

2 The fate of Hispanic American prose on the Polish publishing market

1 Sources and methodology

This chapter is dedicated to discussing quantitative data concerning the presence of translations of Hispanic American prose on the Polish publishing market and editors' strategies related to this literature after WWII. My research focused on several bibliographical sources. First of all, I reached for Rymwid-Mickiewicz and Skłodowska's study *La recepción del libro hispanoamericano en Polonia (1945–90)*.³² So far it has been the most complete work dedicated to the issue I have been interested in. The publication has a bibliography of Hispanic American books published in Poland. However, it is not free from gaps and inaccuracies. Moreover, I have used *Rocznik Literacki* [Literary Yearbook], embracing translations of foreign literary works into Polish, which stopped being issued in 1991. The last volume of this yearbook includes books published in 1984. The next work that I have consulted is *Polska Bibliografia Literacka* [Polish Literary Bibliography], which appeared in the traditional version till 1988, whereas the data of the years 1989–1998 are available in an electronic version.³³ I have also used *Index Translationum*,³⁴ which is a great data base about translations, collected and made available electronically by UNESCO. Another valuable source has been the catalogue of the Polish National Library.

There are numerous discrepancies between the data that can be found in these sources. Comparing them, I have tried to gather facts related to the presence of Latin American literature in Poland as completely as possible, but I cannot guarantee that the presented lists are fully reliable. Consequently, they should be treated as approximate.³⁵

32 It is the first part of the aforementioned book *La presencia de la literatura latinoamericana en Polonia* (CESLA, Warszawa 1994) by Milewska, Rymwid-Mickiewicz and Skłodowska. Its second part is dedicated to the reception of the Portuguese-language literature of Latin America.

33 <http://pbl.ibl.poznan.pl/>; access: 12.03.2009.

34 http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=7810&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html; access: 12.03.2009.

35 I did not succeed in obtaining help of the publishing houses. Their websites focus on *ad hoc* promotional activities and do not give any information about their earlier achievements. An exception is the website of the Rebis Publishing House in Poznań that gives lists of books published as series, but the lists are not updated. My attempts

It is most difficult to acquire reliable information concerning works published after 1989. In the early 1990s, a number of local publishing houses were founded, and as a rule they did not fulfil the requirement to send the so-called mandatory copies to national libraries. Thus, their publications appear neither in the library catalogues nor in any other lists.³⁶ Although since 1996 we have had a new law concerning mandatory deposits, a dispute over their number has not been settled in the publishers' circles yet.³⁷

In the aforementioned study dedicated to the reception of Hispanic American literature in Poland, Rymwid-Mickiewicz and Skłodowska (1994:3) focus on the post-war period since earlier there were very few Polish translations of books coming from Latin America; consequently, they were not known in our country. The authors state that in the 1920s, there were only single and rather randomly chosen volumes of that prose.³⁸ The stay of Tadeusz Peiper in Madrid in 1915–1920 led to the publication of several poems by the Chilean poet Vicente Huidobro and by Jorge Luis Borges in the magazine *Nowa Sztuka* [New Art]. Rymwid-Mickiewicz and Skłodowska differentiated five stages of the reception of Iberoamerican literature after World War II, assuming as fundamental the criterion of the number of published titles in a given period. The first stage, from 1945 till 1955, was described as a period of poor editorial activities. In fact, such activities began in 1949 when the fragment “Let the Woodcutter Awaken” (“Que despierte el leñador”) of the poem *Canto general* by Pablo Neruda, translated by Lech Andrzej Pijanowski, appeared. Then a total of fourteen other titles were published. The second stage – stagnation – lasted from 1956 till 1964 and was characterised by a small number (seven) of published renderings. The next stage, between 1965 and 1972, was a period of moderate activities; altogether

to make contacts with editors have failed. My requests for data concerning complete lists of editorial series have not been noticed or as in the case of Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy and Wydawnictwo Literackie, I have been informed that the editors did not collect such data.

- 36 Baczyński, “Jak szukać książek,” in: *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 3.01.1996, p. 11. The problem is also mentioned by Skibińska (2008:79).
- 37 http://www.ksiazka.net.pl/index.php?id=28&no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=1947&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=12&cHash=cb49c2974b; access: 15.03.2009.
- 38 These are: anthology of stories, a novel ascribed to the indigenista works, *La venganza del cóndor* by Ventura García Calderón, and two novels by the Argentine Hugo Wast. These books proved not to have stood the test of time and are not mentioned in the textbooks concerning the history of Latin America literature.

46 translations appeared in Poland, which gave an average of six titles per year. The fourth stage was a time of intensive activities from 1973 till 1980. During that time, up to 20 titles were published annually. The last stage was again called “stagnation” since the number of published books from the area of Latin America decreased to five a year.

The data collected in *La presencia de la literatura latinoamericana en Polonia* are very valuable. Nevertheless, the quantitative criterion assumed by Rymwid-Mickiewicz and Skłodowska seem insufficient to describe the phenomenon, namely the presence of Spanish American literature in post-war Poland. Firstly, the authors did not deal with the literary value of the originals and the quality of the translations. Secondly, in their research which concerned the reception of literature, they considered only books, omitting any potential press publications. Thirdly, they did not examine the context of reception. In result, their proposed division is too fragmented and does not reflect the essence of the phenomenon.

In my opinion, from the perspective of time the history of the reception of Spanish American literature in Poland is divided into four distinct periods: the first one from 1945 (if we recognise the end of World War II as a cultural caesura) till the beginning of the boom; the second one – the time of the boom; the third one – from the end of the boom till 1989, designating the beginning of political and economic transformations, including freeing the book market; and the fourth one – from 1989 until today.³⁹ I am aware that within these stages certain phenomena are not uniform and that important differences can be noticed. The same objection can be posed to the division presented by Rymwid-Mickiewicz and Skłodowska. Nevertheless, my division reflects the reception of Spanish American literature as a kind of cultural phenomenon that has its own dynamics and explicit culmination. I do realise that if my proposal is accepted it will be difficult to set precise cut-off dates of the stages – it is easier to do that referring only to the quantitative data.

The boom is the central concept of my division concerning the history of the reception of Spanish American literature in Poland. Therefore, it is necessary to provide an explanation of what the boom was from the point of view of Polish readers, and in which aspects this vision differs from the definitions accepted in

39 Similar dynamics can be observed in the history of translations of Latin American prose in other European countries: France, England, Germany (see Munday, “The translation of Spanish American Literature: An inevitable cultural distortion?” in: *Livivs*, 1996, no. 8, pp. 155–164).

Western literature devoted to this issue. I will also try to establish, though only approximately, the cut-off dates of the Polish boom.

2 Boom in Spain, boom in Europe, boom in Poland

It is commonly recognised that the event that began the phenomenon called 'Latin American Boom' was the publication of the novel of the young Peruvian Mario Vargas Llosa, *The Time of the Hero* (*La ciudad y los perros*)⁴⁰ by Seix Barral, a Barcelona-based publishing house, in 1963. Most specialists also assume that the boom, described first of all as a publishing phenomenon,⁴¹ lasted for about 10 years (Ferrer Solà & Sanclemente, 2004; Pohl, 2005). Similar opinions can be found in Polish studies.⁴²

It is less frequently remembered that single works of young novelists from Latin America were published earlier in Spain by Seix Barral. These were the novel *Eloy* (1960) by the Chilean Carlos Droguett, *Los extraordinarios* (1961) by the Mexican Ana Mairena or *Gestures* (*Gestos*) (1963) by the Cuban Severo Sarduy. Moreover, books published in South America, not necessarily in the writers' homelands, appeared in the Spanish Peninsula. For instance, within the series "Colección Popular," edited by Fondo de Cultura Económica de México aiming at popularising its local culture, there were *The Burning Plain and Other Stories* (*El llano en llamas*, 1959) and *Pedro Páramo* (1964) by Juan Rulfo, *The Death of Artemio Cruz* (*La muerte de Artemio Cruz* 1962) by Carlos Fuentes, *La creación* by Agustín Yañez (1959). Yet, the Argentinian publisher Losada published among other things the novel *Son of Man* (*Hijo de hombre*, 1961) by the Paraguayan Augusto Roa Bastos and *A Kind of Mulatto* (*Mulata de tal*, 1963) by the Guatemalan Miguel Ángel Asturias, which contradicts the repeated thesis that Spanish American writers did not have any chance to be known on their continent if they had not been earlier recognised in Spain.

40 The original titles are given in brackets. If some work has not been translated into English, I have given only the original title.

41 Steenmeijer (2002:144) focused on the ambiguity of the term "boom," which is used both in reference to the sphere of the production of Latin American literature and its reception.

42 "The boom embraces writers that became acclaimed in Spain, laureates of Premio Biblioteca Breve granted by Seix Barral in Barcelona or the annual Premio de Crítica" (Kühn 1975: 277). The same author evaluates this phenomenon as harmful since it distorts the picture of literature to which it refers, eliminating from it the names of really outstanding writers who did not manage to enter the magical circle (Kühn 1984:11).

In the Iberian Peninsula, although these works were known by a relatively small group of critics, they understood the importance of these works for Hispanic literature. At that time, Spanish literature experienced a deep crisis resulting among other things from the country's isolation caused by General Franco's policy after the civil war. On the one hand, the immigration of numerous writers brought about the loss of inter-generational bonds between writers. On the other hand, writers living in the Iberian Peninsula had a considerably limited access to new artistic currents developing abroad. The doctrine of Social Realism was meant to be a literary response to the Fascist dictatorship, but the Realism did not succeed to be artistically satisfying. Moreover, the stigmatisation of the moral poverty of the system and the exploitation of workers and peasants did not reach proper addressees: this idea was not attractive for real readers – generally members of the middle class. In turn, its addressees, mostly workers, neither bought nor read modern novels. Thus, the appearance of pioneering Hispanic prose from outside was treated as a fresh and desirable trend.

The Time of the Hero was the first novel from South America that aroused the interest of critics and whose publication, preceded by winning the prestigious Premio Biblioteca Breve, turned out to be a commercial success. It opened the Spanish book market to other Spanish American writers. Barcelona became the most important centre promoting the new prose; the city was hailed as the capital of the boom. The greatest stars of the boom, including Vargas Llosa and García Márquez, moved to Barcelona. Carmen Balcells⁴³ began her activities there, creating an agency representing writers from Latin America. Thanks to her many of them reached material stabilisation allowing them to focus only on literary activities. Naturally, there were tensions: on the one hand, one could observe an enthusiastic approach of editors and readers, and on the other hand – reservation or even reluctance of the official Spanish criticism stigmatising its alleged “existential nihilism” and leftist belief (Ferrer Solà & Sanclémente, 2004:93–106). Some right-wing critics however noticed with satisfaction the departure from the Social Realism, while progressive critics positively reacted to the explicit involvement of Latin American writers on behalf of the socialist ideals. This attitude was expressed by support or even enthusiasm for the Cuban revolution

43 In Poland, one can more frequently read about Carmen Balcells in popular magazines rather than in scientific periodicals. See, for example, the article by Lipczak “Nigdy z klientami” [Never with clients], *Wysokie Obcasy* 5.10.2008, at: <http://www.wysokieobcasy.pl/wysokie-obcasy/1,96856,5755536.html>; access: 12.03.2009.

that integrated their circles for several years.⁴⁴ Critics representing both political options generally saw the novelty and artistic values of the young Spanish American prose.

It was the Barcelonan publishers that decided which books would reach mass readers, not only in Spain but also in Latin America. First in the capital of Catalonia, a kind of sanctification of authors took place; after their success in the Iberian Peninsula their works appeared on the European markets and then triumphed in Latin American countries. It was also there that a kind of 'homogenisation of the product' occurred: the works were promoted as "Spanish American literature," leading to the blurring of readers' awareness that they were connected with the traditions of particular national literatures⁴⁵ (Gras Miravet & Sánchez López 2004:120).

We should also remember the role of Paris in promoting Latin American literature. In the 1960s, the capital of France was still perceived as a cultural centre, and the judgements passed by French critics fundamentally influenced the fate of writers and their works. The high evaluation of authors coming from Latin America determined their success in Europe and then in the United States. Undoubtedly, the role played by two Latin American publishing centres: Mexico and Buenos Aires, where the works that encountered opposition from the censors appeared, was significant (op. cit., p. 127). The uniqueness of the boom was that in a relatively short time Latin American literature achieved recognition as works of world literature (Steenmeijer 2002:145).

The culmination of the boom was the publication of Garcia Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (*Cien años de soledad*) by the Argentinian publishing house Sudamericana in 1967. The novel achieved immediate success both among

44 Latin American writers had a different attitude towards the so-called case of Padilla, the Cuban poet arrested with his wife for his dissident "contra-revolution" views in 1971 and forced to the self-criticism of his works. He was defended by many eminent writers, including Simone de Beauvoir, Margarite Duras, Carlos Fuentes, Juan Goytisolo, Alberto Moravia, Octavio Paz, Juan Rulfo, Jean-Paul Sartre and Susan Sontag, who had been enthusiasts of the Cuban revolution earlier.

45 On the other hand, it is worth remembering that the writers were united by a common language and that for many critics that fact was more important than their nationality. An essential feature of their works was the renewal of the Spanish language and discovering new possibilities in it. The Spanish poet and critic Félix Grande wrote that for a writer the language was more important than his or her homeland, and that he did not feel the need to be seen against the background of Latin American writers; it was enough for him to state that they were his companions (Gras Miravet & Sánchez López 2004:133).

critics and readers. In Spain, it was published by Edhasa a year later, initiating the reception of Iberoamerican prose on a mass scale.⁴⁶ Then numerous new titles, which were generally in high demand, appeared on the market. The expectations of literary audiences were high. The acclaimed authors were required to produce bestsellers regularly, works that would fulfil some precisely defined criteria, such as political involvement with high artistic values associated with linguistic experiments and elements of fantasy.

After several years, the market must have been saturated, and in the early 1970s, some critics predicted a decline of the boom. Vargas Llosa's novel *Captain Pantoja and the Special Service* (*Pantaleón y las visitadoras*), published in 1973, brought disappointment: the Peruvian writer made readers get accustomed to the fact that his works dealt with serious problems and dazzle them with formal experiments. That is why the novel, written in a light satirical mode, failed to meet readers' expectations. The same happened with his novel *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter* (*La tía Julia y el escribidor*, 1977), which was received as an extremely commercial work, without any bigger artistic ambition.⁴⁷

And then there was... normality. Spanish American literature was not seen as exotic in Spain any longer. Awarding a writer coming from Latin America was not sensational. Works of Latin American authors entered the canon of literature created in Spanish, which was proved by the fact that the Royal Spanish Academy included quotations from the works of Borges, Cortázar, García Márquez and Alejo Carpentier in its manual *Esbozo de una nueva gramática de la lengua española* (1973).

In other European countries, editors' interests in Latin American prose could be seen more or less in the mid-1960s. Their activities increased considerably in the early 1970s to reach an apogee in 1977 (Rymwid-Mickiewicz 1995:239).

The range of the reception of the new Latin American prose in a given country depended to a large extent on the existence of cultural and literal relationships with Latin America. For instance, in France, the interest in the contemporary creativity of Latin American writers preceded the boom. It began in 1950 with the publication of Asturias' novel *Mr. President* (*El señor Presidente*) that was favourably received by the critics. In 1952, the Gallimard publishing house

46 The commercial success of the novel was global: till March 1983, i.e. within 15 years, 12 million copies in 30 language versions were sold (Munday 1996:156).

47 See the review of Javier Alfaya in *Triunfo*, no. 768 (1977); reprinted in the volume *La llegada de los bárbaros* eds. J. Marcia and J. Gracia, Edhasa, Barcelona 2004, pp. 1073–1075.

inaugurated the series “La Croix du Sud,” dedicated only to Latin American prose. Several works published within this cycle were re-editions, e.g. *La sombra del caudillo* by the Mexican Martin Luis Guzmán. This novel appeared in 1929, its French translation – in 1931, and within the series – in 1959. The same happened with Ricardo Güiraldes’ novel *Don Segundo Sombra* (original edition in 1926), whose rendering into French was produced in 1932, and then it was published within the Gallimard series. An explicit increase in interest in Latin American literature was noted in France in the 1970s, and works of such writers as Vargas Llosa, García Márquez and Borges made a commercial success. At the beginning of the 21st century, more new authors appeared, and French readers began appreciating authors outside the trend of the magical realism (Malingret 2002:185).

If we choose the criterion of quantity, the countries that showed the greatest interest in Latin American literature were France, Germany, Italy and the Soviet Union. On the average, in 1960–1979, there were between 5.7 and 8.6 books of Latin American authors published annually. Great Britain, Czechoslovakia, Holland, Bulgaria and Romania formed a group of countries for which this indicator was clearly smaller (2.7 – 3.5 books). The numbers were even lower in the remaining European countries (Rymwid-Mickiewicz 1995:243).

The criteria assumed by Rymwid-Mickiewicz are misleading. It is true that in German-speaking countries the new Latin American prose appeared early: in 1964 – the translation of *The Death of Artemio Cruz*, in 1966 – the debut novel by Cortázar *The Winners* (*Los premios*) and *The Time of the Hero* by Vargas Llosa. However, the next novel of the Peruvian writer, *The Green House* (*La Casa Verde*), appeared in 1968 only in 8,000 copies and was reprinted after several years (Brown 1994:64). The most famous novel by García Márquez appeared in German as late as in 1970. It was favourably received and positively reviewed about 50 times in German magazines, but did not arouse the reader’s enthusiasm. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* waited for its second German edition until 1979 (Brown 1994:57). The turning point was the Nobel Prize in Literature for García Márquez in 1982. From then on, Latin American prose began reaching masses (Munday 1996:158). In the decade of 1981–1991, twelve books of four Spanish American novelists: García Márquez, Vargas Llosa, Isabel Allende and the Mexican authoress Angeles Mastretta were placed on the bestseller’s list by *Spiegel/Buchreport* (Brown 1994:65). Other earlier books written by Spanish American authors were sold in Germany and systematically reviewed. German readers received reliable information about the writers, their works and contexts of their origin (Morales Saravia 2005:268).

According to the criteria proposed by Rymwid-Mickiewicz, Poland, with the average number of published books of Latin American authors 8.2 per year, belonged to the group of countries with the highest indicator of the reception of Latin American prose in the 1960s and the 1970s. It is assumed that the Polish boom for Latin American literature began in 1968 with the publication of Cortázar's *Hopscotch* (*Rayuela*), famously translated by Zofia Chądzyńska. Its symbolic end is most frequently considered to be the year of his death – 1984 (Majcherek 1984:120). The first date does not evoke many doubts, but the other seems debatable. In my opinion, the boom in Poland ended earlier – in 1981, i.e. with the introduction of martial law. This historical and political turn was also a cultural caesura.⁴⁸ Thus, the Polish boom was also 10 years later than the Spanish one; fashion for Latin American literature developed when the boom was wading in Spain. On the other hand, the Polish boom was slightly moved in time as compared with other European countries, which could not necessarily have been caused by the editors' tardiness, but rather long, sometimes lasting for several years, cycle of publishing books in the conditions prevailing in the Polish People's Republic. This period was characterised among other things by the special position of Cortázar and the editorial policy, i.e. publishing – under the pressure of readers' expectations – books of authors belonging to different generations. Consequently, the average Polish reader did not distinguish between literary generations and associated the boom not with the relatively small number of writers who had their debuts in Spain in the early 1960s, but with Latin American literature in general. As Marrodán wrote (1979:8):

Poland is perhaps the only country, outside the Spanish and Portuguese area, in which, within a short period, so many translations of this prose appeared, remembering that bestsellers were not single works but the whole Latin American prose proposed by the editors.

3 Spanish literature in Poland after World War II

The situation of Spanish literature in post-war Poland was completely different. First of all, Spain was seen not only as an old political power, but as a country boasting a long and rich literary tradition, a country where numerous works permanently belonging to the European heritage were created.

The position of Spanish literature in Poland has never been so strong as French, German, English or Russian literature. Nonetheless, throughout the

48 I am going to return to these issues in the next part of this chapter.

centuries a number of works, mainly those regarded as classics, were translated into Polish. In the 16th and 17th centuries, there were translations of books having a pedagogical and political character. Moreover, the writings of the mystics, among whom several were outstanding writers, aroused much interest in Poland where their Latin, Italian and Polish renderings were available. In the 19th century, as a consequence of the Romantic fascination with Spanish classics in Germany and France, one could also see in the Polish lands an interest in the most important writers of the Golden Ages, such as Miguel de Cervantes, Lope de Vega and Pedro Calderón de la Barca. Furthermore, during the inter-war period of 20 years, the novels of Spanish authors, including Miguel de Unamuno, Vicente Blasco Ibañez, Pío Baroja and Azorín, were popular with Polish readers (*Literatura polska. Przewodnik encyklopedyczny* 1984:357).

The knowledge of Spanish literature considerably increased after World War II.⁴⁹ The esteemed classics were not forgotten but at the same time a number of contemporary works were available to Polish readers, e.g. *The Young Assassins* (*Juegos de manos*) by Juan Goytisolo (1959, tr. Maria Sten), *Nada* (*Nada*) by Carmen Laforet (1962, tr. Kalina Wojciechowska) or *Si te dicen que caí* by Juan Marsé (1978, tr. Teresa Marzyńska). In Poland, there were translations of works written by the most eminent post-war novelists: Miguel Delibes⁵⁰ and the winner of the Nobel Prize 1989, Camil José Cela.⁵¹ Two novels: *Time of Silence* (*Tiempo de silencio*) by Luis Martín Santos (1978, tr. Florian Śmieja) and *A Meditation* (*Una meditación*) by Juan Benet (1983, tr. Zofia Chądzyńska and Halina Czarnocka), considered to be a breakthrough in the history of modern Spanish literature, breaking with the paradigm of Social Realism, were published although with a certain delay. Summing up, the Polish editors avoided falling into the trap of Social Realism prevailing in the Iberian Peninsula. As astonishing as it might seem, the artistically poor prose marked by the Spanish Social Realism was not actually published in Poland. Yet, those authors whose views

49 See a detailed discussion of this issue in Sawicki "La ilustre desconocida. Traducciones polacas de la literatura española," in: *Estudios Hispánicos II, Actas del Segundo Simposio de Hispanistas Polacos celebrado en Wrocław y Karpacz del 24 al 27 de septiembre de 1990*, Wrocław 1992.

50 *Five Hours with Mario* (*Cinco horas con Mario*, 1980, tr. Reszelewski), *The Rats*, (*Las ratas*) (1983 tr. Kühn), *The Holy Innocents* (*Los santos inocentes*) (1988, tr. Komarnicka).

51 *The Hive* (*La colmena*, 1960, tr. Wojciechowska); *The Family of Pascual Duarte* (*La familia de Pascual Duarte*, 1963, tr. Szleyen); *Mazurek dla dwóch nieboszczyków* (*Mazurka for Two Dead Men*, 1990, tr. Komarnicka).

could be recognised as close to the officially proclaimed position were published in Poland. That is why, from among the Spanish poets the works of Federico García Lorca and Rafael Alberti were mainly published in journals and as books predominantly in the first post-war years. Then the works of Juan Ramón Jiménez, the nestor of Spanish poetry living abroad, appeared, especially after he had received the Nobel Prize in 1956.

The death of General Franco in 1975 began a period of political and social transformations in Spain, resulting in establishing a democratic order. This date is also an important cultural caesura. The output of those writers whose debuts fell in the 1970s is described as “new prose.” Both the critics and readers received it with favour. The regaining of readers was considered as the biggest success of modern Spanish prose. It was estimated that towards the end of the 20th century, works of ca. 300 novelists were published in Spain. Naturally, the artistic level of their works varied but there were many genuine talents, such as Jesús Ferrero, Javier Marías, Julio Llamazares and Alejandro Gándara, who also found recognition abroad. Translations of the most interesting works of Spanish authors, who debuted in the last quarter of the 20th century, were produced in many European countries.⁵²

Polish editors focused on English fiction. Contemporary Spanish novels were published sporadically and without any plan or strategy. Translations were relatively few, their number and choice did not reflect the phenomena that were most important to contemporary literature. Polish readers had the chance to get to know several novels by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán⁵³ and Eduardo Mendoza,⁵⁴ who, as the only representatives of the local hardboiled fiction that the Spanish editors promoted in the late 1970s, have a lasting place in the history of Spanish literature. Of great popularity in Poland were the novels by Arturo

52 For example, Llamazares' works have been translated into French, English, Dutch, Swedish, Greek, Portuguese, German, Norwegian; Marías' novels have been translated into French, English, Dutch, Portuguese, German, Slovenian, Hungarian, Czech, Serbian, Italian, Turkish, Lithuanian, Estonian and Croatian.

53 For example, *Murder in the Central Committee* (*Asesinato en el Comité Central*, tr. Wasitowa, 1998), *The Buenos Aires Quintet* (*Quinteto de Buenos Aires* tr. Rycerz, 2001), *The Prize* (*El premio*, tr. Elbanowski, 2002), *Southern Seas* (*Los mares del Sur*, tr. Raczkiewicz, 2004).

54 For example, *The Truth about the Savolta Case*, (*La verdad sobre el caso Savolta*, tr. Chądzyńska, 1980), *A Light Comedy* (*Una comedia ligera*, tr. Wasitowa, 2000), *The Olive Labyrinth* (*El laberinto de las aceitunas*, tr. Chrobak, 2004).

Pérez-Reverte.⁵⁵ There appeared translations of Llamazares,⁵⁶ Marías,⁵⁷ Álvaro Pombo⁵⁸ and Antonio Muñoz Molina.⁵⁹ During the trend of feminism, we could not miss translations of prose written by women; hence the presence of the following books published in Poland: *Cómo ser una mujer y no morir en el intento* by Carmen Rico-Godoy (tr. Ewa Morycińska-Dzius, 2005), *La única libertad* by Marina Mayoral (tr. Barbara Jaroszek, 2005) and *Muertos de papel* by Alicia Giménez-Bartlett (tr. Filip Łobodziński, 2003). Yet, the Polish editors of that time seemed to behave inconsistently: for example, works by Jesús Ferrero or Alejandro Gándara, which were highly evaluated by the critics and achieved a commercial success, were not translated into Polish.

Summarising, after World War II, the editorial offer concerning Spanish literature, especially contemporary writers, was evidently enlarged, which however did not mean that the offer was deliberate and could be a reliable source of knowledge on literary trends in the Spanish literature of the second half of the 20th century.

4 Latin American literature in the pre-boom period

The process of publishing, distributing and selling books in the time of the Polish People's Republic can hardly be called a publishing market since it had little to do with what we understand under this term. Central planning and managing effected almost all spheres of culture and did not omit editorial activities because books were recognised as an essential element of the state's propaganda policy. The ideologized activities of the publishing houses led to making plans that envisaged the publication of an appropriate number of titles in a given time, the publication of concrete authors' works, the establishment of an *a priori* circulation and distribution of a certain amount of paper. In communist Poland, there was a determined, relatively small, number of publishing houses, supported and

55 Including *The Club Dumas* (*El Club Dumas*, tr. Łobodziński, 1998), *The Fencing Master* (*El maestro de esgrima* tr. Łobodziński, 2000), *The Seville Communion* (*La piel del tambor*, tr. Karasek, 2000), *The Nautical Chart* (*La carta esférica*, tr. Karasek, 2001).

56 *The Yellow Rain* (*La lluvia amarilla* 2004), *Escenas de cine mudo* (2005), *El río del olvido* (2007, all tr. Płachta).

57 *The Man of Feeling* (*El hombre sentimental*, tr. Zaleska, 2002), *Tomorrow in the Battle Think on Me* (*Mañana en la batalla piensa en mí*, tr. Marrodán Casas, 2003).

58 *La cuadratura del círculo* (tr. Szafrńska-Brandt, 2001), *Donde las mujeres* (tr. Dzisiewska, 2001).

59 *Prince of Shadows* (*Beltenebros* 1998), *El jinete polaco* (2003, both tr. Charchalis), *In Her Absence* (*En ausencia de Blanca*, tr. Potok-Nycz, 2003).

controlled by the state, specialising in producing books in accordance with the imposed profile, following the rules of central planning. As Skibińska (2008:86) observes, the editors' driving force allowing authors and their works to exist in the literary field was to a large extent limited by the communist authorities that interfered in that field to multiply their political capital. Decisions concerning the selection of foreign texts to be translated into Polish, whether they would be published or not, were also conditioned by these criteria. The last word regarding a concrete work belonged to censorship. These conditions considerably defined the publishing policy towards Latin American literature.

It is hard to contradict the statement that for Polish readers the boom for Latin American literature was "an explosion of nothingness," the appearance of prose from an area seen as a "continent without novelists" (Rymwid-Mickiewicz, Skłodowska 1994:5). However, it would be an overstatement to say that before the boom Latin American literature was completely absent in Poland. At this point, I want to add some words about the editions of poetry since it is important for the picture of the reception of this literature within the first fifteen post-war years.

In the post-war period until the late 1960s, the editors' interest in Latin America was indeed scarce in Poland. Till 1967, only 36 books written by authors coming from this continent were published, which was averagely 1.5 title per year. They included poetry and prose. Yet, in some years (1960–1962) no books coming from this continent were published.

Non-literal criteria most frequently decided whether a given book would be published or not. The author of one of the few novels published in Polish during that time, *Neuve lunas sobre Neuquen* (tr. Zofia Szleyen, 1950), was the Uruguayan Enrique Amorim, a communist party activist. The same happened with *Huaspungo* (tr. Tadeusz Jakubowicz, 1950) by the Ecuadoran author Jorge Icaza. Two books by Carlos Luis Fallas: the novel *Mamita Yunai* (tr. Szleyen, 1953) and selected stories (tr. Helena Bychowska and Zawadowski, 1955), a writer from Costa Rica, who aimed at exposing social inequality, were also published. The "designated" writers from Latin America were Pablo Neruda and Jorge Amado during almost the whole period of the Polish People's Republic.⁶⁰ In

60 I do not intend to deal with the publications of his works in Poland since the Portuguese-language literature of South America is not the subject of my book. Yet, I want to mention the first Polish translations of his works: *Cacau* (tr. Holyńska), *Vida de Luis Carlos Prestes, O Cavaleiro da Esperança* (tr. Gruda and Holyńska), *The Violent Land (Terras do Sem Fim)*, tr. Wrzoskova – all published in 1949, *A Albania é uma festa, Seara Vermelha, Jubiabá* – 1950, *Sea of Death (Mar Morto)*, *The Golden Harvest*

that time, four editions of Neruda's poetry appeared in Poland. They included the aforementioned fragment of the poem "Let the Woodcutter Awaken" translated by Pijanowski (1949),⁶¹ its full text appeared two years later (1951), *Allí murió la muerte* translated by Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz (1953), and *Canto general* (1954), translated into Polish by four poets: Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz, the initiator and *spiritus movens* of the publishing endeavour, Konstanty Ildefons Gałczyński, Janusz Strasburger and Lech Pijanowski.

Without questioning the literary values of Neruda's or Amado's works, we need to say that publishing their creative output primarily resulted from their leftist beliefs and political activities. Reviews of their works stressed this aspect of their works. For example, in 1948, *Nowa Literatura* published an article about Amado entitled "W służbie jutra" [At the service of tomorrow] by Tadeusz Sarnecki (1947:2), while *Kuźnica* described a political campaign against Neruda in M. Margal's text (1948:7). In 1949, in *Odrodzenie* (No. 46, p. 8) there appeared the poet's speech delivered during the Peace Congress in Mexico. In 1950, *Tygodnik Literacki* (No. 42, p. 2) published a fragment of the Chilean poet's speech during the 32nd Anniversary of the October Revolution held in Leningrad. The title of the text was "Stalin's and Lenin's ideas lighten the only way of mankind." In 1951, *Nowa Kultura* (No. 15, p.1) published Neruda's text *Chwała ludowi Barcelony* [Glory to the people of Barcelona]. One can multiply titles of press texts written in a similar mood, but those already mentioned show that Neruda was presented mainly as a political activist, while his creative output remained in the background. This can also be seen in the selection of his poems published in the Polish press: his ideological poems were evidently preferred, for instance "Song to Stalingrad" ("Canto de amor a Stalingrado," *Kuźnica* 1948, No. 20, p. 5, tr. Kazimierz Andrzej Jaworski). The translations of his poetry are commonly regarded as being of low quality. However, it is worth remembering

(*São Jorge dos Ilhéus*) – 1951, all tr. Gruda and Holyńska). Moreover, in 1953 there were reprints of *The Violent Land* and *The Golden Harvest* within the series "Biblioteka Laureatów Nagrody Stalinowskiej za Utrwalanie Pokoju między Narodami" [Library of the Laureates of Stalin's Prize for Preserving Peace Among Nations].

61 The booklet was edited by the Central Council of Trade Unions within the series "Biblioteczka Świetlicowa" [Little Library of Childcare Daycentre] with an obvious aim to reach masses. The interesting fact is that a theatre performance based on the book was staged jointly by Maria Jarema and Tadeusz Kantor as the instructor of a day-care recitative centre related to the Trade Unions Regional Culture Centre (Wojewódzki Dom Kultury Związków Zawodowych) in Kraków; at <http://www.cricoteka.com.pl/pl/main.php?d=teatr&kat=40&id=104&str=4> (16.02.2009)

that Neruda's poems were also translated by outstanding Polish poets: Czesław Miłosz rendered "Almería" for *Głos Szczeciński* (1949, No. 92, p. 4) and for *Odrodzenie* (1949, No. 28, p. 3) – "Song to Stalingrad." *Dziennik Literacki* (1949), on the front page of its 19th issue, placed "Song for Bolívar" ("Un canto para Bolívar") translated by Wisława Szymborska. The translator of "To my Party" ("A mi partido") was Konstanty Ildefons Gałczyński (*Echo Tygodnia*, 1953, No. 16, p. 1). A fragment of the translation of "China" was published by Julian Tuwim in 1953 in *Wieś* (No. 32, p. 5). Disregarding the ideological dimension of these poems, their artistic value was treated as a challenge for poets who tried their hand in translation.

Studies concerning the reception of Spanish American literature in Poland note the sparse activities of publishing houses and small number of translations in the period preceding the boom. They paid little attention to press publications. Yet, from the early 1960s the activities of the press stopped being limited to translating Neruda and Amado. In 1960, in several issues of the popular weekly *Itd* there appeared the first translations of Borges' short stories, signed by Stanisław Zembrzuski.⁶² A year later, in *Twórczość* (No. 10, pp. 19–30), one could read three of his works: "The House of Asterion," "Averroes's Search" and "Death and the Compass" translated by Chądzyńska.

The press focused on the literature of three Latin American countries: Argentina, Mexico and Cuba. Translations of writers coming from these countries were most frequently published.

As far as the works of Argentinian writers are concerned, translations of the prose of Borges⁶³ and Cortázar⁶⁴ were chiefly published in Polish periodicals

62 These were: "The Form of the Sword" (*La forma de la espada*, no. 5, p. 13), "Emma Zunz" (No. 11, p. 13), "The Dead Man" (*El muerto*, no. 4, pp. 8–9).

63 "The Secret Miracle" (*El milagro secreto*, *Itd* 1962/9, p. 11, tr. Zembrzuski), "The Library of Babel" (*La biblioteca de Babel*, *Przekrój* 1963/934, pp. 5–7, tr. Welczar). In 1966, *Poezja* (No. 12, pp. 65–73) published eight short stories by Borges, translated by different authors. In the fourth issue of *Twórczość* (1966), there appeared other six works translated by Sobol-Jurczykowski (pp. 49–55). In 1967, different periodicals published three pieces of prose, tr. Chądzyńska: "The Two Kings and the Two Labyrinths" (*Los dos reyes y los dos laberintos*), "The Wait" (*La espera*), both in *Zwierciadło*, (no. 50, p. 5), "The Zahir" (*Życie Literackie*, no. 48, p. 7) and three texts translated by Waśkiewicz: "History of the Echoes of a Name" (*Historia de los ecos de un nombre*), "Vindication of Bouvard and Pécuchet" (*Vindicación de Bouvard et Pécuchet*), both in *Twórczość*, no. 7, pp. 78–81) and "Ragnarök" (*ibid.*, pp. 84–85).

64 "End of the Game" (*Final del juego*), *Zwierciadło* 1964/44, pp. 5–6, tr. Wachlowska; "Axolotl," *Świat* 1966/8, pp. 12–13, tr. Chądzyńska; "The Night Face Up" (*La noche*

in the discussed period. Works of other authors appeared rather sporadically: beside one short story by Horacio Quiroga⁶⁵ single poems of various poets were published.

From among Mexican novelists, only Rulfo⁶⁶ and José Revueltas⁶⁷ found recognition with Polish press editors.

In the 1960s, that is, from the victory of the Cuban revolution and seizure of power by Fidel Castro, one could see a considerably bigger number of translations of Cuban literature. The Polish press published many Cuban poems, the biggest number of Nicolas Guillén's works. In 1962, the weekly *Świat* (No. 8, p. 20) published an interview with Eduardo Manet, a Cuban writer who lived in Europe for many years, but after the victorious revolution returned to Cuba and worked there till 1968, and his short story "El huésped" translated by Ewa Fiszer. In 1964, *Zwierciadło* (No. 8, pp. 5–6) published Guillermo Cabrera Infante's short story "En el gran Ecbó" (tr. Irena Wachlowska). In 1965, fragments of the prose of such authors as Edmundo Desnoes,⁶⁸ Octavio Getino⁶⁹ and Otero Lisandro⁷⁰ were published in various periodicals. In 1967, numerous translations of poems appeared, while almost none of prose. The translations published in periodicals were usually accompanied by notes about the authors, containing basic biographic and bibliographic information.

At the same time, there were articles about the literary and cultural life in Mexico and Cuba, aiming at showing phenomena that had been unknown to Polish readers.

The first article dedicated to Mexican literature was published in *Nowa Kultura* (1961, No. 27, p. 10). It was a reprint from *New York Times Review*.

boca arriba), *Zwierciadło* 1966/12, pp. 5,9, tr. Chądzyńska; "House Taken Over" (*Casa tomada*), *Zwierciadło* 1967/48, p. 5, tr. Chądzyńska.

65 "El solitario," *Świat*, 1966/12, p. 12, tr. J. Kühn.

66 "No Dogs Bark" (*No oyes ladrar los perros*), *Argumenty* 1961/2, p. 8, tr. M. Sten; "Tell Them Not to Kill Me" (*Diles que no me maten*), *Przegląd Kulturalny* 1961/50, p. 7, tr. H. Czajka; "Talpa," *Wiatraki* – literary edition of *Życie i Myśl* 1961/14, pp. 1–3, tr. Z. Wasitowa.

67 *Życie Literackie* 1962/31, p. 7, *Kontynenty* 1964/2, p. 11, tr. M. Sten, *Nowa Wieś* 1965/16, p. 10.

68 A fragment of the novel *Memorias del subdesarrollo* (in: *Wiatraki* – literary edition of *Życie i Myśli* 1965/1, pp. 1–3, tr. M. Gero).

69 *Argumenty* 1965/18, p. 11.

70 *Świat* 1965/23, p. 11.

The same year, Stenowa published a text entitled “Literacka geografia Meksyku” [Literary geography of Mexico] in *Argumenty* (1961, No. 24, pp. 6–7). She also prepared “Literacki bilans Meksyku” [Literary balance sheet of Mexico] for *Nowa Kultura* (1963/7, p. 8). In 1967, *Życie i Myśl* (No. 4/5, pp. 133–138) published a large article by Jadwiga Karbowska entitled “Meksykański renesans” [Mexican renaissance].

The Polish press diligently followed the literary life of communist Cuba. As early as in 1960, *Trybuna Ludu* (No. 324, p. 2) placed “Manifest pisarzy i artystów kubańskich” [A manifesto of Cuban writers and artists], while *Życie Literackie* (No. 29, p. 11) – “Przed zjazdem pisarzy kubańskich” [Before the congress of Cuban writers]. In 1963, there appeared translations of two articles about contemporary Cuban literature: by César Leante (*Współczesność*, No. 2, p. 4) and José Antonio Portuondo (*Kultura*, No. 16, p. 2). In 1966, Polish authors wrote about this subject: Jerzy Kasprzycki published “Czytelnicy – i pisarze” [Readers – and writers] in *Życie Warszawy* (No. 236, p. 3) and Alojzy Pałasz published an article about contemporary Cuban poetry in *Poezja* (No. 12, pp. 105–106). Furthermore, the press followed the history of the literary award “Casa de las Américas,” which enjoyed high prestige after it had been established.⁷¹

As for the literature of the remaining Latin American countries, only single poems could be found in the Polish press. The prose of authors from these countries were not published at all, with one exception: in 1967, after Asturias had received the Nobel Prize, *Kultura* (No. 50, p. 5) published a translated fragment of his novel *Mr. President* (tr. Szleyen).

The analysis of the Polish press allows us to state that although the interest in Spanish American prose was not great in the 1960s, in fact it was limited to a few countries. The publications of translations and informative articles did not result from some elaborate strategy, but rather activities of individuals, such as Maria Sten, who never got tired with popularising the knowledge of Mexican literature and culture, translating works herself and writing about them. Another strong factor was – as in the case of Cuban literature – the assumed community of common views and political ideas. What appeared in the Polish press did not reflect in any way the complexity of the phenomenon that was Latin American literature in the middle of the last century.

71 “Casa de las Américas” is a cultural institution created in Cuba just after the victorious revolution in 1959. It aims at deepening cultural relations between Latin American countries. It has granted literary awards since 1960 in five basic categories: poetry, short story, novel, drama and essay. Since 1970, more categories have been added.

Nevertheless, as compared with the earlier period one can evidently observe a certain increase in interest in Spanish American literature in the Polish press from the mid-1960s. It coincided with a breakthrough in the publishing policy conducted by several important Polish publishing houses. They published a number of important positions of Spanish American prose and in their choice the political criterion ceased to be decisive. Here I have in mind *The Lost Steps* (*Los pasos perdidos*) by Alejo Carpentier (the Czytelnik Publishing House, 1963), *The Tunnel* (*El túnel*) by Ernest Sábato (PIW, 1963), the novel *Doña Bárbara* by the Venezuelan Rómulo Gallegos (“Książka i Wiedza,” 1964) or *Writers of Passage* (*Así en la paz como en la guerra*) by Cabrera Infante (PIW, 1965). In 1965, PAX published *Gestures* by Sarduy, the novel which Seix Barral had published in Barcelona only two years earlier and which was seen as one of the indications of the boom. The year 1966 brought the publication of three important novels: *Explosion in a Cathedral* (*El siglo de las luces*) by Carpentier (Czytelnik), *Pedro Páramo* by Rulfo (Książka i Wiedza) and *On Heroes and Tombs* (*Sobre héroes y tumbas*) by Sábato (PIW).

5 The context of reception

Translated texts function in a changed context. This statement seems banal but the fact that texts do not transfer contexts of their origin often causes misunderstandings at the moment of their reception in the field of the target culture (Bourdieu 2002:3). Receivers do not generally know the cultural and economic background of a given work, which usually does not allow them to understand the author’s intentions hidden in the text. At the same time, the text is thrown into a new, alien context: in the field of cultural production which is ruled by norms and systems of values different from the source culture and in which the relations of power are differently shaped. The change of context usually causes that meanings are modified since context is one of the factors influencing the reception of a work. Sometimes it can produce positive results, for example, when the critics’ authority does not go beyond the borders of a given country, the reflection on a literary work in another country can be free of prejudice, and consequently, it can be characterised by some freshness of perspective and independence of judgements.

Considering the reception of Latin American literature in Poland in the second half of the 20th century, its popularity in Western Europe and enthusiastic reception by the critics, especially those in Paris, must have influenced the editors’ decisions to publish the first translations of works from this region, and then – the reviewers to write favourable opinions. In other words, the

international fame of the boom prepared the ground for a positive reception of Latin American prose in Poland.⁷²

Looking at the issue from the reader's perspective turns my attention to the enormous need for information, generally speaking, about other countries in Poland during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Most Poles were stuck behind the Iron Curtain, travelling was for many an unattainable dream, both for economic and political reasons: difficulty with getting passports and visas. Therefore, popular scientific geography-oriented magazines were very popular with readers in Poland. There were invaluable sources of first-hand knowledge about inaccessible, many a time, distant corners of the world. One of such magazines, which has been published since 1948 by the Polish Geographical Society, was *Poznaj Świat* [Get to know the world]. It was available in the numerous kiosks of the communist media concern "Ruch." From 1964, another monthly *Kontynenty* [Continents], focusing on the so-called Third World countries, was published. During the period of the Polish People's Republic, it was distinguished by a large format and attractive design: articles and reports from various exotic parts of the globe were illustrated with coloured photos. The magazine survived the historical turmoil and stopped appearing only in 1989.⁷³ At the end of every issue, *Kontynenty*, beside informative texts, had some translation of poetry or fragment of prose of an author coming from the region to which the magazine was dedicated. During the first year of its publication, the magazine placed translations of Latin American literature: issue 7 included fragments of the classic Argentinian poem from the circle of the so-called Gaucho literature entitled *Martín Fierro* translated by J. Radzyńska, and in issue 11 – translations of the Cuban poets Roberto Fernández Retamar and Nicolás Guillén, made by Szleyen. The magazine continued this tradition to its last edition. It published both Polish versions of less known writers⁷⁴ and the most popular ones: Borges⁷⁵ and

72 It can be seen in critical texts whose authors referred to the opinions of Western critics (which will be discussed in the next chapter) and in paratexts. Editors of front cover texts stress that a given work has been translated into many languages and positively evaluated in Western Europe.

73 At this point, it is worth noting that the Polish edition of *National Geographic* has appeared only since 1999.

74 For instance, the prose by the Cuban writer Calvert Casey (*Kontynenty* 1965/11, pp. 10–11, tr. B. Babad), the Mexican writer Sergio Pitol (*Kontynenty* 1966/7, pp. 9–11, tr. Z. Szleyen), short stories by the Peruvian writer Francisco García Calderón (*Kontynenty*, 1967/10, pp. 10–11, tr. A. Broken), the Argentinian Manuel Rojas (*Kontynenty*, 1968/4, pp. 10–12, tr. J. Zych).

75 "The End," ("El fin," *Kontynenty*, 1971/10, p. 42, tr. Wojciechowska).

Rulfo.⁷⁶ As a rule, the translation was accompanied by a note about the author. In *Kontynenty* one could also find articles concerning Latin American literature, e.g. “Powieść meksykańska” [Mexican novel] by Sergio Pitol (*Kontynenty*, 1964/9, p. 9) or fragments of Carpentier’s recollections (1966/1, pp. 8–11).

Both monthlies, *Poznaj Świat* and *Kontynenty*, fostered interest in Latin America. *Kontynenty* promoted its literature as well.

Demand for knowledge of other countries was also met by travel books. Especially popular travel books were published for forty years from 1956 by “Iskry” as a series “Naokoło Świata” [Around the World], characterised by dust jackets with broadly-coloured flaps in their lower parts. They were called “reporter’s windows to the world throughout the whole epoch” (Poprawa 2009:26). Another feature of the series was thoroughly selected authors. The first book of this series was *The Ascent of Everest* by John Hunt, then works by Thor Heyerdal, Roald Amundsen, Karen Blixen, Ernest Hemingway or Melchior Wańkowicz. They described exotic travels as well as reports from Western European countries.⁷⁷ The books were printed in several dozen thousand copies, and some were reprinted. The series included reports concerning expeditions to Latin American countries.⁷⁸

Thus, we might risk putting forward the thesis that the translations of Latin American prose published in an increasingly bigger number of copies in Poland did not fulfil only literary or aesthetic expectations. When the chance to have personal experience of the exotic was minimal and access to reliable information limited, a considerable circle of readers treated the translations as additional, or perhaps even main, sources of knowledge about this continent. This could also account for the fact that the number of translations of Latin American poetry or drama was very small at that time. Their cognitive values were much smaller from the point of view of an average reader.

Summarising, the reception of Latin American literature in Poland was influenced both by external factors, i.e. literary hierarchies set up by Western Europe, and internal factors, the level of readers’ knowledge about the region where this literature originated and the expectations resulting from that. It

76 “They Give Us the Land” (“Nos han dado la tierra,” *Kontynenty*, 1968/11, p. 9, tr. Zych).

77 E.g., *Lambrettą przez Italię* [Around Italy on a Lambretta] by Stanisław Jagielski (1958).

78 An example can be *Karnawał na wulkanie* [Carnival on a Vulcano] by Olgierd Budrewicz, a report from touring Latin America, published in 1971 and reprinted in 1980 in 30,000 copies.

confirmed Bourdieu's thesis (2002:3) that the source and target field influenced the interpretation and way of functioning of translations of literary works.

6 Polish boom in numbers

In Poland, the year 1968 is commonly assumed to be the beginning of the boom; in that year, the Czytelnik Publishing House published *Hopscotch* by Cortázar, translated by Chądzyńska. As already mentioned, it was not the first brilliant novel written by a contemporary Latin American author that was published in Poland. However, none of the novels published earlier was a bestseller. The novels by Carpentier and Rulfo aroused critics' interests but were not popular with readers. It was the work by the Argentinian writer that evoked their enthusiasm and switched their attention to literature from the continent, which had not been seen as a region where valuable books were written.

That year three important books appeared: *The Kingdom of This World* (*El reino de este Mundo*) by Carpentier, *The Death of Artemio Cruz* by Fuentes (both translated by Wojciechowska) and *La tierra que les di* by the Chilean writer and feminist Mercedes Valdivieso (tr. Mikołaj Bieszczadowski). Furthermore, there was an anthology of Argentinian prose edited by Kazimierz Piekarec. He translated all the works included in this anthology.

The data show that till 1972 the editors' activities concerning Spanish American prose remained on a similar level, an average of six titles a year. However, more books were written by outstanding contemporary authors who had already gained popularity in Spain and other European countries. For instance, 1969 saw the publication of Cortázar's short stories *All Fires the Fire* (*Todos los fuegos el fuego*, tr. Chądzyńska), 1970 – *The Mirror of Lida Sal: Tales Based on Mayan Myths and Guatemalan Legends* (*El espejo de Lida Sal* by Asturias, tr. Aleksandra Ołędzka-Frybesowa), Revueltas' short stories *To Sleep on the Ground* (*Dormir en tierra*, tr. Krystyna Rodowska) and *In Evil Hour* (*La mala hora*), the first Polish translation of García Márquez, tr. Jan Zych. In 1971, five titles appeared, including *The Burning Plain and Other Stories* by Rulfo (tr. Zych), *Big Mama's Funeral* (*Los Funerales de la Mamá Grande*) by García Márquez (tr. Chądzyńska) and, nine years after the debut in Barcelona, *The Time of the Hero* by Vargas Llosa. In 1972, Polish readers received translations of two volumes of Borges' short stories: *Ficciones* (tr. Piekarec) and *The Aleph and Other Stories* (*El Aleph*, tr. Chądzyńska and Andrzej Sobol-Jurczykowski), *Where the Air Is Clear* (*La región más transparente*) by Fuentes (tr. Marzyńska) and *Son of Man* by Augusto Roa Bastos (tr. Zygmunt Wojski).

The year 1973 seems to be a turning point as far as the number of published books by Latin American writers is concerned. There were 14 titles. Then the number increased to reach 20 titles in 1974. The biggest activities of Polish editors, concerning the publications of Latin American prose, fell on the late 1970s. Twenty-five titles appeared in 1976 and twenty-three in 1977. At this point, it is worth remembering that in 1955–1967 the total number of published titles was twenty-five. If we compare these data with the number of translations from English-speaking literature in Poland during that period, we have: in 1977 forty-two titles of North American literature and fifty-six from British literature. Yet, one should consider that these data include reprints of classic works (e.g. by Joseph Conrad, Charles Dickens, William Shakespeare) as well as books for the youth (e.g. novels by Jack London, Mark Twain and James Curwood). On the other hand, there were mostly first editions of Spanish American literature; in 1977, there were second editions of *Opowiadania* [Short Stories] by Cortázar and *On Heros and Tombs* by Sábato, and third edition of *Son of Man* by Roa Bastos.

The circulations were very big in that period; in the case of eminent authors they amounted to several dozen thousand copies. The most important works were published even in one hundred thousand copies. It also happened that works of low artistic value was published in big circulations, for example the novel *Tomorrow I'll Say, Enough!* (*Mañana digo basta*) (tr. Wojciechowska) by the Argentinian writer and translator of French literature Silvina Bullrich, was published in 60,000 copies in 1978.

Despite these facts, critics predicted a swift closure of the boom in the late 1970s. They showed that an increasing number of books having little intellectual and artistic value was part of the editors' offer (Marrodán 1978:477–482). Indeed, readers had reasons for being disillusioned, which was a consequence of the publishing policy. It focused on publishing works of the important writers not according to the chronology of their creation, but according to their most popular and best books, which must have created high expectations. Like in Spain towards the end of the 1960s, Polish readers constantly demanded such masterpieces as *One Hundred Years of Solitude*.

The numbers confirm the gradual decrease in the editors' interest in Spanish American prose in Poland in the late 1970s. The number of new titles on the market fell to sixteen in 1978. It continued at a similar level in the next years: in 1979 – twelve, in 1980 – sixteen, in 1981 – nine, in 1982 – seventeen, and in 1983 – ten. On the other hand, the selection of works to be published was much more thorough. Collections of poems and essays started appearing. The current works of the best writers were also published. For example, in 1980 there

was *The Autumn of the Patriarch* (*El otoño del patriarca*) by García Márquez, in 1981 – *Terra Nostra* by Fuentes, in 1982 – *The Harp and the Shadow* (*El harpa y la sombra*) by Carpentier. The circulations amounted to 10,000 – 20,000 copies concerning the published prose, and from 5,000 to 10,000 copies as far as poetry and literary criticism were concerned.

The Polish boom then gradually, but inevitably faded. In some opinions, the boom expired in the early 1980s. As I have already mentioned, the cut-off date was 1984, the year of Cortázar's death since in our country this writer as no one else was associated with the boom and enjoyed great popularity or even adoration of readers, comparable to the delight evoked by pop stars (Komorowski 1977:129). In my opinion, the factor that sealed the end of the boom was the introduction of martial law in December 1981. Using Bourdieu's categories, one can say that this event fundamentally changed the relations of power in the Polish literary field and caused some essential modifications.

According to the conception of Bourdieu (1995), the literary field constitutes a part of the field of power and is subordinate to it. The field of power is a space where entities and institutions having capital necessary to dominate in various fields, first of all in economy and culture, are placed. Those possessing all kinds of power wage fight in order to preserve or transform the symbolic and economic capital within the framework of the field.

Soon after the proclamation of martial law, the authorities, in the most literal way, i.e. officers of various levels acting on behalf of the newly created Military Council of National Salvation began brutally interfering in the literary field. Their aim was to dominate the field in order to maximise political benefits. One of their activities was to suspend the publication of all magazines, both literary and cultural. Some of them were reopened after a certain time (sometimes only after several months), but some were closed for good. Consequently, the national weeklies *Literatura* and *Kultura*, being obligatory readings for all those who regarded themselves as intelligentsia, disappeared. Moreover, the opinion-giving circles, often grouped around these periodicals, were scattered. The disintegration of artistic circles was also caused by the internment and arrest of people involved in the opposition. Many artists and journalists chose to immigrate, which resulted from their own decisions or the pressure of the ruling power. Thus, the authorities whose opinions were to be considered and who formed artistic hierarchies disappeared from the scene.

Till 1981, Spanish American prose was regularly discussed and reviewed in literary and cultural periodicals. There had also been presentations of new books before they were translated into Polish. Additionally, in many other popular magazines, especially weeklies, the newly published titles were noted and

discussed. One such weekly was *Czas* [Time], appearing in Gdańsk, which was closed in 1981. The disappearance of these papers from the cultural map of Poland meant destroying the tradition of thinking and writing about Spanish American literature that had been worked out for twenty years.

7 Publishing policy towards Spanish American prose during the boom

Examining the strategies⁷⁹ of publishing houses is an important element of the research on the reception of literary translations. The text of a literary work does not appear as 'pure' but as 'packed' by its editor. The packed elements are the cover, the sort of printing paper used as well as the editorial and aesthetic level of the final product. Another crucial element of the editor's strategy is a decision to place a given work within some series, which usually means that the work is directed to concrete receivers. Bourdieu (2002:5) calls all these schemes "giving a new trademark." The prestige of a publishing house and concrete series influence the way a work is seen – the same book whose author is not renowned, published by a prestigious publishing house and by another one that publishes popular literature of rather pure quality, will most probably reach various groups of receivers, and there will be various attitudes towards it. In the case of the first editor, readers will expect literature of high quality, while in the case of the other editor – rather simple entertainment.

It is also important whether a published book has peritexts, i.e., information about the author, introduction or preface, notes, commentaries on the fourth page of the cover or the flaps. All these editorial activities anticipate the receiver of the translation and thus co-create the context of the reception of the translation. They are a kind of manipulation that in extreme cases can lead to deform the original message (Bourdieu 2002:5).

Till 1963, most translations of Latin American prose were edited by the Czytelnik Publishing House. Single books were published by the Książka i Wiedza Publishing House, the People's Publishing Cooperative (Ludowa Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza), the PAX Publishing House and the National Publishing Institute (Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy – PIW). Then PIW's activities in publishing Latin American prose became more visible. Such activities were also undertaken by "Iskry." Till 1971, translations of the literature in question were produced only

79 Strategies mean concrete activities of publishing houses in order to realise certain overall plans and intentions concerning publishing or a certain type of literature.

by Warsaw-based editors. As far as the number of titles was concerned, Czytelnik remained a leader. In 1971, the Kraków-based Literary Press (Wydawnictwo Literackie – WL) came into play.

7.1 The Czytelnik Publishing Cooperative

The first book belonging to the imposing achievements of Latin American prose that appeared in Poland was *The Lost Steps* by Carpentier. The Czytelnik Publishing House edited it in the “Nike” series in 1963. Within this series, the same year witnessed the publications of *The Blood of Others* (*Le Sang des autres*) by Simone de Beauvoir, *Middle Age of Mrs Eliot* by Angus Wilson, *The Day of the Locust* and *Miss Lonelyhearts* by Nathanael West, *Babylon Revisited* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Family of Pascual Duarte* by Camilo José Cela, *The Nonexistent Knight* (*Il cavaliere inesistente*) by Italo Calvino and *Three Women* (*Drei Frauen*) by Robert Musil.

That series has appeared since 1961. Till 2005, it included 312 titles.⁸⁰ The best period for the series was the mid-1970s, with up to 12 titles a year. The published books are characterised by a pocket format and hard cover. For the first several years the cloth covers had coloured dust jackets with a drawing of the Nike of Samothrace. In the 1980s, the cover was changed to a cream-coloured glossy one. The symbol of the series was still the sculpture of the Greek goddess of victory.

Within the first year of the series, six books were published: *Freedom in December* (*Sur ce rivage...*) by Vercors, *The Hungry Stones and Other Stories* by Rabindranath Tagore, *Contempt* (*Il disprezzo*) by Alberto Moravia, *Romantics* by Konstanty Paustowski, *Wayward Bus* by John Steinbeck and *Gioconda Smile* by Aldous Huxley. This choice of titles showed the ambitious plans of the publishing house to include books of important, world renowned authors in the “Nike” series. In the following years, works of Heinrich Böll, Thomas Mann, Roger Vailland, William Golding, Erich Maria Remarque and other authors were published.

The small format suggested that the Czytelnik Publishing House wanted to reach a large number of readers since such books could be read while travelling or commuting to work. Their hard covers and sown pages testified to their multiple use, and that they were worth preserving. At present, the old books store: Antykwariat-MIT.pl promotes the “Nike” series:

80 Data of the National Library.

Small is beautiful, the mystery of this series is not only its pocket format (books can be placed in a bag or handbag), but the authors and titles of world literature, often unpublished by any publisher. The charm of these little books and the possibility to have easy access to the author encourage many readers and collectors to begin their adventure with the “Nike” series. It is characterised by a hard cover, often a cloth cover, and sown pages, not glued as it often happens today. Every new book is presented with the idea to initiate new literary fascinations or to cultivate the present ones.

The excellent works within the “Nike” series included the following Latin American authors: *Born Guilty (Hijo de ladrón)* by Manuel Rojas (tr. Chądzyńska, 1965), *Explosion in a Cathedral* by Carpentier (tr. Wojciechowska, 1966), *All Fires the Fire* by Cortázar (tr. Chądzyńska, 1969), *The Death of Artemio Cruz* by Fuentes (tr. Wojciechowska, 1968), *Big Mama’s Funeral* by García Márquez (tr. Z. Chądzyńska, 1971), *The Aleph* by Borges (tr. Chądzyńska and Sobol-Jurczykowski, 1972), *Setenta veces siete* by Dalmiro Sáenza (tr. Chądzyńska, 1972), *Cantar de ciegos* by Fuentes (tr. Wojciechowska, 1973), *The Green House* by Vargas Llosa (tr. Marrodán Casas, 1974), *The Incredible and Sad Tale of Innocent Eréndira and Her Heartless Grandmother (La increíble y triste historia de la cándida Eréndira y su abuela desalmada)* by García Márquez (tr. Marrodán Casas, 1975), *The War of Time (Guerra del tiempo)* by Carpentier (tr. Wojciechowska 1975), *The Winners (Los premios)* by Cortázar (tr. Chądzyńska, 1976), *Octaedro*⁸¹ by Cortázar (tr. Chądzyńska, 1977), *Leaf Storm (La hojarasca)* by García Márquez (tr. Marrodán Casas, 1977), *Cuentos completos* by Juan Carlos Onetti (tr. Rajmund Kalicki and Edward Stachura, 1978), *The Autumn of the Patriarch* by García Márquez (tr. Marrodán Casas, 1980) and *Reasons of State (El recurso del método)* by Carpentier (tr. Wojciechowska, 1980).

Summing up, during the boom one or two Spanish American works were published within the “Nike” series a year. The number is small but it should be admitted that the editors of the series did their best to publish works of writers enjoying great popularity with readers and prestige with critics.

When the books within the “Nike” series had dust jackets, there was laconic information about the author and/or work. It was the only form to present potential receivers the content of the book. The texts published in the series were not accompanied by any prefaces or afterwords. Then when the design of the series was changed, the dust jackets, and along with them biographical notes, disappeared. This form of presenting the work and author was not replaced by

81 All the stories from this book were translated into English by Gregory Rabassa and published as part of the collection *A Change of Light and Other Stories* in 1980.

any other form. The editors must have concluded that the trademark of this series was a sufficient warranty of the high quality of prose.

The Czytelnik Publishing House, issuing *The Lost Steps* for the first time in Poland presented the author who had not been known in Poland on the folded flap of the jacket in the following way:

Alejo Carpentier (born in Havana in 1904) is one of the most eminent figures in the present-day Latin America and belongs to most renowned and frequently translated writers in this continent.

An identical sentence began the note about the Cuban writer placed in the book *Explosion in a Cathedral* published within this series three years later. Both notes included information about the musical education of Carpentier and the functions he had played in Cuba, as well as the titles of his most important works.

Submitting the first edition of Fuentes' work to the Polish readers, the editors of the "Czytelnik" Publishing House wrote on the jacket that he was one of the masters of contemporary Spanish American prose. The titles of his books were presented, stressing that the novel *The Death of Artemio Cruz* was translated into many languages. Moreover, the editor added the sensational information that his last novel *A Change of Skin* (*Cambio de piel*) published in Spain and honoured with the Seix Barral Award was confiscated by the censor. Then the informational strategy could be slightly modified since at least some Latin American writers were known to Polish readers. On the occasion of the first publication of García Marquez's prose in Poland (1971), in the laconic note on the jacket his name was listed with other known authors:

Gabriel Garcia Marquez,⁸² a Columbian writer, besides the Cuban Alejo Carpentier, the Argentine Julio Cortázar and the Mexican Carlos Fuentes, represents the highest achievements of contemporary Latin American literature.

Yet, it was added that he was an extremely interesting writer whose works were translated into many languages, and who was esteemed on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Thus, the promotional strategy referred to the readers' knowledge and popularity which a few Latin American writers had already gained in Poland, and stressing that like in the case of other authors his prose was known in numerous countries.

The editor considered that for Polish readers the words of Cortázar would be a sufficient recommendation for the first publication of Borges' collection of short stories:

82 The writer's name was placed in this form – without the accents – on the flap of the jacket.

In my country, Argentina, when someone speaks about great international literature, the name of Jorge Luis Borges appears on every mouth. [...] Borges, a man of incomparable intellectual rigors, has raised the level of literary requirements so high that today everyone who wants to be regarded as a real writer must reach this level.

The Green House was the fourth book by Vargas Llosa published in Poland. The Peruvian writer was known to Polish readers, and that is why it was possible to refer to his earlier works in the note placed on the folded flap of the dust jacket. Moreover, his literary prizes were mentioned, and it was noted that the plot of the work was “almost sensational.”

In my opinion, the aforementioned quotations are sufficient to discern what the character of the notes that accompanied the prose published within the “Nike” series was. Beside basic information and ritual reference to readers’ snobism by stressing that a given book had been translated into many languages and was known worldwide, the value judgements were very general. Fuentes’ literary output was described “The author shows the rural revolution of the year 1910 in some artistic visions, focusing on its significance and consequences.” One can learn about *The Green House* that “it presents the complicated fate of the heroes at different levels of time and reality” and that “it forms a whole of great artistic and cognitive value.” *Big Mama’s Funeral* by García Márquez “is a sample of the creativity of this extremely interesting writer.” Such notes made it difficult to realise what the real artistic value of a given book was and which elements made it different from other works.

The Czytelnik Publishing House included Spanish American prose in its other series called “Biblioteka Klasyki Polskiej i Obcej” [Library of Polish and Foreign Classics], which appeared in the years 1970–1983. It had a total of 275 titles. The series was distinguished by a thorough design. The books had cloth hard covers and included short afterwords. Within this cycle there appeared works, Polish and foreign, old and new, belonging to three literary genres. They embraced *Poems* by Alexander Pushkin (1979), *Wiersze, poematy i dramaty* [Poems, Narrative Poems and Dramas] by Zygmunt Krasiński (1980), *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë (1976), *Steppenwolf* by Hermann Hesse (1977), *Madame Bovary* by Gustave Flaubert (1976) as well as two books written by Latin American writers: *The Lost Steps* by Carpentier (1973) and *Short Stories* by Borges (1978). Including these works to the prestigious series, along with masterpieces of Polish and world literature, was a clear indicator for readers that Carpentier and Borges were not avant-garde writers whose fame could quickly fade, but that their works had timeless value. Unfortunately, the editor did not have any ideas on how to present Carpentier’s prose. The first part of the anonymous afterword was the text that had already been published – on the folded flap of the edition of the

same novel within the “Nike” series. Its second part was a summary of the content. The afterword to Borges’ *Short Stories* was much better. Its author, Rajmund Kalicki, discussed Borges’ prose in the background of contemporary Spanish American literature and showed the most essential features of his literary output.

7.2 The National Publishing Institute – PIW

The publishing strategy adopted by PIW was similar to the one used by the Czytelnik Publishing House: Spanish American prose was included in the existing series: “Współczesna Proza Światowa” [Contemporary World Prose] and “Biblioteka Jednorożca” [The Library of the Unicorn].

“Współczesna Proza Światowa” has appeared since 1968. It is one of the most popular series presenting contemporary fiction. PIW aims at publishing works of representatives of new literary trends, acclaimed debutants and most famous authors in the world. It boasts publishing the first Polish translations of such authors as Italo Calvino, Umberto Eco, Joseph Heller, Gabriel García Márquez, Vladimir Nabokov, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Susan Sontag, John Updike, Kurt Vonnegut, John Maxwell Coetzee, Günter Grass or Tarjei Vesaas. The series also embraced works of less popular authors, for example *4447* by the Hungarian writer Anna Jókai (1972) or *The Architect of Ruins* (*Der Ruinenbaumeister*) by the Austrian novelist Herbert Rosendorfer (1972).

Books edited in this series have the same format, hard covers and dust jackets. The author of the design, used for the first ten years of the series, was Jerzy Jaworowski, a graduate of the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts, who was a famous book designer and author of posters in the 1960s and 1970s. On the front cover there were various, often non-real motives, mostly black, in the coloured background. The editor placed a short, no longer than one column, informative note on the even numbered page next to the title page. The notes were similar to the ones included in the “Nike” series, and so they had basic biographical data, titles of the author’s most important works and information about literary awards. Sometimes it was noted that the author’s views followed the official line of the state propaganda, e.g. the writers from the German Federal Republic.⁸³

83 For instance, the note about the novel *Treibhaus* by Wolfgang Koeppen, “The book uncompromisingly reveals the backstage of the governing parties in Bonn and many elements stuck in the ideology of BRD as a dangerous heritage of Hitlerism.” In the case of Martin Waiser the editor ensured, “However, he won the greatest popularity by the novels that fiercely attacked social morality and customs of the bourgeois circles of the German Federal Republic.”

In the late 1970s, the books published in the series received elegant glossy jackets with a coloured graphic motif on the first page. The author of the new design was the known artist, co-founder of the Polish poster school, Waldemar Świerzy. The notes were moved to the folded flaps. On the left flap, there was information about the writer and on the right about the work. The character of the notes was not fundamentally changed.

The first Spanish American book in the series was the novel of the Venezuelan Miguel Otero Silva entitled *Dead Houses* (*Casas Muertas*, tr. Wasitowa, 1969). Till 1981, PIW published a total of 17 volumes of Spanish American prose in the “Współczesna Proza Światowa” cycle. The number of the titles was smaller – twelve since there were two reprints of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and *Conversation in the Cathedral* (*Conversación en la Catedral*) and one reprint of *Captain Pantoja and the Special Service*.

“Współczesna Proza Światowa” included two books by García Márquez: *In Evil Hour* (tr. Zych, 1970) and the aforementioned *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (tr. Grażyna Grudzińska and Wojciechowska, 1974), *Ficciones* by Borges (tr. Piekarec, Sobol-Jurczykowski, Wojciechowska, Zembrzuski, 1972), *Conversation in the Cathedral* (tr. Wasitowa, 1973) and *Captain Pantoja and the Special Service* (tr. Marrodán Casas, 1976) by Vargas Llosa, three books of the representative of the Peruvian indigenism, José María Arguedas, *Deep Rivers* (*Los ríos profundos*, tr. Helena Czajka, 1973), *Amor mundo y todos los cuentos* (tr. Andrzej Nowak, 1979) and *The Fox from Up Above and the Fox from Down Below* (*El Zorro de Arriba y el Zorro de Abajo*, tr. Wasitowa, 1980), *The Obscene Bird of Night* (*El obsceno pájaro de la noche*) by Donoso (tr. Chądzyńska, 1975), *Holy Place* (*Zona sagrada*) by Fuentes (tr. Marzyńska, 1977). The last Spanish American title in the series was *Retrato hablado* by the Mexican Luis Spota (tr. Hanna Igalson, 1980), which appeared in the end-stage phase of the boom.

The information about the writers from Latin America placed in the series was quite laconic. For example, we could learn that Borges studied in Switzerland, Spain and England, that he collaborated with literary magazines in Buenos Aires (the titles were not given), that he was a member of the Argentinian Literary Academy, the director of the National Library in Argentina and a professor at the University of Buenos Aires as well as that he received a series of prestigious literary awards. Similar information about Vargas Llosa was given on the flap attached to *Captain Pantoja and the Special Service*: he studied in Peru and Bolivia, wrote a doctoral dissertation in Madrid, lived in various European cities and won several important awards. As for Arguedas, the note gave sufficient information about his studies (“From 1931 he studied in Lima at the Faculty of Literature at the University of San Marcos, then he dedicated himself to anthropological

studies.”) The editor did not forget to mention that the writer held high state and scientific positions, but did not specify what they were. Naturally, there was information about his numerous literary awards.

The notes about the works, placed on the right flap, were much more interesting. They were attempts to present the book briefly and encouragingly. In the case of *Captain Pantoja and the Special Service*, the editor warned the reader that this novel by Vargas Llosa differed from his earlier books. However, he stressed the pioneering elements and masterful skills of the author, which was always regarded as a feature of the future Nobel Prize winner. Moreover, he showed that the book “was something more than a satire in its masterful form.” It was a kind of promise given to more ambitious readers of the “Współczesna Proza Światowa” series that the novel of the Peruvian writer would fulfil their expectations – encounter with a book whose reading would not be only pure entertainment. On the other hand, the editors of the series wrote about *The Fox from Up Above and the Fox from Down Below* that the author “showed the whole ethnic complexity of Peru and transformations in this society connected with the intensive industrial development.”

PIW decided to include several Spanish American books in the “Biblioteka Jednorożca” series, which appeared in 1959–1993⁸⁴ and had a total of 126 volumes. Both poetry (*Białe kwiaty* [White Flowers] by Cyprian Kamil Norwid, 1974) and prose written by Polish and foreign authors in different epochs were published. As a rule, the series did not include the most famous works of a given author. They were usually relatively short works, sometimes one volume embraced two or three novellas. For instance, in *The Lawyer of Glass* (*El licenciado Vidriera*) there were two out of the eight “exemplary novels” by Cervantes.

The books of “Biblioteka Jednorożca” were edited in a small format. They had hard, cardboard, single coloured covers, but the colours of particular volumes were different. A small geometrised image of the unicorn was placed on the cover. Sometimes the editor placed a short note at the end of the book, as in the case of *Taglio del bosco* by the Italian writer Carl Cassoli (1973) or *La otra muerte del Gato* by the Cuban Onelio Jorge Cardoso. Some editions had afterwords, while some did not have any informative notes. An example of the latter is *The Birch Grove* by Jarosław Iwaszkiewicz. The editor of the series must have thought that this work did not need any recommendation. Of interest is the fact that the series of contemporary prose is one of not many series which was illustrated with attractive graphics.

84 After 1985, there were only two works published in the series.

Within “Biblioteka Jednorożca” five titles of Spanish American prose were published: *La otra muerte del Gato* by Cardoso (tr. Jan Aleksandrowicz, 1970), *To Sleep on the Ground* by Revueltas (tr. Rodowska, 1970), *The Mirror of Lida Sal* by Asturias (tr. Olędzka-Frybesowa, 1970), *The Cubs (Los cachorros)* by Vargas Llosa (tr. Marrodán Casas, 1973) and *Los perros hambrientos* by Ciro Alegría (tr. Wasitowa, 1979). The editor placed a kind of afterword entitled “From the translator” at the end of three published works. Rodowska’s text concerning the collection of Revueltas’ short stories seems too exalted, and so its readers could not gain any reliable information from it.⁸⁵ In her afterword to Asturias’ work, Olędzka-Frybesowa stressed social motives of his output, at the same time mentioning that it was not tendentious literature with a thesis or a voice of some concrete political option. According to the Polish translator, charm fused with the present in the writing of the Guatemalan author in a natural and authentic way. In turn, Marrodán Casas interpreted *The Cubs* as a kind of “lens” which brings together the most fundamental features of Vargas Llosa’s writing.

The analysis of the PIW editors’ activities concerning Spanish American prose in the period preceding the boom and during the boom leads to a conclusion that the fundamental criterion used to select a work for translation and publication was its artistic value and the author’s acclaim. Within the PIW series, the best books of the most acclaimed Latin American writers were almost exclusively published. The publications of less known authors were very few, and only the publication of *La otra muerte del Gato* could be counted as a publishing mistake. It might not have been a mistake but a conscious decision. Political reasons might have outweighed: the publishing house considered to be appropriate to place within the series at least one book by a less known author who was an exemplary prosaist of communist Cuba.

7.3 Literary Press

The Kraków-based Literary Press (Krakowskie Wydawnictwo Literackie – WL) assumed a completely different strategy towards Spanish American prose than the Warsaw-based editors. WL decided to dedicate a separate series to this prose. It was inaugurated in 1971 under the name “Proza Iberoamerykańska” [Latin American Prose]. I intend to discuss it in an exceptional way going beyond the

85 From the afterword of Rodowska, “The mysticism of death, so strongly stressed in Revueltas’ works, is a common property of the writers coming from Latin American countries, where in the shadow of the Conquistadors’ cross their Indian ancestors still seem to cut out their victims’ hearts with obsidian knives”.

time framework of the boom since the series has been the only Polish cycle dedicated entirely to Latin American prose.

The series appeared for 18 years till 1989. Altogether ca. 126 titles were published within the series.⁸⁶ During the first years of the series, it was not assumed that it would include so many volumes. In fact, within the first two years only two titles were published a year. Then the number gradually increased. In 1973, eight titles were published, and in the next year – ten. The record years were 1975–1977, when between 14 and 16 titles were published per year. In 1978, “Proza Iberoamerykańska” saw a decrease to 10 titles. In the next years, the number was even smaller: in 1979 – five titles, in the next year – six, and in 1981 – only two, which could have resulted from a publishing collapse as a consequence of martial law. In 1982, eight titles were published, but then one could see that the editors’ possibilities and aspirations came to an end: till 1989 not more than four titles a year were published within “Proza Iberoamerykańska.”

The presented data clearly show that the series “lived” to the rhythm of the boom. The series was initiated along with the wave of interest in Latin American literature at its beginning, which testifies to the excellent discernment of the WL director concerning the market situation. The best years of the series, when several dozen titles appeared per year, fell on the apogee of interest in Latin American prose. Then the series was gradually closed due to the decline of the boom in Poland. Single titles, published in the 1980s, were of a distinctly epigonic character; the editors of the series tried to draw buyers by publishing works of great authors: Roa Bastos, Fuentes, Donoso, García Márquez, José Lezama Lima and Vargas Llosa. They also published the last little collections of Cortázar’s short stories and reprinted *Hopscotch*. Yet, the series did not survive after the political and economic transformations.

Various kinds of works were edited in “Proza Iberoamerykańska.” It included both works of the most acclaimed writers and those who were unknown outside their countries, contemporary and living writers as well as the 19th century classics. From this perspective, the beginning of the cycle turned out symptomatic: in 1971, two collections of short stories inaugurated the series; they were very unequal as far as their artistic values were concerned. The author of the first collection entitled *The Burning Plain and Other Stories* was Juan Rulfo, one of

86 This number should be treated as approximate. It was very difficult to establish the number of the published titles. The lists available on-line are incomplete and the catalogue of the National Library did not have all the titles. Even Wydawnictwo Literackie was not able to provide reliable information about the subject!

the most eminent Mexican writers of the 20th century whose works – humble in numbers – were translated into many languages and remained in the focus of critics and scholars. The other collection was *El hombre de la rosa* by the Chilean Manuel Rojas, who was acclaimed only in his country.

As far as the greatest stars of the boom are concerned, the series included eight books by Cortázar: *Hopscotch*, 1974, *Opowiadania zebrane* [Collected Short Stories], 1975, *Last Round*, 1979, *A Manual for Manuel (Libro de Manuel)* 1980, *Alguien que anda por ahí*, 1981, *A Certain Lucas (Un tal Lucas)* 1982, *We Love Glenda So Much and Other Tales (Queremos tanto a Glenda)* 1983, *Unreasonable Hours (Deshoras)*, 1989, all translated by Chądzyńska. The reprint of *Hopscotch* in 1985 in 50,000 copies was the only case of repeating the titles within the discussed series. The published books were: two collections of Borges' short stories *Doctor Brodie's Report (El informe de Brodie)*, 1975 and *The Book of Sand (El libro de arena)* 1980, both tr. Chądzyńska), two books by Carpentier: *Explosion in a Cathedral* (1975) and *The Kingdom of This World* (1976, both tr. Wojciechowska), five works by Fuentes (*Aura* 1974, tr. Wojciechowska, *The Good Conscience (Las buenas conciencias)*, 1975, tr. Marzyńska, three volumes of the saga *Terra Nostra*, 1980, tr. Maria Kaniowa, *Distant Relations (Una familia lejana)*, 1983, *Burnt Water (Agua quemada)*, 1984, both tr. Maria Kaniowa), six books by Garcia Márquez: *No One Writes to the Colonel (El coronel no tiene quien le escriba)*, 1973, 1985, tr. Beata Babad), *In Evil Hour* 1975, tr. Zych, *Eyes of the Blue Dog (Ojos de perro azul)*, 1976, tr. Chądzyńska), *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1977, tr. Grudzińska and Chądzyńska), *The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor (Relato de un naufrago)*, 1980, tr. Kalicki), all novels by Sábato (*On Heroes and Tombs*, 1977, tr. Czajka, *The Angel of Darkness [Abaddón el Exterminador]*, 1978, tr. Czajka and *The Tunnel (El túnel)*, 1976, tr. Józef Keksztas), three works by Vargas Llosa: *The Leaders (Los jefes)*, 1976, tr. Nowak), *The Time of the Hero* (1978, tr. Marrodán Casas), *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter* (1983, tr. Rycerz) as well as *The Obscene Bird of Night* (1978, tr. Chądzyńska) and *Hell Has No Limits (El lugar sin límites)* by Donoso (1988, tr. Rycerz).

WL did not publish most of the aforementioned works as first editions. Only their re-editions were published in the series; the exception was the works of Fuentes and Asturias which were not popular in Poland. However, the editor obviously cared that those who collected the series in their home libraries had works that were most strongly associated with the boom.

The editors of "Proza Iberoamerykańska" tried to meet the readers' demands, but at the same time, they knew that the publishing copyrights of the stars of the boom were reserved for the Warsaw-based publishing houses. This was probably one of the reasons why WL decided to reach for less known authors.

The editor of the series Maria Kaniowa explained the controversial decisions saying that WL intended to show Polish readers a broad panorama of literature of all Latin American countries. Publishing contemporary bestsellers, beside the slightly outdated classics, presenting works belonging to various trends of Latin American prose, e.g., novels about the land, about politics, violence, were to show the complexity of the literature of this continent and its many problems. For “Proza Iberoamerykańska” was to fulfil mainly a cognitive function (Kaniowa 1978:238) and at the same time, was to become an exemplification of a textbook of the history of Latin American literature (Marrodán Casas 1978b:235). This strategy was not approved even by critics:

Literary scholars read what they need, in Spanish and Portuguese, while ordinary customers of bookstores and libraries have no separate “places in the heads” for Ecuador or Bolivia and can distinguish between a novel and encyclopaedia, statistical yearbook and monograph. They look for single, good books; they would like people to be guided rather by an index than by a map [...].⁸⁷

Kaniowa (p. 58) also stressed that being faithful to the socialist model of culture obliged us to get to know the tradition of the Third World nations. This declaration explained the reasons why “Proza Iberoamerykańska” included ideologically “correct” works and also those of low literary values.

Thus, a combination of various factors led to the inclusion in the series *El secuestro del general*, 1975, by the Ecuadorian Demetrio Aguilera Malta, a novel that was not regarded as one of his most outstanding achievements, and *Yawar fiesta* by Arguedas, representing the indigenous current of Peruvian literature, which was rather at the edge of the main trend of the boom. As for the older prose, the following book was published *Cecilia Valdés or the Hill of the Angel* (*Cecilia Valdés o la Loma del Ángel*, 1976) by the 19th century representative of Cuban realism Cirilo Villaverde. Although the significance of this novel for the history of Cuban literature is obvious, from the perspective of the Polish reader the novel is simply an oldie, naïve romance that differed from many European works of that epoch only by its exotic decorations. The Polish reader was not interested in another published work, namely *Las honradas* (1978), a novel of manners written at the beginning of the 20th century by the Cuban Miguel de Carrión.

Some volumes of the series should be treated as publishing mistakes. They embraced translations of the so-called committed literature, i.e. *Pisagua: la semilla en la arena* by Volodia Teitelboim (1977), the Chilean writer who during

87 Tarska, *Nowe Książki*, 1976, no. 11, pp. 12–13.

his immigration in Moscow fought against the dictatorship of Pinochet, or two novels *Cuando la sangre se parece al fuego* (1977) and *La última mujer y el próximo combate* (1978) by the representative of Cuban Socialist Realism Manuel Cofiño. However, we should note and appreciate the daring actions of WL, for example the publication of Lezama Lima's works (*Paradiso*, 1979, *Oppiano Licario*, 1982, *Cangrejos, golondrinas*, 1986), prose that was extraordinary, highly acclaimed and at the same time difficult to understand, requiring the reader's involvement and literary skills.

The series also included five anthologies: *Piętnaście opowiadań iberoamerykańskich* [Fifteen Latin American Short Stories] (1976), *Opowiadania brazylijskie* [Brazilian Short Stories] (1977), *Liść wiatru: antologia opowiadań Ameryki Środkowej* [A Leaf of Wind: Anthology of Latin America's Short Stories] (1982), *Nowe opowiadania brazylijskie* [New Brazilian Short Stories] (1982) and *Każdego lata: nowe opowiadania argentyńskie* [Every Summer: New Argentinian Short Stories] (1988).⁸⁸

"Proza Iberoamerykańska" turned out to be controversial. After a number of years looking at the editors of the series one cannot be astonished by Jerzy Kühn's opinion (1978:14), who thought that the greatest achievement of the series was to break the magic circle of the boom – the repetition of the names of the same authors in the publishers' plans. In turn, Karbowska (1980:5) issued a very negative opinion about the mixture of epochs, styles and levels within the series, calling the WL initiative "a coloured series of duds."

After the six-year appearance of the series, Marrodán Casas and Jerzy Mazur (1977) showed enthusiastic attitudes towards it. They ascribed WL an intention

88 The editors of the series did not forget about Latin American prose written in Portuguese. Within "Proza Iberoamerykańska" a total of 18 translations from this language were published, including the works of the 19th century Brazilian classic Machado de Assis (*Memórias póstumas de Brás Cubas – The Posthumous Memoirs of Bras Cubas*, 1974, *Relíquias de casa velha*, 1975, *Quincas Borba*, 1977), Amado's novel *Tereza Batista cansada de guerra* (*Tereza Batista: Home from the Wars*, 1989), Aluisio Azevedo's naturalistic novel *O Cortiço* (*The Slum* 1976). It is worth mentioning contemporary novels: *O fundador* by Nélide Piñon, winner of many awards given in Brazil and other Hispanic countries, as well as the novel *Maíra* by Darcy Ribeiro, a Brazilian intellectualist, anthropologist and ethnologist, who also had literary skills. All of that does not change the fact that in Poland the boom was commonly associated only with literature created in Spanish. Despite the editors' efforts none of the Portuguese-speaking writers attracted the Polish reader so much as García Márquez or Cortázar. One had to wait for the success of Paulo Coelho's prose and interest in Brazilian literature that followed his success till the mid-1990s.

that was completely unrealistic, namely that WL aimed at showing the Polish reader the basic canon of Latin American prose, embracing both classic and contemporary works. They interpreted the diversity of published works as the multiplicity of the editors' points of view. On the one hand, they were to show the whole region, and on the other – the literature of particular countries. This would explain why the series, beside known and acclaimed works, published such short stories as *Abrir y cerrar los ojos* by Cardoso, the prosaist that was so much acclaimed in his homeland Cuba that he was given the title of the National Prosaist (*Cuentista Nacional*). Yet, he won no fame outside his country.

Today, from the perspective of time, a question can be raised why the editors of the series did not consider either, or perhaps above all, the perspective of the Polish reader? The WL strategy, which was complicated and focused on unattainable goals, must have been unclear to the Polish reader. Consequently, the readers did not distinguish the literary generations of Latin American prose, and for them the concept of the boom became much broader than in other countries. It was commonly related to Latin American literature in general and not with a rather narrow group of writers whose works were published and launched in Barcelona by Seix Barral in 1963–1973. It was the WL policy that to a large extent contributed to the fact that the boom in Poland did not embrace selected works but Latin American prose seen as a whole.

Sometimes it was indicated that the WL series took after the French series “La Croix du Sud” edited by Gallimard, directed by Roger Caillois (Komorowski 1979:13). Some direct inspirations were naturally very probable, but one cannot speak of any imitation. The differences between these series are numerous, the most obvious being their numbers: the French series had 41 titles,⁸⁹ while “Proza Iberoamerykańska” – almost three times more. The French series was launched in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and thus it already included some authors associated with the boom, namely Cortázar, Borges, Vargas Llosa and Carpentier. Yet, what prevailed were the names of the so-called contemporary classics, e.g. Ciro Alegria, Rómulo Gallegos, Ricardo Güiraldes and Jorge Amado. The editor could have intended to present a panorama of contemporary Latin American prose, which could be testified by the fact that in the series works of most authors

89 Data from www.gallimard.fr/gallimard-cgi/Appli_catal/rech_collection.pl. (25.02.2009). Malingret (2002:46) mentions ca. 60 titles, without giving the source of this number. In the early 1970s, Gallimard tried to renew the series under the name of “La Nouvelle Croix du Sud,” but it was unsuccessful. Within three years, eleven titles were published (<http://www.gallimard.fr/>, access: 18.12.2009).

were represented by one title, sporadically by two titles of one author. The editor did not attempt to realise contradictory aims, which seems to have characterised those who were responsible for the publication of the Polish series.

Translators collaborating with WL in the 1970s and 1980s can be divided into two distinct groups. The first one included those who belonged to the best translators of Hispanic literature into Polish (sometimes they were the best translators of literature in general): Zofia Chądzyńska, Kalina Wojciechowska and Teresa Marzyńska. However, their translations of works from the series were new editions of the titles that had already been published by the Warsaw-based publishing houses. WL never ordered a new translation of some book that had been published by another publishing house.

The other group of the translators were those working for WL. We should mention Andrzej Nowak who was connected with the series from its very beginning and who might have been the most versatile translator, boasting of excellent renderings of poetry, Jadwiga Konieczna-Twardzikowa, Jan Zych, Beata Babad or Danuta Rycerz. There were also other translators who debuted in WL (e.g. Leszek Kutra and Anna Grodzicka), but their later works proved to be rather insignificant.⁹⁰ WL boasted that within the several years of the publication of the series it gave the chance of a debut to a dozen translators (Kaniowa 1978:237).

The subsequent titles of the WL series had postscripts. Their authors were mainly specialists in Latin American literatures and cultures, working for WL: Adam Komorowski, Jerzy Kühn, Rajmund Kalicki, Joanna Petry-Mroczkowska, Anna Jasińska, Grażyna Grudzińska and Henryk Czubała.⁹¹

90 A detailed list of renderings made by particular translators within “Proza Iberoamerykańska” is given by Ziarkowska in her article “Objaśnianie odległej współczesności. Informacje o nowym świecie w przypisach tłumaczy serii „Proza Iberoamerykańska” [Explaining distant present times. Information about the new world in the notes of the translators of the “Proza Iberoamerykańska series,” in: *Przypisy tłumacza* [Translator’s Notes] ed. E. Skibińska, Księgarnia Akademicka, Wrocław-Kraków 2009. According to her calculation, the biggest number of translations were made by Chądzyńska (21) and Nowak (19). Others made between one and four renderings.

91 Almost all of them have made translations of literary works: Kühn translated *Crónicas de Bustos Domecq* (*Chronicles of Bustos Domecq*) by Borges, Kalicki *Introducción a los vasos órficos* by Lezama Lima and *The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor* by García Márquez, Petry-Mroczkowska *Legends of Guatemala* (*Leyendas de Guatemala*) by Asturias and *El diosero* by Francisco Rojas Gonzáles, Jasińska *The Dream of Heroes* (*El sueño de los héroes*) by Bioy Casares, Grudzińska was a co-author of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. The editor of the series grumbled about the quality of collaboration with specialists in

The afterword had a similar scheme. It included a short biography of the writer, a discussion of his or her literary output and many a time, his or her political activities since the relationships between literature and politics in Latin America were often emphasised. Moreover, the artistic and social context was depicted, sometimes very extensively. Today this part of the afterword evokes the impression that the authors wanted to hastily fulfil the gaps in the knowledge of Latin America and its literature, resulting from the unavailability of other reliable sources, offering the Polish reader a crash course in cultural studies. However, the postscripts did not enjoy the readers' recognition. "In the atmosphere of 'mystical unity' with Latin American prose the mediators are treated as if imposters following only commercial and advertisement motives" – derisively commented Marrodán Casas (1979:8). In my opinion, the reasons for this aversion were much more prosaic: the readers might have been struck by the obvious didacticism of these texts, unconcealed desire to deliver information that was unnecessary to experiencing the commented works. Their greatest sin was that they did not try to give the Polish reader another interpretative key than the sociological and historically literary one. Furthermore, these texts did not allow readers to form opinions about the real artistic value of the given book. In every case the authors of the afterword made it clear that the reader dealt with a masterpiece or an important and excellent work. Indeed, it is hard to accept that the editor believed in his or her own words writing in the folded flap of *Pisagua: la semilla en la arena*: "written with a colourful, vivid language. It depicts authentic people and their real, dramatic problems." Actually, the characters of this novel were described very schematically, and their dialogues were dull and blurry. Nowak, the author of the afterword, felt obliged to explain what the drama of the heroes was and why Teitelboim used such a drastic term as "concentration camp" for a temporary forced place of settlement, "from the perspective of the parliamentary canons of Chile's tradition it was a completely novelty and shock for the public opinion." Petry-Mroczkowska tried to convince potential readers of the Mexican novel *Un tal José Salomé*, "But Artur Azuela's book [...] is not only a picture of the sufferings and misfortune of Mexican peasants. José Salomé experiences moments of happiness and clearly emphasises them to the listener of his story. This fact makes him a man of flesh and blood, and not only a paper representative of the exploited from the 19th and 20th century critical

Latin American literature, claiming that she had to wait months for the ordered afterwords (Kaniowa 1978:243).

literature.” The Polish readers must unavoidably have associated these works with Social Realism. They could hardly identify themselves with the heroes of *Pisagua: la semilla en la arena*, sentenced to temporary dislocation, or with the story of a Mexican lumberman experiencing metaphysical exultations at clearing the forest.

The editors’ didactic goals were also fulfilled in the footnotes, which occurred in all books within the series. There were translators’ footnotes explaining some of their decisions and confessing their failures. Moreover, many footnotes contain remarks about those regions of Latin America that the editors regarded as being unknown to the Polish reader. Therefore, the footnotes belonged to the strategy of showing readers a different world and reducing the cultural distance.⁹²

As for the material dimension of “Proza Iberoamerykańska,” the books were definitely distinguished by the appearance on the shelves in the bookstores. Their single coloured, sometimes, bright, covers, almost each having a different colour, attracted buyers’ attention. There was a large, black motif, clearly referring to the pre-Columbian art, on the front cover. The author of the design was Andrzej Wysocki, a renowned artist. The books did not have any dust jackets but their soft covers had folded flaps. These panels were used to print a fragment of the afterword or longer or shorter information about the author and his/her work. These notes were not so brief as the ones made by the Warsaw editors, but still did not follow the biographical-bibliographical scheme. The editors did not try to provide summaries of the books (blurbs), but rather capture their message. This was the case of the note printed on the flap of the WL edition of the juvenile collection of Vargas Llosa’s short stories *The Leaders*:

[...] the prevailing motif is violence, understood rather as a psychological and not social phenomenon. Only conscious power, leadership, domination, untouched personal honour or honour of your closest ones can fully satisfy a male – and if there is something that will shake the essential *status quo*, one should fight against it at once. The game is great since it is a game for life, and the heroes of Vargas Llosa’s stories know the price of life since they are convinced that disgrace can be avoided only by death: killing others or dying yourself. That is why they kill or go to uneven fight to feel that they are real males – *machos*.

It is worth adding that the text printed on the flap was not a fragment of the afterword.

92 This issue was intensively analysed by Ziarkowska in the quoted study.

The editor of the note to the Polish translation of *A Plan for Escape (Plan de evasión)* by Adolf Bioy Casares listed a number of questions that its readers faced:

What do those Castel's experiments conducted on people tell us: his "transformations?" Is that a metaphor of human existence on the Earth that "really" has nothing in common with our images of the world we live in? Are we dealing with a fantastic illustration of the thesis that "life is a dream?" Or should we look for [...] a thesis concerning the "multi-layered" or "multi-degred" creation and various co-existing realities?

In the 1980s, when WL and other publishing houses were affected by shortages of printing materials, the books of "Proza Iberoamerykańska" were printed on increasingly worse grey paper. Then the editors gave up using the folded flaps and moved the notes to the page next to the front one.

The readers of the series were attacked with peritexts appearing almost everywhere: postscripts, footnotes, notes on the flaps or inside the book. Wydawnictwo Literackie must have fulfilled its mission consistently to promote Latin American literature and to promote knowledge about this literature and continent.

In the mid-1970s, this mission was supported by another series, which was not dedicated to fiction but non-fiction – literature of fact. It had a much better design: hard cover with a white dust jacket on which a photo or reprint of some piece of art was put. At the end of the books, one could find photos illustrating their contents. It is extremely difficult to find out how many titles were published within this cycle because it did not have any name. Consequently, we cannot find the books in on-line catalogues. For example, we can mention the following titles: *The Aztecs; People of the Sun (El pueblo del sol)* by Alfonso Caso (tr. Sten, 1974), *The Aztec Image of Self and Society: An Introduction to Nahua Culture (Los antiguos Mexicanos a través de sus crónicas y cantares)* by Miguel León-Portilla (tr. Sten, 1976), *Juan Pérez Jolote* by Ricardo Pozas (tr. Raisa Cárdenas and Roman Samsel, 1977).

Moreover, Wydawnictwo Literackie edited several important books concerning Latin American prose within the series dedicated to literary essays. They are: *The Boom in Spanish American Literature: A Personal History (Historia personal del "boom")* by Donoso (tr. Komarnicka, 1977), *Ameryka Łacińska w swojej literaturze [Latin America in its Literature]* (a collection of texts written by different authors; different translators, 1979), *Introducción a los vasos órficos* by Lezama Lima (tr. Kalicki, 1977), *Tientos y diferencias* by Carpentier, (tr. Petry-Mroczkowska 1982), *Calibán (Caliban and Other Essays)* by Roberto Fernández Retamar (tr. Czarnocka, 1983), *Don Quixote: Or, The Critique of Reading (Cervantes o la crítica de la lectura)* by Fuentes (tr. Petry-Mroczkowska, 1981) and *El escritor y sus fantasmas* by Sábato (tr. Kalicki, 1988).

7.4 Summary

The strategies of introducing Spanish American prose to the Polish market realised by the Warsaw-based “Czytelnik” Publishing House and PIW as well as by the Kraków-based Wydawnictwo Literackie were considerably different. Both Warsaw institutions decided to include the works of contemporary Latin American novelists to the existing series presenting contemporary prose. “Nike” edited by the Czytelnik Publishing House and “Współczesna Proza Światowa” edited by PIW had already enjoyed prestige and gathered circles of readers before they started publishing their first Latin American translations. Thus, the Warsaw publishing houses, by placing their Polish translations of the works by García Márquez and Borges among the works of such writers as Ernest Hemingway, Erich Maria Remarque, Heinrich Böll (“Nike”) or William Faulkner, Yury Trifonov and Iris Murdoch (“Współczesna Proza Światowa”) directed their offer to learned readers, those who did not look for entertainment but aesthetic experiences and reflections on serious problems. Such receivers had to be open to literary novelties. Furthermore, the Warsaw editors did believe that good prose would defend itself and limited their peritexts to a minimum. In total, the Czytelnik Publishing House and PIW attributed contemporary Spanish American prose a label of high level literature, worth of interest, comparable to the literature created by writers coming from countries that were traditionally seen as centres of culture.

Wydawnictwo Literackie chose a different strategy. They started publishing books of Latin American authors eight years later after the first editions of the writers associated with the boom appeared in Poland. Thus, the WL editors had data allowing them to see their market potential. In order to promote Latin American prose, they did not try to use the existing series but decided to initiate a new one, dedicated exclusively to this literature. Consequently, they took some risk that is always connected with attempts to introduce a new brand.

From a perspective of time, it seems that the policy of Wydawnictwo Literackie proved to be more effective than the strategies of the Warsaw publishing houses. The “Proza Iberoamerykańska” series was associated with the boom. It was recognised as one of the most important and successful undertakings of the Kraków publishing house, and until now has remained its trademark (Strzałka 2003:1). Many a time the series was praised for what it did not accomplish: the on-line bookstore “Liber” recommending the reprint of *Hopscotch* suggests that it was WL that started a fashion for Latin American literature.⁹³ The study *Rynek*

93 See: http://www.liber.pl/sklep/product_info.php?products_id=29886, 5.03.2009.

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książki w Polsce [Book Market in Poland], which generally provides reliable data, gives the following information, “Wydawnictwo Literackie also introduced the books of Latin American writers to the Polish market” (Gołębiewski 2002). Sometimes one forgets that it was PIW and Czytelnik that published contemporary Latin American prose since at that time the WL series did not exist, and the series cannot be merited with launching the works of most authors from this continent.

The WLs risk related to creating a new brand was evidently worth taking. Publishing “Proza Iberoamerykańska” allowed the Kraków publishing house to increase its symbolic capital and probably its economic capital as well (although one cannot confirm the latter since the series appeared in the period of socialist economy realised in the Polish People’s Republic).

8 Years of stagnation: 1981–1989

The years 1981–1989 form a period closed between two key events for modern Poland’s history: the proclamation of martial law and the sessions of the “round table” leading to the transformation of the political system. Both events had a fundamental influence on the shape of the literary field.

The 1980s were a period of a gradual degradation of the socialist economy. The year 1989 definitively marked the end of a state controlled economy. From that moment, we can speak of a free book market.

The economic collapse lasting throughout the martial law and years that followed it must have had an impact on cultural life. For editors, it was a time of struggling with hardships: drastic limitations concerning paper allowance, lack of finances for fees and, in case of translations, for author’s copyrights, almost absurd censors’ suspicion... One could hardly speak of a publishing policy since the only strategy adopted by the editors was a strategy of survival. They stopped investing in printing machines, thus the process of printing was long due to the old equipment. Only titles promoted by the state thanks to the so-called quick printing path appeared within a short time (Gołębiewski 2005:233). Consequently, the number of published titles and copies decreased every year. Publishing houses tried to include in their plans the most valuable titles, which would guarantee promising income. The situation did not improve after three new organisations were called into being during the time of martial law (Porozumienie Wydawców [Alliance of Publishers], Zrzeszenie Księgarstwa [Association of Bookselling] and Zrzeszenie Państwowych Przedsiębiorstw Przemysłu Poligraficznego [Association of State Printing and Publishing Companies]), aiming at providing help to overcome difficulties on the publishing market (p. 233).

Tab. 3: The number of translations of Spanish American prose published in 1982–1989 by particular publishing houses.

Year	WL			PIW		Czytelnik		total
	Latin American prose	Collection of Cuban literature	Outside the series	Contemporary world prose	Outside the series	Nike	Outside the series	
1982	8				1	1		10
1983	8						1	9
1984	3			2			1	6
1985	3	2			1			6
1986	3	1	2				1	7
1987	1		1		1			3
1988	2						1	3
1989	3						1	4
total	31	3	3	2	3	1	5	48

During the described period, the number of translations of Spanish American prose decreased drastically. Within eight years, the number of published titles equalled the number of those published in 1976–1977, the peak of the boom. Tab. 3 illustrates the data.

Spanish American prose was published by three institutions: PIW, Czytelnik and Wydawnictwo Literackie. However, all of them modified their strategies concerning this prose. Earlier most works of Latin American novelists were edited within some series, and editions outside of the series were sporadic, the proportion began to change in the discussed period. PIW included only two novels: *This Sunday* (*Este domingo*) by Donoso (tr. Anna Grodzicka-Trudgett) in 1984 and *Kiss of the Spider Woman* (*El beso de la mujer araña*) by Manuel Puig (tr. Wasitowa) to the series “Współczesna Proza Światowa.” Moreover, PIW decided to publish separately three other books: the collection of Borges’ short stories *A Universal History of Infamy* (*Historia universal de la infamia*) (tr. Sobol-Jurczykowski, Zembrzuski, 1982), the novel of the Columbian José Eustaquio Rivera, *The Vortex* (*La vorágine*, 1924, tr. Czarnocka, 1985) and *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* (*Crónica de una muerte anunciada*) by García Márquez (tr. Marrodán Casas, 1987).

The Czytelnik Publishing House, within its “Nike” series, published only one book: *The Harp and the Shadow* by Carpentier (tr. Wojciechowska, Janina Carlson, 1982). The remaining five titles appeared outside any series. They were: *The Book of Imaginary Beings* (*El libro de los seres imaginarios*) by Borges (tr. Chądzyńska,

1983), the novel *La salamandra* by the rather unknown Venezuelan Pedro Berroeta (tr. Wanda Tinojero, Samsel, 1984), *La contracorriente* by Guillermo Atías, a Chilean writer living in Paris (tr. Czajka, 1986), the third edition of *The Lost Steps* by Carpentier (1988) and *La vida exagerada de Martín Romaña* by Alfredo Bryce-Echenique (tr. Wasitowa, 1989). The Czytelnik Publishing House must have looked for new names. Decisions concerning the publication of Berroeta's and Atías' novels were not accurate. It was difficult to imagine that Polish readers, used to receive high level literature of the stars of the boom, could become interested in a prose of clearly lower level, even during the period of short supplies of translations of Spanish American literature. An interesting and popular writer was Bryce-Echenique, but we cannot understand why his novel was edited outside "Nike." Neither do we understand the decision to publish the prose of Borges and Carpentier outside the series.

In the discussed period, Wydawnictwo Literackie published the biggest number of Spanish American works, mainly thanks to the fact that till 1989 the publisher continued the "Proza Iberoamerykańska" series, within which 31 volumes appeared. However, it took a risky decision to initiate a new series called "Kolekcja Literatury Kubańskiej" in those hard years. The reasons for the decision to exclude Cuban prose from the highly prestigious series remain unclear. The editors could have foreseen that in Poland the brand of Cuban literature was not catchy enough to publish it as a new collection that would achieve a great success. The fate of the new cycle, including poetry, showed that the decision was wrong. The series was continued till 1989 and embraced only four titles, out of which the two most important, i.e., the volume with two Carpentier's works: *The Kingdom of This World* and *Explosion in a Cathedral*, as well as *Paradiso* by Lezama Lima, were re-editions. The series also embraced *Reminiscences of the Cuban Revolutionary War (Pasajes de la guerra revolucionaria)* by Ernesto "Che" Guevara⁹⁴ (tr. Ernesto Porcel Ortega, 1989) and *Wiersze [Poems]* by José Martí (tr. Zofia Szleyen, 1985).

9 Spanish American prose on the free publishing market

The year 1989 marked the beginning of political, economic and social transformations in Poland. Under their influence the cultural field, and literary field as its part, began to undergo a fundamental transformation, and consequently, capitalist rules began to play an important role on the market. The

94 The decision to include this book to the collection of Cuban literature seems controversial.

cultural field gradually became similar to that described by Bourdieu. The book market became a free market almost overnight.

The early 1990s were a time when those publishing houses established in the Polish People's Republic tried to face the new situation in which the economic factor conditioned their activities. The huge socialist institutions found it difficult to adjust to the new conditions since they did not know how to manage without the state protective umbrella ensuring supplies of paper, money for employees and infrastructure, etc. Those institutions, such as PIW, Czytelnik and WL, failed to use their symbolic capital accumulated for years through developing the image of prestigious and trustworthy institutions and creating various publishing series as their brands. At the same time, new publishing houses were established, having a smaller or bigger economic capital. Yet, in the early 1990s, their activities were still not intense. Yet, the old editors did not manage to maintain their privileged positions on the market after the transformations had begun although the new publishing houses had to create their own images and seek ways to win readers. For example, due to some wrong decisions taken by PIW in the early 1990s, the institution lost copyrights to re-edit many of their translations, including the works of Kurt Vonnegut, Joseph Heller, Günter Grass and James Joyce as well as the works of Latin American authors: Cortázar and García Márquez (Gołębiewski 2003:385). On the contrary, the new editors undertook their activities in a vibrant or even aggressive way. Warszawskie Wydawnictwo Literackie [Warsaw Literary Press], established in 1991, being part of the Muza S.A. capital group belonging to Włodzimierz Czarzasty's media, bought the copyrights to publish the other works of many Hispanic writers: García Márquez, Isabel Allende, Cortázar and Pérez-Reverte (Gołębiewski 2003:231, vol. 1). For some time, "Muza" did not introduce new titles to the market, focusing on re-editing the works that had been published by PIW or WL, being confronted with accusations that it benefitted from someone else's achievements.⁹⁵

The early 1990s triggered entrepreneurship, and founding a publishing company was quite easy. In Poland, a number of small companies were established. They published new works of writers: Manuela Gretkowska, Izabela Filipiak and Tomek Tryzna (Czapliński 2007:22) who are now renowned in Poland. With time, it occurred that free market favoured the development of big companies as well as the creation and strengthening of the hierarchies between

95 Czarzasty refuted these accusations, "It is true that we bought copyrights to the titles that had belonged to other publishers. However, I think that it was our success. The old potentates failed because they did not understand in time the transformations happening in Poland" (http://niniwa2.cba.pl/ksiazka_na_wolnosc.html, 20.11.2009).

them. Small publishers are generally unable to face competition, and thus they can be active only on local markets. Towards the end of the 1990s, two thirds of the income on selling books went to 19 publishing companies (Czapliński 2007:23), i.e., those who could not only produce books but also pay very high costs of their distribution and advertisement:

In the Polish People's Republic, it was enough to print books – the rest was cared for by the almost unlimited demand. In new Poland, printing books means nothing – the ability to create demand decides about everything (Czapliński 2007:26).

Huge publishing houses reach receivers through advertisements in high circulation press and on the radio, through posters as well as big wholesalers and chain bookstores. This kind of market favours what is known. Readers, especially those living in cities, received “standardised publishing offer: famous names, advertised titles and popular series” (Czapliński 2007:25).

Free market made editors undertake activities that were factually unknown and not applied during the times of real socialism. At present, the artistic value of a book becomes less significant being covered by its economic potential, i.e. the profit it can bring. Consequently, promotion plays an increasingly bigger role, and one can hardly see a success of some book that has not been supported by a promotional campaign (Gołębiewski 2004:30, vol. 1), which many a time happened during the times of the Polish People's Republic when demand on good literature significantly exceeded supply. Today advertising exerts an increasing influence on book sales. Promotional campaigns are of a different character and momentum. Their elements are meetings with authors and editors, articles in high circulation periodicals and press advertisements. Regarding translations, visits of writers are frequent forms of promotion. Editors finance the travelling costs of the writers and organise meetings with them. The cost of such a visit is between 30,000 and 100,000 zloty (Gołębiewski 2004:28, vol. 1). Thus, we have hosted Vargas Llosa and Fuentes. Naturally, Latin American writers visited us during the period of the Polish People's Republic but their visits were related to political events. For example, Julio Cortázar came to Poland in 1979 in order to participate in the International Forum of Solidarity with Chilean Culture, which was organised in Toruń.

In the 1990s, literary translations, mostly from English, constituted a considerable source of publishers' income, but at the threshold of the new century, one could notice a significant interest in modern Polish literature. Polish prose and poetry achieved visible success. It turned out that it was easier to promote a Polish writer, which could be seen in the readers' reactions towards literary awards. “Looking at the level of the sales of awarded books, Polish readers value the “Nike” Prize more than the Nobel Prize in Literature,” noted Gołębiewski (2002:32).

The fate of Spanish American prose in Poland in the discussed period varied significantly (see Tab. 5). Analysing the statistical data, one can have the impression that in the early 1990s, the editors completely lost interest in this prose. In 1990, no book from this region was published, in 1991 – two, in 1992 – three, while in 1993 – eight. From that year, the number of Spanish American works gradually increased and maintained a similar level till 2000: in 1995–2000, there appeared between ten and fifteen titles per year. Then one could see another breakthrough: since 2001 over twenty books have been published annually, which is a similar number to the one during the boom in Poland in the mid-1970s. However, there is one important difference. During the boom the prevailing form was the first edition and thanks to the WL policy readers got to know new authors, while the data of the years 1990–2005 show that what prevailed was re-editions.

Till 2001, the published books embraced almost exclusively works of renowned Latin American writers. The exceptions were the novels by Isabel Allende (the first Polish translation of her book was published by “Muza” in 1996; it was *The House of the Spirits* [*La casa de los espíritus*], tr. Zbigniew Marcin Kowalewski) and novels by Laura Esquivel (her first novel translated into Polish was *Like Water for Chocolate* [*Como agua para chocolate*], tr. Komarnicka, PIW, 1993). Then new names started gradually appearing.

Within those fifteen years (1990–2005), there appeared works of eleven Latin American writers whose books had already been published in the period of the Polish People’s Republic. The biggest stars of the boom, both dead and living, prevailed on the market. As for the latter, both their latest and early works, known to Polish readers, were published. These writers were García Márquez, Vargas Llosa and Cortázar. The editors also favoured Borges and Fuentes. Works of other writers were published sporadically. The astonishing fact is that neither Carpentier, whose works were published four times in the discussed period, nor Sábato (only one re-edition), found recognition with the editors although both were extremely popular in Poland during the boom. A detailed overview is presented in Tab. 4.

Only the Chilean writer Isabel Allende, whose works were published in Poland 25 times during the discussed period, can compete with the writers associated with the boom and boasting of the biggest number of editions. Some popularity was attributed to other writers: the Chilean winner of many prizes Luis Sepúlveda and the Mexican Laura Esquivel, who won fame by the aforementioned novel *Like Water for Chocolate*, which was published as a serial and then filmed successfully.

In the new century, editors have often taken bold decisions to promote new Latin American authors. Works of 22 unknown writers, apart from the ones mentioned above, have appeared in Poland. In most cases, only one work of a given

Tab. 4: Summary of the editions of authors who were known in Poland before 1990 (some books were published more than once) in 1990–2005.

No.	Writer	Number of editions
1.	Gabriel García Márquez	50
2.	Mario Vargas Llosa	40
3.	Julio Cortázar	20
4.	Jorge Luis Borges	17
5.	Carlos Fuentes	13
6.	Alejo Carpentier	4
7.	José Donoso	2
8.	José Lezama Lima	1
9.	Alfredo Bryce-Echenique	1
10.	Ernesto Sábato	1
11.	Manuel Puig	1
	total	150

writer has been published. Nowadays it is difficult to predict which writers will remain on the market for a longer time. The editors' strategy concerning Spanish American prose contradicts the general tendency on the Polish book market where one can observe a decrease in the publications of new titles from 2000; in 2003 and 2004, new editions constituted just over 50 % of the book production. Promoting an unknown writer takes on serious risk because Polish readers belong to the group of conservative recipients (Gołębiewski 2002:52). Detailed data are presented in the Tab. 6.

The following writers had single editions of their works translated into Polish: the Haitian Micheline Dusseck, the Mexicans – Guadalupe Loaza, Jorge Volpi, Pedro Guillermo Martínez and Ignacio Padilla, the Cubans – Jesús Díaz, Juan Gutiérrez, Reinaldo Arenas, Eliseo Alberto, Mayra Montero and Ena Lucía Portela, the Argentinians Pedro Mairal and Carlos María Domínguez, the Chilean Francisco Coloane, the Columbians Santiago Gamboa and Alvaro Mutís as well as the Bolivian Manfredo Kempf Suarez. One can easily gain the impression that this list of names is fairly accidental. The policy of re-editing the prose of the writers of the older generation and of publishing their new works seemed obvious, and the editors and readers' preferences were stable, but one cannot see any evident strategy concerning the new names. The strategy probably aimed at sounding out the market. However, it is worth noting that there were many Polish translations of Latin American female writers, which was a novelty since during the boom and just after it the works of male writers prevailed.

Tab. 5: The number of editions of Spanish American prose published by particular companies in 1990–2005.

Publisher year	WL	PIW	Czytelnik	Muza	Rebis	Noir sur Blanc	Prószynski i S-ka	Zysk i S-ka	De Agostini	Altaya Świat Książki, Libros (Bertelsmann)	Mediasat	other	total
1990													
1991	2												2
1992	1	2											3
1993	2			4	1					1		1	9
1994		1		5	1								7
1995			10	1									11
1996			8	1									9
1997		1	7	2						1		1	12
1998	1		6	5		1				1		1	15
1999			9		1	5							15
2000			11			1				1		1	14
2001	1		14	1		1	2	2		1		1	23
2002			11	3	3		5	2		3		2	29
2003			10	2	3		2			1		0	21
2004			11	1	1	1	2			6		3	27
2005			9		1					3		6	19
total	3	6	2	117	18	9	12	6	7	2	18	3	216

Tab. 6: Summary of the editions of writers who were unknown in Poland before 1990 (some books appeared more than once in this period) published in 1990–2005.

No.	Writer	Number of editions
1.	Isabel Allende	26
2.	Luis Sepúlveda	6
3.	Laura Esquivel	4
4.	Antonio Skármeta	2
5.	Zoé Valdés	2
6.	Federico Andahazi	3
7.	Marcela Serrano	2
8.	Carmen de Posadas	2
9.	Tomás Eloy Martínez	2
10.	others with one edition	17
	total:	66

Which publishing strategies concerning Spanish American prose are being realised nowadays? In 2003, there were 18,000 registered book publishers in Poland, out of them 2,500 were active, i.e. published at least two books a year (Gołębiewski 2003:19). Naturally, not all of them publish fiction, for some publishers, literature is on the margin of their activities. Only a small number of them – 27 had at least one title of Spanish American prose in their offer, the reason being that this literature was not in focus of the given publisher or they feared the risk of promoting a new name. Publishing works of renowned Latin American authors is unfeasible for most publishers since the most important editors of literary translations have most frequently ensured that they have exclusive copyrights for the acclaimed writers' works, purchasing the copyrights in advance. Such a foresighted policy was adopted by the Warsaw-based publishing company “Muza,” which published 117 editions of Spanish American prose in 1993–2005 and which was an absolute leader on the Polish market. Their re-introduction of Latin American writers has turned out to be one of their greatest successes.

9.1 “Muza” Publishing House

“Muza” (a joint stock company) has been active on the publishing market since 1991. In 1991–2006, it published 3,627 titles, including 2,216 first editions, with a total of over 20 million copies.⁹⁶

96 <http://www.muza.com.pl/?page=wydawnictwo>; access 20.10.2009.

The Board of “Muza” decided to build a positive image of the company by publishing fiction. It managed to persuade a group of specialists in literature and book market experts to join its Programme Council. They included Andrzej Wasilewski (director of PIW in the 1970s and 1980s), Andrzej Drawicz (translator and specialist in Russian literature), Jerzy Lisowski (specialist in French literature and editor-in-chief of the monthly “Twórczość”), Krystyna Goldbergowa (specialist in reportage, working for many years in the “Iskra” Publishing House and then in PIW, editor of the series “Naokoło Świata”), Carlos Marrodán Casas (translator and specialist in Latin American literature), Maciej Sadowski (graphic designer, author of book covers for “Muza”).⁹⁷ With time fiction became one of the most essential parts of the publisher’s production, and in the first decade of the 21st century, was over one third of its offer.

“Muza” has consistently carried out its policy of purchasing copyrights of the most eminent contemporary writers. Although it reduced its production of books to 40 % at the turn of the century, it decided to have a 100 % increase in purchasing copyrights (Gołębiewski 2002:186).

“Muza” has placed Spanish American prose in various series. In 1993, it released two series dedicated to contemporary prose: “Biblioteka Bestsellerów” [Library of Bestsellers] and “Galeria” [Gallery], and in 1995 – “Vademecum Interesującej Prozy” [Vademecum of Interesting Prose]. These three cycles included Spanish American works, which constituted 29 out of 112 titles of “Biblioteka Bestsellerów” (i.e. almost 26 %), the standard series of this publisher in 1993–2004, being one of the most valuable cycles of fiction. The series embraced works of such authors as Irvin Shaw, Mikhail Bulgakov, Herbert George Wells, John Steinbeck, Stefan Zweig, Ernest Hemingway, Charles Dickens, Simone de Beauvoir and Alberto Moravia. The title of the series may be misleading since it did not include “fashionable” books, sold in record number of copies for a relatively short time and then quickly forgotten, which is usually associated with the term “bestseller,” but works that can be counted to the 19th and 20th century classics.

In the first year of the series, four titles of Spanish American prose appeared: *The Aleph and Other Stories* (*El Aleph. Ficciones*) by Borges, *The Autumn of the Patriarch* by García Márquez, *A Manual for Manuel* by Cortázar, *In Praise of the Stepmother* (*El elogio de la madrastra*) by Vargas Llosa. In the next year (1994): *Explosion in a Cathedral* by Carpentier, *Hopscotch* and *Completed Short Stories* by Cortázar, *Love in the Time of Cholera* (*El amor en los tiempos del cólera*) by García Márquez, *The Green House* by Vargas Llosa; in 1995: *Strange*

97 Burzyński, Cichy 1997; http://niniwa2.cba.pl/ksiazka_na_wolnosci.htm, 15.11.2009.

Pilgrims (Doce cuentos peregrinos) and *In Evil Hour* as well as the re-editions of *The Autumn of the Patriarch* and *Love in the Time of Cholera* by García Márquez, and – the re-edition of *Hopscotch*; in 1996 – *The Lost Steps* by Carpentier, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*⁹⁸ and the re-edition of *Strange Pilgrims* by García Márquez as well as re-editions of his *Love in the Time of Cholera*, *A Manual for Manuel* and *Completed Short Stories* by Cortázar; in 1997 – *The Time of the Hero* by Vargas Llosa and *The Winners* by Cortázar; in 1998 – *The General in His Labyrinth (El general en su laberinto)* by García Márquez and *Conversation in the Cathedral* by Vargas Llosa; in 1999 – *Historias de cronopios y de famas (Cronopios and Famas)* by Cortázar and *The Notebooks of Don Rigoberto (Los cuadernos de don Rigoberto)* by Vargas Llosa; in 2000 – *The Kingdom of This World* by Carpentier and *Paradise* by Lezama Lima; in 2001 – re-editions of *The Winners* by Cortázar; in 2003 – the re-edition of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*.

This list is a good illustration of the policy of “Muza,” i.e., publishing both old and the latest books of the most popular authors and re-editing books that are most desired by readers within the same series. The editors of “Biblioteka Bestsellerów” were interested in six Latin American writers whose books were exploited until the market was saturated.

“Biblioteka Bestsellerów” was a series addressed to richer buyers. Books had hard cloth covers, with glossy coloured dust jackets. On the front cover, designed by Maciej Sadowski, there was a coloured photo beneath the name of the author and the title in the coloured background. The books did not have any forewords and afterwords, which should not be surprising: most authors were well known and their works did not need any recommendation. There was short information about the work on the left flap of the cover.

The other flap was obviously to fulfil a promotional function since it contained a photo of the next work to be published within the series. The editor placed information about the author as a short encyclopaedic entry on the back cover.⁹⁹

98 Czarzasty recalls how “Muza” managed to purchase the copyright of this novel, “I learnt quickly that one can publish not what you like but what you managed to gain. The selection of titles often depended not on brain storm, but work and accident. *The Autumn of the Patriarch* was published firstly since it was the only free title by Márquez. We had to wait two years to publish *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, when the agreement between the agent and PIW expired. We queued for the copyright and phoned the agent every week. I do not know why PIW did not publish the book earlier.” (Baczyński, Cichy 1997, at http://niniwa2.cba.pl/ksiazka_na_wolnosci.htm, 15.11.2009.)

99 For example, “Mario Vargas Llosa (1936), a Peruvian writer, winner of many Spanish and Latin American prizes in literature (“Rómulo Gallegos,” “Miguel de Cervantes”

In 1993, “Muza” initiated another series called “Galeria.” Although the books of the series had brochure cover designs, they attracted attention by their coloured graphic layout.

The series included three books by Cortázar: *Hopscotch* (1998), two volumes of *Completed Short Stories* (1999) and *A Manual for Manuel* (2001), *Love in the Time of Cholera* by García Márquez and works by Isabel Allende: *The House of the Spirits* (1998, 2005), *Paula* (1998), *Of Love and Shadows* (*De amor y de sombra*, 1999), *The Infinite Plan* (*El plan infinito*, 1999), *Eva Luna* (2000), *The Stories of Eva Luna* (*Cuentos de Eva Luna*, 2000), *Daughter of Fortune* (*Hija de la fortuna*, 2005) and *Portrait in Sepia* (*Retrato en sepia*, 2005). “Galeria” included 14 volumes of Spanish American prose within 108 works published till 2005, which is almost 13 %. The books published in this series embraced: *The first forty-nine stories* by Hemingway (1998), Maria Puzo’s novels about the mafia (*The Godfather* published twice, in 1998 and 2000), *Out of Africa* by Karen Blixen (2000), *The Fencing Master* (*El maestro de esgrima*) by Arturo Pérez-Reverte (2003). Summaries of content and the main themes were placed on the covers.

In another series edited by “Muza” called “Vademecum Interesujących Prozy,” which appeared in 1995–1999 and included 39 works, there were ten Latin American titles, i.e. ¼ of the cycle. This series, like the former, included both re-editions of works known to Polish readers and several new editions. They were books written by five Hispanic authors: Isabel Allende, Gabriel García Márquez, Julio Cortázar, Alvaro Mutis and Manuel Puig.¹⁰⁰ Their books were published along with such novels as *Henry and June: from the unexpurgated diary of Anaïs Nin* by Anaïs Nin (1997), *The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Two Towers* and *The Return of the King* by John Ronald Reuel Tolkien (1996), the prose of Heinrich Böll, Iris Murdoch and Amos Oz. The series had hard, glossy covers without any dust jackets. On the fourth page of the cover, there were summaries of the books and laconic notes about the authors.

The data show that “Muza” included Latin American writers in different, concurrently issued series. Both authors and particular works were repeated. These

and “Premio Planeta”); author of great novels: *The Green House*, *Conversation in the Cathedral*, *Captain Pantoja and the Special Service*.”

100 *The House of the Spirits* (1996) and *Eva Luna* (1997) by Allende, *Of Love and Other Demons* (*Del amor y otros demonios*, 1996), *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* (1997), *Short Stories* (1998), *Leaf Storm* (1997) and *The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor* (1999) by García Márquez, 62. *Modelo para armar* (62: *A Model Kit*) by Cortázar (1999), *Ilona Comes with the Rain* (*Ilona llega con la lluvia*) by Mutis (1999) and *Kiss of the Spider Woman* by Puig (1999).

three cycles had a similar profile and embraced broadly understood contemporary prose of renowned writers. Thus they were addressed to those having similar interests but different material statuses. The most expensive books belonged to “Biblioteka Bestsellerów” for collectors of high level literature who could afford spending more than 40 zloty for a book. The “Galeria” series was cheaper; one could buy a book for ca. 20–30 zloty. The VIP series was between them.

In all of these three series, particular volumes were accompanied by short editors’ notes placed on the flaps or the back covers. The notes were not always clichéd summaries; many a time they were ambitious attempts to present the most important message of the given work. The note concerning *Love in the Time of Cholera* included the following, “differently from the other novels by Gabriel García Márquez, it is written with great tenderness, humour and compassion; it is his only work in which love is stronger than loneliness, fate and death.” According to the editor’s note, the power and uniqueness of Carpentier’s *The Lost Steps* was that “the contrast between modernity and life in complete wilderness, lyrical descriptions of landscapes inspiring us with the power of imagination, sentences that dazzles with extraordinary splendour, and above all, a journey in time transferring the reader to the ages before the creation of the world.” The editor of the information about *In Praise of the Stepmother* by Vargas Llosa shouted, “Horrible, amoral novel! Everything in the novel is deception – commencing from reproductions, used to realise goals that were not at all used to make the content more beautiful [...] to the scoffing tone of the author of *Captain Pantoja and the Special Service*.”

These commentaries were repeated in various series, which testifies to the fact that the editor directed them to recipients with similar reading competences and similar tastes. For example, the edition of *Hopscotch* within “Biblioteka Bestsellerów” was accompanied by an identical note as in “Galeria.” At first, the special constructive principle of this novel: the author’s invitation to co-create the novel, was mentioned. Then the author of the note referred to the popularity of the book in the 1970s and encouraged contemporary readers to confront their experiences after reading the novel with those of the former readers, “Will contemporary readers be still able to communicate in Gliglish (glíglico)? Will they be moved to tears reading Maga’s letter to Rocamadour? In order to know that, you should pick up a copy of this novel.” A similar note accompanied the edition of Allende’s novel *Eva Luna* in “Galeria” and VIP. The note read:

Eva Luna is a story of a girl born on her mother’s deathbed. Before Eva finds real love, becomes a woman and popular writer, she will take us to her tale of the thousand and one night, in which reality is mixed with the miraculous, love triumphs over hatred, the joy of life conquers misery and humility.

We get to know the fate of Eva as well as her extraordinary mother, minder, closest friends, prostitute with a soft heart, transvestite with an artist' soul; we follow the fates of men she met in her life – Arab merchant and a boy from an Austrian town, leader of a group of street urchins, and then of partizans fighting against the junta as well as fates of numerous extraordinary figures. The genius of the novel leads us from one adventure to another, plays tricks and leaves us in the conviction that his power is absolute: the impossible becomes the needy, the hopeless finds a happy end, the story reaches its end, but in fact does not end...

The largest-scale undertaking of “Muza” concerning Spanish American prose was to launch the series called “Salsa. Książki dla Muzykalnych” [Salsa. Books for the Musical]. It was dedicated to Hispanic literature; so it included works from Latin America and Spain.

“Salsa” appeared in 2003–2009 and had 54 titles.¹⁰¹ Thus the editor did not repeat any book within this cycle. Out of 54 books over half (30) belonged to Spanish American prose.

The editors of “Salsa” carried out a strategy that was similar to the one implemented in the other series. On the one hand, new books were included, their authors being completely or almost unknown in Poland, for example the Portorican Mayra Montero or the Spanish Marina Mayoral, or being popular and thus requiring no recommendation. Consequently, within “Salsa” there were the re-editions of *Love in the Time of Cholera* by García Márquez, published for the first time in 1996 in the VIP series, *Strange Pilgrims* by the same author (the first Polish edition in “Biblioteka Bestsellerów,” 1995) and *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, the novel that was included in almost every series of “Muza” dedicated to contemporary literature. *Hopscotch*, *Completed Short Stories* and *Last Round* (*Último round*) by Cortázar and several books by Allende were re-edited. The first Polish edition of *The Notebooks of Don Rigoberto* by Vargas Llosa (2004) was added to “Salsa.” In recent years, “Muza” made available to Polish readers the following works of some unknown Latin American writers who were not associated with the boom: the Columbian Fernando Vallejo (*Los días azules*, 2006; *Our Lady of the Assassins – La Virgen de los sicarios*, 2007, *Mi hermano el alcalde*, 2007, tr. M. Szafrąńska-Brandt), the Chilean Roberto Bolaño (*By Night in Chile – Nocturno de Chile*, 2006, tr. Anna Topczewska, *Distant Star – Estrella distante*, tr. Marrodán Casas, 2006, *Monsieur Pain*, 2007, tr. Topczewska) and the

101 Data from the main catalogue of the National Library (http://alpha.bn.org.pl/search~S4*pol?/tsalsa/tsalsa/1%2C3%2C48%2CB/exact&FF=tsalsa&1%2C46%2C) and the information from the webpage of “Muza” (<http://www.muzaklub.com/index.php?k31,literatura-piekna-salsa,12.11.2009>).

Cuban Eliseo Alberto (*Caracol Beach*, 2001, *La fábula de José*, 2003, both translated by Maciej Ziętara, *Esther en alguna parte*, 2006, tr. Bogumiła Wyrzykowska, *Eternidad por fin comienza un lunes*, 2008, tr. Jaroszuk).

The covers of the books published within “Salsa” clearly referred to the WL series called “Proza Iberoamerykańska.” The designer Maryna Wiśniewska had no scruples in copying the idea of the designer of the Kraków cycle: there was a distinctive motive in one coloured background referring to the Pre-Columbian art. The soft cover had flaps for the editor’s note. Although the backgrounds of the covers were brighter and the central motive was not necessarily black as in “Proza Iberoamerykańska,” the whole seemed to suggest that readers dealt with a continuation of that cult series. Yet, the editorial level and the quality of the paper used were far from the imposed minimalism of the Polish People’s Republic.

The editors of “Muza,” contrary to those of WL, gave up the didactical notes supporting the volumes of “Salsa,” the reason being that the knowledge about Latin America and contemporary Hispanic literature was much more commonly spread at the beginning of the new century than in the 1970s. Thus, there were no elaborated postcripts. The editor’s texts were placed on the flaps or the back covers. On the left flap, there was information about the author, features of his or her output, and there was a list of his or her most important works.¹⁰² These notes were longer than the ones placed on the covers of “Biblioteka Bestsellerów.” The right flap, like in other series of “Muza,” was dedicated to promoting the series, i.e. mentioning its recent and future titles. On the fourth page of the cover, the editor gave a kind of summary that did not betray the puenta, but first of all described the unfolding of the plot in order to stimulate the reader’s curiosity. For example, we can read on the cover of *Distant Star* by Bolaño:

The book talks about a mysterious poet of the Chilean Nazi avand-garde. This self-thought erudite appears in poetry workshops at the university in Concepción some day

102 For example, “Mario Vargas Llosa (born in 1936); a Peruvian writer, journalist, thinker, politician, specialist in Spanish literature. He has lived abroad for many years (Paris, London, Barcelona), published novels, critical essays, journalistic sketches and articles. His literary output is rooted in Latin American reality, saturated with political and social contents. It shows the world of power, corruption, violence, misery, religious passions and human emotions. Llosa has won many prestigious awards; he was nominated for the Nobel Prize. His most popular novels include: *The Green House*, *Conversation in the Cathedral*, *Captain Pantoja and the Special Service*, *The Leaders*, *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter*, *The War of the End of the World* and *In Praise of the Stepmother*.”

in the early 1970s; his name is Ruiz-Tagle; he comes from nowhere and at once wins other poets' recognition and women's admiration. The author of the disturbing poems turns out to be an army pilot called Carlos Wieder, who writes Bible verses in the sky and celebrates death as an act of creation.

What followed was a number of terms positively evaluating the book: "novel like a bad dream from which one regretfully wakes up," "on the border of a high-quality detective story" or "is an extraordinary work." Moreover, referring to the acclaimed Latin American writers should evoke positive attitudes of the reader, "It is a work [...] one would wish to say 'magical,' proving the existence of other Latin American literary stars than Gabriel García Márquez or Julio Cortázar." We can read on the cover of Susana Fortes's novel *El amante albanés* that it has "a profound, timeless dimension." *Esther en alguna parte* by Albert Eliseo was, according to the editor's note, "a spectacle in the form of intelligent absurdity," a story "told with tenderness and humour, discussing very important matters: friendship, forgiveness, weakness." Those techniques were used to encourage people to buy books or only to read them.

9.2 Other publishing houses

The position of "Muza" in publishing Spanish American prose in Poland was overwhelming. The other publishers could offer from one to several titles. One of them was the Poznań-based Dom Wydawniczy Rebis ["Rebis" Publishing House], established in 1990. Initially, its founders focused on fiction, mainly on fantasy and horror. Then they gradually enlarged their offers and at the threshold of the 21st century, fiction constituted 50 % of their production (Gołębiewski 2002:224). Like other institutions, "Rebis" publishes prose in long series. In 1992, Jonathan Carroll's novel *A Child across the Sky* inaugurated a series called "Z Salamandrą" [With Salamander].¹⁰³ The cycle embracing translations of contemporary prose won popularity thanks to a thorough selection of titles and low prices. Compromising solutions were necessary: readers received very good and acclaimed prose, but printed as books with soft covers on low quality paper. The editor's text was placed on the fourth page of the cover, the text was usually in the form of a summary of the book and a short fragment (one sentence) of

103 G.L. Kamiński writes in the middle of 2001, "So far, 128 first editions in 413 circulations have been published, the average circulation being ca. 19,000 copies. Over two million copies have been published." (<http://www.ksiazka.net.pl/?id=archiwum09&uid=485,8.11.2009>). In 2006, the "Z Salamandrą" series had 240 titles printed in four million copies.

a favourable review from the renowned newspaper, e.g. *New York Times*. The catalogue of the National Library has 482 entries in the series from the years 1992–2009. Bestsellers were re-edited several times. Beside the works written by Faulkner, Golding, Remarque, Vonnegut, Oz, José Saramago and Salman Rushdi, there were seven novels by Vargas Llosa, including the re-editions of *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter* (1997), *The War of the End of the World (La guerra del fin del Mundo)*, 1998) and *Captain Pantoja and the Special Service* (1996, 1998, 2002) as well as the first editions of *The Storyteller (El hablador)*, 1997, 1998), *The Real Life of Alejandro Mayta (Historia de Mayta)*, 2001), *Who Killed Palomino Molero? (¿Quién mato a Palomino Molero?)*, 1995, 1998) and *Death in the Andes (Lituma en los Andes)*, 1998, 2000). The more prestigious series called “Mistrzowie Literatury” [Masters of Literature] published from 1995 included two new novels of the Peruvian writer: *The Feast of the Goat (La fiesta del Chivo)*, 2002, re-edited in 2003) and *The Way to Paradise (El Paraíso en la otra esquina)*, 2003, re-edited in 2004), both translated by Danuta Rycerz.

Out of Latin American writers “Rebis” published only Vargas Llosa’s works, while the Prószyński i S-ka Publishing House is the Polish editor of Borges’ books. The latter published *The Book of Sand* (1998, 1999, 2007), *Ficciones* (2003), *Universal History of Infamy* (1998, 1999, 2006) and *Doctor Brodie’s Report* (2006).

Looking at the publishers that were interested in Spanish American prose, we should turn our attention to Oficyna Literacka Noir sur Blanc [Noir sur Blanc Publishing House]. It publishes only fiction and has been probably conducting the most ambitious policy concerning this literature on the Polish market. It launches about 40 new titles per year, most of them being books that have not been translated into Polish before. It also re-edits from ten to fifteen books per year (Gołębiewski 2002:333). It publishes “provocative” authors: Henry Miller, Blaise Cendrars and Charles Bukowski. It has exclusive copyrights to Sławomir Mrożek’s prose.

Although “Noir sur Blanc” published only ten titles of Spanish American prose till 2005, their selection clearly showed the editors’ care for quality. The published books included five books by Luis Sepúlveda (*Diario de un killer sentimental*, *The Story of a Seagull and the Cat Who Taught Her to Fly*, both in 2002, tr. Maria Raczkiewicz, *Patagonia Express* 2003, tr. Adam Elbanowski, *Mundo del fin del mundo*, 2003, tr. Dorota Walasek-Elbanowska, *Desencuentros*, 2005, tr. D. and E. Elbanowscy), two intriguing books by the Cuban authoress Zoé Valdés (*I Gave You All I Had – Te di la vida entera*, 1999, tr. Ziętara, *Milagro en Miami* 2004, tr. Maria Raczkiewicz-Śledziewska), two by Francisco Coloane (the first one, 2003, contains short stories from three volumes: *Cabo de Horno*, *Cabo de Penas*, *Tierra del Fuego*, tr. Elbanowski and Joanna Skórnicka, as well as *El*

camino de la ballena, 2000, tr. Walasek-Elbanowska) and one by Bryce-Echenique (*Tarzan's Tonsillitis – La amigdalitis de Tarzán*, 2003, tr. Walasek-Elbanowska).

The Poznań-based company “Zysk i S-ka” publishes mainly fiction, which constitutes 75 % of its production. Contemporary prose appears in the “Kameleon” series [Cameleon], which amounts to 343 titles till 2005. The series included five out of six titles of Spanish American prose, published by “Zysk i S-ka”: *Like Water for Chocolate* by Esquivel (1999, tr. Komarnicka), *The Merciful Women (Las piadosas)*, 2001) and *El príncipe* (2004) by Federico Andahazi, and *Swift as Desire (Tan veloz como el deseo)* by Esquivel (2002) as well as *Dirty Havana Trilogy (Trilogía sucia de La Habana)* by Pedro Juan Gutiérrez (2004), all translated by Piotr Fornelski. Moreover, Zysk published *The Law of Love (La ley del amor)* by Esquivel (2003, tr. Maria Boryska).

In 2001–2003, over a dozen titles of Spanish American prose appeared within Bertelsmann Media, including “Libros” and “Świat Książki.” The latter stopped acting as a publishing house and concentrated on conducting reader’s clubs. It promotes more valuable literature than for example *Harlequin* or *Reader’s Digest*, trying to reach those who do not usually buy books (Gołębiewski 2002:108). Bertelsmann published translations of Fuentes’ works: *En esto creo*, 2003, *The Eagle’s Throne (La silla del águila)*, 2004, both tr. Wasitowa, *The Years with Laura Díaz (Los años con Laura Díaz)*, 2004, tr. Komarnicka, *Nuestra Señora de la Soledad* by Marcela Serrano, 2002, tr. Komarnicka, and within the “Arcydziała Literatary Światowej” series – *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (2004).

What testifies to the difficulty of acquiring copyrights to attractive Spanish American works in Poland at the threshold of the 21st century is the fact that “Amber,” an important publisher of fiction, boasting of the biggest number of bestsellers, published only one book from this region, *El vuelo de la reina* by the Argentine Tomas Eloy Martínez (2005, tr. Pindel). It was part of “Złota Seria,” promoted as “the library of good books” for lovers of interesting and valuable literature.

It is conspicuous that the most important editors of Spanish American literature in the period of the Polish People’s Republic, which contributed to the Polish boom, actually stopped publishing this literature. In 1990–2005, Wydawnictwo Literackie, PIW and Czytelnik published only a total of eleven titles!

In 1992, WL published outside its series Fuentes’ novel *The Old Gringo (Gringo viejo)*, tr. Danuta Rycerz. In the late 1990s, it decided to take a risky step launching the ambitious “Seria Literatary Iberyjskiej i Iberoamerykańskiej” [Series of Spanish and Latin American Literature], embracing both modern and old works. The editor’s obvious merit was to make available for Polish readers “false” *Don Quixote* by Alonso Fernández de Avellaneda (1997, tr. Fornelski).

Unfortunately, the cycle lasted only two years and had seven titles. There were works of Spanish American prose: two volumes of sketches by Octavio Paz (both in 1997, tr. Fornelski), and Fuentes' novel *Diana: The Goddess Who Hunts Alone* (*Diana o la cazadora solitaria*, 1998, tr. Krystyna Libura). Moreover, in 2001 the Kraków-based publishing house re-edited *Birthday* (*Cumpleaños*) by Fuentes, tr. Kaniowa.

In the early 1990s, PIW tried to continue the policy adopted before the transformations. In 1991, it published the juvenile novel *Final Exam* (*El examen*, tr. Chądzyńska) by Cortázar, unknown in Poland, and re-edited *Captain Pantoja and the Special Service* and *Conversation in the Cathedral* by Vargas Llosa, in 1992. It also published a new novel of the author *The War of the End of the World* (tr. Marrodán Casas) and re-edition of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, and in 1993, a new novel by Garcia Márquez *The General in His Labyrinth* (tr. Wasitowa). All of these books, with the exception of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, appeared in the “Współczesna Proza Światowa” series. Then PIW lost the copyrights to edit Latin American writers in favour of “Muza.”

In 1994, in its “Nike” series, the Czytelnik Publishing House published *The Hydra Head* (*La cabeza de la hidra*) by Fuentes (tr. Wasitowa), and three years later – *La consagración de la primavera* by Carpentier (tr. Carlson).

10 Summary

The picture of Spanish American literature on the Polish book market after World War II depended on non-literal factors – economic and political – to a large extent. The literature appeared in the publishers' plans and readers' awareness relatively late, later than in other non-Hispanic countries. In fact, it happened in the 1970s since the selection of works printed in the press and as non-serial publications in the first postwar decades produced a one-sided and rather unattractive picture of Spanish American literature – strongly ideologised, biased and communist. The period of the boom changed the vision radically. It turned out that the prose of this continent was miscellaneous. It did not only attract readers with its exotics and otherness but also dazzled with innovative formal solutions.

Literary agents exerted strong influence on the readers' way of perceiving this literature. The Warsaw-based publishing houses which were the first to edit Latin American books did their best to earn this literature a good reputation: high-quality prose withstanding the comparison with the best contemporary writers of Europe and the United States. They used similar strategies: inclusion of these works to the existing prestigious series. Thanks to Wydawnictwo Literackie, the literature of Latin America itself became a recognisable brand: in the period of

the boom, it was published in “Proza Iberoamerykańska,” while in the 21st century it was “Muza” that published it in its “Salsa” series.

After the boom, Spanish American prose did not disappear from Poland’s literary life. The 1980s and the early 1990s were difficult years for this literature, but everything seems to indicate that the difficulties were caused only by non-literary factors. Observing the policy of the biggest Polish editors of fiction allows me to state that the older books of some limited group of Latin American writers are regularly re-edited, whereas the new ones are published on an ongoing basis. In the period of the Third Polish Republic, the publication of Hispanic prose has become the domain of one publisher – the Warsaw-based “Muza.” However, other publishers see the economic potential of contemporary Hispanic Latin America, which is testified by their attempts to promote completely new names.