turned toward the camera, giving the impression that both Grandes and Galdós are separate writers with their own identities; yet the position of Grandes at Galdós's feet suggests that they are not peers, but that Grandes is a descendant of Galdós. The photograph conjures up the image of a small child listening to and learning from the stories of a grandparent. In addition to the image Grandes presents of doted descendant, there is also another facet to this image. Grandes is choosing sides and clearly marking whose side she is on. In press interviews, for example, she explains how she is not just using Galdós to authorize her work, but also to vindicate the reputation of Galdós. In an interview with *El Público* she states that 'Galdós ha acabado sufriendo en España, él que fue la conciencia pública de la izquierda Española de entonces ha pasado como un escritor conservador, reaccionario y casposo. Totalmente injusto' (2009). Thus, Grandes presents the press with an image of her showing her with her forebear Galdós whom she has loved, learned from and whom she intends to vindicate.

The media response to the press packet was to use the information and that images Grandes had presented and circulated and these were incorporated into articles associated with her literary project. Even on the release of the second book in the series *El lector de Julio Verne* (2012), critics were still describing her *Episodios* as 'a modo de los galdosianos' and as 'unos nuevos *Episodios Nacionales* galdosianos' (Anon, 2012a; Anon, 2012b). The first book *Inés y la alegría* also won two Mexican literary

²⁴⁰ The press packet is no longer available on Grandes' website, but can be accessed at the following web address: <http://www.almudenagrandes.com/Dossier%20Almudena%20Grandes.pdf> [Accessed: 10/06/15].

prizes, the *Premio Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz* (2011) and the *Premio Poniatowska de Novela* (2011). The *Sor Juana* prize is worth \$10,000, was founded in 1993 and is awarded as ‘un reconocimiento al trabajo literario de las mujeres en el mundo hispano’ (*La Jornada Guerrero*, 2011). It was awarded to Grandes for being ‘una escritora madura, dueña de su oficio’ who ‘desborda perfección narrativa’ and ‘presenta el mayor número de virtudes literarias en grado significativo’ (*La Jornada Guerrero*, 2011). The *Poniatowska* prize is worth 500,000 Mexican pesos and was awarded to Grandes for ‘una obra narrativa que, montada en la tradición galdosiana, está escrita contra viento y marea, contra la tendencia general en nuestro tiempo, de andar con prisas, tanto del lado de quien la construye como de quien la lee’ (*Diario de Cadiz*, 2011). Here again, the adjective *galdosiano/a* is used in conjunction with Grandes’s work. Thus, through showing her relationship with Galdós with the image in her press packet, the inter-textual reference in her series title, and her explicit recognition of Galdós in her press interviews Grandes has created a literary world where her name and Galdós’s are synonymous.

In addition to inter-textual references, her association with canonical authors and the inclusion of real stories within her narrative, Grandes also plays on the well-worn trope of the Romantic author to add appeal and authority to her authorial persona. One of the key images of a Romantic author is that of a solitary, possibly lonely genius. As Bennett states, ‘the figure of an author as uniquely separate from society is an important dimension of the construction of the Romantic author, and indeed of the modern author generally’ (2005, 36). Playing on this Romantic author trope then, in an interview with *El País*, the journalist says of Grandes that, ‘Para que se concentre en la obra, “el escritor ha de gestionar la soledad”. Esa respiración solitaria es la que confiere sosiego: “Cuando me levanto, entro en mi despacho, enciendo el ordenador y me enfrento a lo que he escrito, entro en un espacio que es exclusivamente mío y en el que no dejo que nada me preocupe”’ (07/03/2014). What this comment from Grandes shows is the author inserting herself into the respected literary tradition, while simultaneously updating the trope for the twenty-first century by substituting a pen for a computer.

In addition to the Romantic author trope, when Grandes states ‘entro en un espacio que es exclusivamente mío’ she is also playing on a common trope specific to women writers, that of a room of their own. In the famous essay ‘A Room of One’s

Own' (1928) by the renowned English writer Virginia Woolf, she states that '[a] woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction' (Woolf: 2000, 6).²⁴¹ The use of this particular trope in her authorial image appears multifaceted. The author is possibly covering her bases and alluding to a prominent feminist thinker after the creation of an all-male genealogy. An alternative use of this trope is to show that she does have a room of her own and that she had made it as a writer, asserting her success and dominance in her field. The use of well-worn tropes to enhance her image helps Grandes to portray herself as a respected writer and, in particular, a woman writer with financial independence and a 'room of her own'.

However, the creation of an authorial persona to promote Grandes's work would be meaningless, were her work and her marketing strategy not supported by her publishing house. Grandes is published by the prestigious publishing house *Tusquets*²⁴² and has been published by them for over twenty years, since winning the *IX Premio Sonrisa Vertical*, which is awarded by *Tusquets*, in 1989, for her erotic novel *Las edades de Lulú*.²⁴³ Despite Grandes's strong ties to Madrid, *Tusquets* is a Catalan publishing house based in Barcelona. All of Grandes's books are published in the *Andanzas* (Adventures) collection and are situated alongside other international best-selling authors, such as Haruki Murakami and Ian McEwan. In addition, on her website, there is a space where readers can Tweet the author and share the site on their own social media pages. There is also a biography of the author with a gallery of personal photographs, such as Grandes when she was three months old, Grandes making her first communion, as well as photographs of her with various members of her family. The website allows Grandes to form a further connection with readers and give them a small insight into her private life, without being invasive. The readers are also able to connect with her through social media. This shows the importance of an author being well-supported, well connected and up-to-date with technological

²⁴¹ The room that Woolf mentions has come to stand as a symbol for the freedom and independence of women writers. Conversely, it has also been used to describe women's writing as a ghetto in which women writers are situated. See, for example, Elaine Showalter's *A Literature of their Own* (1999) for a discussion of this issue and Mary Ann Caws and Nicola Luckhurst's edited volume *The Reception of Virginia Woolf in Europe* (2002) for a discussion of why Woolf's work was so popular in Europe.

²⁴² *Tusquets* was founded in 1969 by Beatriz de Moura and Óscar Tusquets.

²⁴³ *Las edades de Lulú* has sold over 1 million copies worldwide and been translated into 21 languages, including English. It was first published in English in 2005, before being published as an e-book in 2012 following the enormous success of the *Fifty Shades of Grey* trilogy. *Las edades de Lulú* has been a huge success for Grandes and Tusquets and is ultimately what propelled Grandes to literary fame. In 1990, the book became a film, directed by well-known director Bigas Luna (1946-2013).

advances. In addition, it gives the impression of the author being in direct contact with her readers and allows her to promote her persona across multiple platforms and so increase awareness of her work and authorial persona.

What the case of Almudena Grandes shows is that writers, and women writers in particular, can achieve commercial success and critical acclaim through the careful construction of an appealing authorial persona and marketing strategy. Writing competence is of course a key factor too, but the impression that people have of an author and creating a human brand that builds trust that ultimately leads to readers and critics returning to the author every time they publish a new book is equally important. What can be learned from Almudena Grandes is that the genre in which an author writes is important to their success. In addition, if the author is new to any particular genre then testing the market response to any work done in this genre can be a useful tool to gauge the commercial reaction to the work. The use of well-worn tropes to establish a popular, familiar authorial persona that perpetuates the classic idea of the writer as a solitary Romantic-type author can add weight to a project too, as does the association with canonical authors. One of the most important facets of an author's persona, however, is the connection they form with readers. Grandes's persona is inclusive and includes being able to contact her through social media and meet her at book fairs and book signings. Finally, being well-supported by the publishing house is essential for the success of an author. It is the publishing house that has the resources available to help build human brands. The result of this carefully coordinated marketing project is that Grandes has gained maximum exposure for her work, gained critical acclaim and continued to be a best-selling author.

Lucía Etxebarria

As has been outlined in the introduction of this chapter, the early work of Grandes and Etxebarria has often been compared by academics and media critics. In Etxebarria's satirical essay on the current and future Spanish literary field 'La letra futura' (2000), she discusses how she was asked the same question in interviews conducted to promote her erotic novel *Beatriz y los cuerpos celestes* (1998) being translated into Italian. According to Etxebarria, she was constantly asked if she felt she was a descendent of Grandes, who had achieved huge success a decade earlier with her erotic novel *Las edades de Lulú*. Etxebarria's response was 'no [...], no

compartimos ni generación, ni ambiente, ni ideas políticas [...]’ (312). She laments that this was then spun into an attack on Grandes by the press and she adds ‘[n]ada tengo contra Almudena Grandes, excepto que no le perdono que en su día vendiera un millón de ejemplares de *Las edades de Lulú* y que pueda permitirse, no ya vivir exclusivamente de lo que escribe, sino tomarse su tiempo para redactar sus novelas sin agobios ni presiones’ (313). What this shows is that while Etxebarria is keen to have the same level of success as Grandes, she also wants to make clear that her authorial persona or brand is completely different to that of Grandesse. In addition, Etxebarria’s anecdote demonstrates what can happen if a writer refuses to recognise who critics think are important forebears and works, such as *Las edades de Lulú*, which could be considered a novel that is similar to her own corpus. Although Etxebarria says that she has nothing against Grandes, the ‘en su día’ in her statement suggests that Etxebarria thinks Grandes has had her day and the market is now Etxebarria’s for the taking. Thus Etxebarria is keen to demonstrate that although there are contemporary authors, such as Almudena Grandes, who write in similar genres, she is a unique author, who has a completely different authorial persona and aim from other writers in the literary field.

In one of Etxebarria’s first promotional stunts, the author shows her aptitude for manipulating the media for maximum exposure. In 1998, Etxebarria won the *Nadal* prize with her novel *Beatriz y los cuerpos celestes*.²⁴⁴ Firstly, as Henseler (2003) has observed, many critics thought the quality of Etxebarria’s prose was inadequate and unworthy of the prize (113). However, this was quickly overshadowed by the outfit Etxebarria wore to the award ceremony. Etxebarria wore ‘a red outfit, red shoes, red gloves, with a red heart-shaped bag, and she sported a heart-shaped tattoo on her upper right arm’ (Henseler: 2003, 113). This led to critics nicknaming the author ‘La reina de corazones’ (Henseler: 2003, 113). This could be a reference to the erotic and romantic nature of the book with which Etxebarria won the *Nadal* prize as well as the formidable Lewis Carroll character from *Alice in Wonderland*. Carroll himself states that he pictured the Queen of Hearts ‘as a sort of embodiment of ungovernable passion – a blind and aimless fury’ (Quoted in Gardner: 1960, 86). The sexualised authorial image of Etxebarria was only heightened when she posed nude for *Dania* magazine

²⁴⁴ The *Premio Nadal de Novela* or Nadal prize is a prestigious literary prize in the Spanish nation-state. It was founded in 1945 and the first winner was Carmen Laforet with her novel *Nada*. The prize is still awarded in the present day and the current prize money stands at 18,000 euros.

two weeks after winning the literary prize.²⁴⁵ Thus, with this stunt Etxebarria separates the writer from the text, using her own body as a promotional tool.

Since Etxebarria's constructed image leading the press to dub her 'The Queen of Hearts', the author has used the heart motif on the front covers of her book of interlinked short stories *Nosotras que no somos como las demás* (1999) as well as two of her subsequent self-help books: *Ya no sufro por un amor* (2005) and *Tu corazón no está bien de la cabeza* (2013). In a similar vein to Almudena Grandes, then, Etxebarria has capitalized on the critical responses to her work and incorporated them into subsequent projects. In addition, after the scandal caused in the press by her attire at the awards ceremony Henseler states that Etxebarria 'later denounced the outcry that her red outfit produced and claimed that the dress she wore was the only party dress she owned at the time' (126). What Etxebarria creates is a continual process of action and reaction between herself and the media. This process begins with an initial promotional stunt on the part of Etxebarria, which the press reacts to and then Etxebarria responds to the press reaction. The continual conversation that surrounds this author and her work gains her maximum exposure in the press and almost guaranteed press coverage for her latest novel and accompanying marketing stunt. Henseler states that critics felt discomfort from this particular incident because 'the novel upsets critics' perception of literary quality and leaves open the possibility that their opinions may be tainted by the body of the writer instead of the narrative body' (113). While Henseler focuses on the tensions created by the use of Etxebarria's body in the promotion of her work, the above quote also demonstrates how Etxebarria used paratext, such as her outfit at the award ceremony, to manipulate and control the reception of her novel.

A further way in which she differentiates herself from other writers, and women writers in particular, and manipulates her authorial image is through self-identifying as feminist. Although Etxebarria is not the only writer to define herself as a feminist, many women writers in the Spanish nation-state reject the term, as it has negative connotations and often decreases a writer's symbolic capital. As Henseler says of Etxebarria, '[h]er feminist opinion, scattered throughout her work add to the polarization of the reception of her enterprise' (118). Despite progressive politics in

²⁴⁵ For a complete analysis of Etxebarria's presence in the magazine, see Henseler (2003, 114).

the 1930s giving women in the Spanish nation-state the vote, among other rights, the subsequent oppression suffered under the Franco regime and a dominant Catholic church has meant that second-wave feminism did not arrive in Spain until the 1970s and the ideologies of the feminist movement did not take hold as well as they had done in France, the USA and the UK (Davies: 1998; Ugarte: 1998). In literature, the late arrival of feminism in Spain has translated into the reluctance of women writers to be associated with the term 'feminist'. This has frustrated academics such as Johnson and the gap between Anglo-American feminist academics and Spanish women writers has been examined more recently by Helena Miguélez-Carballeira.²⁴⁶ Thus, while Etxebarria's self-identification as feminist may polarize her reception, it sparks the interest of academics outside Spain²⁴⁷, gaining her international exposure and leading to possible prestige and cultural capital.

However, while academics such as Henseler argue that Etxebarria sends a strong feminist message, she admits that the writer has a mixed reception regarding her association with this ideology. Henseler states that:

[t]o some, she prostitutes women writers and reduces them to Lulú-like dolls; to others, she liberates and opens the doors to a more inclusive representation of texts written by women [...]. She is loved by the public and rejected by the critical establishment. Women writers abhor the marketing gimmicks that she uses to call attention to herself because they contribute to the sexist and marginalizing characterization of women writers, and because her tactics distort promotional expectations (2003, 125).

Henseler's analysis of Etxebarria's reception demonstrates how Etxebarria sets herself up as a renegade writer, working against the grain of the established literary field in order to create a connection with the public, while still operating within this field and being published by a huge conglomerate, such as *Planeta*.²⁴⁸ In addition, it

²⁴⁶ 'Stuck With The Label: The Problematical Rapport Between Peninsular Women writers and Anglo-American Feminist Hispanists' in *Making Waves: Anniversary Volume: Women in Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies*, ed. by Ann Davies, Par Kumaraswami and Claire Williams (2008).

²⁴⁷ As Henseler states, '[i]t is perhaps precisely because of her feminist platform that Etxebarria is more appreciated in the academic world outside of Spain' (123).

²⁴⁸ Etxebarria is not always published by *Planeta*. Her first novel, *Amor, curiosidad, prozac y dudas* (1997), for example, was published by *Plaza y Janés*. However, the majority of her work is published by *Destino* and *Espasa Calpe*, both of which are owned by *Planeta*. Etxebarria has been published directly by *Planeta* on two occasions: the first in 2004 when she won the *Premio Planeta* for *Un milagro en equilibrio* and again in 2011 with the novel *El contenido del silencio*.

highlights the tensions between Etxebarria, critics and other women writers due to her ambiguous and contradictory stance regarding the representation of women. One of the central tensions and fundamental ambiguities of Etxebarria's construction of her literary persona is her avowed allegiance to certain feminist notions on the one hand, and the perpetuation of certain stereotypes of womanhood on the other. Tsuchiya (2002) affirms that Etxebarria 'often ends up by reaffirming those very structures, categories and ideologies that she purportedly questions; that is, in spite of her professed "feminism" and her purportedly critical stance toward late-capitalist consumer society' (77). Just as in the case of the red dress at the award ceremony, with the continual tensions Etxebarria creates, the constant questions she asks women writers and the critical establishment and the necessary responses from the latter all serve to gain Etxebarria a significant amount of attention and space in the press and academic spheres.

Since the new millennium, Etxebarria has used increasingly polemical strategies to gain publicity and increase book sales. In 2001, for example, the weekly news magazine *Interviú* – famous for the semi-naked women who appear on the front cover – accused Etxebarria of plagiarising the work *Sepulcro en Tarquinia* (1976) written by the respected Spanish poet Antonio Colinas (1946-) in her first book of poems *Estación de infierno* (2001). While Etxebarria claimed that she was merely making inter-textual references and sued *Interviú* for defamation of character, a tribunal concluded that Etxebarria had in fact plagiarised the work of Colinas and that the accusation of the weekly magazine 'no es un ataque al honor, porque no hay honor que proteger' (*Diario de León*, 15/02/03). In 2005, a similar accusation was made against Etxebarria after the publication of her self-help book *Ya no sufro por amor* (2005). This time, the psychologist Jorge Castelló accused Etxebarria of plagiarising his 2004 article 'Dependencia emocional y violencia doméstica'.²⁴⁹ According to the women's magazine *Enfemenino*, a financial agreement was reached between Castelló and Etxebarria (2012).

In the press Etxebarria was portrayed as the dishonourable villain, while Colinas was lauded as the prize-winning, national treasure who had been robbed, but

²⁴⁹ Full details of the incident, as well as examples of coincidences between the two texts can be found in the following newspaper article:
<http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2006/09/08/cultura/1157714369.html>

was gracious in his response. One would assume that such a damning image of Etxebarria would be detrimental to the author's reception, however, the opposite is true. *Enfemenino* confirms that 'la escritora reconoció públicamente que todo había sido una artimaña para intentar aumentar las ventas de su libro' (2012). *Interviú*, the magazine that first brought the issue to light confirms that the scandal only increased the sale of her work. The magazine ironically comments that 'la escritora se muestra contenta porque con aquella polémica vendió más libros. Siempre estaremos dispuestos a ayudarla' (2006). In addition, the scandal situates Etxebarria within a canon of Hispanic authors who have also been accused of plagiarism, such as Camilo José Cela and Manuel Vázquez Montalbán (*Enfemenino*, 2012). What Etxebarria does here is invert the system of literary prestige (as discussed in the introduction to this thesis) and questions the role of the author in the twenty-first century Spanish nation-state. In doing so, she achieves maximum and continued exposure for her work and literary persona as a renegade, villainous writer.

Jumping ahead to 2011, Etxebarria caused uproar on a global scale when she announced she was abandoning literature due to book piracy. The press quoted her Facebook page in which she had stated '[d]ado que he comprobado que se han descargado más copias ilegales de mi novela que copias han sido compradas, anuncio oficialmente que no voy a volver a publicar libros en una temporada muy larga' (*El Mundo*, 2011). This message was then communicated internationally through the media. European newspapers, such as the British papers *The Guardian* and *The Telegraph* and the French papers *L'Express* and literary magazine *Actualité* picked up the story, focusing on the problems of illegal downloads in Spain and the government's unwillingness to act. The story was even run in the Spanish edition of *Rolling Stone*. Although there are piracy problems in Spain, as briefly mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the articles fail to highlight the overpricing of books in Spain and the reluctance to publish in an e-book format. There is also the irony of Etxebarria announcing on a free-to-view social media platform that she is unhappy with people reading her books for free. Etxebarria herself manipulates free, digital platforms to promote her image, such as Facebook and Twitter, but is disgruntled when others use digital technologies to download her books without paying.

The reception of her decision by the general public was extremely negative. *The Guardian* reported, for example, that '[h]er vow to stop writing provoked a torrent

of abuse from downloaders who filled her Facebook wall with insults. Some said they did not earn enough to buy her books' (Tremlett, 2011). Both *The Guardian* and the *Actualité* published a quote from one reader, Kelly Sánchez who had stated that 'Literature is not a profit-making job, but a passion. [...] If you had a real vocation then you wouldn't stop writing' (20/11/12). What this reveals is an adherence to the illusion that the writing profession is not synonymous with making money and the related notion of prestige that a writer whose books do not sell well has more prestige. By revealing her interest in monetary rewards in exchange for her work, Etxebarria subverts the rules of the literary field and, as such, is received negatively. The story also revealed that some readers were beginning to tire of her media stunts with *El Mundo* observing that 'hay quien le acusa de intentar crear polémica para intentar aumentar las ventas' (2011). The negative reactions from the public did not decrease the exposure of the author, they merely allowed Etxebarria to respond to her critics in the press for increased exposure. The Spanish daily periodical *ABC* reported that 'Lucía Etxebarria ha vuelto a expresar que la sorprende "enormemente que tanta gente no lo haya entendido y que, para colmo, me critique por ello"' (2011). Thus Etxebarria uses the cultural capital she has acquired from her previous career in marketing to successfully negotiate with the media and the public and play on their perceptions of the author.

After Etxebarria's dramatic exit from the Spanish literary field and the public sphere, she returned in July 2013, when she entered the reality television show *Campamento de Verano*²⁵⁰ and the realm of 'celebreality'. 'Celebreality' is a term that has been coined to identify celebrities who 'were once renowned as celebrities in other contexts and revived moribund careers by participating in reality programming' (Tran and Strutton: 2014, 294). As with all her other career choices Etxebarria made it clear once again that the only reason for her participation in the show was the monetary reward that accompanied it. She stated in the press that, '[d]ebo una pasta a Hacienda' and '[n]o es que sea pobre de solemnidad, pero no puedo obtener, de la noche a la mañana, chasqueando los dedos, una cantidad de dinero como la que me piden' (*El Confidencial*, 2013). With the above quote, Etxebarria is deliberately capitalizing on the scandal created by admitting that she owes a large amount of money to the Spanish

²⁵⁰ The television show, which airs on *Telecinco*, consists of 12 celebrity participants (14 with Etxebarria's 2 dogs) who become novice explorers on la Sierra de Grados and complete tests and tasks.

income tax authority *Hacienda*. In addition, she allies herself with the many millions of people who find it hard to make ends meet in the current economic climate. In other words, she is setting herself up as one of the people, as well as playing on people's interest in a rich, famous author with money troubles.

In the usual Etxebarria style the writer dramatically left the show after ten days amid scandal, accusations that she had revealed the secrets of her fellow contestants and claims that she was mentally unstable.²⁵¹ Her performance was devoured by the press and the public. In one particularly positive article, Daniel Jabonero comments on Etxebarria's performance and states that from the moment she arrived in the *Campamento* Lucía 'comenzó a escribir su mejor novela. O al menos la más *leída* y más rentable.'²⁵² Dos millones de espectadores han seguido semanalmente la historia de la escritora' (2013). This type of reaction to Etxebarria's participation in the reality television show is particularly fascinating as her marketing, authorial persona appears to have surpassed her texts and become a text itself. Jabonero's description of Etxebarria's experiences on *Campamento de Verano* as writing a story reinforces the notion put forward by Richard Dyer that the mediated identities of stars, or in this case famous authors, can be, and are, read as texts.

However, one has to question the real motives behind Etxebarria's appearance in this reality television show. Unlike other popular reality television shows in Spain such as *Gran Hermano* (Big Brother) and *Supervivientes* (Survivor), which have been running since 2000, the series of *Campamento de Verano* in which Etxebarria participated was the first and only season of the programme. In addition, Etxebarria was the only one of two 'celebrities' on the show, the other being the journalist Karmele Marchante. The other participants had all been contestants on other reality television shows, predominantly *Gran Hermano* and *Supervivientes*. One contestant was the father of a previous *Gran Hermano* contestant. The show also coincided with the release of Etxebarria's new book *Tu Corazón no está bien de la cabeza* (2013) as the television show aired in July 2013 and her book was released in August the same year and, according to one article in the press, had already pre-sold 20,000 copies due to her appearance on the show (*El Confidencial*, 2013). One cannot help but wonder if this television show was simply a marketing vehicle for Etxebarria's return to

²⁵¹ (www.telecino.es/concursantes/lucia/16824/).

²⁵² Emphasis in the original.

literature, which as with the television show, was attributed to her owing money to the tax office, and to promote her latest literary project.

Despite Etxebarria's sensationalist and revelatory approach attracting negative responses, the writer is still a best-selling author and gains much public interest. Applying the theories of sociologist Pierre Bourdieu to this particular Spanish case can help explain why such personalities can still achieve success. He states that:

[p]aradoxically, nothing more clearly reveals the logic of the functioning of the artistic field than the fate of these apparently radical attempts at subversion. Because they expose the art of artistic creation to a mockery already annexed to the artistic tradition by Duchamp, they are immediately converted into artistic 'acts', recorded as such and thus consecrated and celebrated by the makers of taste. Art cannot reveal the truth about art without snatching it away again by turning the revelation into an artistic event (1993, 80).

Thus, although Etxebarria's marketing strategy and her fiction are revelatory and have been created to inflame strong reactions from the public, therefore creating maximum exposure for her work, she is still working within the parameters of the field of artistic production. Her sensational media stunts could be interpreted as the 'artistic acts' Bourdieu discusses and could be seen as being celebrated by the media and the public. This could go some way to explaining why her work and marketing strategy provoke much discussion, but the writer is not overtly rejected by the literary field.

The cases of Almudena Grandes and Lucía Etxebarria have shown that women writers can achieve success in the central Spanish literary field, and elsewhere, with a strong marketing campaign and a well-managed mediated identity. This identity can be anything from conservative and traditional to renegade and provocative, as long as the author's aim is clear and the author is committed to this persona. These mediated identities, along with the marketing campaigns or paratexts can create connections with readers, gain authors maximum exposure in the press and even lead to cultural prestige and critical acclaim. Other factors, such as the genre in which an author writes are also key to the reception of an author's text and their authorial persona. Although only the design and reception of these mediated identities have been discussed in this chapter, it is worth noting that though marketing campaigns can help to sell books initially, consistent best-sellers and critical acclaim are achieved through accompanying this with literary competence, in other words, a well-written, articulate

work. Finally, these two case studies have shown the myriad techniques that writers can use to promote their work including gimmicks, social media and building a strong connection to canonical authors.

Conclusion

This thesis has attempted to demonstrate the multiple marketing strategies that women writers can use to achieve success in the Spanish nation-state as well as how their mediated identities, constructed to function as part of their promotional strategy, affect the way a writer is received in the press, by literary critics and by academics. The analysis of the eight case studies in this thesis have shown that there are numerous strategies that women writers can use to achieve visibility, prestige, recognition and economic success, such as associating oneself with other successful and/or canonical authors, using social media as a promotional tool, creating a niche or separate space within which to work, winning literary prizes, displaying a commitment to the national project, employing popular tropes, using prologues and epilogues to guide the public's reading of a text, and following popular literary trends. Of these strategies, the most popular appear to be: associating oneself with other successful and/or canonical authors - whether these be feminist writers, as in the case of María Xosé Queizán, or canonical male authors, as in the case of Almudena Grandes, Mariasun Landa and Carme Riera – and the use of prologues and epilogues; although as has been demonstrated by the case of Mariasun Landa, the use of these paratexts can have varying results. Though creating a niche or separate space within which to work was also a common link between Queizán and Landa, it also demonstrated the limits of this strategy, in that it could only reach a very specific audience. One factor that has been highlighted by the cases of Queizán, Reimóndez and Grandes is the importance of the resources and support of the publishing house in the level of success an author achieves. The cases of Queizán, Reimóndez and Grandes have demonstrated that if a publishing house fully supports their writers, then they are able to achieve a high level of success and prestige.

In terms of reception, this thesis has shown that the reception that an author receives from the press, critics and academics is dependent on three things: the author, the literary field and its politics, and the critic. Concerning the author, although the career choices a writer makes regarding the language and genre in which they write are individual and personal, the product of these choices are then put on display for the public and literary critics and, as has been demonstrated in this thesis, can affect an author's identity. In other words, a writer's reception can be affected by how a

writer constructs and presents their mediated identity as well as their work. Another factor that affects a writer's reception is the extent to which and how well an author can manage and control their own reception. The cases of Almudena Grandes and Lucía Etxebarria have shown that it is possible for a writer to control how the reading public perceives both them and their texts and to guide the public towards a specific reading of their text. However, the quality of the work is also a factor in this case and, as such, in addition to the initial promotional strategies, the novel or text that is published must be written to a high standard to achieve long-term success, prestige and even canonisation.

As mentioned above, a writer's reception is also dependent upon the literary field in which they work and how well the writer is able to work with the politics in play in these particular fields. As has been demonstrated by the case studies in this thesis, writers can choose to follow or subvert the norms of the literary field, but must be able to justify and carefully negotiate their choices. What this thesis has also shown is that literary fields are not the same in the various autonomous communities. Some overlap or compete against each other, but each literary field has its own way of operating, its own politics and expectations for writers. This is, once again, shown in the cases of Mariasun Landa and Almudena Grandes. In the Spanish literary field, Grandes was able to successfully use prologues and epilogues to her advantage, whereas Landa's use of prologues and epilogues were criticised in the Basque literary field, due to the overriding politics at work. In addition, where literary fields are linked to a national identity, as is the case in Galicia, Catalonia and the Basque Country, writers are expected to produce work in Galician, Catalan, or Basque and to commit to the national project. As has been demonstrated in earlier chapters some writers are able to successfully negotiate between two literary fields, such as the Catalan and Spanish literary fields in the case of Carme Riera, however, the borders between literary fields are fraught with controversy and this thesis has also shown the negative effect working in two literary fields can have on the reception of an author. Overall, this thesis has demonstrated the complexity of the literary fields that exist within the Spanish nation-state and the significant choices that authors have to make in order to successfully negotiate their position within these literary fields.

Finally, the reception a writer receives, depends on the critic, the position the critic occupies in the literary field and whether they are attempting to authorize their

own position. This thesis has demonstrated that the reviews of novels can tell us as much about the reviewer as about the novel itself and that a detailed analysis of reviews can reveal how the various agents are jostling for space in the literary field. With this in mind, what has come to light over the course of this thesis is that literary criticism in the Spanish nation-state can often be subjective, personal and, in the case of negative criticism, attack a women writer's personal appearance particularly if a critic perceives the writer as having broken the unwritten rules of the respective literary field. This was particularly evident in the case of Maria de la Pau Janer. However, this thesis has also demonstrated that it is possible for women writers to manipulate the media and use it to their advantage in order to achieve prestige and recognition. This is evident in the case of Almudena Grandes who, with a carefully-constructed marketing campaign, was able to successfully control the public perception of her work. In addition, Lucía Etxebarria, while receiving negative criticism similar to Janer, she was still able to manipulate the media to achieve maximum exposure for herself and her work. Thus, while the situation of women writers in the literary fields of the Spanish nation-state is complex and contains many pitfalls, it is possible for women writers, to a certain extent, to control their own image and the way in which they are received and perceived by the media and the reading public.

Thus, this thesis has shown that women writers in the Spanish nation-state are engaged constantly in a complex negotiation of various inter-dependent factors. Achieving success – both economic and symbolic – is a complex process, and there may often be cases where economic success can be detrimental to symbolic success, or vice versa. Thus, if women writers in the Spanish nation-state are able to negotiate these complex inter-dependent factors, success – both economic and symbolic –, prestige and even canonisation are achievable. The majority of women writers discussed in this thesis have proven that it is possible for women writers in the twenty-first century to successfully market their work, be received positively and achieve success and prestige. The success and prestige these women writers have achieved and managed to sustain well into the twenty-first century is a positive sign for the future of women writers in the various literary fields in the Spanish nation-state. Though there are still issues that exist within the literary fields concerning women writers, such as sexism and lack of representation in literary prizes, the presence and continued

success of the case studies mentioned in this thesis can hopefully provide a useful reference for other women writers in the Spanish nation-state.

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