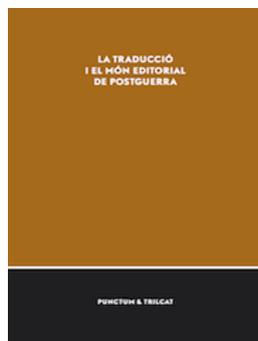


Montserrat Bacardí, *La traducció catalana sota el franquisme* (Lleida: Punctum, 2012), 333 pp. ISBN: 978-84-940694-0-6.

La traducció i el món editorial de postguerra, ed. Sílvia Coll-Vinent, Cornèlia Eisner and Enric Gallén (Lleida: Punctum & Trilcat, 2011), 297 pp. ISBN: 978-84-937371-9-1.



For obvious reasons, during the last quarter of the twentieth century academics have devoted most of their efforts to building a canon. The absence of Catalan literature in the educational curriculum for more than 40 years made it crucial to

develop tools which could help raise awareness among the reading public of the richness and diversity of the native literary tradition. As a result, scant attention was paid to gender and genre issues, the publishing industry or the impact of translation on the literary polysystem, to name but a few neglected areas. From early 2000, however, the situation seems to have changed significantly, as proven by the collective volume *La traducció i el món editorial de postguerra*, edited by Sílvia Coll-Vinent, Cornèlia Eisner and Enric Gallén, and Montserrat Bacardí's *La traducció catalana sota el franquisme*. Both books have been published by Punctum, which during the last few years has offered to the academic community a number of highly interesting monographs dealing with twentieth century Catalan culture.

Bacardí's study is divided into two different parts: a lengthy and nuanced introduction devoted to exploring the obstacles faced by Catalan publishing houses and translators during Franco's regime and a selection of seventy-five articles, prologues, notes, letters and diary entries from various authors published between 1940-1975 which deal

with translation. The introduction represents the first attempt to provide a general overview of the role of translation in the post-war literary field. Bacardí establishes a distinction between the immediate post-war ('Traduir en silenci', 11-47), during which most translations were published illegally or were subsidised by patrons, and the period 1962-1975 ('Traduir de viva veu', 49-90), during which the restrictions that affected Catalan language were partially lifted and, as a result, the publishing sector experienced a sudden boom. Issues discussed include the translation of poetry, non-fiction, children's fiction, religious, classical and theatrical texts, the changing regulations concerning censorship, the effects of self-censorship, the role of clandestine translations, the debates around purism and literary language, the working conditions of translators and, finally, Catalan translation theory. Drawing upon a wide range of sources, Bacardí offers a concise and detailed introduction to a neglected yet very important topic: as she points out, in the mid-1960s translations clearly outnumbered original works, to the extent that only 45% of books published in 1965 had been penned by Catalan authors. This clearly shows that, despite the undeniable importance of local writers, the functioning of the post-war Catalan literary field cannot be properly understood without taking into consideration the enormous impact of foreign works on the polysystem, an issue which unfortunately has not been acknowledged in reference work such as Riquer, Comas and Mola's *Història de la literatura catalana* or the more recent *Panorama crític de la literatura catalana*.

The second part of *La traducció catalana sota el franquisme* consists of seventy-five texts published during Franco's regime which approach translation from a variety of perspectives. While in the introductory chapter Bacardí points out that in Catalonia reflections on the practice of translation have been scarce and literary critics have tended to ignore translation issues, the range and interest of the issues addressed by practitioners, readers and critics in the second part seem to contradict Bacardí's initial appraisal. In fact, the opposite seems to be true: from Josep Miracle's reflections in his memoirs (1940) to Maurici Serrahima's article 'Traduccions' (1975), Catalan intellectuals have constantly debated the role of translation in the literary

polysystem. Two examples will suffice to prove this point: Marià Villangómez, when discussing Carles Riba's *Odissea* and Josep Maria de Sagarra's *La divina comèdia*, pointed out that 'Són dues traduccions, segurament, les manifestacions més destacades de l'última creativitat literària catalana' (p. 133) and, in 1962, Osvald Cardona argues in his review of Paul Valéry's translations that 'el fet importantíssim és que la totalitat de l'obra, per tants motius admirable, s'incorpori en vària versió a la literatura catalana' (p. 179).

One of the important achievements of this monograph, therefore, is that it demonstrates that translation, despite having been rendered invisible by literary scholars, has in fact always been at the centre of intellectual debate. Hopefully, Bacardí's study will help to redress the balance and future attempts at reassessing twentieth century Catalan literature will take into consideration the key role played by translation.

Following Manuel Llanas's pioneering work on the Catalan publishing industry, *La traducció i el món editorial de postguerra* contains twenty articles which explore from several angles the post-war publishing sector. The notions of repression, censorship and cultural resistance run through all the contributions, which are of a uniformly good quality and scholarly interest. When taken together, the studies collected here give the reader a clear idea of the obstacles faced by the Catalan cultural sector during Franco's regime. The goal of this volume, succinctly summarised by Gallén in the introduction, is to 'conèixer la transformació en el funcionament del sistema editorial català arran de la implantació de la dictadura franquista el 1939' (p. 7).

The first three articles go West: San Vicente and Zaboklicka focus respectively on the translation of Russian and Polish texts, and Garcia examines Joan Sales's indirect rendition of *Els germans Karamàzov*. In a felicitous decision, the editors have chosen to include contributions which deal with translation into Spanish. This is also the case of Ortega's study of the reception of Vita Sackville-West's novels, Chiericato's similar survey on Giovanni Papini, Massimo Bontempelli and Dino Buzzati's work, Llanas's comprehensive analysis of the publishing houses Aymà and Arimany and Collet-Vinent's study of Montaner i Simon. Given that Barcelona was the

capital of the Spanish book industry, it would have made little sense to ignore publishers such as Luís de Caralt or Josep Janés, whose names crop up regularly, not to mention that, as demonstrated by Llanas, many Catalan publishers had no other option but to reluctantly turn to the Spanish market in order to survive. Theatre translation is addressed in Gallén's study of Editorial Occitània and Fontcuberta's article on the several adaptations of Molière. On the other hand, two contributions focus on children's literature: Pascual examines Sales's adaptation of folktales and Girons briefly explores the role of translation in *Cavall Fort*.

The articles collected in the volume cover a wide range of areas, authors and languages: Biosca examines Maria Aurèlia Capmany's translations of Vasco Pratolini, Iribarren places her attention on the first –and still unpublished– rendition of Joyce's *Ulysses* into Catalan and Jané-Lligé discusses the reception of three German authors: Günter Grass, Heinrich Böll and Wolfgang Koeppen. In two thoroughly researched articles, Vilardell and Quer respectively examine the legacy of Argos-Vergara's imprint Isard and Nova Terra, two important initiatives at the time that have received little attention. Finally, Carné offers an advance of her edition of Jordi Arbonès's fascinating epistolary, published by Punctum in 2011, Ruiz explores the presence of Catalan literature in *Papeles de Son Armadans* and Manent focuses on censorship in the 1940s.

There is little doubt that this collection, carefully edited by Coll-Vinent, Eisner and Gallén, will be regarded for years to come as a reference point for scholars interested in the post-war cultural sector. The only criticism is that some contributions are excessively short; rather than fully-fledged articles, they read as summaries which could have been significantly expanded. It appears that the editors decided to include as many papers as possible, a decision that, given the scarcity of materials regarding the post-war publishing sector, is understandable.

Overall, both *La traducció catalana sota el franquisme* and *La traducció i el món editorial de postguerra* bear testament to the recent interest of Catalan scholars in censorship, translation and the publishing sector. Their major strength is their capacity to broaden our

understanding of post-war culture by taking into account social conditions, institutional practices and the processes of cultural production. Both books demonstrate that, in order to advance in our understanding of the development of contemporary Catalan culture, it is paramount to give more attention to the literary field at large.

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