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**Constructing Hegemony:
The Latin American Boom and the
Book Industries of Spain and Mexico,
1963-1967**

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Table of Contents

Abstract	3
Declaration	4
Acknowledgments	5
Introduction	7
The Boom Question	9
The Boom Protagonists	14
The Dates of the Boom	20
The Comparison between Spain and Mexico	24
Chapter 1 Theoretical Framework	30
Literature review	34
The Theory of Hegemony	37
Deploying the Theory of Hegemony	41
The Concept of Articulation	44
Hegemony, Dislocation and Social Change	48
Colonialism and the Boom	51
Chapter 2 Methodology	56
A Novel Approach to the Boom	57
The Qualitative Approach	58
Design and Historical Sociology	60
Approach to Reading	62
Approach to Interviews	65
Personal Documents and Research Ethics	69
Chapter 3 History and the Genealogy of the Book Industries in Spain and Mexico	75
Shared History and a Colonial Relationship	76
Different Publishing Histories	82
The Cuba and Borges Factors	91
Business Models	98
Chapter 4 Public Cultural Policies and the Boom	104
Spain under Francisco Franco and Mexico under the PRI	105
The Economic Models in Spain and Mexico	111
Cultural Policies and the Publishing Industry in Mexico and Spain	113
Chapter 5 The Boom’s Editor, its Literary Agent, and Being a Latin American Writer	128
The Editor	129

The Literary Agent	133
Being a Latin American Writer	141
Chapter 6 Latin American writers vis-à-vis their circumstances	146
Julio Cortázar: The Cosmopolitan Transition	151
Carlos Fuentes: A Driven Publishing History	160
Gabriel García Márquez: The Leap to Global Authorship.....	167
Mario Vargas Llosa: Constructing Global Authorship from Spain.....	172
Conclusion	180
Reference List.....	191
Appendices.....	206

Abstract

This thesis analyses the process of construction of hegemony in the Spanish-language publishing world in the 1960s. It compares the book industries of Spain and Mexico to understand how the Spanish rather than the Mexican industry established itself as the main one of their shared language. The empirical research design consisted of interviews, historical sociology, bibliographical and archival research, and cultural, social, and political analysis. The context thus compared is one in which a group of outstanding authors and other actors, such as an editor and a literary agent, fully exercised their agency within their particular circumstances, often going against and beyond them. For the first time in history, Spain's publishing industry made it possible, mostly from Barcelona, for a small group of Latin American authors to become professional writers and for their work to reach international audiences and be translated into different languages. This set of events became known as the "Latin American Boom." This study's empirical findings include that the Boom authors opted to face censorship under the Franco regime in Spain, rather than aiming to develop their literary careers in the precarious, inefficient publishing systems in place in Latin America at the time. This work draws on Laclau and Mouffe's theory to build the argument that diverse factors — namely: Colonial history, cultural public policies and industrial models, networking among social actors, and authors' agency of professionalisation — articulated to establish the hegemony of Spain's book industry. In doing so, this dissertation engages with two theoretical debates: those of hegemony construction and that of whether hegemony belongs solely to the realm of national societies or whether it could be built globally. This dissertation, therefore, contributes to the sociology of culture and publishing by revealing how the construction of cultural hegemony worked in the Latin American Boom phenomenon.

Declaration

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except where specifically indicated in the text.

It has not previously been submitted, in part or whole, to any university or institution for any degree, diploma, or other qualification.

In accordance with the Department of Sociology guidelines, this dissertation does not exceed 80,000 words.

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Introduction

In the 1960s, the Latin American Boom ushered in the consolidation of the hegemony of Spain's book industry within the Spanish-speaking publishing world. That is the focus of this study, which looks at the Boom process to better understand the differences between the publishing industries in Spain and Mexico. The current hegemony of the Spanish book industry manifests as follows: both in Spain and Latin America, readers of Spanish-language publications who visit bookstores in the 21st-century come across tables and shelves of new releases that appear to have been published by a great many publishing houses. However, if these readers were to flip open a few covers, they would notice that many of these books were printed by publishers whose headquarters are in Spain¹ and that, even though there appear to be a great number of imprints, many of these belong to a single publishing conglomerate.² Indeed, these readers might even notice that many of those books were printed and bound in Spain and then exported to different Latin American countries. In other words, the Spanish-language publishing industry centres on Spain not just in economic and material production terms but also as regards how literary taste and topics are curated. This state of affairs is what has prompted me to claim that Spain occupies a hegemonic position in the Spanish-language book industry. My study centres on the Latin American Boom of the 1960s, which was the first stop on the journey to the current state of affairs.

My analysis in this dissertation is guided by the theory of hegemony put forward by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1999). I explain this theoretical framework in detail in chapter 1 of this thesis, but for now, I will limit myself to noting that it is a social theory that views the way societies are ordered as being the outcome of a struggle for laying the foundations in the creation of social meanings. It also argues that this social

¹ Although there are now an enormous number of Spanish-language publishing houses, many of which are small and are described as "independent" because they do not belong to one of these conglomerates, three companies produce most of the books that are published in Spanish: Editorial Planeta, based in Barcelona; Penguin Random House Grupo Editorial, also based in Barcelona; and Editorial Santillana, based in Madrid.

² Grupo Planeta owns more than 100 imprints, including the following, which have very solid reputations in the Spanish-speaking cultural world: Planeta, Espasa-Calpe, Destino, Temas de Hoy, Seix-Barral, Emecé, Crítica, Ariel, Paidós, Booket, Austral, Joaquín Mortiz, and Editorial Diana. Grupo Planeta also has a stake in Tusquets. Penguin Random House, which is owned by the Bertelsmann Group, is now the world's largest publisher following a series of international mergers. Its Spanish-language imprints include Literatura Random House, Mondadori, Plaza & Janés, Alfaguara, Taurus, Suma de Letras, Debate, DeBolsillo, Grijalbo, Lumen, Aguilar, and Punto de Lectura.

order is based on the construction of contingent social meanings that guide both the practices of a given society and its symbolic elements.

Given the literary and publishing success the Boom brought to its writers, their fame, and their unquestionable cultural influence, just over 50 years on from the Boom, — as I will discuss below — there is still no consensus as to how to define it, who was part of it, and when it unfolded. All the same, there is no denying that the Boom is a specific cultural reference point, which is one of the reasons why I think it is significant to think about it in discursive, hegemonic terms. Given all the discussion it has sparked, the Boom is clearly a source of meaning and a way of creating an order in the way literary and publishing events are perceived (at least in Spanish-speaking countries), and thus our understanding of it benefits from a sociological approach.

Therefore, using Laclau and Mouffe's terms, my research argues that the Latin American Boom became an empty signifier. An empty signifier is the social element which, in the hegemonic moment, enables the articulation, or link, between a diverse set of social elements making sense of social interaction. Thus, the Latin American Boom was the empty signifier that fostered the articulation of: a relationship between two countries shaped by its shared Colonial history, differences in their publishing industrial developments, the public policies being implemented by the governments of Spain and Mexico — the two countries this study focuses on —, the emergence of and networking among new figures with specific functions in the publishing world, and the literary qualities of a specific group of writers and, more importantly their aim to professionalise their craft. All of these elements created a chain of equivalence — that is to say, the articulation of social elements that acquire a new social meaning due to such linkage. These factors combined in such a way that the book industry of one of the two countries in question, Spain, established itself as hegemonic.

As I mentioned above, I explore the theoretical underpinnings of this study in detail in the theoretical framework chapter. However, it is worth noting that Laclau and Mouffe's theoretical perspective focuses on analysing the frameworks of understanding that are established in a society and that guide the social practices taking place in that community. I would like to note that the ideas of Laclau and Mouffe are, of course, most commonly discussed in terms of political theory and philosophy, and deployed for political analysis (Critchley and Marchart, 2006; Howarth, Norval and Stavrakakis, 2000). However, as theirs is a social theory as well — implying a detailed understanding of

society — Carpentier and Spinoy (2008) opened the path, together with a series of contributors, to bridge Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory with cultural analysis, specifically bringing the theory of such authors into the realm of media studies and literary and art studies. I inscribe my contribution in such line of research, inspired in particular by the analysis presented by Martínez Martínez in Spinoy and Carpentier's book, since it analysed the end of a hegemonic discourse and an ongoing process of social change in Mexico (Martínez Martínez, 2008, pp. 97–117). This is one of the fundamental reasons why Laclau and Mouffe's theory of hegemony is particularly relevant in a study of the Boom and the consolidation of Spain's central role in the Spanish-language book industry, as it allows me to link factors that were part of the construction of a new hegemony regardless that they may appear unconnected at first glance, such as the agency of professionalisation of writers from different Latin American countries, and the public policies implemented by Francisco Franco's dictatorship in Spain. Likewise, at the theoretical level, by taking a comparative approach, this study proposes ideas that reveal hegemonies stretching beyond national borders to reach the transnational sphere.³

I have had two main research questions, one empirical and, another one, theoretical. As for the first, as I said, I wanted to look at the Boom to understand the foundations of the current hegemony of the Spanish publishing industry. My guiding question was: Why is the Spanish, and not the Mexican one, the central actor among the book industries of the Spanish language? As for the theoretical aspect of my dissertation, I wondered: What are the elements involved in the process of construction of a hegemonic discourse and how do they interact internationally to get to an outcome involving more than one national society?

The Boom Question

I will now examine the broad issue of what was the Boom in order to clarify how I use this phenomenon to understand the social process of publishing in the Spanish speaking world. It is important to provide some context on why it was socially and culturally significant. Before the Boom years, major writers had emerged in Latin America during

³ Indeed, it could also be said that the publishing industry was one of the first industries to become truly global in scope and in its very character.

both the Colonial period and after the continent as a whole gained its independence. However, with the exception of the work of an extremely reduced number of key writers, literature and other forms of cultural expression from Spanish America never became readily available in other Spanish-speaking countries, and there was not a particular or systematic interest in them. This is what makes it relevant to study the cultural and social backdrop to the turning point that was the Boom: the point at which Latin American literature stopped being invisible on the international scene and instead became an object of curiosity for both Spanish-speaking publishers and readers and those from other countries.⁴ What I am, thus, seeking to provide is a detailed examination of the conditions that made the Boom possible as a social and cultural event both in terms of conditions of production and its conditions of possibility in terms of discourse — that is to say, of a new social order.

One of the difficulties in analysing the Latin American Boom, is that there is little widespread agreement on exactly what it was and which authors it encompassed. Indeed, the Chilean novelist José Donoso⁵ (2018, p. 12) — who was close to the Boom's main writers, remained at the periphery of the phenomenon, and later chronicled it — wrote that it was “difficult to define [the Boom] with even a modest degree of rigour.” The term Boom was first used by the critic Luis Harss in the Argentinian magazine *Primera Plana* to refer to a group of writers from the region who had begun to achieve international fame (Rama, 1981; Esteban and Gallego, 2011). The word “boom” was frequently used at that time to describe the Italian economic expansion, and Ayén (2017) argues that Harss' choice of the term alluded to this. As the Uruguayan critic Ángel Rama has written, the term was not only an English onomatopoeia for an explosion but was also US marketing parlance for a sudden and significant increase in sales of a given product (1981, p. 56). Marketing and advertising techniques were indeed an essential part of the Boom (de Diego, 2013, pp. 124–125). In an interview for this research, Garcíadiego (2017) also perceives the Boom in economic and commercial terms, although he does not deny the literary quality of the authors involved in it. He argues that “what really made the Latin American literature market was the Spanish book industry [...] What it brought was the commercial side of things, marketing” (2017). These opinions point to the complex tangle of commercial and artistic factors that converged in the Boom.

⁴ It will be up to other researchers to explore this shift in terms of cultural consumption.

⁵ José Donoso Yáñez (5th October 1924, Santiago, Chile-7th December 1996, Santiago, Chile).

Many of the claims and assertions that critics and researchers have made regarding the Boom contradict one another, but there is widespread critical consensus that a sea change swept the Spanish-language publishing world. Ayén (2014, pos. 64) describes the Boom as “the most important thing that happened to Spanish-language literature in the 20th-century.” Likewise, Esteban and Gallego (2011, pos. 96) do not hesitate to claim that “the 1960s and 70s were truly the Golden Age of Latin American literature, which flourished more than that of any other place on earth”. They suggest that the importance of the Boom reached beyond the Spanish-speaking world. In a similar vein, in 1964, the Mexican novelist Carlos Fuentes wrote a letter to his Peruvian counterpart Mario Vargas Llosa in which he said that he was full of optimism because he believed that in the preceding year, no other cultural community had produced novels as valuable as those that had been published by Latin American authors (Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 211–290). In 1967, the Uruguayan writer Mario Benedetti, a contemporary of the Boom who was, however, not part of the publishing phenomenon, also took pride in the literary output from Latin America over the preceding years, in contrast with that of other places (Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 222).

The Boom gradually outgrew each of the spaces it came to occupy and affect. Up to a point, as Anaya argues, the Boom was: “a phenomenon from Spain that spread to other Spanish-speaking countries” (2017). Díez-Canedo Flores, in interview for this dissertation, stresses that many Boom novels were translated very quickly into other languages, which raised their profile and extended the marketing period in both the foreign and Spanish language markets (2017). The significance of this process, the Boom, would be then that the international literary canon expanded beyond Europe and the English-speaking world to include another cultural region.

The readership side of the Boom was also significant, as Ayén observes, also in interview for this thesis, when he describes it as a phenomenon that included an enormous number of readers: “if it had merely been something in which critics or a small number of cult readers were involved, we wouldn’t be talking about it today. We wouldn’t be discussing it in these terms because there would be no justification for calling it the ‘Boom’” (2017). So, regardless of some critiques against the label or the phenomenon itself, there are events and processes that could be analysed to reach an understanding of the transformations involved in the Latin American Boom

I, nevertheless, have to acknowledge and make reference to the debate around this issue. Some Boom contemporaries and predecessors have repeatedly denied the existence of the phenomenon or their role in it — and also somehow wished and claimed to have been part of it. For example, the Cuban novelist Alejo Carpentier, who was older than most of the Boom writers, wrote: “I’ve never believed in the Boom [...]. It’s just a passing fancy” (Centeno, 2007, p. 41). At the height of the Boom, the Colombian novelist García Márquez sent a letter to Vargas Llosa, dated 12th November 1967, in which he stated that “I think it would be healthy to demystify the Boom” (Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 3963). Over the years, Vargas Llosa has expressed often contradictory opinions on the matter. In 1972, for example, he described the Boom as an “accident of history” (Rama, 1981, p. 59), and in 2016, he not only denied understanding what the Boom was but went so far as to suggest that no one else did, either: “What was the Boom? I don’t know. I don’t think that anyone knows for sure” (Vargas Llosa, 2016). However, in 2012, he had said that “the Boom only lasted 10 or 12 years, although it continues to cast its shadow over us today” (Vargas Llosa, 2012a, p. 59). The blurriness of the idea of the Latin American Boom, is not surprising if we look at it from a hegemonic point of view. Within a discourse analysis perspective, as I wrote before, we could identify the Latin American Boom as an empty signifier: “We do not have to deal with an excess or deficiency of signification, but with the precise theoretical possibility of something which points, from within the process of signification, to the discursive presence of its own limits” (Laclau, 2007, p. 36). This implies, on the one hand, that “Boom” was not merely an equivocal or ambiguous term, but a notion that pointed to the boundaries of a phenomenon rather than to the definition of its contents; and, on the other hand, that the idea of the Latin American Boom needed to be free of an ultimate meaning to enable the articulation of the diverse social elements analysed in this dissertation as coming together in the hegemony that, in turn, made the Boom phenomenon possible.

On a related issue, it has often been said that the Boom was synonymous with magic realism, the literary style that enables fantasy to emerge amidst a realistic narration of events, although this was not the case, as the works of these Latin American writers reflected multiple aesthetics (Chirinos, 2012, pp. 11–12). In the view of the Peruvian academic and literary critic, José Miguel Oviedo, there were major differences between the Latin American novels written at the time, but they had one aspect in common: their experimentation with forms (2007, p. 54), although this manifested itself

in different ways. Granados agrees, stating that the Boom was more than just a commercial manoeuvre when he says that “it was not just something that someone made up, there were radical new literary aspects to the Boom” (2016). Díez-Canedo Flores concurs: “it could not just have been a media construct” (2017). Oviedo’s point of view is more nuanced: while he acknowledges the commercial aspect of the Boom, he also suggests that there was a “notable surge in great novels at the start of the 1960s”, and that these works and the main players in the Boom sparked international interest in Latin American authors whose work had been published in the preceding decades and who, thus far, had only received local attention in very specific intellectual and cultural spheres (2007, p. 55). Ayén also adds that the literary protagonists of the Boom had a common idea about what the novel stood for, despite their different styles, and that what would unite them would be their belief that it would be the literary genre “that would best express the human condition and the complexity of what it means to be human” (Ayén 2017). Similarly, these experiences reveal the different facets of the book industry: the economic, the cultural, the personal, and the social. This points towards my focus of interest, that is to say, not aesthetic judgement of literature, but how these publishing events marked a novel public presence of books coming from a region that had previously been dismissed.

The opinion of the Spanish literary agent Carmen Balcells was largely at odds with the views that denied literary substance to the phenomenon, as she said: “‘Boom’ is an invented word that points to the linguistic, thematic, and formal renewal of the novel” (Ayén, 2014, pos. 2252). However, I shall insist, from a social or publishing perspective, some aspects of the Boom reach far beyond the literary. That this phenomenon arose specifically in the book industry is due at least in part to the fact that this new market emerged through a very specific type of publishing house: small Spanish companies with a pre-eminently cultural focus (Esteban and Gallego, 2011: pos. 3829–3840). This reinforces an aspect of the Boom that I have already suggested: its hegemonic nature was not exclusively economic, but instead involved different facets of the creation of social meanings. A number of factors converged in time and socially articulated to reconfigure hegemony. This moved the cultural focus to Latin America, and this would eventually transform literary works into commercial successes, allowing these writers to become professional authors, while reshaping the management model for the book industry. Two key figures of this were players from within the Spanish book industry: Carlos Barral, the

editor at the heart of the Boom, and the literary agent Carmen Balcells, both of whom I will discuss in chapter 5. The two were responsible for integrating the Boom writers into Barcelona and Europe in both personal and intellectual terms. Against the backdrop of a city with a long publishing tradition, a three-part team emerged: authors, literary agent, and editor. They worked together toward the common goal of internationalisation.

Regardless of whether the Boom was a generation of writers who embodied an innovative literary movement or a marketing strategy involving an effective advertising campaign — both of which are common interpretations of the Boom, as I explain later in the literature review in chapter 1— in this study I argue that the Boom needs to be approached from a sociological perspective if we are to understand the political economy of the Spanish-language publishing industry, which brings together publishing management models, the agency of professionalisation of the writers in question, and the cultural policies implemented in the 1960s in Spain and Mexico, two countries whose shared history stretches back to the 16th-century.

My study shows that the convergence of the aforementioned various factors meant the effects of the Boom reached beyond the world of literature and also implied an industrial, social, and cultural transformation in which Latin American literature and culture passed from near invisibility to having a central place. In a similar vein, Garrels, paraphrasing Rama, wrote that, during the Boom, multiple factors came together to make it possible for Latin American literature to have international audiences and for the figure of genuine professional writers to emerge (Garrels, 1981, p. 294). Consequently, the central argument of this research project is as follows: the Latin American Boom was the turning point that marked the start of the consolidation of the hegemony of Spain's book industry over those of other Spanish-speaking countries.

The Boom Protagonists

The process at the core of the Boom entailed a select group of Latin American authors and their work reaching an international readership. In the first half of the 1960s, therefore, some novelists emerged onto the Spanish-speaking literary and cultural scene, achieving unprecedented fame. Vargas Llosa, as quoted by Donoso, has described the main players as “the privileged few” (Donoso, 2018, p. 14). Through their literary works

and mostly their agency of professionalisation of their craft, the key Boom writers also played a part in building the hegemony of Spain's book industry within the Spanish-speaking world, as we will see in chapter 6.

Critics, readers, and even the writers themselves continue to disagree over which authors and works were part of the Boom. Despite this, the unavoidably mentioned figures are, by order of their birth: Julio Cortázar (1914), from Argentina;⁶ Gabriel García Márquez (1927), from Colombia;⁷ Carlos Fuentes (1928), from Mexico;⁸ and Mario Vargas Llosa (1936), from Peru.⁹ I share Donoso's (2018, pp. 117–121) stance that all four of these writers attained a literary and commercial status that no other Latin American writers of the time enjoyed. They changed the course of Spanish-language publishing significantly. This brings us to the question of who the main players in the Latin American Boom were.

Scholars include different authors in the Boom. Regarding Donoso, García Huidobro argues that he was indeed part of the Boom, but that after writing the book *Historia personal del boom (The Boom in Spanish American Literature: A Personal History)*, which I will discuss in chapter 1, and acknowledging that he had not achieved the publishing success of Cortázar, García Márquez, Fuentes, and Vargas Llosa, Donoso came to think of himself more as an observer than a protagonist of the Boom (García Huidobro, 2016, p. 497). Ayén even lists what he deems to be the "requirements" for being part of the Boom (Iglesia, 2019),¹⁰ writing from a viewpoint that, in my opinion, draws on both the literary and the political to paint a portrait of Latin American intellectuals at the time. However, from my perspective, there is no clear list of criteria that would automatically make a writer a member of the Boom. If we look at the ages of the writers in question, we cannot describe them as being part of the same generation either, since their ages varied considerably. In 1962, the year when *La ciudad y los perros (The Time of the Hero)* was awarded the Biblioteca Breve Prize, the youngest of the four Boom protagonists, Vargas Llosa, was 26; Fuentes 34, García Márquez 35; while the oldest, Cortázar, at 48, was nearly

⁶ Julio Florencio Cortázar (26th August 1914, Ixelles, Belgium-12th February 1984, Paris, France).

⁷ Gabriel José de la Concordia García Márquez (6th March 1927, Aracataca, Colombia-17th April 2014, Mexico City).

⁸ Carlos Fuentes Macías (11th November 1928, Panama City, Panama-15th May 2012, Mexico City, Mexico).

⁹ Jorge Mario Pedro Vargas Llosa (28th March 1936, Arequipa, Peru).

¹⁰ Although Ayén acknowledges that, strictly speaking, only García Márquez, Fuentes, and Vargas Llosa fulfilled his criteria, his list of requirements for being part of the Boom was as follows: supporting the Cuban Revolution at its beginnings, living in Barcelona or visiting it frequently, and being represented by Carmen Balcells (Iglesia, 2019).

twice as old as Vargas Llosa (Morán, 2015, p. 41). Therefore, we cannot regard the Boom as a generation of writers. If we examine their novels in literary terms, they seem to be so different from one another that perhaps is difficult to label them as a homogenous movement. Despite the close friendships between the writers in question during the period I focus on, the differences in the literary qualities of their work, their political stances, and their public profiles mean that they cannot be thought of as a club or association, as Ayén seems to suggest. The Boom was an observable social phenomenon that was manifested also through quantifiable measures such as book sales and writers' incomes, rather than involving conscious, deliberate actions or initiatives on the part of a homogenous group that thought of itself in these terms.

The criteria to focus on these four writers are as follows. Despite the lack of ultimate consensus on who the major players of the Boom were, there is some agreement among scholars in considering them to be at the heart of the phenomenon (Ayén, 2014; Donoso, 2018; Esteban and Gallego, 2011; Rama, 1981). I have chosen to focus on them not just because of this widespread agreement on their role but also because I have identified other significant social and publishing-related factors in their profiles. My selection is not based on literary, political, or gender criteria, which are the ones that are most frequently invoked in discussions on whether a certain author was part of the Boom or not, but attending, instead, to their aims at professionalisation and the role they played in the transformation of the Spanish language book industries. This is why I refer to them in this thesis as the protagonists of the Boom.¹¹

I will now describe in more detail some ways in which these authors conducted their own literary-cum-intellectual careers to make my criteria more explicit and, at the same time, show the empirical focus of my study.

I have chosen to include Julio Cortázar for several reasons. In my opinion, his publishing career represents the transition between nonprofessional writers and those who set out to earn their livings through their pens, from book sales. He was also the first of the four writers I focus on to have his work translated into other languages.¹² In terms

¹¹ The only person I have found to disagree with this opinion is Peruvian writer Alfredo Bryce Echenique. Although Cortázar thought of himself as a member of the Boom, in Bryce Echenique's opinion, he was not (Ayén, 2014, pos. 8921).

¹² Although the work of Latin American writers had occasionally been translated before this point, translations were the exception rather than the rule. Cortázar ushered in a period in which the translation of Latin American writing into other European languages became standard practice. This process began in

of the criteria for my research, Cortázar provides interesting features for analysis as he was the only one of the four protagonists of the Boom who did not agree to work with the literary agent Carmen Balcells in his lifetime.¹³ Finally, the map of his publishing career touches on Argentina, Mexico, and Spain, which enables me to analyse his professional decisions and how they affected the way his work reached the reading public.

There are multiple reasons for including Gabriel García Márquez in this and other studies of the Boom. As I noted above, he is one of the writers who is most commonly considered to be part of the Boom. In literary terms, he is the first contemporary global author to write in Spanish. I am particularly interested in how far he contributed to constructing the hegemony of Spanish publishing industry, as he is emblematic in terms of both his collaboration with Balcells and the internationalisation of his work. Indeed, his novels were a watershed in negotiations around copyright and translation rights, in that it sold so well that Balcells was obliged to divide up the commercial rights to his books by country to manage sales better. Specifically, his novels marked the start of the practice of dividing up the book market in the Spanish-speaking world. García Márquez also enables me to analyse how an author went about managing his own work over time. He began his career by self-publishing his first book in Colombia, a common practice for Latin American authors of his generation. His next few books were also published on a small scale, namely through a university press and a small publishing house, both of which were based in Mexico. Although he already had reached an agreement with Balcells about translations of his work, she was not involved in his decision to publish *Cien años de soledad* (*One Hundred Years of Solitude*) in Argentina in 1967. The book became an overnight bestseller and has remained one ever since. García Márquez then consolidated his career while being managed and represented by the Balcells agency, with whom he formed a symbiotic relationship that gave the agency symbolic power that would help firmly establish its prestige as the representative for all the best authors writing in Spanish at the time. This enabled it to attract significant new authors to its client list and undoubtedly made it the unofficial agency of the Latin American Boom.

Carlos Fuentes is another writer who has allowed me to delve into issues relating to the construction of the hegemony of the Spanish book industry. Fuentes seemed

1961, when Editions Fayard published its French translation of *Los juegos*, which had originally been published in Spanish, in Argentina, by publishing house Sudamericana in 1959.

¹³ All the same, after Cortázar's death, Aurora Bernárdez, who inherited his literary estate, entrusted its management to the Balcells agency.

destined for international prestige from the outset. The son of a diplomat and part of a family with great social and symbolic capital, he was able to set the parameters of his literary career from the beginning. While the other protagonists of the Boom were rejected by publishing houses at different points in their early publishing journeys, I have found no record of Fuentes ever having experienced this. Indeed, his first book was published by Fondo de Cultura Económica, then the only Mexican publishing house with an international distribution network.¹⁴ According to different sources (Donoso, 2018, p. 63; Rodríguez Monegal, 1984, p. 32), Fuentes was the first Latin American author to have had a literary agent, and he chose the American Carl D. Brandt for the job, as there were not yet any agents in the Spanish-speaking world who operated on the scale he was looking for. It was only later that Balcells came to represent him, enabling his work to be translated into several languages and to reach a global readership. Fuentes won the prizes that helped shape the canon of contemporary Spanish-language literature, such as the Biblioteca Breve Prize, which he was awarded in 1967. In other words, Fuentes's own agency is what led him to seek to become a professional writer and his career sheds light on several of the factors that were articulated to make the Latin American Boom possible.

Mario Vargas Llosa is the fourth author I have chosen to include in my study. Like Fuentes, he is a key player in the social practices that I analyse. Vargas Llosa has published all of his narrative work in Europe — this being a unique experience among the Boom writers — while being represented by the Balcells agency. The 1962 Biblioteca Breve Prize established a two-way dynamic: Vargas Llosa's work gained prestige, and the literary value that Vargas Llosa soon accrued earned the prize a reputation as a serious cultural benchmark. Vargas Llosa is an example of a professional writer who has managed to spend his time dedicated full-time to his craft. As he is also the only living protagonist of the Boom, I was able to interview him over the course of this research project.

I would like to point out something regarding literary protagonists. There are at least two things about my list that immediately stand out. First, all four are Spanish-language writers, and second, they are all men — indeed, Donoso referred to the Boom as “an all-boys gang” (2018, p. 78). Although the Boom is usually described as a Latin

¹⁴ After a time as CEO of various private publishing houses, in 2002 I became the CEO of Mexico's state-owned publishing house, Fondo de Cultura Económica, and remained in the position until 2009. I then became president of Mexico's National Council for Culture and the Arts, now the Ministry of Culture, from 2009 to 2012. I reflect on this experience and how it has influenced my research in chapter 2 dedicated to the methodological section of this thesis.

American phenomenon, the fact is that, at least in the stage I analyse, it did not include publications in Portuguese or authors from Brazil and Portugal, and thus neither does this research project. As I have noted, my universe of study are two Spanish-language publishing industries — those of Spain and Mexico — and the protagonists of the Boom who, by critical and social consensus, were all writers who worked in Spanish and, in this sense, in the 1960s the Latin American Boom was in fact a Spanish American phenomenon.¹⁵

On the matter of women's involvement in the Boom, it should be noted that in recent years there has been a reappraisal of the work of women writers who predated the Boom, were contemporary to it, and came after it. In my literary opinion, it is curious, to say the least, that female authors did not appear alongside the men who are identified with the Boom, since, for example, the Mexican writers Rosario Castellanos (1925-1974) and Elena Garro (1920-1998) both produced experimental fiction, which seems to be one of the defining features of Boom writing. Garro is particularly interesting in this regard, since her novel *Los recuerdos del porvenir* (*Recollections of Things to Come*) was published in 1963, the year that ushered in the Boom. Furthermore, many aspects of the novel, most notably its temporal structure, foreshadowed the magic realism of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, which García Márquez published four years later, in 1967.

The fact that no women writers are considered to have been part of the Boom is a fascinating topic but is one that lies beyond the bounds of this research project. I agree with the Chilean writer and feminist activist Alejandra Costamagna's appraisal that "the Latin American Boom was an exclusively male phenomenon. It revolved entirely around men and did not include a single woman, even though Elena Garro, Clarice Lispector, Rosario Castellanos, and one of her predecessors, María Luisa Bombal, were all writing at the time" (Montes, 2019). And I would to add the Brazilian Nélida Piñon, who had close friendships with the Boom protagonists, and whom I interviewed for this dissertation (2016). To deal with the reasons for this, we need to remember that this was a time, the 1960s, when feminism was only just beginning to be taken seriously in public, and these early battles focused on issues such as women's right to work and their economic independence. Furthermore, the fact of the matter is that the Boom was a male-only

¹⁵ Further research could look in the Latin American dimension of the Boom, i.e. Brazilian participation, by means of extending the time period, taking into consideration cultural and social processes other than those that concern my own focus in this dissertation.

phenomenon: forcibly including a female presence in this study even though no such presence existed in the factuality of social practices makes little sense, despite the literary qualities of several female writers of the time. My own approach, of course, would not like to ignore that the absence of women from the Boom had an exclusionary character, with parallels to female exclusion of the public sphere in the 19th-century: “Women were not banished to the family arena, of course, without any accruing effects. Indeed, their place within the family was the precondition for an enrichment of the individual as well as an enrichment of personal concerns which, while compatible with the form of possessive individualism fostered by capitalism, also carried the seeds of a critique of that same form of subjectivity” (Landes, 1984, p. 29). But the analysis of exclusion is a vast topic and an issue of research in itself. So, at least for my current research, I focus on the way the events developed in the exclusionary context observed during the Boom. I will now look into the time period I cover in these pages.

The Dates of the Boom

With regard to the period the Boom covers, my focus has been on identifying the Boom as being primarily about publishing. Because of this, I have identified specific start and end dates that are relevant to the book industry, as I will now explain in more detail. Taking specific publishing events as reference points has the advantage of enabling me to define a period that is based on more than just anecdotal evidence or perceptions, but instead relates to social events with clearly identifiable consequences.

The early 1960s saw a wave of literary achievements in Latin America. There was publication of works that would become key elements of the corpus of literature written in Spanish. While not all of these became publishing turning points, I will make a brief account of significant titles in order to demonstrate that the period was a flourishing moment for Spanish American fiction. Esteban and Gallego list some of the works that are testament to this: Cuban Alejo Carpentier’s *El siglo de las luces* (*Explosion in a Cathedral*) (1962), Fuentes’ *La muerte de Artemio Cruz* (*The Death of Artemio Cruz*) (1962), Cortázar’s *Rayuela* (*Hopscotch*) (1963), and Vargas Llosa’s *The Time of the Hero* (1963) (2011, pos. 3840), all of which have become cornerstones of the Spanish-language literary canon and beyond.

A series of events conspired to shine the international spotlight onto Latin American novels. The first of these is the decision to award the 1962 Biblioteca Breve Prize to the Peruvian novel *The Time of the Hero*, which was published in 1963. As I will explore in chapter 6, several events were articulated to make this decision possible, to cause it to have a public impact, and for it to pave the way for Latin American novels reaching a wider readership, as the prize drew the attention of different groups of readers to Latin America's literary output. With the aforementioned prize, Vargas Llosa became the first Latin American to win the Biblioteca Breve Prize in Spain, which was organised by the publishing house Seix-Barral. This company bore the surnames of its founders, Víctor Seix and Carlos Barral. The Biblioteca Breve Prize had only been awarded to Spanish writers up to that point (Martínez Martín, 2015a, pp. 614–615). In the five years since its founding, the prize had already become a touchstone in the Spanish-language literary world (Rama, 1981, pp. 66–67), so Esteban and Gallego (2011, pos. 3895) argue that awarding it to Vargas Llosa in some ways marked the birth of the Boom. According to my publishing criteria it, indeed, signalled the beginning of new modes in the publishing industry, which involved, for instance, linking the publication of literary works to major international prizes and the publicity attached to them.

As I wrote above, Vargas Llosa's first novel, *The Time of the Hero*, "opened the door to the Boom. It was, undoubtedly, the book that ushered in the new era" (Ayén, 2014, pos. 3869). Larraz provides insight into why the book was published in Spain in the first place, rather than in Argentina, which had been, until recently, at the centre of the South American publishing industry but in the 1960s was experiencing serious economic problems, due to events such as a runaway inflation, which had a detrimental effect on local publishing houses (Larraz, 2013, loc. 3561–3564). As opposed to being published in a country with financial troubles, according to Esteban and Gallego (2011, pos. 3869), with Spain as its launching pad, *The Time of the Hero* became a bestseller both in Spain and Latin America and catapulted Latin American literature into the limelight.

Given that *The Time of the Hero* was a milestone in the history of Spanish-language book sales, it would be reasonable to point to its publication as the turning point where Latin American literature became attractive to the Spanish industry in publishing terms. However, Ayén (2014, pos. 908) argues that it was *One Hundred Years of Solitude* that "was the real leap, the start of the brand that we call the Boom", thinking both in literary and publishing terms. Between 1967, when it was first published in Argentina, and 1976,

over one million copies of García Márquez's book were sold in Spanish, leading Ayén (2017) to later argue that "sales of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* were absolutely unprecedented and can only be compared with those of Don Quijote [...] it really was a massive sales phenomenon" (2017). Esteban and Gallegos (2011, pos. 3930) agree that the Boom authors' sales did not really begin to take off until 1968, with *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, which outperformed everything that had come before it by a huge margin. These authors seem to be thinking in publishing terms but are referring actually to sales. The apparent discrepancy comes, therefore, from the different criteria we are looking at when analysing the Boom. In this particular case, Ayén, Esteban and Gallegos are looking at the Boom as a literary phenomenon and registering sales figures. As for me, I am looking at the broader picture of the publishing industry, not only sales records.

Over the course of this thesis, I also show how the Spanish-language publishing world was transformed in fundamental ways within this period of time. A Barcelona-based literary agent came to occupy a key role in the Spanish-language publishing industry, translations of Latin American authors' works began to be commissioned, the authors themselves decided to focus their working time exclusively on writing (a decision they were only able to make because of how their literary careers were developing in the new context that was emerging, which they were helping to build), and a strategic design for distributing books from Spain was put into place. Given this trend toward the publication and consumption of Latin American novels, from my publishing-oriented perspective, the high point of the Boom and the year when these practices became standard was 1967, when *One Hundred Years of Solitude* was first published. García Márquez's landmark novel quickly achieved international acclaim in several languages, becoming one of the most important literary works in the contemporary world.¹⁶

In this sense, in regards of publishing and cultural transformation, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* consolidated what Vargas Llosa had begun with *The Time of the Hero*. Vargas Llosa himself has argued that "it would be fairer to say that the pioneering work that heralded the arrival of the Boom was Carlos Fuentes' first novel *Where the Air Is Clear*, which was published in 1958, that is, four years before mine" (Vargas Llosa, 2012a, p. 53). Again, the lack of coincidence comes from contrasting criteria, since I have already established that in such a remark Vargas Llosa is looking at the literary features of the

¹⁶ The year 1968, for example, was when *Cien años de soledad* was first translated into French.

novels and is dismissing the implications his own work had in the operation of the Spanish-language publishing industries. Such implications went far beyond the publication of a notable novel, as had been the case with *Where the Air Is Clear*, which had not been as momentous a publishing or cultural event as the publication of *The Time of the Hero* and as *One Hundred Years of Solitude* would be.

According to Esteban and Gallego (2011, pos. 3963), literary success marked the start of major advertising campaigns for these writers' works, which focused on their Latin American origins, putting a positive spin on this. Meanwhile, the authors in question also stepped up their academic activities and television appearances. The accumulation of these events began to generate new, positive meanings regarding Latin America, which were largely created and expressed from Spain. Processes that had been several years in the making, became indisputable when *One Hundred Years of Solitude* was published. That same year saw the publication of novels such as *Tres tristes tigres* (*Three Trapped Tigers*), by the Cuban writer Guillermo Cabrera Infante, in 1967, and Vargas Llosa's second novel, *La casa verde* (*The Green House*), which won Venezuela's prestigious Rómulo Gallegos Prize in 1967. Such year, therefore, marks the height and normalisation of the publishing transformation I am interested in. Thus, it was a sum of events that played a part in this positive publishing wave for Latin American authors which enables me to pinpoint the consolidation of the Boom, understood from a publishing standpoint.

From my perspective, which is rooted in what I propose we could call the sociology of publishing, the Latin American Boom thus runs from 1963 to 1967, as I am thinking of it as the period of growth, expansion and transformation — as implied in the name — which becomes a steady state, a naturalisation as it were, of Latin American literature on the global scene. Therefore, these two years are regarded, in this thesis, as the starting point and the moment of normalisation, or sedimentation, of the practices of the Boom because those were the dates when these two landmark books were published. In analysing this period, I show how the Spanish-language publishing world was fundamentally transformed by the emergence of the figure of the literary agent, the decision to translate Latin American books from Spanish into other languages, the possibility of writers becoming true professionals focusing exclusively on writing, the strategic design of distribution from Spain, and the rise of literary prizes that sought to have symbolic and economic consequences.

The Comparison between Spain and Mexico

In this section, I will explain why comparing the publishing industries of Spain and Mexico is relevant. The Spanish-speaking world obviously reaches far beyond these two countries — the diverse origins of the four protagonists of the Boom speaks to this. Spanish is spoken in 21 nations,¹⁷ including the countries of Spanish America (Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela), several Caribbean countries (Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico), Spain, and even one African country (Equatorial Guinea). It would clearly have been impossible to cover all of these countries in a PhD thesis. Before deciding which countries to focus on, I had to define on what specific issues my research would focus and over what period, of which I have already explained the logic of analysis.

So, as well as the unavoidable practical issue of how to make the research project feasible and given my own experience and networks — as I examine in the methodology chapter — there was also the question of academic relevance. My intentions when I began my PhD proved overly ambitious: I had initially set out to cover the entire Spanish-language book industry. As I mentioned at the beginning of this introduction, it is clear to even the most casual observer that Spain dominates the Spanish-language book industry in the 21st-century. Consequently, one key step in defining what I would research entailed identifying the moment when the Spanish book industry began to occupy such hegemonic position, as it were, to build a framework of reference that went well-beyond publishing dominance. Paradoxically, that turning point happened to be the Latin American Boom. I say that it is paradoxical because what catapulted Spain to this position was the publishing of literature from Spanish America, rather than from Spanish writers. All of this was effectively managed from Barcelona by individuals like Víctor Seix¹⁸ and Carlos Barral,¹⁹ and the literary agent Carmen Balcells.²⁰ By doing so, Seix and Barral redefined

¹⁷ This list does not include countries and places where Spanish is not an official language but there are a large number of Spanish speakers, such as the United States, Brazil, Belize, Andorra, Gibraltar, and the Philippines.

¹⁸ Víctor Seix y Perearnau (1st July 1923, Barcelona, Spain-21st October 1967, Frankfurt, Germany).

¹⁹ Carlos Barral y Agesta (2nd June 1928, Barcelona, Spain-12th December 1989, Barcelona, Spain).

²⁰ Carmen Balcells Segalà (9th August 1930, Santa Fe de Segarra, Spain-20th September 2015, Barcelona, Spain)

how the industry worked, while, through Balcells' work, the literary agent came to occupy a prominent place in the Spanish-speaking world for the first time ever. For this reason, it was clear to me that Spain's book industry must occupy a central role in my research.

This thesis could have focused exclusively on Spain. However, the paradoxical issue mentioned above meant that this alone did not seem to be enough. Another researcher, Sorá, put forward a relevant argument: "studies on books and publishing in Spanish America cannot be divided up into national cultures or markets. They need to bring together the local, national, and transnational dimensions" (Sorá, 2017). This is so for both economic and cultural reasons. Why, if Fuentes's first novel was published by a Mexican company with an international distribution system, did the Boom start in Spain, specifically in Barcelona? If, as we shall see in chapter 3, Mexico was the first country in the Americas after the Spanish Conquest to operate its own printing press, and then went on to develop a centuries-long publishing tradition, why were the circumstances not ripe there for a phenomenon such as the Boom to develop? Why was Mexico not the starting point for the Boom if that was where Fuentes was from and where García Márquez eventually settled permanently? By then, Mexico was also the largest Spanish-speaking country in the world, so it had the greatest potential number of readers. This puzzle made Mexico the ideal point of comparison with Spain as I set about trying to understand why cultural and publishing hegemony was constructed in one country and not the other.

There were also other reasons that made a comparison of how the publishing industries developed in Mexico and Spain interesting. These relate to the features the two countries' industries had in common and the differences between them. Their similarities included the creative raw material they worked with (books on different topics, but all in the same language — Spanish), in other words, books that were often a legacy that was shared by the whole Spanish-speaking world. Another point of overlap was the people who were involved in publishing these books, given that Mexico, like Argentina, had given asylum to a substantial number of Spanish intellectuals with a background in the publishing industry. As a result of the Spanish Civil War, these refugees were looking for a new place to live and new ways to earn a living.

Another, more interesting point is that the two countries implemented two different management models. In Spain, the model included the literary agent and the printer, and publishing houses had independent, outside distributors who specialized in what they did. In Mexico, in contrast, there were no literary agents and publishing houses

printed and distributed their books themselves — in other words, they played a part in almost all of the book publishing chain, so they were unspecialised, had a limited capacity of distribution, and were unable to leverage economies of scale. These differences contributed further to my interest in comparing the two industries to better understand how the Boom meant a hegemonic turn in favour of Spain.

There are a series, therefore, of justifications for comparing Spain and Mexico: the relevance of Spain to this topic, the significance of comparing it to Mexico, and similarities and differences regarding the topic in question. All the same, none of this precludes me from comparing Spain's book industry with that of another country or selection of countries. This field of research is open, and other studies of this sort will only enrich it. However, I wanted to mention two factors that helped confirm my decision to focus exclusively on Mexico's and Spain's industries. One of these is Cuba and the triumph of the Cuban Revolution on 1st January 1959, which transformed the Caribbean country into a political, social, and cultural reference point that drew the world's attention to Latin America (Rojas, 2018, pp. 9–22). The cultural activism of the Castro regime and the international backdrop of the Cold War meant that, like Mexico, Havana could have become the starting point for the Boom. However, this did not happen, because, despite the symbolic significance that Cuba was building, it was insufficient to turn Havana into the cultural capital of the Spanish-speaking world as the site where, for example, authors were more interested in getting their works published and, more broadly, the place from where a new international appreciation of Latin American literature was being built. The other key location in the story was Argentina, which had a high-profile, a dynamic book industry and which, indeed, was where the original masterpiece of the Boom, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, was first published. However, Argentina's industry, like that of Mexico, lacked the international profile that Spain was already developing, as I will explore in chapter 4. In sum, there is no shortage of reasons for examining the book industry in other Spanish-speaking countries, but it was clear to me that a comparison between Spain and Mexico would enable me to examine how the Spanish industry was undergoing a process that would construct it into the dominant player of the language while also looking into the failure of its potential main competitor to establish itself in such position, thus helping us understand how and why Spain occupies a hegemonic position the Spanish-language book industry.

Consequently, this thesis tracks the articulation of the international context, a flagship city, a publisher, a literary agent, cultural policies, and the agency of four authors in the construction of the Latin American Boom. All this, within the argument that such articulation made it possible for the Spanish publishing industry to start consolidating its hegemony within the Spanish speaking world.

In doing so, my thesis goes beyond earlier literary studies that focused largely on identifying the literary qualities of the Boom novels, or exercises from the field of cultural studies that examine the advertising apparatus that was created around the Boom authors. In contrast, my research takes a sociological standpoint and shows how a specific example of social and cultural hegemony arose and drew together multiple factors that range from the individual to the political.

Likewise, in theoretical terms, this study contributes to understanding hegemonies, which tend to be studied in terms of national societies. However, the Latin American Boom shows that it is also possible for transnational hegemonies to arise and be analysed, just as in the case of empires and, in contemporary times, of neo-liberalism in connection with cultural globalisation.

All in all, what follows in the chapters of this thesis is new knowledge on the Latin American Boom, as it has brought together the comparative analysis of history, the development of publishing industries, and political ideologies and public policies of Spain and Mexico at the time; together with the examination of the networking among the actors of the phenomenon and the agency of the writers who were aiming to become global cultural figures. In doing this, I advance a novel interpretation of the Boom as a process of hegemonic change by connecting events that, to my knowledge, had not been previously linked. This has led me, as well, to advance — in the conclusion to this dissertation — some key ideas on a face of cultural globalisation which is illustrated by the Latin American Boom. With this I hope to challenge critical views on globalisation and to contribute to a broader theoretical understanding of the processes of global culture.

As I will mention in the methodology section, I have already made presentations based upon this piece of research. I have found very positive reactions, that have included the publication of an article in Chile on one of the issues dealt with in a chapter of this dissertation²¹. This pleases me as it is the outcome of several years of research, reflection

²¹ Sáizar, Consuelo (2017) 'La B como epicentro de la Ñ. El boom y su impacto en el mundo editorial'. In: *Revista Dossier*. 36, Santiago de Chile: Universidad Diego Portales, pp. 29-33. Also reprinted in: Sáizar,

and writing. I am, therefore, confident that the reader will see the evidence of the academic skills I acquire, which include the ways of doing research, of approaching a theme from a scholarly point of view, and, of course a detailed, original and new understanding of the Latin American Boom.

To summarize, in this thesis I look at the Latin American Boom to analyse the beginnings of the construction of hegemony in the contemporary Spanish book industry by comparing the publishing industries in Spain and Mexico. This I do following Laclau's and Mouffe's theory of hegemony, which understands society as a construct of social meanings which gives sense to human action and encompasses both intangible and material practices. The political economy of the publishing world was different in each of the two countries. For the first time in history, Spain's management model and the political economy of book publishing in the country made it possible for Latin American authors (or a specific, Barcelona-based group of these) to become professional writers and for their work to reach international audiences both in Spanish and in translation. This set of events is what constituted the Latin American Boom.

The rationale of the order of my empirical chapters is to begin with a historical examination, in chapter 3, which analyses the Colonial factor involved in the Boom phenomenon, and which gave prevalence to cultural production originating in Spain. Then, in chapter 4, I explore the role played by the cultural and publishing policies of the governments of Spain and Mexico, noting that while both were nationalistic, the Spanish one propelled the export of books. In chapter 5, I analyse the networking among the key players of the Boom, showing how without their coincidence in time and personal relationships the phenomenon would hardly have taken place. Finally, in chapter 6, I reflect upon the agency of professionalisation that guided the authors and note how they achieved their purpose in a changing publishing context. All these chapters present topics of analysis that articulated horizontally as a novel hegemonic conformation required all of them.

My research spans the years between the publication of Mario Vargas Llosa's *The Time of the Hero* (1963), when the Boom began, and Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967), its high point. As I will describe in detail in the

Sáizar, Consuelo (2018) 'La B como epicentro de la Ñ. El "boom" y su impacto en el mundo editorial'. In: *Trama & Texturas*, 35, Madrid, pp. 27-35.

methodological section, this thesis is based on interviews, bibliographical and archival research, a reconstruction of the historical context, and cultural, social, and political analysis. It draws on Laclau and Mouffe's theory of hegemony to understand how these factors converged and were articulated to establish the hegemony of Spain's book industry. This study's empirical findings include the fact that the Boom authors opted to pursue their careers under the censorship of the Franco regime in Spain rather than continue working from Latin America, with its precarious publishing mechanisms and distribution systems, and a place where the literary scene was still being shaped. By exploring how Spain's hegemony emerged, this thesis seeks to contribute to the sociology of publishing and culture by showing that a novel social way of understanding literary production and publishing emerged from the Latin American Boom and shaped the practices of an industry and a set of cultures.

Chapter 1

Theoretical Framework

Among other things, the Boom meant that Latin American literature became visible in much of the rest of the world, notably in Western publishing markets. This was made possible by a series of economic, cultural, social, and political processes, which need to be contemplated in any sociological examination of the Boom. This chapter explores the theoretical tools I have found to be suitable to analyse these events since they make it possible to analyse the way in which the historic background, the public policies, the networking among key characters, and the agency of professionalisation of the writers articulated with each other, and led to the construction of novel paradigms in the world of Spanish language publishing.

The structure of this chapter goes as follows: I first refer to the name and the characterisation of the phenomenon in order to introduce the topic, I then present the prevailing approaches to the study of the Latin American Boom so as to better locate my own contribution; and then go on to introduce the theory of hegemony, its deployment and the explanation of some of its key concepts such as articulation, hegemony and dislocation.

In chapter 1, therefore, I expose my theoretical framework — the theory of discourse and hegemony as proposed by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe — arguing why it is a suitable social theory since it enables the analysis of the articulation of multiple and diverse elements. This articulation constructed new cultural and social paradigms in a transnational context and such novel paradigms were ones that broaden transnational cultural appreciation, while including the use of industrial and commercial resources for the promotion of literature and taking advantage of the articulation with the writers' aims of professionalisation.

To introduce the empirical case with more detail, the story of the events could be summarised as follows. Even before the countries of Latin America declared their independence,²² they had produced literature of a type that would prove to be part of what Bloom later characterised as the “Western Canon” (Bloom, 1995). There are several

²² Bloom refers, for example, to a Mexican writer from Colonial times, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1648-1695), though, tellingly, he classifies her as an author from Spain (Bloom, 1995, p. 543).

possible examples of figures who produced such high-standing literature, for example the Mexican Alfonso Reyes and the Argentinian Jorge Luis Borges. Although he was part of the generation that preceded the Boom, Borges lived through the phenomenon — and perhaps, to some extent, incited it, as we will see in chapter 3 — that revolved around younger writers like Julio Cortázar, Carlos Fuentes, Gabriel García Márquez, and Mario Vargas Llosa. Like Reyes, Borges had achieved great standing in sophisticated, yet limited, literary circles before the 1960s, but he had not yet been enshrined in the pantheon of the greatest writers of the 20th-century as he would later be. Also, in market terms, he had not reached a large readership in other languages — or, indeed, even in the Spanish-speaking one. Setting individual factors such as personality aside, why had Borges, who would later be considered one of the most fundamental writers of the 20th-century in any language, not achieved international renown? Did the publishing industries of the Spanish-speaking world function in a way that prevented them from creating such standing for its writers? Was it even possible for a writer to achieve global intellectual prominence from Spain or Latin America? Referring to Borges, Vargas Llosa himself would write that “If I had to name a single Spanish language writer of our time whose work will endure and leave a profound mark in literature, I would refer to this poet, short story author and essayist” (2020, loc. 230). So why did Borges not get the same initial prominence as the Boom writers, which he would have if it had all been a matter of “genius” as the common-sense explanation has it?

Things changed following the publication of works by the four writers mentioned above: Cortázar, García Márquez, Fuentes, and Vargas Llosa. The common-sense explanation for their stratospheric rise, one that is widely shared in literary journalism about the Boom, is that it was due to a concurrence of talent and chance that four exceptionally gifted authors happened to come to prominence in four different countries at the same time. My own take on this is closer to the sociology of cultural production advanced by Becker: “I do not intend to present a picture of lonely, inventive geniuses fighting against smug artistic establishments (although that happens, too), [in the case of the Latin American Boom in the authors going, to some extent, against their own national literary traditions, as I will show in chapter 6]. The shift from art to craft and back is not carried out by individuals acting independently; such shifts are successful only insofar as they involve enough people to take over an established art world or to create a new one” (Becker, 1982, p. 298). That is to say, without ruling out individual literary flair as a factor

— and the theoretical approach I will explain in this chapter enables me to pay attention to and integrate the element of subjectivities — an exploration of the Boom from a social rather than a literary perspective would require consideration of other factors. My research, thus, is an examination that is much more concerned with the whole world — in Becker’s terms — or the conditions of possibility, that produce literary “genius”, public careers, and a publishing phenomenon. In doing so, I am also getting away from just the contents of literary works to look at how literary production came about.

The aforementioned elements could include, for instance, that some of the Boom writers spent time living in Barcelona or at the very least visiting. It also happened that while they were based in Barcelona, they were awarded international literary prizes — an issue I will come back in other parts of this dissertation —, their works were published by Spanish publishing houses, various editions were sold in different countries, and their books were translated into multiple languages — this I will explore further in chapter 5. All this transpired largely because of a novel figure in the Spanish-language publishing world: the literary agent, in the person of Carmen Balcells. Why did Latin American literary talent need to launch itself internationally from Spain? Why did Latin American markets need the Boom writers to go through Spain before commercial and critical attention finally fell on other writers from the region like the previous examples of Borges and Reyes? What enabled Spain’s publishing industry to bring about this unprecedented change?

To be able to go into any attempt at answering such questions, we need to understand what is meant by the Latin American Boom. But, as I have suggested, there is actually a significant lack of consensus over its meaning. For the critic Ángel Rama, the Latin American Boom was about consumer society and manifested itself in terms of advertising and sales (1981, p. 51). On at least one occasion, Borges said of the protagonists of the Boom that it was “curious that massive sales make them so happy” (Ayén, 2014, pos. 9010).²³ The editor Carlos Barral put into question the very existence of the phenomenon. This was due, to some extent, to the use of the term “Boom”, which, according to him, always implied some sort of falsehood and, therefore, was utterly inappropriate to name what was happening with Latin American fiction at the time (Ayén, 2014, pos. 9054). According to Chilean novelist José Donoso, who some scholars include

²³ He stated this in an interview with *The Paris Review*.

among the protagonists of the Boom and who was undoubtedly a witness and contemporary to it, “no-one, [...] including critics, the public, different actors with diverse demands, and writers have ever managed to agree on which novelists and which novels were part of the Boom” (2018, p. 13). Touching on the issue in a 1967 letter to Fuentes, García Márquez wrote: “in my view, the so-called Boom is not so much about writers as about readers” (García Márquez, 1967). In another missive addressed to Fuentes, this time from Cortázar, discussing an article in which Fuentes had compared Cortázar to Alejo Carpentier, the Argentinian writer wrote: “you have to acknowledge that the man who wrote *Rayuela* (*Hopscotch*) [written by Cortázar] cannot accept [being compared to] *El siglo de las luces* (*Explosion in a Cathedral*) [written by Carpentier], which couldn’t be further from my book in aesthetic terms” (Ayén, 2014, pos. 8936). Cortázar’s letter reveals that even the very protagonists of the Boom did not agree on what it was. Finally, Vargas Llosa wrote, as previously quoted, “What was the Boom? I don’t know. I don’t think anyone knows for sure,” even though years earlier he had said, “‘Boom’, a word that means nothing, a noise without meaning, was an expression that someone invented to describe the new Latin American literature” (Vargas Llosa, 2012a; Vargas Llosa, 2016). Interestingly, there is coincidence in Vargas Llosa saying that Boom was a “noise without meaning”, as within this framework I argue that the idea of the Latin American Boom became the empty signifier — a concept I will explain further below — that enabled the articulation of the factors analysed in each chapter of this thesis.

As the reader can gather, there seems to be no consensus on the term, and the debate even seems to suggest that there may not even be any substance to it, that is to say that there would be no actual bases to talk about a “Boom”. However, even the critiques to the phenomenon imply solid proof of its existence, i.e. that it meant a new presence and consumption — in plain words: sales — of Latin American novels beyond their country of origin. My research is based on the notion that, from a sociological perspective, it is possible to identify the Latin American Boom as being a series of events — the publication of key novels and the emphatic positive critical echo and readership that followed them, for example — at a specific time — as I explained in the introduction — that together constituted a turning point in the history of the Spanish-language publishing industry. All this is an added difficulty, as it implies conducting research on a contested phenomenon. In order to advance an interpretation of the Boom, as with any other social topic I had to identify its processes, but I also had to consider the

aforementioned conflicting interpretations as data on and part of the phenomenon. In the rest of the chapter I examine the theoretical tools that made it possible for me to tackle such challenge.

Literature review

My view of the Boom does not coincide with the prevailing views of it, which interpret it as either a literary movement or as a marketing manoeuvre around Latin American fiction. Instead, my research shows, from a sociological point of view, the ways in which a social and cultural hegemony was constructed by approaching the Boom strictly in publishing terms.²⁴ This process had serious consequences on the culture of the Spanish-speaking world, particularly on the publishing industry.

Over the last 50 years protagonists and witnesses, admirers and detractors, academics, booksellers, and readers have paid testimony, made objections, put forward analyses, and expressed praise for the Boom, all of which combines to form an extensive bibliography. This research has often been patchy, in some cases contradictory, and in others notably lacking in intellectual rigour. The Boom has been the subject of books; interviews; articles in academic and cultural journals, newspapers, and cultural supplements; television documentaries; and even, recently, online resources. Some of them, as I have mentioned, were literary studies that focused on aesthetic factors, while others from the field of cultural studies examined the advertising campaigns that began to emerge around Boom novels and even the writers themselves.

To show the other approaches that have been taken to studying the Latin American Boom, I would first like to discuss *The Boom in Spanish American Literature: A Personal History*, by José Donoso (2018), who, as I have mentioned, was a contemporary of the Boom authors and is numbered among them by some scholars and critics (Ayén, 2014; Esteban and Gallego, 2011; Rojas, 2018). Donoso argues that the Latin American Boom was the process that led to Latin American novels reaching wider, international audiences. The book is an autobiographical account, as the title suggests. It is an intimate

²⁴ In the methodology section, I describe the process of narrowing down the very broad field that is the publishing industry. In that same section I also explore the lack of documentation and even archives in publishing houses in both Spain and Mexico.

account of his close friendship with the four writers I have chosen to focus on in this thesis, with a particular emphasis on Fuentes and García Márquez. Another significant aspect of this book is that Donoso notes, with crude realism, that there were different categories of Boom writers, especially among those who were represented by Carmen Balcells. He notes that the print runs for the different books varied and that Balcells did not treat all her authors equally. One point that is of particular interest to my research is Donoso's acknowledgement that making a success of publishing implies effective advertising as well as literary quality. He also nods to the significance of literary awards and prizes. Although the book is more than just a memoir, in that it attempts to portray a literary and publishing community, it does not aim to link these issues to other social events. Instead, Donoso limits himself to providing an organised account of the events he lived through and witnessed first-hand. Insightful as the book is, an eye-witness's account could hardly be expected to analyse the broader social and cultural transformation that led to Spain occupying the hegemonic position in Spanish-language publishing. For this reason, I used Donoso's book as a source and as a map for exploring certain issues, but I do not enter into a direct discussion with it as our objectives are considerably different.

The second source I would like to mention is an example of the literary analyses of the Boom: the Uruguayan critic and writer Ángel Rama's essay "El 'Boom' en perspectiva" ["The Boom in Perspective"] (1981). Working from the field of literary studies and Latin American cultural criticism (D'Allemand, 2001), Rama is sharply critical of the Boom and argues that it was an arbitrary process of granting fame to certain authors through which their writing became detached from concrete communities. In the process of doing so, Rama notes how difficult it is to define what the Boom was and discusses the role of publishing houses in making it possible, the growth in readerships, the arbitrary nature of the lists of those who are deemed to have formed part of the Boom and the period it covers, and, importantly, "literary output, professionalisation, and the laws of the market" (Rama, 1981, pp. 91–110). His remarks are pertinent: for example, he points out incongruities such as that other Latin American authors who were widely read at the time were never considered part of the Boom, such as the Mexican essayist Octavio Paz or the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda, both of whom would go on to win the Nobel Prize in Literature — in 1990 and 1971, respectively — like García Márquez and Vargas Llosa — in 1982 and 2010, respectively. Rama lists a number of authors who are rarely mentioned in connection to the Boom but whose literary projects he considers to be far

more experimental than the Boom writers' novels were. This speaks to another major difference between my research and Rama's: when he sees criteria as being arbitrary, he interprets them as being incoherent from very specific paradigms, namely aesthetic and ideological ones. Although he does refer to the growth in reader numbers and even the increase in print runs of the Boom writers' novels, his analysis nonetheless revolves around ideological and literary factors that emerge from the novels. These do not come into play in my research, as I do not venture in any literary analysis. Rama maps out certain fundamental issues of the Boom that I take up and discuss at certain points in my thesis when they touch on matters that concern me. However, broadly speaking, his interpretation does not overlap with what I find significant in the Latin American Boom.

Finally, I would like to discuss the most recent and one of the most significant publications on the Boom: *Aquellos años del Boom* [The Boom Years], by Catalan writer Xavi Ayén (2014). His argument is that the Latin American Boom meant the globalisation of the literary output of Spanish American writers. The author spent around ten years researching the topic. The book is an account, from narrative journalism, of events as documented in archives and interviews. Ayén manages to reconstruct the daily lives of García Márquez and Vargas Llosa while they were based in Barcelona, and in this sense his study shows some differences from my own. Ayén's account is a careful one, he focuses on constructing a compelling narrative, and not primarily in examining what lay behind the events in question, because, as mentioned above, the book is primarily a piece of narrative non-fiction. My focus, in contrast, is on interpreting events in sociological terms. Thus, while Ayén discusses multiple protagonists in his quest for stories, I limit myself to those I have listed above and examine each of their publishing careers in detail. As such, his book is a documentary source for my research, because although its objectives are very different from my own sociological approach, he provides pithy reflections on the events of the time. I was able to interview the author, discuss with him the reflections I had made in the course of my research, and explore his arguments and how these have evolved since his book was published.

I engaged with the above-mentioned approaches and they nurtured my research questions — briefly: Why did the Spanish book industry become hegemonic? And, how is a transnational hegemony constructed? To answer them, I looked for a theoretical approach that could bring together economic factors, historical analysis, authors' agency, political ideologies, and public policies. Rather than a memoir, literary studies, or

journalistic point of view, what offered me the chance to answer these research questions, in regards of cultural production, was a sociological approach.

The social theory that I will now outline, and which shapes my approach to the Boom, stands apart from other possible sociological interpretations of the Latin American Boom — which to my knowledge have not been made. An approach based on economism — Marxist or deriving from Marxism — might attribute the emergence of the Boom to the Spanish book industry's business model or to marketing. In other words, these approaches would explain the Boom as simply being a consequence of the way that book production was organised in Spain. However, from my perspective, this explanation would be reductionist because, although the business publishing model played an important part in the emergence of the Boom, as I show in this thesis, arguing that this was the sole driving force behind it would leave out other significant factors that I will examine in later chapters. Apart from economism, there are other approaches that also fall short of accounting for the multiplicity of factors that prompted the Boom and the subsequent hegemony of Spain's book industry.

An analysis of the international context, for instance, might lead to approaches that seek to attribute the Boom to cultural clashes propelled by the superpowers during the Cold War. Once again, although Cold War politics also seems to have played a part in the emergence of the Boom, they do not shed sufficient light on it; an explanation that focused heavily on this might even run the risk of sounding like a conspiracy theory. One such explanation would be that the Latin American Boom was ultimately constructed by the CIA, which does not ring true, especially given how close the Boom writers were to the Cuban Revolution in the 1960s. A broader explanation of the Boom would require a theoretical approach that can draw together different significant factors that helped to bring the phenomenon into existence as I will now show.

The Theory of Hegemony

In the process of reflecting on how to address these issues and how to attempt to answer the questions that arose during my early research, I considered several theoretical approaches. For the sake of brevity, I will concentrate on describing how I arrived at the two authors who form my theoretical framework for this study: Ernesto Laclau and

Chantal Mouffe. Early on in my research, I realised that a study of the ways in which the Spanish book industry brought Latin American writers to global prominence in the 1960s would require a theoretical approach that would be able to unite the very disparate elements I had been contemplating.

During the different phases of my research, two words began to come up again and again: hegemony and colonialism, in the most colloquial sense of both terms. With this I mean: hegemony as domination and colonialism as a country aiming to exercise power over another nation. At this point, thus, I was still thinking about hegemony in terms of domination, such as when one speaks of the military hegemony of the United States over the rest of the world. Likewise, when I thought about colonialism, I wondered whether the Boom was simply a new chapter in the story of the Conquest of the Americas that had begun around five hundred years earlier and was followed by nearly three hundred years of Colonial occupation. In other words, was it a carefully planned invasion of the Spanish-speaking market by publishers from the Iberian Peninsula? While these ideas were close to my research interests, this colloquial understanding of the concepts, as aims of subordinating another country and of some sort of domination, was not enough to answer my research questions.

The social theory I realised would help me draw together factors as disparate as the history of the publishing industries in the countries in question, the dynamics of creating literary prestige, the roles of different stakeholders who sought to bring Latin America to global cultural prominence, the practical issue of book distribution and, of course, the interrelated cultural, social, and political contexts, was the post-Marxist theory of hegemony and discourse posited by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe.

As with most concepts in social theory, there is no single definition of hegemony, and it is not a clear-cut concept. Instead, it has been interpreted differently over time by the different authors who have focused their attention on it. Drawing a brief genealogy of the notion of hegemony will allow me to explain why Laclau and Mouffe's theories form an appropriate framework for my research of a process of change in cultural paradigms and social practices.

A major theorist of the concept of hegemony, one on whom Laclau and Mouffe draw is the Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci. In Gramsci's terms, hegemony concerned how the ruling class in any society did not just resort to the use of force and ideology to exert power over those they governed — instead, they also created consensus

among them to achieve legitimacy. This consensus affected not just how governments operated but also shaped civil society. In other words, hegemony describes how the ruling class had to achieve moral and intellectual leadership as well as political supremacy (Gramsci, 1971, pp. 180–185). Although this interpretation acknowledges that hegemony is something that reaches beyond the actions of the ruling class, its Marxist stance means that it revolves around the importance of that class as the fundamental ideological player. In Gramsci's terms, hegemony was a form of domination that was clearly dependent on a single group that was in power. In this sense, for instance, it would have been enough for editors to publish Latin American novels and promote them for them to be accepted. This was unlikely to have been the case as literature from Spanish America hardly had any previous attention.

In contrast, while Gramsci's notion is one of their steppingstones, the post-Marxist nature of Laclau and Mouffe's concept of hegemony means that the focus is no longer on a single agent, neither a ruling elite nor a revolutionary class. Instead, they allow multiple factors to be articulated on a horizontal plane by analysing the network of social relationships that constitute hegemony, without prioritising any one player, factor, or group over the rest. In this sense, for example, the "genius" of García Márquez would not be enough for the Boom to take place. Today Laclau and Mouffe's concept is arguably the most prevalent of hegemony both in theoretical discussions and in the social sciences. This discursive approach would allow me to analyse the publishing industries and societies of two Spanish-speaking countries, drawing multiple elements together in the contingent consolidation of new social paradigms. This understanding of hegemony would extend its focus beyond the role of any powerful publishing houses, in contrast with the Gramscian view, in which power would hinge on these organisations. Hegemonic discourse theory would enable me to analyse the factors that might converge in certain circumstances to bring about a result that would be hard to explain from an orthodox Marxist perspective. Something that might seem impossible from a Gramscian perspective is thus perfectly compatible with discourse analysis — for example, the fact that a literary agent like Carmen Balcells, that is, a single individual, could play a more decisive role in establishing criteria for literary prestige than, say, a publishing behemoth like the Mexican state-owned Fondo de Cultura Económica. From a Marxist perspective like Gramsci's, Balcells' actions would be nothing more than an expression of the ruling class, an agent on behalf of her class interest. In contrast, in Laclau and Mouffe's terms,

Balcells' work could be interpreted in terms of its subjectivity and subject position that played a vital role in establishing a hegemonic discourse during the Latin American Boom, one which, among other things, established a new appreciation of Latin American culture, if we were to talk about ideas, and of the professionalisation of the region's writers, if we were to refer to practices; which were implied in the novel hegemonic discourse.

I could now emphasize that a hegemonic discourse is identifiable, but not easy to express in succinct terms, in the sense of discourse analysts being able to offer a simple per case definition of it. Rather, what the analysis of hegemony comes up with is an examination of key elements of the system of meanings structured by a contingent hegemony. This is so, because fully describing a hegemonic discourse would be equivalent to capturing in full what a society is — or a language for that matter, i.e. we can identify the English or the Spanish languages, but we cannot offer a full description of them, not only because of their diachronic face, but also because they are an unpredictable and current everyday act of every speaker. Clearly, no sociological approach can accomplish the full description of society. Our readings of society offer, instead, sound interpretations of compositive elements of the whole, within the framework of a specific idea of society. In the case of this thesis, this is the discursive concept of society advanced by Laclau and Mouffe.

Gramsci laid the historical foundations for Laclau and Mouffe's view of hegemony. After them, other authors have continued theorising around the concept. Hardt and Negri, for example, advanced their idea of the "posthegemonic" as a notion, they claim, relevant to societies as those that have been shaped after Laclau and Mouffe's first publication of their discourse theory. As I will show below, alluding to Negri and Hardt's work will shed light on another reason why Laclau and Mouffe's writings provide an appropriate theoretical framework for my research. In *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1999 [originally published 1985]), specifically, the two theoreticians show ways in which disparate social, political and economic circumstances (like those of Mexico and Spain) can be observed both in isolation and in relation to one another, without either interpreting a single contextual element as being the sole source of a social explanation.

Various authors in different disciplines have formulated concepts that could be described and grouped as posthegemonic (Beasley-Murray, 2003, pp. 117–118). These include the more contemporary take of cultural theorist Michael Hardt and the political theorist Antonio Negri. In their book, *Multitude*, Hardt and Negri look at contemporary

social issues that are usually associated with globalisation. They argue that factors operating above and below the national level undermine the possibility of hegemony existing in contemporary society and give a pre-eminent social and political role to “collectives, such as the crowd, the masses, and the mob” that cannot be ordered through hegemony (Hardt and Negri, 2004, p. 100). Their argument focuses on the world at the turn of the 21st-century, rather than at the time of the Latin American Boom, nearly fifty years earlier. It is beyond the scope of this study to dwell on whether the second decade of the 21st-century can be described as a posthegemonic time, but the Boom years were clearly a time in which the logic of hegemony could be said to reign. As each of the chapters, and my argument, in this dissertation show, there was an identifiable order of social meanings even in a process of change. Furthermore, the early signs of globalisation beginning to show in the Boom years bear witness to a phenomenon of transnational hegemony rather than to the disintegration of hegemony.

As I observed above, this hegemonic stance, should not be confused with approaches that draw on a single contextual factor to explain a given social phenomenon. For example, it would be reasonable to say that the Boom emerged in the midst of the ideological dispute of the Cold War, which was marked by a struggle for the symbolic possession of political spaces. An explanation focusing on hegemony would, of course, take this into account and might even identify that a social event like the Cold War played a central role in a given phenomenon. However, justifying the explanatory potential of a single factor like the Cold War would not be the starting point for an analysis based on discourse theory. The internationalisation of Latin American authors might overlap with the process of cultural globalisation and might have arisen as part of the struggle for political hegemony during the Cold War, but discourse theory does not assume that any one factor or another would suffice to explain these events. Laclau and Mouffe’s work is thus especially appropriate for my research because of both the specific period in history that this focuses on and the different factors that I need to draw together in it.

Deploying the Theory of Hegemony

My interpretation of these post-Marxist authors’ ideas is as follows. Laclau and Mouffe themselves put forward several models of hegemony, but the most relevant of these in

relation to my work is the second model, which they describe in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, (Howarth, 2000, pp. 109–111) — although I also make recourse to Laclau and Mouffe's later writings. In this book, they conceived of hegemony as the widespread adoption of a particular discourse of norms, moral and other values, intellectual viewpoints, and perceptions. This spreads to society as a whole not just through practices of consensus and through legitimizing actions, but also through the partial fixation of meanings around so-called nodal points that create meaning for society as a whole (Laclau and Mouffe, 1999). I will now explain the meaning of all this.

Fully understanding Laclau and Mouffe's concept of hegemony also requires an exploration of other key concepts in their work. The first and perhaps least understood of these is *discourse*. Unlike other thinkers, they do not look on this as a formation among many that coexist in society. For Laclau and Mouffe, discourse is the very foundation of society. In other words, because their conception of the social originates in Marxist thought, Saussurean linguistics, psychoanalysis, and post-structuralism, it is concerned with the network of meanings that create the guidelines that organise and order society. As Torfing (1999, p. 300) describes it, their discourse is:

a relational totality of signifying sequences that together constitute a more or less coherent framework for what can be said and done. The notion of discourse cuts across the distinction between thought and reality and includes both semantic and pragmatic aspects. It does not merely designate a linguistic region within the social but is rather co-extensive with the social.

Torfing emphasises that understanding society in discursive terms implies more than seeing only at the section of social activity related to creation of meanings or exclusively at a segment of social reality. As for my research, this implies that in my thesis I am not only looking at the meanings of the events of the Boom for those involved, but also to their links with other segments of the relevant societies and how they shaped each other. In other words, Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory is not a kind of semantics of society. In contrast, and in line with Torfing's explanation, what Laclau and Mouffe's notion of discourse seeks to tie together is precisely the realm of social meanings with social practices, which simultaneously generate and depend on each other. This interpretation

will allow me to approach the complex issue of literary prestige while also addressing the commercial and business aspects of the publishing world.

Of course, one has to examine other concepts of this theory to elucidate how such discourses come to be formed and what role hegemony plays in a society that is rooted in a given discourse. In this process, it is essential to note that, for Laclau and Mouffe (1999), discourse is contingent, a temporary fixing of social meanings, rather than something permanent. This is difficult to apprehend because “temporary” could imply periods that range from years to centuries in duration. What makes a discourse hegemonic is not, therefore, its duration but rather, in Torfing’s words, the fact that it “involves the expansion of a particular discourse of norms, values, views and perceptions through persuasive redescriptions of the world” (1999, p. 302). As long as a discourse really becomes the generally accepted description of “the world”, then it is hegemonic in Laclau and Mouffe’s terms, regardless of how long it is in force. In this sense, the novel arrangement of social meanings encapsulated in the Latin American Boom could be identified as a hegemonic discourse because it was successful in enabling a broader international, never before seen, intellectual and commercial interest in literature of the region.

In these authors’ notion, society is made up of different demands. These are often so different and unrelated as to be contradictory. A student group might want free public transport, while the business community wants tax breaks. Strictly speaking, these demands are incompatible in fiscal terms, since the two groups are asking for opposing forms of taxation to achieve their objectives. As for the publishing world, both authors and publishers might demand a larger share of the profits from books sold, which again is incompatible. This prompted Laclau and Mouffe to reflect on what enables a network to form between demands that cancel each other out or are in opposition to one another.

Several interrelated concepts shed light on this issue. The first of these is that of the empty signifier, that is to say “a signifier without a signified. A signifier is emptied of any precise content due to ‘the sliding of the signifieds under the signifier’” (Torfing, 1999, p. 301). This is what happens, for example, when a political figure comes to represent the unconnected, contradictory demands of various social groups, against all logic, but is so effective at doing so that he or she wins the popular vote. In order for this political figure to signify everything, they have to stop signifying anything specific: they are emptied of content. Following from Laclau and Mouffe, this applies not just to

electoral processes but also to the way that society itself is configured. In the context of my research, the question would be whether there was any empty signifier during the Boom that encapsulated different literary, cultural, and social events that justified it and raised its profile, so to speak. And the answer I have found is that it was precisely the idea of the Latin American Boom that played the role of being an empty signifier. Therefore, the notion of a Latin American Boom enabled the shaping of a new hegemonic discourse, by giving way to a chain of equivalences, that is to say the process that made it possible for the diverse factors analysed in this thesis to articulate in a social phenomenon. This is related, as well, with the debates around the Boom label and the discussions around its very existence. The variety of implications the idea adopted as an empty signifier, has propelled the debates around the very phrase “the Latin American Boom”.

Finally, there is the chain of equivalence that is the horizontal linking of diverse meanings, agencies, demands, events, historical processes, and social practices into a coherent frame of reference. I will explain this in greater depth below, in relation to the concept of articulation. There are diverse ways of understanding “the world” and various discourses that are vying to become hegemonic, but only one of these discourses manages to establish meanings that truly prevail over all the other discourses within a society, thus establishing a hegemony (Laclau and Mouffe, 1999, p. 112; Howarth, 2000, p. 119). In this sense, the Latin American Boom would not have taken place if it had not prevailed, at least for some time and regarding a set of authors, over the previous hegemonic discourse which invisibilised, or even underestimated, Spanish American culture.

In applying Laclau and Mouffe’s perspective, one of the challenges in my research was to identify how different elements that were not previously connected came to articulate to one another, such as the role of coloniality in the paradigms of the writers in question, the contrasting business models of the book industries in Mexico and Spain, and numerous other factors that my research touches on. I will now present my reading of the theoretical tool that makes this linkage possible.

The Concept of Articulation

Over the last few paragraphs, I have mentioned another key concept in Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's theory of hegemony, that of articulation. This is a mechanism that

is capable of integrating factors as dissimilar as the colonial history between Spain and Mexico, the economic power of the Spanish book industry, and the local social and cultural factors that impact cultural consumption patterns.

According to Laclau and Mouffe, hegemony does not require the articulation of coherent elements — on the contrary, they write that “the two conditions of a hegemonic articulation are the presence of antagonistic forces and the instability of the frontiers which separate them” (1999, p. 136). What they describe as the instability of frontiers has to do with social change that comes with the possibility of transcending limits that were previously fixed. For example, the rise of Latin American literature on the international market and the increase in appreciation for it implied the breaking of a frontier, but this would not have happened without friction, in other words, without different sorts of antagonistic forces that resisted this social transformation.

When Laclau and Mouffe speak of articulation, they are referring to a logic, a way in which social elements function. Torfing explains this when he says that “articulations that take place in a context of antagonistic struggles and conflicts are defined as hegemonic articulations” (1999, p. 298). In other words, they start out from conflicting, sometimes irreconcilable positions. Let us assume, for example, that there were nationalist readers for whom reading books by authors of other nationalities was not a priority; but at the same time, the inclinations of other readers, who would identify themselves as cosmopolitan, would perhaps be quite the opposite. This is what Laclau and Mouffe call antagonisms and the confrontations that arise from these are what Torfing describes as “antagonistic struggles”. Articulation takes place when a hegemonic operation successfully creates a chain of equivalences that allows these conflicting demands to coexist in a functional manner. Regarding the phenomenon I study, then, the articulation around the empty signifier “Latin American Boom”, did not imply every reader consuming the novels of Cortázar, García Márquez, Fuentes and Vargas Llosa — though they surely gained more readers than those Spanish American authors ever had before: Instead, it means that this cultural production gained a central social space it did not have before.

The authors argue that this implies that articulation is “any practice establishing relations among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice” (Laclau and Mouffe, 1999, p. 105). The elements are necessarily shaped, at least in some senses, by being articulated with one another in a hegemonic

discourse. In the context of my research, for example, the magic realism of García Márquez may have arisen through individual agency, as an exercise of the imagination. However, the way that same magic realism was broadly received and interpreted around the world — the hegemonic reading of it — was mainly as a portrait of Latin America exceptionalism or even exoticism (Sánchez Prado, 2015, loc. 2294). That is to say, an individual imagination —surely influenced by its context, but not exclusively dependent on it— was modified in the process of cultural consumption as being representative of the exoticism of a region.

According to this vision of society, hegemony is built on a sort of permanent battlefield. This is why Howarth, in his dissection of Laclau and Mouffe's work, also emphasises the inescapable, insurmountable element of confrontation within society when he says that: "hegemonic practices thus presuppose a social field crisscrossed by antagonisms, and the presence of contingent elements that can be articulated by opposed political projects striving to hegemonize them" (2000, p. 110). Howarth also notes the contingent nature of social factors in addition to the antagonisms and coexistence of different hegemonic projects. This is key because it implies the discursive logic of the permanent creation or maintenance of a hegemonic discourse. In the case of the Latin American Boom as a phenomenon, this implies that a process like this was not a simple event. For instance, Vargas Llosa's novel being awarded an international prize did not automatically mean having the gates opened for the rest of the authors. Instead, it meant a step that required the articulation with other social elements. It needed, for example, changes in the relationship between publishing houses and writers, and Balcells' participation. All this took place within the context of antagonistic purposes and the articulation of a novel hegemony was not a definite event. As opposed to this, the alteration of social practices and meanings implied in the Boom would remain contested. The evolution of these social processes, therefore, could be studied in other pieces of research and its findings could be that what was hegemonic in times of the Boom might not have prevailed afterwards.

Among these antagonisms are elements that may articulate with others and be transformed by them but are not seeking to construct a hegemony. In the context of my research, the literary talent and great imagination of someone like Julio Cortázar might have contributed to the new order created by the Latin American Boom. However, the writer himself might have lacked the agency of professionalisation or the ambition to

transform the literary market and the way that cultures that were colonies for centuries were viewed. My interpretation, therefore, is that hegemony is the main guideline, but does not imply unanimity or homogeneity in a society or the social actors of the Latin American Boom.

In a clearly different stance, we have “hegemonic agents”, since they are a “political agency striving for hegemony” (Torfing, 1999, p. 302). This is because, as Torfing argues, there are hegemonic practices that attempt to consciously articulate diverse social elements into a discourse that will usher in a new kind of leadership. In this way, discourse theory and hegemony enable my analysis to move beyond the purely economic focus that would explain the Latin American Boom in terms of the Spanish book industry’s business model. By using Laclau and Mouffe’s terms, in contrast, I still deal with such business model, examining, for example the internationalisation of the industry, but without assuming such feature as a unique or fundamental explanatory element. Instead, within this theoretical framework, I will look into how the business model of the Spanish publishing industry articulated with the hegemonic agent called Carmen Balcells who was actively aiming to make the Boom possible, i.e. change the contract conditions for writers.

Hegemonic agents — that, as I have stated above do not need to have similar orientations — are the bearers of a “project, including a vision of how State, economy and civil society should be organised, that aspires to become hegemonic” (Torfing, 1999, pp. 109, 302; Laclau and Mouffe, 1999, pp. 134–137). This needs to be untangled. If a literary agent or a group of publishers were to try to achieve international fame for their authors, this would not automatically make them hegemonic agents. It is not possible for hegemony to emerge only from their intentions: instead, a whole series of factors would need to converge and articulate with these individuals to create a new hegemonic discourse, such as the public cultural policies implemented by the governments of Spain and Mexico before and during the Boom, which I will analyse in chapter 4. In the next section I show how Laclau and Mouffe’s theory looks into the topic of social change.

Hegemony, Dislocation and Social Change

Having taken all this into consideration, we can now make an attempt at defining hegemony. Torfing writes that hegemony, as explained by Laclau and Mouffe, is “the achievement of a moral, intellectual and political leadership through the expansion of a discourse that partially fixes meaning around nodal points” (Torfing, 1999, p. 302). This concept thus moves beyond the common-sense notion of hegemony as merely being a question of exercising control. Instead, it is about successfully leading the construction of a set of meanings that order life in a given society. With this idea in mind, my analysis of the Latin American Boom focuses both on examining the transformation of social meanings and the social and economic practices that were part of the network of meanings and, also, how that very network is organised. In this sense, the hegemony of the Spanish book industry implied not only industrial domination, but several other elements, such as the emergence of the figure of the literary agent, the network of actors around the industry, and the social impact of its curation of published titles, that is to say, a symbolic power beyond its industrial role.

As I mentioned above, one of the core aspects of this post-Marxist view is the dynamics between change and continuity. Within this theory, the concept that explains how hegemony can endure over time is sedimentation: “the process whereby contingent discursive forms are institutionalised into social institutions” (Torfing, 1999, p. 305). That is to say, meanings that are not, as it were, natural or inevitable, become partially fixed meanings which are, therefore, conceptualised and put into practice as if they were essential to objects and social actions. In this, of course, social institutions are understood not just as government or civil society organisations but also as a set of established social practices. An example of this could be sexism: although discrimination against women has been enshrined in law and may have limited female potential for rising to prominence in the field of literature, it did not outright prevent such a thing from occurring. However, the fact of the matter is that the four protagonists of the Boom on whom my research focuses were all men. As I wrote in the introduction, including a woman among them for the purposes of this study would be a political gesture but it would not reflect the way events unfolded at the time, due to the sedimentation of sexism in the Spanish-speaking world that undoubtedly prevented any women from playing a central part in the Boom.

In Laclau and Mouffe's writings, the concept that accounts for social change is dislocation. According to this theory, all hegemony is contingent. As solid and fixed as it might appear to be, hegemony can only ever be temporary and thus may be displaced at some point. For Laclau and Mouffe, dislocation is "the process by which the contingency of discursive structures comes to be seen" (Howarth, 2000, p. 109). It is a crisis point when meanings are called into question. One example of this would be the way in which the central role of Spanish or European literature vis-à-vis Latin American literature was called into question in the 1960s. Something that it seemed would never change, did, opening the possibility of establishing a new way of approaching this and other matters, as was the Boom with the appreciation of Cortázar, García Márquez, Fuentes and Vargas Llosa.

Laclau and Mouffe understand dislocation as "a destabilisation of a discourse that results from the emergence of events which cannot be domesticated, symbolised or integrated within the discourse in question" (Torfing, 1999, p. 301). One line of action for my research is therefore to examine the dislocatory nature of the agency of the four Latin American writers I focus on, the editor Carlos Barral, and of Carmen Balcells, their literary agent and how this linked with the construction of a new hegemonic discourse together with the cultural policies, the industrial development and the historic legacy that accompanied them.

Dislocation is therefore the set of processes, events, and actions that reveal how society can be shaped and come to function in a way that is different from the current state of things, opening up the possibility of social change (Laclau, 1990, pp. 39–41). As I will explore in depth throughout my thesis, the Latin American Boom was a profound process of social change and was thus a moment of dislocation for the book industries of Spain and Mexico and their societies as a whole. I have to clarify, nevertheless, that when saying this, I am not claiming that the Boom changed Mexican and Spanish societies. Rather, what I am stating is that analysing these processes, centred in the publishing industry, enables us to see that such societies, in their entirety, were in transformation. In this sense, from the world of publishing and the cultural sphere to which it belongs, I offer part of the picture of the processes towards novel social arrangements, that is, new hegemonic discourses.

Antagonism, then, plays an important role in Laclau and Mouffe's theory of hegemony. Social disputes are usually regarded as related to imbalances of power. As my

research revolves around writers in the cultural milieu, I realised early on that I would need to work on how to extend Laclau and Mouffe's ideas into the cultural realm to show that struggles for hegemony refer not only to the search of political office. As I have already noted, in taking this theory to apply to a cultural sphere, I am drawing from Carpentier and Spinoy (2008) in general, and Martínez Martínez (2008) in particular. Laclau and Mouffe themselves have engaged in the analysis of culture, by writing about the works of Thomas Mann, Meister Eckhart and Robert Browning, in the case of Laclau; and by reflecting on "artistic practices," in the case of Mouffe; as noted by Carpentier and Spinoy (2008, pp. 2-3). While they are convinced that the framework is relevant to cultural analysis, they also admit that deploying it for such purposes inevitably requires "a number of explicit and implicit interpretations and adaptations of it" (Carpentier and Spinoy, 2008, p. 4). As for me, I am following Martínez Martínez critical theoretical take (2014), in that he suggests discourse theory is well equipped to address the analysis of culture. He claims, the theory of hegemony enables the researcher not to subordinate cultural elements to other analytical categories — such as the economic factor. According to Martínez Martínez, then, this social theory approach enables the researcher to point out the "autonomy" of cultural processes and events. At the same time, discourse theory provides the theoretical tools to link such cultural elements with their "interactions with cultural, political and social contexts" (Martínez Martínez, 2008, pp. 98-99). In my own analysis of the Latin American Boom I have added the industrial factor to the possible points of examination and, more importantly, I have deployed discourse theory in the development of the sociology of publishing, as a theoretical contribution. In doing so, the aim is, as Carpentier and Spinoy noted, to bridge "an untenable distinction between the cultural, the ideological and the political" (2008, p.16). All in all, my aim has been, therefore, to offer a social reading of publishing events.

There are other theoretical contributions that proved useful to approach the publishing industry in terms of cultural production. Bourdieu (1986, 1996, 2000) advanced theoretical reflections in which I partially inspire my analysis of the struggle for social influence during the Boom by looking into this as symbolic capital. This is entirely compatible with Laclau and Mouffe's approach as this struggle for symbolic power could be regarded as one of the elements that could articulate in the construction of hegemony. Actually, my research process and my work with my supervisor gradually revealed that these disputes over symbolic capital were, in a way, a continuation of a

longstanding historical process that seems to have always played a part in the social and cultural relationships between Spain and Mexico. As I said, this connects with my take on Laclau and Mouffe's theory of hegemony in regards with their concept of antagonism and their view that society is a permanent struggle among competing discourses. One of the elements of such struggle as I will show in chapter 3 has been this dispute for symbolic power between Mexico and Spain. This dispute has to do with the shared Colonial history of both countries and that is why, for my theoretical framework, I required specific reflections on such types of processes, as I will now show.

Colonialism and the Boom

It thus became clear to me that I needed to forge a critical understanding of how Spain's cultural hegemony in the Spanish-speaking world had formed and what enabled it to continue functioning and operating the way it did at the time of the Latin American Boom, nearly 500 years after the Spanish first arrived in the Americas and nearly a century and a half after the countries of Latin America claimed their independence from Spain.

The obvious starting point for this was Said. In his terms, any process of colonisation begins with "notions about bringing civilisation to primitive or barbaric peoples, the disturbingly familiar ideas about flogging or death or extended punishment being required when 'they' misbehaved or became rebellious, because 'they' mainly understood force or violence best; 'they' were not like 'us,' and for that reason deserved to be ruled." (Said, 1994, p. 111). These notions are what led the Spanish Conquistadors to perceive the pre-Columbian peoples they encountered in such a negative light. They also created mechanisms for control and punishment in the face of any resistance that these people might have exercised. Fundamentally, returning to the vocabulary of Laclau and Mouffe, the colonisers established a clear frontier between those they sought to subjugate and the new people who wielded power over them.

Although this explanation seemed plausible to me, it also prompted various questions. The Spanish American Colonial period lasted three centuries, but was the subjugation of the indigenous peoples at the time of the Conquest the same as that experienced by the new peoples that arose in the different parts of the continent? It is important to note that this period was marked not just by migration from Spain but also

by forced migration from Africa, by the process of cultural intermingling known in Latin America as *mestizaje*, plus religious conversion. Were these the same mechanisms of domination? How was the frontier between the coloniser and colonised drawn and redrawn? What happened afterwards between countries like Mexico, formerly the Viceroyalty of New Spain, and Spain itself, in terms of social and cultural processes? It was clear to me that the Spanish-speaking world was marked by very specific relationships between the former Colonial power, Spain, and the new nations that emerged in the early 19th-century.

The Colonial variable is important in the cultural relationship between Mexico and Spain. To analyse the Spanish-speaking world of the second half of the 20th-century, it is essential to first consider how relations between the former Colonial power and the countries that were formed by declaring their independence from this power have evolved, and which aspects of them endure. How are race, social class, the use of the Spanish language, and other paradigms that were established by this relationship perceived? I needed a further theoretical tool to analyse the specific nature of Spain's colonial ties with Latin America, especially at the time of the Latin American Boom. Mignolo's (2007) work on the "idea of Latin America", "the Colonial wound", and his notion of the "decolonial" are extremely relevant for this aspect of my research, as he reflects on both the nature of the Spanish conquest of the Americas and the form in which coloniality continues to shape the cultures of Latin America.

Mignolo also argues that there were significant ideological operations through which Europeans exercised a dual process of both ignoring and forgetting the fact that there had been functional societies in the Americas before their arrival. Through the "Colonial differential effect", it has been pretended that the continent did not exist before the Conquest and only became part of history at the point that it was colonised: "for that reason, it was called the 'New World'" (Mignolo, 2007, p. 51). This made symbolic power dependent on Spain's cultural matrix. This is why, I think it appropriate to use this particular theoretical prism to view the way in which Latin American literature was empowered from Spain. This is so because of Spanish control of the literary sphere of the language, and proves to be a significant part of what we could call neocoloniality. I also needed to untangle exactly what the new dynamic that arose during the Boom was.

A critical part of this is what Laclau and Mouffe call the creation of political identities. Mignolo (2007, p. 32) writes that coloniality “points toward and intends to unveil an embedded logic that enforces control, domination, and exploitation disguised in the language of salvation, progress, modernisation, and being good for everyone”. The point, then, is that the colonisers and colonised conceive of the process of domination not as such but rather as one of salvation, progress, the quest for the greater good, and, crucially, the “modernisation” of a “backward” people. Cortázar, García Márquez, Fuentes, and Vargas Llosa presented themselves and were marketed as cosmopolitan figures that stood in opposition to the literature that went before them, which prompts the question of whether the modernisation of Latin American literature during the Boom was in fact an expression of coloniality. I will explore this throughout this dissertation.

Before concluding, I would like to point towards the limitations of Laclau and Mouffe’s theory. These have to do with critiques often advanced, not without bases, against postmodern thought in general. One issue commonly referred to, and relevant to my own dissertation, is what is described as discourse theory’s supposed “normative deficit.” Normative deficit is the way in which some authors call the lack of ultimate detail as to how a desirable society should be, as it were, a void in the theory regarding a social model. I contend that this is only apparent since Laclau and Mouffe offer the radical democratic alternative as the framework to manage undecidable conflicts (Critchley, 2006, pp. 113–122). This means that, on the political side, Laclau and Mouffe’s theory certainly does not draft how a society should be in every detail but, instead, suggests the path to deal with tensions within it. In this thesis, the reader might discern a seemingly normative framework in my analysis: a decolonial one that is interested in uncovering Colonial legacies in part in order to critique them. This, however, does not come from the theory of hegemony but rather is the outcome of my aim at analysing the Latin American Boom and building a theoretical framework around it, as I have shown in this chapter.

More importantly, and relevant to my own research, Laclau and Mouffe’s theoretical tools provide the researcher with a vision of how society is structured. As we can gather from what I examined above, their view is that society is in constant discursive struggle, even though there is always a hegemonic discourse ordering society. However, the point of normative deficit is linked to one of the possible problems when using the theory of hegemony as this points to, in broader philosophical and theoretical terms, to

the risk of relativism. This is so because discourse theory, as the rest of postmodern thought, advances a critique of modernity's universalism (Howarth, 2000, pp. 12–13; Gasché, 2006, pp. 17–34; Dallmayr, 2006, pp. 35–53; Marchart, 2006, pp. 54–72; Riha, 2006, pp. 73–87; Zerilli, 2006, pp. 88–109). I would like to focus here, on the issue from this theoretical debate that has to do with my deployment of Laclau and Mouffe's theory.

The critique of universalism implies that there is a denial that history would have a discernible sense. If, for instance, Marxism, proposed that the sense of history was that of overcoming capitalist societies; from these postmodern stances that is not taken for granted. As opposed to this, societies could undergo diverse unpredictable evolutions, including so-called regressions. From this approach, then, the historical sense of events could be missed, as in Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory universal social processes are put into question. If the events under analysis are contemporary, then, a sense or meaning is not automatically attributed to social events even if they seem to indicate a given process; rather they must be figured out as part of a discourse. And whether they would come to be hegemonic or not could only remain an interpretative speculation. In the case of my research, I would not take for granted that the novel appreciation of Latin American novels at the time of the Boom must have been, or should have been, a process of opening up cultural appreciation to all regions of the world, as it were, a move from localism, or Eurocentrism, to globalism, seen as a desirable evolution.

On the contrary, from Laclau and Mouffe's theory, as hegemony is contingent, the international attention on Latin American cultural production could actually have led, regardless of what we think of as desirable today, to a novel perspective in which only one culture were regarded as important, dismissing the rest: a displacement of one culture by another in a similar dominant position. Fortunately, if this limitation applies to ongoing social processes, I had the advantage of analysing a phenomenon of the past. I, therefore, was able to base my interpretations in the knowledge of at least some of its most evident outcomes, for example the translation and international reception of the Boom novels, and managed to figure out others, for example the agency of the key writers involved. I therefore reached a balance in the examination of the events which enabled me to make sense of their evolution in time.

Apart from this, in a more practical level, I also must acknowledge that the hegemonic approach offers an attractive analysis of different social aspects. It enables the

researcher to bring together diverse, seemingly unconnected, social events. However, this broadness of scope reflects on the presentation of research outcomes. The analytical effort of accomplishing the analysis of multiple factors and discerning articulations among them reflects in the need of presenting only a portion of what one has worked with during the research period and what one is able to register in a limited space such as this dissertation. This, for example, has left me unable to draw comparisons with the publishing industries of other languages. These are, therefore, the limitations and advantages of the theoretical framework I have worked with in this dissertation.

The theory of hegemony has enabled me to order the data and guide my analysis of the Latin American Boom. By using the theoretical framework suggested by Laclau and Mouffe for my analysis of the construction of the hegemony of the Spanish book industry among the publishing industries of Spanish-speaking societies, I will be able to draw together diverse factors recurring to the concept of articulation. Through the idea of the Colonial wound, I will analyse the weight of the colonial past on the configuration of Spanish and Mexican societies in the mid-20th-century in chapter 3. I will dwell, in chapter 4, in the political ideologies and the public policies that were put into practice by the political regimes in Spain and Mexico at the time showing how, while influential, they were not determinant but only a part of a chain of equivalence giving birth to a new hegemony. In chapter 5, I will analyse the networking exercised by the Boom protagonists and other eminent social actors such as the female literary agent in a male chauvinist culture; while pointing out that their articulation was possible under the, as it were, umbrella of the idea of the Latin American Boom as the empty signifier of the phenomenon. As the final piece in the articulation of this novel hegemonic discourse — which gave a new presence to Latin American culture and opened previously unknown possibilities to writers of the region — in chapter 6 I will take full advantage of this theoretical approach by bringing into the analytical picture the role of the agency of professionalisation of four enormously influential writers and public intellectuals. In this way, by depicting a hegemonic process, my critical portrait of the book industries of Spain and Mexico will also function as an x-ray of these societies and their cultures.

Chapter 2 Methodology

As I have explained in the introduction to this thesis and in the theoretical chapter, my research into the Latin American Boom has been guided by the theory of hegemony, which required me to implement a methodology that was compatible with this perspective. This meant that I would need to draw from a variety of methodological resources to examine the diverse topics that were in play in the Boom phenomenon. If social events articulated to bring about the Latin American Boom, I needed to link social research methods to interpret them — qualitative research —, this would have to take into account that I was dealing with events of the past — historical sociology — and, therefore, needed strict ways of examining my sources which were both written and individuals I had the chance of interviewing. At all times, the purpose was to accomplish the most rigorous analysis possible.

I took into account Howarth's reflection in the sense that: "Post-Marxist discourse theory is best understood as a research programme or paradigm, and not just an empirical theory in the narrow sense of the term. It thus consists of a system of ontological assumptions, theoretical concepts and methodological precepts, and not just a set of falsifiable propositions designed to explain and predict phenomena (2005, p. 317). This theoretical framework therefore poses the challenge of a methodology in the making and the need of constant reflection and questioning of the stances and methods deployed.

My approach to the Boom is largely a qualitative one, as I will explain in more detail below. It is based on an analysis of bibliographic sources, a reconstruction of historical and political events using journalistic sources, semi-structured in-depth qualitative interviews (viewed through a reflective critical lens), and research in personal archives and collections. I also used quantitative information to construct my qualitative arguments in a process of triangulation.

Chapter 2, then, presents the methodological reflections on the challenges and the ways in which I did this research. This part of my thesis is closely linked with the previous chapter as it argues that there are the difficulties of putting into practice my theoretical

framework and shows how I operationalised the analysis of hegemony construction with the data and sources of my research.

A Novel Approach to the Boom

As I described in the introduction, to date, the Latin American Boom has been mainly understood as a literary phenomenon. This implies that academics have largely focused on studying the literary characteristics and qualities of the Boom writers' novels. Literary content has been their core concern. It is certainly the case that these writers' works are highly worthy subjects of strictly aesthetic or literary studies — indeed, the Boom novels represent a turning point in Latin American literary history. However, we can also think of this from the examination of aesthetics made by Becker, for instance, when writing that: "Aestheticians, then, provide that element of the battle for recognition of particular styles and schools which consists of making the arguments which convince other participants in an art world that the work deserves, logically, to be included within whatever categories concern that world" (1982, p. 135). That is to say, with aesthetic and literary judgement we are likely to be faced with an endogamic logic that attends, as Becker would put it, to a particular art world. As opposed to this, from the outset, I sought to acknowledge this literary quality without making it my main source or a defining factor of my research or as I put it before I see the autonomy of the literary phenomenon in itself, but want to look beyond it. Instead, my interest lay in examining the dynamics of everything that went on around the phenomenon of the Boom itself, in what made it possible: the practices and processes that converged in the cultural production that became known as the Boom.

My intention, therefore, was not to analyse the plots or characters of novels, even if these were fictionalisations of socially significant figures, in order to then connect them to their surroundings. Instead, through my research, I sought to privilege the publishing, social, and cultural context: the discursive and ideological circumstances in which events unfolded, the cultural structures that led to the events taking the form that they did, and therefore the political economy of the publishing world. My aim in doing so was not to

provide an explanation of the Boom novels (which is the realm of literary studies),²⁵ but rather to discuss processes in the world of publishing and culture that are closely tied to larger social issues and history.

This objective did not prove easy to pursue. I found that publishing houses, which I conceive of as an industry of memory, do not tend to have well-organised, well-preserved archives of their undertakings, at least in the Spanish-speaking world. Salinas, a distinguished Spanish editor, concurred when writing: “our publishing houses are a disaster, all of our archives have disappeared.” (Salinas, 2020, loc. 81). Indeed, I discovered that even the largest publishing houses did not have systematic records of their contracts with writers and that they had not kept the correspondence between authors and their editors.²⁶ Locating such documents was more an exception than the rule, as I will describe later. Given these circumstances, to achieve my objective it was challenging to reconstruct events and connect the different sources of data that I was able to locate.

The Qualitative Approach

One of the first decisions I made was to adopt a qualitative approach. Again, taking into account Mouffe’s and Laclau’s theory of hegemony, this implied making reflections along this line:

Method is not synonymous with a free-standing and neutral set of rules and techniques that can be applied mechanically to all empirical objects. Instead, while

²⁵ There are well-established methods for content analysis (Neuendorf, 2016) or the semiotic analysis of books that could link literary studies and sociology. Although these methodologies take into account, for example, the social meaning of words or the role novels played in certain socially constructed outlooks that existed at given points in history (Beuchot, 2008; Eco, 2018; Guiraud, 1972), the social remains a point of reference rather than a primary concern, and therefore could not be at the focus of my research.

²⁶ In the interviews I conducted for my research, for instance, I compiled testimonies of key editors that witnessed how the files and even books they had managed to preserve were disposed of, in disregard of any attempt at registering the very history of the publishing houses (Díez-Canedo Flores, 2017; Ramírez, 2017). The notable exception, at least in Mexico, is the publishing house Fondo de Cultura Económica (FCE), which keeps all of its catalogue and documents linked to its eight decades of work thanks to a personal effort by the librarian Julia de Fuente Vidal, who in 1991 started to build the imprint’s historical archive, founding the Gonzalo Robles Library. This contains the titles published by FCE, translations of FCE books, foreign language titles translated by FCE, photographs, correspondence with authors, original cover designs — all of which, until 2019, were available in an online digital catalogue.

discourse theorists ought to reflect upon and theorise the ways they conduct research, these questions are always understood within a wider set of ontological and epistemological postulates, and in relation to particular problems [...] In short methodological concerns turn on questions concerning the appropriate relationship between description, understanding and explanation, the role (if any) of causal explanation, the place of critique and normative evaluation, the problems surrounding appropriate research design, and so on (Howarth, 2005, p. 317).

All of which, far from meaning a disregard for sound methods implies the quest for constantly discussing them and aiming to make them as operational as possible.

This decision was due not only to the lack of quantitative data — such as the value of contracts, royalty percentages, or information on book sales — but also to the fact that I sensed that the answers to my research questions lay more in forging connections between disparate factors that appear to be unrelated than in interpreting numerical data. As I mentioned before, this, and issues such as what Bourdieu would call symbolic power, are best understood through looking at the construction of hegemony in the context of a discursive understanding of society. My goal was, therefore, to go beyond merely examining sales accounts and showing, for example, that in a given year a certain number of novels by Latin American authors had been sold and that five years later that number had increased exponentially. Book sales figures are interesting in themselves, but I wanted to understand why the interplay of historical, industrial, and individual processes that the Boom had arisen. I also wanted to discover what had sparked international interest in and legitimised the reading of authors from a region that had not previously been perceived as a supplier of goods for cultural consumption or a producer of internationally significant literature. Finally, I wanted to understand why the epicentre of the Boom was a city in Spain rather than Buenos Aires or Mexico City, two of the capitals of the Latin American literary world. Although I make constant recourse to numbers to support my interpretations of events, I only use the quantitative approach as a first step towards exploring and explaining the matter at hand. Consequently, my research is fundamentally qualitative in its approach.

This also helps me define my object of study. In any country, the publishing industry covers a wide range of printed material, from flyers and posters to highly sophisticated books that can only be appreciated by a handful of specialists. Between

these two extremes lie all manner of magazines (including cultural journals, pornography, and entertainment guides, at least at that point in the mid-20th-century), textbooks, cookbooks, and a vast range of other types of books and publications. The list is almost infinite, and each category is made up of an equally vast number of titles. In this research, I will only be focusing on a handful of publication types that I will define below.

Design and Historical Sociology

As can be deduced from the introduction and the above paragraphs, the object of my study is the publishing industry. The underlying logic was to successively analyse ever-narrower universes to ascertain whether focusing on more specific segments of the industry would be a valid approach to my research questions.²⁷

Consequently, concentrating specifically on the social and cultural production of literature seemed to have the advantage of being a more manageable universe of analysis. Thus, literature will prove to be both a privileged source of social meaning and would work very well with my theoretical framework based on discourse and hegemony. Beyond popularity among readers, financial gains for publishing houses, the analysis of cultural production sheds light on, as it were, how the worlds of literature contribute to the construction of hegemonic discourses.

On the one hand, literature involves a specific social group, and, in this dissertation, I am precisely researching the dynamics within the group that gave rise to the Latin American Boom. On the other hand, literature is a prestigious cultural sphere, but on top of that, its productions are often conflated, as it is the case with the Boom novels, with ideas of nationhood and region. It is key, then, to consider that novels are a form of mass, popular, interclass cultural consumption that became fully established in the 19th-century (Sommer, 1993), endured throughout the 20th, and continues strongly in the 21st.

²⁷ If I were to include all manner of printed matter — since the publishing industry covers such broad arch from leaflets to e-books — in my research I would have run the risk of losing a sense of focus. Indeed, even referring exclusively to books would have been too broad an object for my research, as it would have meant examining technical manuals alongside short stories, for example — in other words, publications for readerships that would not necessarily overlap.

This helped me to further define what I would understand by “the publishing industry” in the context of my research, without ignoring how extensive the work of publishing houses is across different genres. Therefore, considering that novels are more consumed than any other form of literary production, and given the social significance of the genre and its authors, I deemed it both appropriate and advisable to limit my study to the publishing output of those authors who were part of the Latin American Boom. In the course of doing so, I would address the publication process and certain issues that intrigued me, especially regarding the fact that these authors rose to international prominence exactly when Spain’s book industry began consolidating its hegemony over the Spanish-speaking world.

While analysing this I was recurring to the methodology of historical sociology, described as “indirect observation of the past” (Tilly, 2001, p. 6753). I, thus, inscribe my work in one of the four pursuits identified within historical sociology by Tilly,²⁸ specifically that of “process analysis” (2001, p. 6753). In analysing the process of the Latin American Boom, I was, on the one hand, examining “how social interactions impinge each other in space and time” (Tilly, 2001, p. 6754) and aiming to identify “causal mechanisms of broad scope as well as conditions that affect activation, interaction, and outcomes of those mechanisms” (Tilly, 2001, p. 6755).

This historical account creates an analysis that is historical-interpretive. In addition to this, my study makes recourse to three of the six types of evidence for case studies that Yin (1994, p. 86) identified: documentation, archival records, and interviews.²⁹ My decision to use documentation, interviews, and archival records responds both to them being available and, mostly, to their being more suitable to the aims of this research. First, one of the advantages of documentation is its stability as a source of information. The documentary evidence I turned to for this study includes precise data and predates the study itself. Second, the interviews focus on the main issues relating to publishing and to the Boom. Third, archival records offer data which often was not openly available at the time the events unfolded and thus open the possibility of offering novel interpretations of events. All in all, the advantages of these types of evidence for the analysis of the Latin American Boom are significant, even considering the possible disadvantages that Yin himself identifies — selection bias, the fact that they

²⁸ The other ones are: social criticism, pattern identification and scope extension (Tilly, 2001, p. 6753)

²⁹ The other three are: direct observation, participant observation, and physical artefacts (Yin, 1994, p. 86).

are time-consuming, insufficient coverage of the relevant facts or events, among others (1994, pp. 84–87).

I would like to end this section with an acknowledgment, since it is clear that I have chosen four well-known, if not the best-known Latin American authors. This, of course, has an element of pragmatism, since the archival material proceeding from these writers is vast, which would not have been the case with other authors, even significant ones but with a lower public profile. As would be the case with any other selection, this is a limitation of my sample. I am not oblivious to the fact that this implies an inequality. That is to say, when looking into the past, we do not have access to the whole, but can only glance at it from the available sources. This, nevertheless, should not distort the analysis or make us think that what happened to the most powerful individuals of a given sphere or period explains the whole of society. In my assertions about the Boom protagonists I am not either denying the life stories and contrasting experiences of other writers — who, for instance, were not able to professionalise their craft — or claiming that what happened to the Boom authors was all that happened. I am just restricting my scope for academic reasons and, because of that, I conducted my research constantly questioning and critiquing my own interpretations.

Approach to Reading

At the core of my project was a bibliographical and periodicals archival research. The way I went about reconstructing the events of the Boom was usually by trying to identify positions, opinions, impressions, and even inaccuracies rather than looking for specific facts (Hobson, Lawson, and Rosenberg, 2010). Although I did sometimes come across quantifiable data, what I was attempting to do was to uncover and compile any information that would allow me to construct a vision of what took place. This was not arbitrary but was instead in keeping with the very nature of the materials themselves, which included literary reviews, opinion pieces, and other kinds of opinion journalism of different kinds. In doing all this, I was exercising my epistemological approach as my research was of a qualitative nature and therefore interpretivist, constantly recurring to triangulation. It looked, for example, both at statistics on book exports and literary reviews as social constructs. In doing this, I needed to place my research apart from one

of the critiques against postmodern approaches, namely that of epistemological irrationalism.

From epistemological irrationalism social events and actors could end up being regarded as if they were fictional characters, product of creative writing. This implies that, as constructs, they would be the outcome of arbitrariness and their analysis could participate of a similar lack of rigour (McCormack, 1999, pp. 125–139). Which, as quoted by Ortner, has even led to the statement of such approaches turning social science “into a lame and confused form of literary scholarship” (2007, p. 788). I clearly aimed to distance myself from such approach. On the one hand, I did not think of the events under analysis as arbitrary, but instead — following discourse theory — as events that could be many things, but which acquired a certain tangible meaning in the context of a hegemonic discourse. On the other hand, I did look to accomplish sound analyses, even against my first hypotheses on the events under examination, searching what was coherent within the framework of reference of such discourse, not of my research purposes or any other elements foreign to the change of hegemony under analysis.

Therefore, my take on data was to always put any information into question and to trace plausible links with other pieces of data before reaching any interpretation of the event under examination. This was the triangulation I constantly put into practice. For example, in some of the interviews I conducted, my interviewees would tell me a version of events of which they not only seemed to be certain, but also, I have to say, was quite coherent.³⁰ Sometimes this took the form of the interviewee interpreting events in terms of causes and consequences that were persuasive at first sight in explaining problems of the Mexican publishing industry. However, on occasions, a simple cross-check of data would tell me that events did not happen at the time that fitted the stories of my interviewees, revealing that perhaps their memory had reordered the events to make sense of them. The next step was, therefore, to continue to triangulate examining sources and cross-referencing them with findings from other, mainly bibliographical, ones. This points to the centrality that bibliographical sources had in my research, being, as they were, my primary source of data for this thesis.

My critical analysis of bibliographical sources involved consulting and analysing books on certain topics that were relevant to my objectives for substantive background

³⁰ While this is out of the scope of my research, I attribute this to the mechanisms of memory rather than to intention.

research. With this background research I aimed to be fully aware of the previous work and approaches on the Latin American Boom and the evolution and characteristics of the publishing industries of Spain and Mexico. With this I was able to take advantage of what I found relevant to my own research in those studies and to more clearly delineate what my own approach would be. At a first stage, my reading of the literature on the topic also informed my interview guide. In this sense, as time went by, I consulted and thematically analysed written sources on the history of each of the countries involved and the region as a whole; biographies and memoirs of the protagonists and witnesses; essays of different kinds by the Boom protagonists; some of the Boom novels; literary and cultural studies monographs, and academic articles on the Latin American Boom; histories of the publishing industries of Mexico and Spain; scholarly studies on diverse aspects of the book industries of both countries, books on the politics of Mexico and Spain; analyses of the cultural policies of the two nations; and the works of Laclau and Mouffe as well as secondary literature on their theory, together with other theoretical sources.

To achieve this, I made use of libraries in Cambridge, the rest of the UK, the USA, Spain and Mexico. I also reached out to specialised book dealers to get hold of out of print and rare editions mostly on the topic of publishing and the Latin American Boom. It was precisely the sources on publishing that I was able to read almost in their entirety as they were rather scarce, while with all the other types of written materials I had to choose on the basis of relevance, previous public impact of the work and critical analysis of source.³¹ I use all these sources both for background research — without which it would have been impossible to come up with the interpretations that I advance in each chapter of this dissertation — and to collate the sources I needed to quote and discuss to make the arguments I found plausible.

With regard to the nature of my research, I found that I had to create informal categories for bibliographical sources. Specifically, there were books on the Boom that it seemed I had no choice but to include, but my reading and critical examination of them often revealed that they were not relevant to my research topic. This was because they were concerned with literary content rather than cultural production or were out of step with the theoretical debates of recent decades, for instance, just to mention two examples,

³¹ I also discovered research gaps that could be filled in by other researchers from different fields. For example, the only one of the four novelists I chose to focus on who has not yet been the subject of a proper biography is Carlos Fuentes — numerous works focus on Gabriel García Márquez and Mario Vargas Llosa, and there are at least three major biographies of Julio Cortázar.

on the literary side Martin discussing that there was a “boom” but not a new literary form of the Latin American novel (1984, pp. 53–63) and, on the theoretical side, Levy examining the social engagement of the Latin American novel (1974, pp. 7–21). These sources may have been extremely attractive at the time but were anchored in cultural, intellectual, and theoretical discussions that are hard to engage with today.

As I mentioned above, I went through all this literature, and the rest of my data — reading it critically — several times, doing thematic analysis. I had identified the following topics: individual actions of writers, emergence of new figures in the Spanish publishing industry, relationships among the social actors, industrial development of the publishing industries, public cultural policies, and shared Colonial history between Spain and Mexico. So, I checked my sources against such themes looking to spot the different perspectives about each of the topics, to then do the triangulation of the data and diverse interpretations offered both in books and by individuals. While doing this, I engaged in contrasting my findings with my theoretical framework to make sense of the analytical outcome, to then come up with arguments regarding each of the topics. I took this approach as I thought thematic analysis was a relevant way to deepen into the diverse issues I was concerned with. I am confident the results that could be read in this thesis proves a coherent outcome.

Approach to Interviews

A substantial part of my fieldwork entailed conducting interviews with characters of the highest-profile, including Nobel laureate Mario Vargas Llosa, professors Doris Sommer and Julio Ortega, and editor Jorge Herralde, among others. In this, I took into consideration that gathering data from my interviewees was not only a matter gaining access to them, but also that I had to conduct the conversations taking into account both scientific and ethical paradigms, including gaining their trust (Silverman, 2017, p. 73). I therefore was explicit regarding the aims of my research and always asked for written consent on the process of interviewing and the handling of the information.³² Here, too, depth prevailed over breadth, as I was not looking to establish quantitative averages among different individuals but to gather personal perspectives on certain events. My

³² The authorisation form is in Appendix 1.

initial intention was to conduct 30 interviews in Mexico City and Guadalajara, Mexico; and Barcelona and Madrid, Spain.³³ My criteria to select them was that I required data and personal interpretations of basically two types: on the one hand, members of the publishing industry, and on the other hand relevant participants of the cultural sphere both in Spain and Mexico. In both cases they had to be knowledgeable regarding the Latin American Boom, but mostly they had to be able to offer their expertise in the cultural field or in the book industry. In this way, the cultural sphere members included journalists, historians, writers, literature scholars, and an academic-cum-civil servant in the field of culture. As for the interviewees related to the publishing industry, I talked to editors, publishers, experts in publishing — scholarly and otherwise — a book seller, and a literary agent. This means I covered the whole chain of book production and commercialisation. In both groups, these people, whether directly involved or not in the Boom, shed light, as actors within the field, on the different publishing, cultural, historical, political and literary processes articulated in the construction of hegemony. Without asking them about hegemony, nor assuming they looked at the issues involved in a discursive way, their answers were providing, as it were, the building blocks for the analysis of a hegemonic process.

I contacted the 30 people I wished to interview. My response rate was limited by lack of reply, illness and an interviewee who ultimately did not consent to be recorded.³⁴ I prepared for the interviews by researching each interviewee, their work, and possible views on the Boom and the processes that surrounded it, as well as on the Spanish-language publishing industry in general. I went to each interview with a series of questions that served as a script for the encounter. I had a general interview guide, which was the basis for all interviews, but which I adapted individually based on the background research, the profile interview and the way the interview itself developed.³⁵ All the interviews were flexible and inevitably went beyond this basic questionnaire that I was familiar with, but had not sent my interviewees in advance, except for one interviewee

³³ There was a practical reason for this: most of the individuals I was focusing on lived in one of these four locations.

³⁴ Three of them did not respond to my emails or telephone calls. One of them seems to be missing, as nobody knows the person's whereabouts. Three interviews were not possible due to illness and the interviewees died not long after. Location prevented another interview from taking place. And I had a conversation at length by telephone in which all my questions were answered but the interviewee refused to sign the authorisation form I presented all my interviewees with nor did the person allowed me to record the conversation, but was willing for me to take written notes.

³⁵ See Appendix 2 for the interview guide.

who asked me to do so. I carried out all but three of the interviews in public places. These conversations were also an exercise in creativity fuelled by the generosity of my interviewees in sharing their thoughts and experiences. This led them to be semi-structured in-depth qualitative interviews. With only one exception, all the interviewees signed the consent form. To my delight, in every single case, the interviews went far beyond the bounds of the questions I had prepared. My approach to the interview process was guided by the methodological advice of different social scientists (Brooks, Horrocks, and King, 2019) and, particularly, ethnographers (Murchison, 2010): rather than pose questions that explicitly targeted the information I was seeking — which could all too easily have led to politically correct, predictable, or ideologically tendentious answers by way of leading questions — my strategy was, instead, to explore a given issue from various angles to get a sense of what was socially underlying my interlocutors' understandings and interpretations.

Following this approach, I conducted 26 formal interviews, 25 of which were recorded and transcribed in their entirety. In 2016 and 2017, I conducted interviews in Mexico City and the Guadalajara International Book Fair with publishers, intellectuals, historians, cultural journalists, bookstore owners, and protagonists of the Latin American Boom from countries that included Colombia, Spain, and Mexico. I interviewed nine publishers, all of whom have held senior positions in major Latin American publishing houses and have also worked at trade associations or government bodies that are connected to books and reading, editing, and publishing. One of them is the son of a Spanish publisher who was active in Mexico during the Boom years and who published works by Fuentes and Vargas Llosa, and one of them was García Márquez's first publisher in Mexico. I was also able to interview someone who was herself directly involved in the Boom: Mercedes Barcha, García Márquez's widow. Another person I thought it important to interview to understand the distribution and marketing mechanisms for books was a former managing director of what is currently the largest publishing chain in Mexico. Through these interviews, I was seeking insiders' insight into the Boom and the world of Spanish-language publishing.

I approached other interviewees seeking outside perspectives that were not necessarily related to publishing itself but did come to bear on the cultural and intellectual context in which the Boom arose. For this reason, during my interviews in Mexico, I spoke to a cultural journalist with considerable knowledge about the Boom, an

intellectual historian, and four public intellectuals, one of whom had also held a high-ranking position at the Mexican Ministry of Education. Through the interview process, I found ways to bring together these individuals' subjective interpretations with, as I mentioned above, what I garnered from my readings of bibliographic sources to build my own interpretation of the events of the Boom.

During my research trip to Barcelona and Madrid, I interviewed writers, publishers, literary agents, bookstore owners, and experts on the Latin American Boom and the history of publishing. Among them was a publisher who played a leading role in the Boom as he published several of its key works. I also talked to a bookstore owner, as I had done in Mexico, to contrast the distribution mechanisms and forms of marketing in the two countries. Finally, I met and interviewed the current CEO of the Carmen Balcells Agency and two of her colleagues. This interview with a literary agent marked a contrast in the list of interviewees from the two countries, for whom there was no equivalent figure in Mexico. Perhaps the most important of the interviews I conducted in Spain were those with two writers, one of whom, Mario Vargas Llosa, rightly describes himself as "the last survivor" of the Boom. Another core aspect of this process was my interview with the author of a recent study of the Boom, a journalist with whom my research enters into dialogue due to our interest in the same historical figures and events, although our studies have significantly different aims.

In sum, I met with 17 people in Mexico and 7 in Spain³⁶. The reason for this apparent imbalance in interview locations is that, before I designed the conversations, I had observed the need to explore the limitations of the publishing process in Mexico as compares to the well-functioning Spanish system. I needed to fill in the gaps of knowledge. I complemented these encounters with interviews with two prominent literary and cultural studies scholars during an academic fellowship at Harvard University, and visits to Brown University, in 2018. As I had conducted the rest of the interviews in the two years prior to my time at Harvard, the conversations with these two academics enabled me to clarify their positions on certain aspects of the Boom, to compare their remarks with the data and opinions I had already gathered, and to contrast them with my own vision of the events in question.

³⁶ Plus two professors in the United States.

I would like to add that while I quote many of the interviews in this thesis, most of their contents were left out. This was because I did thematic analysis on the transcriptions in order to reconstruct the different dynamics outlined in each of the chapters of this dissertation. I therefore reserved the use of quotations, while developing a more general argument, to the moments when it was useful to analyse the point of view on the matter of a given individual. This was, I consider, more relevant for the presentation of the outcomes of my research than the direct analysis of the interviewees' interpretations of events or the confrontations of their different versions of them. I wanted to offer, instead, my take on the examined events. Because of all this, I can confidently say that without some of the answers and outlooks of my interviewees and my own reflection upon the conversations, I would not have been able to fully outline and narrow down neither the topics of my thematic analysis nor my final take on the issues.

Personal Documents and Research Ethics

There was one more feature to my fieldwork: research in personal archives and collections. At this point, I would like to reflect on how I was able to access these archives and the interviewees I described above. I know that my interviewees were well-aware of my public profile and career history. With many, our paths have crossed in the past in roles that had nothing to do with a scholarly interview. None of them saw me simply as an academic researcher or a PhD student. They knew of me by reputation following my career managing private publishing companies, the years I spent in public service at the helm of the Mexican state publishing house Fondo de Cultura Económica, and perhaps above all, my time as president of the National Council for Culture and the Arts (Conaculta), currently Ministry of Culture since 2015. It was these professional experiences that gave me expertise in practice, what in Dutch is called *ervaringsdeskundige* and which gave me what we might call a curation of topics and sources — both printed and human — that were crucial in this research.

There are a range of reasons for this being acquainted even without personal contact, but the main one was likely the fact that my administration was responsible for building considerable cultural infrastructure. One such undertaking, a literary and visual cultural centre known as La Ciudad de los Libros y la Imagen (The City of Books and

Images) was described by Vargas Llosa as “the most beautiful, original, and creative library of the 21st-century” (Vargas Llosa, 2012b). When I asked Vargas Llosa if I could interview him, I knew that I was approaching one of the most widely read and appreciated authors in the world, a Nobel laureate, and a public intellectual of international significance. I mention this as an example of how doors, that might have been closed to any other graduate student, were thrown wide open to me because of my professional career — literally so, in the case of the personal archives of the Boom authors.

My background in the industry appears to have facilitated my search for information and given me almost unlimited access to my interviewees. However, I also needed to bear in mind how their perceptions of me might affect both what they said and what they chose not to say. When I interviewed editors and publishers, for example, there was no getting away from the fact that I was in the company of colleagues and former competitors who were now seeing me in an entirely new capacity, as an academic. Before conducting the interviews, I wondered whether they would be in any way defensive or even aggressive towards me. I also asked myself if they would withhold information from me because they thought of me as part of their competition, even though I am no longer a publisher or even a business owner.

In the end, what I found was that my interviewees, on the challenging side for research, took for granted that I understood many of their references — which was mostly the case, but also led to some points not being uttered with enough detail by them³⁷ — and, on the productive side of research, this enabled the process of the interviews to reach points of detail that probably could not have been a matter of discussion without the shared expertise.

In turn, my research in the personal libraries of two of the Boom protagonists brought into play longstanding, close personal relationships with people I have been friends with for many years. In this I followed the reflections of Owton and Allen-Collinson (2013) who claim that emotional involvement and emotional reflexivity could be a legitimate resource for the researcher and should not be avoided a priori as a methodological problem. To do this in a sound way I worked on not having a bias due to

³⁷ After the first cases of this happening, I adopted the strategy of adding questions regarding such apparently obvious points, with a brief explanation to my interviewees regarding the need of registering their take on the issue and not leaving it to my own interpretation.

such personal relationship, and aimed not, as it were, disturb or contaminate the answers of my interviewees. This also made me aware that I needed to approach all my interviews and my research as a whole in a keenly critical spirit that would allow me to identify subjective positions and access the knowledge I needed to go about my work.

One of these personal relationships, which could be understood as part of my own social capital — which, as I have explained enabled and shape my research to some extent — is my friendship with Silvia Lemus, Carlos Fuentes’s widow. Thanks to her, I had access to Fuentes’s personal library, where my main focus was his collection of copies of each edition of his books. I visited the Fuentes archive in Mexico City in February 2019. I was able to compare the first editions of titles published in Mexico by various publishing houses with the list of editions I had already compiled following research at other collections, particularly the Gonzalo Robles Library at Fondo de Cultura Económica. Being able to visit this private collection also gave me access to the different translations of Fuentes’s work, which was the main purpose behind my visit.³⁸ This was particularly useful because I had not been able to find a comprehensive list of these translations, which is understandable, given that it would be hard for, say, a French student of Mexican literature to ascertain whether Fuentes had been published in Mandarin, or a Dutch professor to be concerned with Portuguese translations of Boom writers; however, that was precisely my purpose: to integrate dispersed knowledge. My work in the author’s personal archive, not open to the public, also led me to revise and expand the list of Spanish-language titles I had drawn based on the material available at the Fondo de Cultura Económica library. Constantly comparing and cross-referencing data from a range of sources thus became a defining feature of my research. Consequently, most data were merely a starting point for further investigation that would sometimes lead me to verify claims or to formulate hypotheses and reach other conclusions when statements were contradicted by registered data or events that could be documented by other means. That is to say I systematically did data triangulation, “so that diverse viewpoint or standpoints cast light upon a topic” (Olsen, 2004) and also because triangulation “tends to support interdisciplinary research” (Yeasmin and Rhaman, 2012, pp. 154–163). As I am not doing, for instance, literary analysis I would not call my own research

³⁸ I drew on this information to create the list of titles in translation that I present in chapter 6.

interdisciplinary and yet, as it deals with a spectrum going from individual agency to historical developments, I required this kind of approach.

My visit to another private archive that is not open to the public, that of Gabriel García Márquez, was also made possible by another personal relationship of mine: the writer's widow, Mercedes Barcha. I visited the archive, which is located in Mexico City, in August 2019. One of my aims was to confirm the first editions' dates of the works by the Colombian writer, who decided to donate his collection of 3,000 first editions to the Banco de la República Library in Bogotá, Colombia, in 2018. As with Fuentes, this collection included Spanish editions released by various publishing houses and translations into other languages. I was not able to see the books themselves, but I was able to consult a detailed list of the donations. Beyond the mere exercise of gathering information, what I am interested in recording here is the personal and academic reflection that I had to engage in given that the objects of my research were the late husbands of two people close to me. Given the academic nature of my research, I would keep my critical sociological vision even if my findings did not portray the writers themselves in a positive light. Although ultimately this did not occur, it was a possibility. Furthermore, I knew I could not let my friendships cloud my judgement or prevent me from seeking to assess the information provided to me as lucidly as possible.³⁹ Achieving a balance between my academic duties and my personal ties drove me to confirm and verify my data and sociological interpretations as exhaustively as possible.

I also conducted research in public archives. At Princeton University's Firestone Library⁴⁰ I was able to consult the personal archives of Carlos Fuentes and Mario Vargas Llosa. The library's restrictions on photographing and photocopying documents meant that I was not permitted to record their letters in facsimile form. In view of this, I developed a specific approach to working with these documents, of which there were thousands, although many of them were not relevant to my objectives. I sought out correspondence relating to publishers, contracts (particularly royalty payments), censorship (which my bibliographical research had revealed as a possible line of investigation), references to translations and distribution, literary agents, and publishing

³⁹ In the future, new lines of research on the Boom can be pursued by academics and scholars who will no longer have to deal with the dilemmas associated with personal friendships with their objects of study or, indeed, political disagreements. For example, there are documents in the Fuentes archive that cannot be consulted for another 50 years, at the behest of Silvia Lemus.

⁴⁰ Specifically, in the Manuscripts Division at the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections.

projects, and reflections on the political situation in the Boom protagonists' countries of origin. Also at Princeton, Emir Rodríguez Monegal's archive proved fruitful in terms of both his vision of the Boom as an academic, literary critic, and editor and his correspondence with Boom novelist Guillermo Cabrera Infante (Emir Rodríguez Monegal Papers). Comparing different stakeholders' visions was essential to my research, which was not about putting forward the viewpoint of either writers or publishers but rather entailed constructing a social overview of what had gone on in the publishing world at the time of the Boom.

In August 2018, at the Firestone Library in Princeton University, I examined Vargas Llosa's correspondence with literary agent Carmen Balcells, and in the Ransom Centre of the University of Texas at Austin that between García Márquez and Balcells. By doing so, I was again seeking to build a broad vision of the Boom rather than one that revolved around just one of the many stakeholders who were involved in it. At the University of Texas, I was able to photograph correspondence and copy letters and contracts that were relevant to my research.⁴¹ The richness of this collection and the quality of the facilities in which it can be consulted prompted another reflection on my part: the García Márquez and Fuentes archives were sold to those universities by the writers' families, because the government of Mexico (where both Fuentes and García Márquez resided) did not try to keep them in the country as part of Mexico's cultural heritage, which would make them easily accessible for local academics.⁴² This is one of the paradoxes of the Boom: the documentary history of a Latin American cultural phenomenon that unfolded in Spain is mostly found in the United States.⁴³

⁴¹ See Appendixes 4-7 for a sample of such documents.

⁴² I would like to mention that my work has already begun to have consequences beyond the world of academia. One positive outcome of my research would be to promote the creation of archives within publishing houses to contain and preserve first editions, correspondence and documents, and other valuable assets. I will mention one specific example of this. During the research process, I discovered that despite being the gatekeepers of the memory industry, as I have described them, many publishing houses, from the largest to the smallest, in both Spain and Mexico, do not have archives to preserve the multiple documents involved in the publishing process. This posed challenges to my research but, more importantly, constituted a major omission in the historical record. In view of this, I took advantage of an invitation to give a lecture at the Club de Editores (Publishers' Circle) in Mexico. I proposed that a library of editing and publishing be created in the country to provide an appropriate space in which this legacy could be preserved. My suggestion went down very well with the audience and there is a possibility that the Mexican memory industry will eventually find a way to preserve documents for its own benefit and also make these available to scholars.

⁴³ This could open a line of research, which goes beyond the aims of my dissertation: the policies and the politics of Latin American archives. A working hypothesis taken from my own experience with this is that perhaps there are weaknesses in the policies of memory from Latin American States and this leads to the destiny of archives being resolved mostly in the basis of individual decisions.

My research with archival materials required, as suggested, extensive time of work. I can say that all the archives I have mentioned contain a wealth of data for many kinds of researchers. That proved to be the case for me. Nevertheless, I can state that taking full advantage of these materials might require new and original ways of working with them, perhaps by digitalising documents and thus enabling efficient searches. As they stand, these archives are in general very well classified and ordered. However, such classifications follow traditional patterns that require researchers to go through documents that are not necessarily relevant to their topics and are not accessible remotely.

Overall my method was to embark on the thematic analysis of my qualitative data. As Hernández, Fernández and Baptista (2014) write, this implied that the processes of collecting the information and analysing it ran almost simultaneously (p. 418). It also meant a “detailed analysis” in which my hypotheses were emerging from my data in a non-linear process that proved to be iterative and led me, from time to time, to search for even more data (Hernández, Fernández and Baptista, 2014, p. 422). In the course of my research, I set out to connect and contrast data through triangulation in which I filtered the information I received from my interviewees through a reflective, critical lens so as forge the most sophisticated possible connections between such information and the findings of my bibliographical research and work in news archives.

Finally, I used all my background data to structure the chapters and their sections and collated sources and their data to advance my argument in the chapters of this dissertation. In the following chapters, I present the results of the processes I have described here.

Chapter 3

History and the Genealogy of the Book Industries in Spain and Mexico

This chapter seeks to analyse the state of the book industries in Spain and Mexico when the Latin American Boom emerged, in order to establish in what way the shared history of the countries, the development of their publishing industries, and their business models in the 1960s articulated with other elements to lay, together and horizontally, the foundations of a novel hegemony. This part of the thesis then analyses the historical framework in which events took place and how such context played a part in the studied phenomenon.

This analysis is broken down into four parts. The first is a comparative historical review of the Colonial relationship between the two countries that began with the Spanish Conquest of Mexico in 1521 and lasted until both independent countries established diplomatic relations in 1836.⁴⁴ The following section addresses the differences in how the book industries developed in the two countries from the 19th-century to the mid-20th-century. The third section places the Latin American Boom in historical context and within this genealogy of publishing in the Spanish language. The final section focuses on the two very different publishing industry models that were operating in each one of them in the 1960s, when the Boom began. With the aforementioned elements, the chapter traces different sociological factors that explain what role they played in articulating with other elements examined throughout this thesis to shed some light on the understanding of the role of the Spanish book industry in the emergence of the Boom.

The argument of this chapter is, therefore, that the Spanish publishing houses were undergoing a process of change — with novel actors, in Boom times, such as a literary agent looking for the benefit of authors and an editor seeking internationalisation of such writers — unparalleled in Mexico; that this happened in an industrial framework that had several decades in development in Spain, while in Mexico it had a more recent history, regardless of centuries of printing experience; and that all this took place in the

⁴⁴ Two historic milestones in this process were the 1810s, when the struggle for Mexican independence began, and 1821, when it was achieved.

cultural framework of a Colonial wound still tangible in the 1960s from the part of Spanish America towards Spain, therefore opening the chance of literary events in Europe being regarded as the point of reference for the Americas.

The chapter's theoretical contribution to the existing literature centres on its articulation of coloniality, historical issues, and economic and industrial factors, with a focus on their role in the construction of hegemony. This approach will allow me to analyse why Spain was the site where the conditions of possibility of the Boom arose. To do so, I begin by exploring one particular aspect of coloniality, namely how the hegemony that was established five centuries ago during the Conquest continued throughout the Viceregal Period and still exerted a palpable influence on social practices in Latin American countries in the 1960s — and, indeed, it probably still does today. In this way, this chapter is a step within this dissertation in order to show, from a hegemonic point of view, that the stamp and vestiges of Mexico's Colonial status appear in its culture, economy, and history, and that they articulate with other contemporary phenomena — which I analyse in all other chapters of this research — to give shape to cultural events such as the ones implied in the ways the book industry works and has close ties with other social events.

Even though I first thought of discussing the political context as a factor linked to this historic dimension, my research showed me that there were distinct elements which had to be analysed regarding public policies that required separate attention. I thus explore the political ideologies and the cultural policies of the Spanish and Mexican governments in detail in chapter 4, and by doing so, I examine the influence such public policies exerted in the development of the publishing industries of both countries. My objective is for this chapter to contribute to reflections on the construction hegemony in the Spanish-language publishing industry, shedding light on how these processes functioned.

Shared History and a Colonial Relationship

The aim of this section is to provide a brief historical account of the relationship between Spain and Mexico to analyse their colonial and cultural ties, particularly that of language. The relationship between the two countries began with the arrival of Captain-General

Hernán Cortés in Mesoamerica⁴⁵ on 14th March 1519. The watershed moment came with the surrender of Tenochtitlan on 13th August 1521, which marked the beginning of the Spanish Colonial regime that would last until 27th September 1821, when the Viceroyalty fell apart, giving way to the first Mexican Empire (Alamán, 1850; Robertson, 2013). This was the start of the new nation's independent life.

Spain had four viceroyalties in America: The Viceroyalty of New Spain in what is now Mexico, and the viceroyalties of Peru, New Granada, and the Río de la Plata. The Viceroyalty of New Spain “was Spain's richest colony” (Anna, 2001, p. 9). At the start of the struggle for independence, it stretched from the Caribbean to the Pacific, from Guatemala and the current Mexican state of Chiapas to what is now the southwestern United States (Anna, 2001, p. 9). By 1519, around 10 million people were living in what is now Mexico (Thomas, 2005, pos. 9699). This data point toward the significance of the Viceroyalty of New Spain in the Spanish Empire.

The Spanish invasion was a massive military undertaking but was also a spiritual conquest (Ricard, 2014) that followed the clash of two empires. The victor, Spain — it is critical to stress this for the analytical purposes of this thesis — wished for a single language to be spoken throughout its territories, it aspired to linguistic unity (Nebrija, 2018, p. 11; Lara, 2005, p. 173), while the vanquished were linguistically very diverse at the time of the Conquest — over 500 languages were spoken in their territory (Thomas, 2005, pos. 9699). In addition to multiple languages, there were also clearly differentiated religions in the various Mesoamerican cultures, which contrasted with the Catholic unity of Spain. Thomas writes that “in the early 1520s, Spain had not only a language ready for empire, as the philologist Nebrija had insisted was needed, [but also] a large number of people ready for the adventure of emigration...” (Thomas, 2005, pos. 11149). Nebrija himself described the situation accurately when he said that language was always the companion of empire (Thomas, 2005, pos. 1851; Fuentes, 2008). That is to say, the aim of conquest had a hegemonic turn as it looked forward to having cultural and linguistic homogeneity in its conquered lands.

It is worth reviewing how academic perspectives on the nature of the Conquest of Mexico have changed. Earlier studies made missionaries the main players and emphasized the religious drive behind Spain's military prowess (Moreno Toscano, 1987,

⁴⁵ “About 1950, a fine German scholar, Richard Konetske, invented a new word for Mexico and Central America, in pre-Columbian days: Mesoamerica.” (Thomas, 2005, pos. 9699).

pp. 325–338). Ricard’s arguments are in a similar vein: “naturally, the Spaniards brought to America the Catholic tradition that prevailed in the mother country, together with the corpus of ideas, sentiments, and customs that it encompassed” (2014, pos. 88). According to this interpretation, which stretches back to Nebrija, the Spanish conquered Mexico with a sword in one hand and the Spanish language in the other.

Initially, the spiritual conquest was driven by a desire to evangelise (Ricard, 2014) that was reflected in the teaching of the Spanish language and, more broadly, in control over education, which the Church took over. This shaped a multilevel ideological enterprise with cultural, linguistic, religious, and educational facets to it. Thomas records that Cortés was convinced that the Aztec emperor, Moctezuma, “made a formal acceptance of his vassalage to the King of Spain” (Thomas, 2005, pos. 10198) and describes how “the spiritual conquest of Mexico was the next stage after the material conquest. It was a triumph of proselytism” (Thomas, 2005: Pos. 10340). Let’s explore what kind of theoretical background underlies this kind of interpretations.

Approaches that draw on classical Marxist lines of thought generally would read this process as being exclusively one of domination, in which Moctezuma was overthrown and the local population evangelised, giving short shrift to any sense of agency among the indigenous population. These interpretations are similar to Mariátegui’s description of the conquest of Peru: “Almost the sole interest of the colonisers was the mining of Peruvian gold and silver” (1988, p. 5), without discussing the experiences of the colonised. Within this horizon of comprehension, it almost seems that the wishes of those with power would be the ones shaping reality without any resistance or transformation of their impulses.

In contrast, the approaches of other scholars, such as Gruzinski, have entailed other factors. Gruzinski describes the cultural process as the “colonisation of the imaginary” (2016), an interpretation which does not depend exclusively on orthodox Marxism. This approach goes beyond one-sided action on the part of the colonising power, since, returning to what Thomas has suggested, it includes the experiences of Moctezuma and the new converts in the Americas, taking into account the multiple indigenous responses to attempts at domination. These reactions included not just subordination, but also adaptation, *mestizaje* (cultural fusion), appropriation, and resistance. Moreover, this could be linked to Brading’s argument in the sense that the study of the different social and cultural processes that took place during the Viceregal

Period would also need to contemplate “the religious experience of *criollos* [people born in the Americas to European parents], *mestizos* [people of combined European and Native American descent], and *mulatos* [people of combined European and African descent]: that heterogenous population that formed the core of the future nation of Mexico, along with Native Americans who had received European-style educations” (2015, p. 249)⁴⁶. Together, these perspectives shape a new imaginary that is defined by more than just the intentions of the Spanish conquistadors and which are clearly expressed through cultural practices that go beyond subordination.

Although his writings are less well known, Lienhard (2003) has insightful theoretical reflections, which are particularly relevant to my research as they engage specifically with the imposition of writing during the Colonial period. He and Gruzinski both note the tension between pre-Columbian pictographic expression and the Spanish imposition of “the passion for writing” (Gruzinski, 2016, p. 12), or the “fetishism of writing” (Lienhard, 2003, pp. 45–52), in other words, the vital role that was given to cultural, political, and social practices that began to centre on the written word. The practices of reading and writing excluded the majority of the population, who were illiterate, but they were a defining feature of the new society, the very essence of things as public as the drawing of contracts and the defining of identities through record-keeping and the issuing of birth-certificates.

Similarly, Thomas argues that “the role of writing in all these conquests of the 16th-century has been called ‘the literal advantage’ or ‘perhaps... the most important’ difference between the Spaniards and the indigenous people” (2005, pos. 10250). As I will explore in greater depth in the rest of this dissertation, following Lienhard’s line of thought, the literary prestige that the Boom novelists would accrue in 1960s Latin America could be read as an expression of the fetishism of writing whose roots lie in the region’s Colonial history. With this I mean that, within Colonial thinking, being an author entailed several things, not only the ability to imagine interesting and beautiful stories. It would also imply the social meaning of, for instance, bearing the aura of Enlightenment and modernity.

A scholar such as Garciadiego seems to show this pattern of thought when he states that the Boom authors were good writers “con mundo”, meaning a praise since

⁴⁶ My translation.

they were well-travelled, in reference to them having travelled through and lived in Europe as a sign of civilisation (2017). Similarly, editor Labastida — when praising some Mexican publishing houses by referring to their actions as bringing a universal and contemporary character to its readers — seems to be expressing himself from within this mind frame (2017). In both cases they are making statements that capture the rawness of the Boom's process: both Garcíadiego and Labastida are dissecting the cultural and publishing paradigms of the 1960s, while being aware of the Colonial nature of the moment. I should also note that ultimately, when examining this issue in regards of the Boom protagonists I am not writing neither of an intellectual stance nor of personal traits of the characters involved. Rather, these statements of mine address the social, not the personal, and have the purpose of revealing the hegemonic discourse in Mexican society at the time, one of subordination to European culture, as if “civilisation” had to be brought to the Americas from there.

As we will see in chapter 5, Vargas Llosa praised the actions of Balcells as a process of modernisation of the book industries of the Spanish language. It is in events like this that we can identify some possible remains of social Colonial disposition, since they imply assuming the existence of a model, in this case an ideal modern publishing industry, which must be imitated and reached by practices considered to be less developed. This is part of what I have referred to before as the Colonial wound and, as such, an element of a previous hegemonic discourse.

Other positions that Vargas Llosa has publicly expressed on these issues are particularly illustrative. I will examine these in detail in chapter 6, but will summarise them here: when he began his public life, Vargas Llosa believed the Boom to be valuable because, from his point of view, it was an unprecedented outburst of literary modernity that opposed and set itself apart from the concern with the picturesque and the localism that had characterised Latin American literature up to that point (Williams and Vargas Llosa, 1987, p. 202). In her writings and in an interview for this study, Sommer (2018) has asserted that Cortázar, Fuentes, and García Márquez were all of the same opinion on this point, a stance that she disagrees with: “they told us categorically and repeatedly how little there was worth reading in earlier Latin American fiction [and that only since the Boom] had the continent started to gain cultural independence” and in *Foundational Fictions*, her study on the link between Latin American novels and the construction of nationalism in the continent's new nations in the 19th-century, Sommer discusses novels

of great literary quality that also contributed to consolidating national states (1993, pos. 74–76). But, as I have insisted, my analysis is social, so regardless of literary features, what interests me is that the Boom protagonists regarded themselves — and were seen in their countries, the region and Spain from the perspective that I have described.

From a sociological standpoint, such as that of Mignolo (2007), the Boom protagonists' argument would be seen as an example of an absence of emancipation, lack of decolonisation or, in Mignolo's terms, the persistence of a Colonial wound. With this, Mignolo refers to the inferiority complex imposed, by colonisers, on human beings that do not fit the predetermined model of the Euro-American narratives (2007, p. 17). I find this idea and approach relevant, since it is compatible with the theory of hegemony, and Mignolo himself at some point expresses it with a hegemonic theoretical vocabulary when he states that the Colonial wound is a consequence of racism, since the "hegemonic discourse" puts into question the humanity of everyone who does not belong to the locus of enunciation (and the geopolitics of knowledge) of those who create the patterns of classification and grant themselves the right to classify (Mignolo, 2007, p. 34). From this point of view, the stance points of the four Boom authors I study would have the need of a process of decolonisation, since what they reveal is that they were immersed in a culture and society that saw Western literature, and the forms of operation of its publishing industries — regardless whether they actually worked in a desirable way — as the only model. This, as any of my assertions in this thesis, of course, refers to, in this case, the language of the literary protagonists of the Boom as social evidence beyond individuals, and is not a characterisation of people who uttered them. It was Latin America that showed the Colonial wound in the 1960s and the Boom authors, well-aware of it, aimed at working from within such framework to transform it in favour of their public careers.

From a strictly decolonial perspective, the roots of the Boom authors' questioning of earlier Latin American literary practices lie in their quest for a different sort of public presence in world literature, as authors in equal standing to those of developed societies. This is not foreign to what, when talking about Mexican society in interview with me, Díez-Canedo Flores points out that, deservedly or not, there seems to still prevail some level of deference toward Spanish culture, and that "cultural prestige resides in Spain" (2017). Equally, Larraz speaks of the preference the elites of Spanish America show for what comes from Europe (2017). This ties with the Latin American Colonial wound of

hoping to be like the Euro-American model of culture. And, therefore, in this we have yet another paradox of the Boom: a Latin American presence in the world that emphasised its Latin Americanness while simultaneously aspiring to overcome its condition of origin.

Different Publishing Histories

I have made reference to the historical background that links Spain and Mexico. I will now examine the contrasting histories of the publishing industries in both countries to shed some light on why multiple factors were able to converge in Spain for the Boom to take place there and not in Mexico. The book industries in Spain and Mexico had, indeed, very different histories. George Bernard Shaw is often said to have first uttered the famous phrase that the United States and the United Kingdom are two nations separated by the same language. The same could perhaps be said of the Mexican and Spanish publishing industries, which share a language but developed in ways that do not resemble each other.

The history of books in Mexico began very early in the Colonial period. Although the Mesoamerican peoples preserved their history and memories through codices, which have also been described as “painted books” (Rodríguez Díaz, 1992, p. 16–22; Manrique, 1992, p. 19), the production of printed books in the Americas began when the first press was established in New Spain in 1539, just a few years after the Conquest had been consummated in 1521. The purpose of this press was to produce books and materials for evangelising the local population (Griffin, 2010, p. 5; Rodríguez Díaz, 1992; Zaid, 1959, p. 11). This was an unprecedented cultural milestone: as Fuentes notes, typographer Juan Pablos began work in Mexico City in 1539, but another century would go by until Daye established the first Anglo-American printing press in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1638 (2008, p. 90), while Cambridge University Press had started in 1534. As Zaid argued, “Mexico was the focal point of printing in the Americas” (1959, p. 11). This early production of books in Mexico was a material expression of Spain’s three-pronged approach to colonisation (sword/rosary/language) discussed above: books were printed in situ in the language of the coloniser to evangelise the indigenous population while teaching them that very same language. Over the next three centuries, the books printed in Mexico were predominantly of a religious nature. The Church controlled the titles to

be published with an iron fist, even seizing a copy of *Don Quixote* (Leonard, 1979, pp. 137, 142, 174, 261; Hampe Martínez, 2010, pp. 62–63).⁴⁷ With this we can see that while the activity appeared early in México, the printing of books did not represent the foundation of a tradition of freedom in publishing.

With all this in mind, I must state that, seeing this from my publishing perspective, we cannot really discuss industrial aspects of book printing until the start of mass production, which for Spanish-language publishing took place toward the end of the 19th-century, as we will see below. This coincided with an increase in reader demand. This marks the beginning of the period that can be described as that of the book industry, which is the main focus of my research. Not only was there greater supply due to the mechanised production of books, there also was an interplay between this supply and greater consumption due to both demographic factors and social transformation processes, such as increases in schooling and the quest for symbolic capital. For these reasons, my analysis will centre on the social phenomena that arose within the industrialisation of book printing, in the context of both increased readership and the watershed moment in social habits that coincided with this increase. Nevertheless, it is worth analysing some events before the turn of the 19th into the 20th-century as they offer us elements to better understand some of the sedimented practices in Mexico's book industry.

According to Fernández Moya, over the century that elapsed between the 1830s and the 1930s, Spain's publishing companies underwent a process of industrialisation: the guilds the industry had formerly rested on were dissolved, new printing legislation was passed, the readership diversified, demand grew, publishing developed, and the ways in which books circulated increased, all of which went hand-in-hand with transformations to Spanish culture and society (2009, p. 67). So, now we must see whether something similar happened simultaneously in Mexico.

In Mexico, it is worth remembering that, between 1571 and 1820, the Tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition exercised control over printers and booksellers, determined the topics on which books could be published, and, during the evangelising phase, restricted the entry of any books that were considered to be profane or that

⁴⁷ Nesvig (2009, p. 238) describes how *Don Quixote* arrived in Mexico just a few months after being published in Spain, and argues that its popularity could be gauged by the number of people who stated they owned a copy on being interrogated by the Inquisition when they reached Mexico.

concerned topics it considered to be heretical or a threat to the Catholic Church (given the context of the Reformation) (Ramos Soriano, 2011). Despite these restrictions, some of the “forbidden” books blacklisted by the Inquisition still managed to enter Mexico “on ships from Spain, which often carried books in wine barrels or crates of dried fruit” (Martínez, 1987, p. 41). According to Nesvig, however, the Inquisition’s rules were not rigorously enforced. He recounts how all passengers who arrived by ship to Veracruz were supposed to be questioned as part of the search for forbidden publications but argues that the records show that many passengers were not actually interviewed. Those that were interviewed were not questioned in detail, despite this being stipulated, and there are no records of what was eventually done with any banned books that were found (2009, p. 236–237). Ideas did circulate, then, between Spain and Mexico and the two were not hermetically isolated from each other, although there were significant restrictions on the printing and importation of books.

Despite this control, printing played a fundamental role in the spread of ideas of insurgency during Mexico’s War of Independence, when many publications circulated clandestinely (Martínez, 1987). These were printed on makeshift portable presses, since established printing presses in Mexico City were controlled by civil, military, and Church authorities (Martínez, 1987). Through this underground printing activity, forbidden books circulated among the elite and provided the ideological underpinnings for the War of Independence. If I previously wrote about the fetishism of writing, pointed out by Lienhard, I can now add that, with practices like these ones, the object of writing par excellence, the book, came to be regarded as something of the exclusive use of a minority, as the property of a privileged few.

In 1813, for example, one of the leaders of the independence movement, José María Morelos, seized a printing press in the community of Chilpancingo, now the state of Guerrero, to use it to spread the word during what has been described as a “paper war”, which even led to the printing press being transported with the fighting forces (Rodríguez Díaz, 1992, p. 159). After 1821, printing presses were established throughout the new republic and some outstanding publishers also emerged (Rodríguez Díaz, 1992, pp. 161–162). However, 19th-century Mexico was soon ravaged by civil wars that once again brought publishing to a halt and slowed the progress of the printing industry, then still in its infancy. As I will explore below, the negative effects of political conflict on the Mexican book industry emerged again soon after.

Looking once more to Spain, Martínez Martín argues that, by the 20th-century, the business and trade aspects of the book industry were now fully in step with the industrialised world (2001a, p. 13). He explains that this process had begun toward the end of the 19th-century, which marked the start of the transition from a world that revolved around printers and booksellers, who had carried out all the work involved in producing and trading books, to that of the individual editor, who was both a producer and a link to readers, interpreting what they were looking for and what might interest them (Martínez Martín, 2001a, p. 14). During a second phase, in the first quarter of the 20th-century, the aforementioned old ways of producing books and bringing them to market coexisted with new companies and corporations (Martínez Martín, 2001a, p. 13), which led to a constant, significant increase in the number of publishing companies on the tax record (Martínez Martín, 2001b, p. 177). The publishing industry was, therefore, undergoing a transformation.

In stark contrast to this industrial evolution, the historical events of 19th-century Mexico that I mentioned above — extreme political instability and both civil and international wars — meant that “production languished” (Zaid, 1959, p. 13). At the start of the 20th-century, the Mexican Revolution and the subsequent conflicts between its leaders up to the end of the 1920s had such dramatic effects on the Mexican book industry that Zaid argues it would be fair to say that it disappeared altogether (1959, p. 13). Despite this, it was not long until some bookstores became publishing houses. This was true of *Librería Robredo* and *Librería Porrúa*, as documented by Zahar (2000), which can be said to be the first publishing companies in Mexico according to Cosío Villegas’ definition, namely that the distinguishing features of the publishing industry are “regularly and frequently printing large quantities of books; setting a price for them according to their cost and the state of the market; distributing and selling them widely; and investing capital in all these activities in order to turn a profit, like any capital that is invested in any business. The first company of this type appeared in Mexico in 1933” (1947, pos. 337).⁴⁸ Larraz argues that actually the whole of Spanish America saw the start of industrial publishing only in the 1930s (2017). With this and the aforementioned, we

⁴⁸ In interview with me, Labastida placed the beginning of Mexico’s publishing industry as late as in the 1960s (2017), that is to say, in the years of the Latin American Boom, therefore signalling a complete inequality between Spain’s and Mexico’s book industries. Pérez-Gay, also in interview, differ from both, placing the beginning of the Mexican industry in the 1920s but did so with reference to a book printing programme of the Government (2016).

can see that by the first third of the 20th-century there was already a mismatch between the book industries of Mexico and Spain, which actually enables me to say that Spain saw the beginning of a proper industry then, while Mexico was only just beginning to glimpse at such possibility.

These events are worth dwelling on. The histories of book publishing in Spain and Mexico were significantly out of step with one another. By the time that Spain had a fully-fledged publishing industry — the mid-20th-century — Mexico was still only engaged in bookselling, drawing mainly on imports from Spain. Likewise, while in Spain companies and individuals had begun to specialise in particular tasks or areas, in Mexico, bookstores were still doubling up as publishing houses. And yet, from my hegemonic approach, this industrial reality in itself would not have been enough for the Boom phenomenon to take place, as Laclau and Mouffe's theory goes beyond reductionist explanations in order to integrate a set of factors as complex as those that society reveals itself to have.

It is also worth noting that up to the 1930s, editors in both Spain and Mexico did not perform the functions that we identify with them today and that would, in the second half of the 20th-century, come to characterise figures like Barral, whose role in the Latin American Boom I will discuss in chapter 5. Martínez Martín describes a conference in Spain in 1922, at which editor Rafael Calleja discussed editing as a profession through which one could reasonably hope to earn a living rather than being supported by patrons (Martínez Martín, 2001b, p. 174). The very fact that he said this seems to suggest that producing books was yet to become firmly established as an economic activity and was still perceived as being an exclusively cultural undertaking with shades of altruism to it, with echoes of sacrifice. However, Calleja also explained that the editor decided on the physical features of books, such as their typesetting, directly oversaw their production from start to finish, and was responsible for spreading the word about their existence among potential consumers. The economic responsibilities of editors toward their books was taking shape, building on their existing cultural and social responsibilities. Calleja also listed four desirable traits in an "ideal editor": a love of books, business and corporate skills, a sense of the aesthetics of books, and the desire to function "as a promoter of public culture and a moral influence on the country's spiritual progress" (Martínez Martín, 2001b, p. 174). Calleja was apparently not the only one who, while pointing out economic factors, seemed to subordinate them to more intangible ends. Martínez Martín (2001b, pp. 175–176) stressed that there were several politically committed "editors"

and publishing companies in Spain in the 1930s and 1940s who focused on these ideals even to the detriment of their financial profitability.

Botrel argues that the specialisation — and perhaps even the rise — of professional booksellers in Spain began in the late 19th-century (Botrel, 2001, p. 164). He also claims that by the 1920s the Spanish market was a diverse one in which it was possible to find more foreign books than ever before, magazines from at least Germany, France, and Great Britain, and newspapers from several other countries (Botrel, 2001, p. 164). From the beginning of the 20th-century onward, book production in Spain diversified significantly and came to include literary works, books for children and young readers, textbooks, and books on religion, art, medicine and pharmaceuticals, engineering and the sciences in general, mechanics, accounting, travel, botany, and technical and professional matters, in addition to reference books and encyclopaedias (Martínez Martín, 2001b, pp. 191–192). This speaks to the growing strength and sophistication of the industry.

The above-mentioned factors coincided with a notable growth in the population and public literacy policies, which increased the number of potential readers (Martínez Martín, 2001b, p. 167; Fernández Moya, 2009, p. 25). Likewise, Martínez Martín adds that, in the first half of the 20th-century, “Madrid became a magnet for intellectuals, and authors and editors came together there seeking economic success and social recognition. In Barcelona, printing and the graphic arts were gradually industrialised as the market for such products expanded, including existing markets in the Americas” (2001b, p. 178). Several processes were coinciding in the creation of a reading public and, therefore, a market for reading products.

The creative offer and production of books (and newspapers) in Spain diversified at the same time that the consumption of books increased, reaching unprecedented levels as a result not only of greater numbers of readers, but also due to the democratisation of such cultural practices in different sectors of Spanish society, which Martínez Martín describes as an “interclassist” phenomenon (2001b, pp. 170–171). It would be useful to have statistics on reading habits in both Spain and Mexico at that time, but no such data are available, therefore I could only try to offer this image of a readership in the making in Spain, while that did not seem to be the case in Mexico.

What we can see for Spain, contrasted with the state of affairs in the other side of the Atlantic. According to Sánchez Illán (2015, pp. 553–554) in the first third of the

century, “if in Argentina or Chile we can speak of a golden age of publishing, what took place in Mexico was the birth of the publishing industry, which had been practically non-existent in 1936, with the exception of Fondo de Cultura Económica. This process benefited from the arrival of a large contingent of Republican exiles”. However, my research has revealed that the men who arrived in Mexico and found work at Casa de España — an academic institution — and the fledgling publishing project that was Fondo de Cultura Económica were writers and academics rather than editors (Agustí, 2018). In any case, as I have described above, there were clearly times when the lack of industrial infrastructure at Mexico’s publishing houses meant that they lagged behind their Spanish counterparts, but it is important to note that this was not a permanent state of affairs.

Cosío Villegas argues that, in 1935, Spain was “the only Spanish-speaking country that printed books on an industrial scale and was thus the only country serving the market of all the other Spanish — and even Portuguese-speaking countries” (2014, pos. 706). The following year, however, the Spanish Civil War broke out. According to Cosío Villegas, this dealt a devastating blow to the Spanish publishing industry and gave “the Latin American publishing industry the chance to increase its limited domestic production to an industrial scale for the international market” (1949, pos. 740). This was Mexico’s big opportunity, as practically no books were printed in Spain during the war and, indeed, “the first major publishing houses in Latin America were founded in 1936 and 1937” (1949, pos. 745). That is to say, the Mexican book industry had opportunities like this to grow.

As I mentioned above, another consequence of the Spanish Civil War was the arrival in Mexico of Republican exiles, including writers, editors, and intellectuals, who contributed indirectly to strengthening the publishing industry and who also had a significant impact on the country’s intellectual life. Several of these exiles founded publishing houses: Juan Grijalbo created the publishing house Atlante in 1939, which changed its name to Editorial Grijalbo in 1954 (León, 2016); 1939 was also the year that Rafael Giménez Siles, in partnership with the outstanding Mexican intellectual Martín Luis Guzmán, founded Edición y Distribución Iberoamericana de Publicaciones (Ediapsa), which a year later opened what was at that time the most modern bookshop in Mexico City: Librería de Cristal, as León shared with me in interview (2016). What was unusual about this shop was its architecture: the books it sold were displayed in the shop’s many windows and customers had direct access to the shelves, in contrast to traditional

bookshops where they had to ask for the books they wanted at the counter (Zahar, 2000, p. 95). Other publishing houses that were started around this time were Editorial Jus (1938), Fernández Editores (1943), Editorial Diana (1946), Editorial Trillas (1954), Editorial Era (1960), Joaquín Mortiz (1962), Libreros Mexicanos Unidos (Limusa, 1962), and Siglo XXI Editores (1965), which was founded, as a cooperative, by the Argentinian editor and publisher Arnaldo Orfila Reynal after leaving his position as director of Fondo de Cultura Económica. The key factor was that they were only just emerging, and we would still have to see whether they organised themselves in a way that was functional to their development.

One crucial difference between the book industries of Spain and Mexico was the decentralisation of the former and the centralisation of the latter. Although in Spain, as I will expand on in the rest of this chapter, Madrid and Barcelona were the main publishing centres, they did not monopolise the book industry. From the turn of the century to the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, the province of Vizcaya was the country's third-largest publishing centre and there was also a significant output in other regions (Martínez Martín, 2001b, p. 187). The situation was very different in Mexico. In interview, Anaya criticised such centralisation in the sense that it prevents the creation of any proper distribution network, even in the 21st-century (2016). Statistically speaking, it is hard to establish a comparison with Mexico given the lack of analogous figures. Only limited documentation is available — possibly due to the authoritarian post-revolutionary regime, which had little inclination to document industrial activity — making it hard to access accurate production and export data. However, Zaid does provide a basic parameter for comparison, mentioning that in 1945 for books printed and published in Mexico, 95% of books were printed in Mexico City, 2% in Guadalajara, and 1% in Monterrey, and that in that same year some 1,000 titles were published with an average print run of 2,500 copies (1959, p. 16). The Mexican book industry was, thus, highly centralised.

The triumph of centralism in Mexico meant that most publishing activity, if not all, returned to the model established during the Viceregal Period, wherein book production was done almost in its entirety in Mexico City (Zaid, 1959, p. 16). This centralisation was reinforced by the fact that most of the country's bookstores were also in the capital, and very few operated elsewhere. From the outset, Mexico City was the epicentre of Mexico's publishing industry, which was perhaps also explained by it being the location of the

National Autonomous University of Mexico and other major universities, along with much of the country's other industries. Mexico was centralised in general, not only regarding its book industry.

Agustí has also suggested that the sheer size of Mexico was one of the factors that historically hindered the distribution of books. He describes the “excessive distances” that “make distribution an impossible feat”, given that “Mexico City and [the border city of] Tijuana are about as far from one another as Barcelona and Moscow” (Agustí, 2018), and this despite the fact that Mexico had lost around half its original territory in a war with the United States in the mid-19th-century.

Sánchez Illán argues that Spanish exiles found “well-established cultural platforms and collaborative spaces” in Argentina and Mexico (2015, p. 549). Mexico had a growing economy, an increasingly literate population, and a nation-building project that prioritised schooling. Then again, we must consider that an increase in literacy is just a first step, it is not equal to a growing readership. Sánchez Illán claims that “after the Spanish Civil War, the centre of gravity of the Spanish publishing world shifted to Mexico City and Buenos Aires” (2015, p. 549). Similarly, Larraz argues that Argentina was “the world’s leading producer of Spanish-language books until 1953” (2013, pos. 3564). In his view, exiled Spanish writers wished to take advantage of what he describes as “the possibilities that the powerful Argentinian and Mexican publishing industries offered [which] were extremely attractive in comparison with what the devastated Spanish book industry could provide in the post-war period” (2013, pos. 3561–3562). Larraz quotes Lago Carballo, who argues that after the Spanish Civil War, “the work of translating books [into Spanish] no longer revolves around Spain but has shifted to Mexico and Argentina” (2013, pos. 570–571). Agustí considers the issue in more detail and points out that Spanish exiles in Mexico contributed more to the specific field of translation, at Fondo de Cultura Económica, than to publishing in general (2018). The overlaps between these different authors’ viewpoints suggest that history could have unfolded differently, and that Argentina and Mexico could have become the two linchpins of the Spanish-language book industry, or that at least one of them could have.

In both Mexico and Argentina, the increase in publishing output coincided with a rise in the demand for books in the two countries’ capital cities, driven mainly by the increase in the numbers of people who were able to read and write (Sánchez Illán, 2015, pp. 549–550). However, Sánchez Illán also points out that Mexico was where “the links

between Spanish exiles and the publishing world were closer and more in evidence” (2015, p. 551): in just over a decade, over 50 publishing houses and printers’ were established, and the Fondo de Cultura Económica came to employ many Spanish refugees (2015, p. 552), as I mentioned before. Sánchez Illán also writes that Mexico was the main destination for exiled editors who “managed to attract Mexican investors, authors, and audiences” (2015, p. 553). He specifically mentions Fondo de Cultura Económica’s Tezontle collection, which he describes as the imprint’s “first literary collection” (2015, p. 559). Finally, Sánchez Illán argues that in the 1940s it was Argentina, not Mexico, that “ranked first in Spanish-language book production” (2015, p. 564–565). Thus, while broadening its scope with multiple imprints, the Mexican publishing industry was not establishing itself as the dominant producer in the Spanish speaking world, neither regarding physical production nor in the intellectual shaping of such sphere of influence. This again brings us to the paradox of the Boom: although there were contrasts between the Spanish and Mexican book industries, as we have seen, there were several moments when hegemony in the Spanish-language publishing world could have been constructed in Mexico rather than in Spain. But before we look into that, I would like to put the Latin American Boom into its own historical context and within this examination of publishing’s history and genealogy.

The Cuba and Borges Factors

There were some historical events in places other than Spain or Mexico that played a role in making the Boom possible and, therefore, opened the possibility of a transformation of hegemony among the publishing industries of the Spanish language. This is the subject of this section within the chapter. The broader social, political and cultural context of the early 1960s also shaped the Boom and subsequent interpretations of it.

The Boom became attached to a series of events that now tend to be identified with major social change and progressive thinking: the Civil Rights Movement in the United States; the Second Vatican Council, which attempted to modernise the Catholic Church; uprisings and conflicts such as May 1968 in Paris, the Prague Spring, and the Vietnam War; and the consolidation of pop culture through the Beatles, which resulted in a transformation of consumer society (Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 171; Donoso,

2018). However, one historical event exerted more influence on the perception of the Boom writers across the world than any other, attracting the attention of — and dividing — intellectuals the world over: the Cuban Revolution.

On 1st January 1959, Fidel Castro's forces ousted Fulgencio Batista from Cuba, sparking global interest in the social transformation that the island's inhabitants would experience and the new role that Latin America was expected to occupy in international relations (Rojas, 2018, pos. 32, 51). As Garciadiego said in his interview, "the Cuban Revolution transformed Latin America into a point of interest for the rest of the world [...] which hadn't been the case up to that point" (2017), and Ramírez expressed also in interview (2017). I agree with Garciadiego and find that this was one of the international elements that contributed to making the Boom possible.

The day that the revolutionaries seized power in Cuba marked the start of a new era in the global visibility of the Spanish language and its literature and culture, which opened the doors to the international process that was the Boom. To Vargas Llosa's mind, as he stated in his interview for this thesis, "the Boom started before the Cuban Revolution, but this attracted the world's attention to Latin America and suddenly everyone discovered that Latin America produced good literature, too" (2017). Actually, the Boom writers had been working on, and even publishing, their novels before the start of the Castro regime. When Vargas Llosa claims that the Boom had started before the Revolution, he is thinking in literary terms, for instance, in the publication by Fuentes, in 1958, of *La región más transparente* (*Where the Air Is Clear*), the Mexican's first novel. However, although the Cuban Revolution did not create the Boom, it certainly amplified its effects.

I would like to stress the non-deterministic approach of Laclau and Mouffe's theory of hegemony, in that other approaches would advance the interpretation that cultural practices, such as literature, would be dependent on other more fundamental social elements. In this case, the reading could be that, were it not for the Cuban Revolution, there would not have been a Boom. Whereas, from a hegemonic perspective approach, such takeover of power in the Caribbean is only one of the elements that articulated with some other events in the construction of the hegemony of a national book industry in the whole of the Spanish speaking world.

In those early years, there were close friendship ties between Latin American writers in general and particularly among the Boom writers; and also political ties of such

authors with the Castro regime, which most Latin American intellectuals then supported (Esteban and Gallego, 2011; Rodríguez Monegal, 1972; de Diego, 2013). Some authors even attempted to raise support for Castro around the world: for example, at a conference in Chile in 1962, Fuentes and Chilean poet Neruda, who was to be awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1971, actively worked together to this end (Donoso, 2018, pp. 57–58). Ayén (2014, pos. 10350) writes that at one point, Fuentes became “one of the Cuban Revolution’s staunchest propagandists”. In this sense, political leanings and personal affinities could have played a part in constructing the Boom. Therefore, we must analyse whether that actually happened or whether sharing a political ideology was not one of the core elements of the Latin American Boom.

A few months after the Cuban Revolution came the founding of the Casa de las Américas, a cultural organisation in Havana that, among its many other undertakings, began to publish an eponymous magazine in 1960. Latin American intellectuals and artists were invited to take part and often travelled to Cuba as guests of the regime (Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 299). That same year, at the instance of Ernesto “Che” Guevara, the news agency Prensa Latina was founded, also in Havana, an institution for which García Márquez worked during the 1960s (Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 299). Ayén (2017) also mentioned, in the interview we held, that, in addition to the intellectual activities that visiting writers took part in during their trips to Havana, “they were also taken around the island to see what the Revolution had achieved.” That is to say, with actions like this, the regime was striving to get the Boom writers to propagandise in favour of the Cuban Revolution.

It was perhaps events like these that later led the editor Barral (2015, p. 614) to claim that “state control of culture [in Cuba] echoed through all the speeches and even just casual conversations with anyone with any sort of political responsibility or real influence.” In other words, there was a clear intention in Havana to exert an ideological influence on the rest of Latin America. And yet again, from a hegemonic point of view, it was not enough for a government to wish for the intellectuals to sing its praises, as such interpretation would reject the possibility of any agency on the part of the intellectuals. Following the hegemonic logic social actors do not obey solely to, for instance, to class determinations, but act from subjectivities that might be highly influenced by factors such as class, but ultimately are able to and act in different ways from diverse subject positions. I will explore this in more detail in chapters 5 and 6 of this dissertation.

While support for the Cuban Revolution had united writers in the early years of the Boom, it later prompted a divide between them. The end of the relationship between several of these Latin American writers and the Castro regime, and the cooling-off of relations within the group, was sparked by the case of the Cuban writer Heberto Padilla. Padilla was dubbed a counterrevolutionary in 1968 following the publication of his poetry book *Fuera de juego*, when Raúl Castro went so far as to intervene in the decision of the judges of the Julián de Casal literary prize. The incident concluded with Padilla being awarded the prize, but not the prize money and being forbidden to travel abroad. He was also forced to add a text to his book in which he admitted his complicity with US imperialism (Thomas, 2016, pp. 2472–2473; Granés, 2009; Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 2612–2623). If we were to think of the Boom as a group of public intellectuals, perhaps this would mark its end, but since my criteria are based on the field of publishing, I make reference to this mostly to point out the context and one of the elements influencing the development of such publishing events.

On 20th March 1971, Padilla and his partner were arrested on the charge of being a counterrevolutionary and having carried out “subversive activities.” His partner was held for a couple of days, while Padilla was imprisoned for 38, prompting criticism, reflection, and an intense correspondence between different intellectuals throughout the world, including the Mexican essayist and poet Octavio Paz, who, as I mentioned before, would win the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1990. Cortázar, for example, wrote to Vargas Llosa about an open letter on the problems in Cuba which would be signed by the most prominent Spanish-language writers at the time, and would be addressed to Castro in person asking him to review the case (Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 3124). The letter sparked a rupture between several literary figures due to their lack of agreement over the attitude they needed to take toward the Cuban government and also due to communication problems between them.

It was assumed that García Márquez would be among the signatories (Martin, 2008, pp. 351–352; Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 2670), but getting him to sign the letter proved difficult and led to confusions and suspicions (Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 3136–3148) that would subsequently translate into frictions among these public intellectuals (Martin, 2008, p. 352). When the letter was published (Cortázar et al., 1971, pos. 3413–3426), García Márquez’s name was included in it, even though he had not really consented to this (García Márquez, 1971; Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 3159).

The point remains controversial and Vargas Llosa is certain that he did not (Vargas Llosa, 1971; Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 3184). What is indisputable is that the Padilla incident played a major part in distancing the two leading figures in the Boom, García Márquez and Vargas Llosa.

The Spanish writer Juan Goytisolo (1987) summarised the consequences of the incident in a letter in which he said that, from that point on, “the Hispanic cultural community was transformed into a world of goodies and baddies.” Chilean writer Jorge Edwards (1989, p. 35) said that “there was an irreparable split among Latin American intellectuals into Castroists and anti-Castroists”. Vargas Llosa agreed that after the Padilla case, there was a divide between those writers that were critical of Castro and those who supported his regime, emphasizing that this friction was “devastating” (1998, p. 191). What I would like to express regarding the focus of my research is that these confrontations were not the dismantling of a previously homogenous way of acting; but rather they made visible the heterogeneity and political and subjective leanings of the writers.

Cortázar, for example, remained loyal to the Castro regime but was put under pressure by the Cuban government and pro-Castro intellectuals for having signed another open letter. He had attempted to avoid breaking with Castro by seeking official information on the situation in Cuba at the Cuban Embassy in Paris, but this gesture was insufficient for him to be recognised as being loyal to the regime (Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 3493). Cortázar was in fact already aware of the problems in Cuba, including the persecution of Padilla, but said, all the same, that “it still seems to me [that the Cuban Revolution is] the only thing in Latin America that has mattered in all these years” (Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 2794). His position was not an easy one: fervent Castroists made a distinction between unconditional allies and those who, like Cortázar, mixed support with criticism, ultimately looking on these as enemies. However, the fact that he continued to at least partly support Castro distanced him from other old friends, who had by then become openly critical of the regime. As Goytisolo recalled, “the Padilla case marked the start of a distancing from Cortázar” (Ayén, 2014, pos. 11021). Again, rather than class or political determinations, what we see there at play, from my theoretical point of view, is the performance of subject positions (Laclau, 2007, pp. 47–65). The issue with subject positions, rather than being determined by a previous factor, depends on what ways the subject positions articulate, or not, with other social elements

giving rise to the construction of a discourse and in what way such discourse aims to become hegemonic. The same subject position could be part of a discourse which does not manage to become hegemonic, in Cortazar's case one of critical support towards the Cuban Revolution, but as the theoretical assumption is that this processes are contingent such critical discourse might find a course to become hegemonic at another point in history.

Vargas Llosa, in contrast, soon distanced himself entirely from the Castro regime and the ideology of the public intellectuals that supported it. Pro-Castro intellectuals began to criticize him both for the prizes he received and the contracts he signed, especially from universities funded by the United States (Williams, 2014, p. 46). He was also condemned, for example, for teaching in Puerto Rico, paid for by the United States, which was seen as an adversary of the Revolution (Ayén, 2017). The Cuban government and pro-Castro intellectuals also found fault with Vargas Llosa's opinions on specific historical events, such as the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, to which he reacted by resigning from the board of the *Casa de las Américas* magazine and ultimately leaving *Libre* magazine, which was also financed by the regime (Rojas, 2018; Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 2743–2760). Vargas Llosa is, thus, further proof of the diversity comprised in the Boom phenomenon, especially considering that García Márquez took the opposite view to him (Esteban and Panichelli, 2009; Rojas, 2018, pos. 149), and remained close to Castro for the rest of his life.

The Castro regime, therefore, exerted some influence on Boom writers, trying to shape their political leanings and marking the relationships between them (Martin, 2008, p. 376). Nevertheless, it did not have either a significant publishing apparatus or the capacity to distribute the Boom books all over the Spanish speaking world. Thus, Havana did not become a literary heartland for the Boom, and Cuba did not become the cultural capital of Latin America, regardless of all its influence. Indeed, despite literary initiatives, such as the magazines described above, the Castro regime played little part in creating the greatest publishing phenomenon in the Spanish-speaking world.

This paradox is heightened when we consider that Cuba's international actions at the time were largely based on the regime's success at spreading ideas of Latin American unity and identity — which were endorsed by Boom authors, as we will see in chapter 5 — in opposition to the imperialism exercised by countries such as the United States (Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 299). This cultural stance even came to be a point of

conflict between the US and Cuba: Ayén (2017) explains that the US State Department and the Rockefeller Foundation sought to counteract the ideological influence of the Castro regime over Latin American writers. Such measures included approaching publishing houses and offering to pay for translations of these writers' works into English, and even to cover the costs of publishing them. This literary battle was ultimately another Cold War skirmish (Anaya, 2016; Cohn, 2012; Franco, 2003; Gally, 2017; Ramírez, 2017). Regardless, the relationships between the Boom writers were entirely reconfigured or came to an end following the Padilla case.

However, the Castro regime was not the only factor that attracted attention to Latin America at the time. Like in any process in which hegemony is reconfigured, several factors converged to cause this. In our interview, Vargas Llosa (2017) recalls a Shakespeare celebration organised by UNESCO in France in the early 1960s which was attended by the Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges, who later was often slated to win the Nobel Prize in Literature but was little known in Europe at the time. Borges sparked great interest among the many French writers who went to listen to him:

His speech made such a great impression on them that all the major literary magazines devoted entire issues to him [...] His entire oeuvre began to be translated or retranslated [...] I think that really had an influence, too. The appearance of a writer as exceptionally original as Borges led many people to think that if Latin America produced things like Borges, maybe it was time to see what else it had to offer. And it turned out it had a lot of interesting things, things that were really novel (Vargas Llosa, 2017).

My theoretical approach, rather than trying to establish whether the Cuban Revolution or the French discovery of Borges was more important in making possible the Latin American Boom, aims to consider these and other elements that played a part in the phenomenon.

Business Models

Having reviewed the history of the Spanish and Mexican book industries, placed them in a context of coloniality, and the Latin American Boom within its historical context, I will now analyse business models as yet another factor in the construction of the hegemony of the Spanish publishing industry in the 1960s. This section discusses the economic efficiency, or lack thereof, of the two book industries, or more specifically, the adaptation of each book industry to the forms of cultural consumption that emerged around the Boom years. This will shed light on some of the reasons why the phenomenon did not take place in Mexico.

As Zaid wrote, “publishers and bookstores cannot survive if they are exclusively cultural undertakings” (1959, p. 8). Publishing is an activity that entails both economic and cultural practices. This dual nature is at the core of this study: in other words, the book industry is more than just an economic activity. If it were, simply analysing production and sales would suffice to define which country was and is the capital of Spanish-language publishing. However, from the perspective of our understanding of hegemony, in addition to the economic factor, there are other factors such as symbolic capital at play in the field of publishing, as Bourdieu (2000) and Thompson (2005) have observed. The relationship between Spain’s and Mexico’s publishing industries need to be considered from this more comprehensive perspective, bringing other factors into the analysis. In this section, I will examine the significance of the differences in how publishing houses were run in each of the two countries.

In his works on the history of publishing in Spain, Martínez Martín describes the transformation of the industry between the turn of the century and the 1930s, which went from being small, traditional individual or family businesses to “standard general or limited partnerships” (2001b, p. 171). By the 1940s, the Spanish publishing industry had established corporations, updated the technology, gained access to greater financial resources, and adopted specialised management and marketing techniques. All the pieces were in place for the book industry to grow and meet the increasing demand both from within Spain and from other Spanish-speaking markets (Martínez Martín, 2001b, p. 171). As I noted above, this was the turning point for Spain, when its book industry regained the competitive edge that had set it apart from those of other Spanish-speaking countries before the Civil War.

What I would also like to refer to is the rise of the editor in the Spanish-language book industry of the time, a figure that is quite different from that of the “editor” in the English-language markets and which became crucial both for the Latin American Boom to take place and for the hegemony of Spain among the publishing industries of the language. First, a distinction of profiles must be described. Generally speaking, in the industries of other languages, the publisher is the economic, financial, and strategic director of a publishing house, collection, series, or periodical; that is to say industrial production. They tend to be investors in their projects and are responsible for sales and marketing. Editors, in contrast, are responsible for reviewing, changing, and correcting texts, that is to say, the publishing process. Their work is more technical, although they may also have strategic outlooks, depending on the publishing house they work for. In the past, in the Spanish speaking book industries, the figure of the publisher as business owner was sometimes blurred with that of the editor as a text expert because both functions were often performed by the same person both in Mexico and in Spain. However, the industrialisation process I have described led to a change in Spain. Due to this, by the time of the Boom, the publisher’s focus could be said to be on the economic viability of the project, while the editor is more concerned with its literary, theoretical, or scientific qualities. I would like to conclude by stating that this was the case for Spain but not for Mexico, and that this sheds light on how the Spanish book industry was working in the 1960s. This definition of expertise enabled the business model of the Spanish book industry to further develop and give rise to social agents with novel aims — such as seeking translations of novels originally written in Spanish into other languages — which, in time, was one of the elements that articulated for the emergence of the Latin American Boom.

Martínez Martín has tracked the evolution of the editor in the Spanish-language book industry. He argues that in Spain, by the middle of the 20th-century, editors had specific tasks and an identity that clearly set them apart from publishers, printers and booksellers (Martínez Martín, 2001b, p. 171). Working in partnership with other links in the book industry chain, editors selected and even commissioned texts and decided on the physical appearance of the books, including their format, visual elements, and typography. In other words, editors themselves designed the products and the formulas through which they would be distributed. Two examples of this were paperback editions

and novels that were sold at newsstands (Martínez Martín 2001b, p. 171). This could be a description of Barral's work within the Boom.

The political ideologies and public policies implemented in Spain and Mexico in the first half of the 20th-century had very different effects on their publishing industries, as I will study in detail in chapter 4 of this thesis. Francisco Franco's dictatorship in Spain and the authoritarian post-revolutionary regime in Mexico created new contexts for the rise of these industries, because although Mexico systematically developed its institutions, the recovery of Spain's book industry after the Civil War was one of the elements that allowed it to be the starting point for the Latin American Boom.

According to Martínez Martín, by the second half of the 1960s, it was clear that there were publishing houses in Spain that privileged cultural matters over business interests (2015c, p. 366). I would like to show that, albeit in a limited manner, at least one of such kind of publishing houses also existed in Mexico. In 1962, one of the Spanish exiles who had arrived in Mexico, Joaquín Díez-Canedo, had founded the publishing house Joaquín Mortiz, in which the Catalans Seix and Barral were also involved as investors, and in a professional manner as an editor and a publisher. Joaquín Mortiz became a "touchstone for Mexican literature" (Sánchez Illán, 2015, p. 588), and, like its counterparts on the other side of the Atlantic, focused more on its cultural role than on the business side of things. According to the son of the firm's founder, one of the aims of his father's initial partners, Seix and Barral, was to start a publishing project in Latin America to evade the censorship of the Franco regime (Díez-Canedo Flores, 2017). This begs the question of whether Joaquín Mortiz might have been the Mexican platform that could have launched the Latin American Boom. And an answer is that the cultural endeavour that Joaquin Mortiz represented was possible thanks to the publishing approach of Seix and Barral, who supported it. That is to say, the innovative and groundbreaking Joaquin Mortiz was, to some extent, dependent on the avant-garde approach of those Catalans.

I should point out that Joaquín Mortiz arose specifically to fill a gap in the Mexican publishing output by concentrating on literary works and essays. The imprint emerged at a time of great political and economic stability in Mexico and was strengthened by its partnership with Barcelona-based Seix-Barral. One difference between Joaquín Mortiz and Seix-Barral was that the former's founder, Díez-Canedo, was involved in the entire publishing process — selecting titles, hiring authors, and running the company — and

even had to create his own distribution network to make up for shortfalls in the Mexican market. At Seix-Barral, Seix was primarily responsible for the business side — the economic face of publishing, as it were and dealing with authors — while Barral focused on selecting titles — the intellectual face of publishing, as it were — (Díez-Canedo Flores, 2017). In the 1950s, Díez-Canedo apparently noticed the limited space given over to literature at publishing houses like Fondo de Cultura Económica, which was what prompted him to launch “a publishing house that was essentially focused on literary works” (Díez-Canedo Flores, 2017). Therefore, due to his previous job as publishing director at Fondo de Cultura Económica, Díez-Canedo had the vision that led him to seek to create a business project around a market niche that was underserved by his competitors.

Another possible candidate for a Mexican publishing house for the Boom was Siglo XXI Editores, which had *carte blanche* to publish the works of many outstanding authors. Two factors prevented this from happening: first, the director of the company, Arnaldo Orfila Reynal, only took on works that had not yet been published, and second, for ethical reasons, he “refused to pilfer the backlists of works by authors like Cortázar from Sudamericana [another Argentinian publishing house]” (Sorá, 2017, p. 179). Orfila’s agency was contrary to enabling the Boom, as I will expand on in chapter 6. So, even if Orfila’s and Díez-Canedo’s publishing houses offered a possible infrastructure for the Latin American Boom, there were other elements that did not make it possible.

This was the outlook for the Spanish publishing industry at the beginning of the 1960s, when the role that would create an even broader difference between the two countries’ book industries consolidated in the figure of Carmen Balcells: that of the literary agent, which I will analyse in chapters 5 and 6. I should stress again that there were not any such literary agents in Mexico, and still today, there are no literary agencies intervening in its book industry, although, according to Granado’s statements in our interview, they are required in the Mexican literary field (2016).⁴⁹ It was on this basis that the Spanish book industry became international and would continue to evolve in that direction up to the present, absorbing several Mexican publishing houses, such as Joaquín Mortiz. In this way, the business model — that is to say, the way in which the Spanish

⁴⁹ Díez-Canedo Flores states that in Mexico’s Joaquín Mortiz publishing house, for instance, rather than dealing with literary agents, the publication of books depended on the personal relation of his father, the founder of the imprint, with prominent intellectuals such as Carlos Fuentes and, mostly, Octavio Paz who had enormous influence on Joaquín Díez-Canedo (Díez-Canedo Flores, 2017).

publishing industry was organising itself — was one of the elements articulating in the creation of a new hegemony.

In this chapter, I have shown that there is a shared history between Spain and Mexico. Their link is a Colonial one, as is that of Spain with the rest of Spanish America. This leads to several consequences, one of them being the Colonial wound that shapes the Latin American societies and its individuals, including the protagonists of the Boom. These emerged to public life in the book industry of Spain. I have compared the genealogy of the publishing industries of Mexico and Spain. I have shown that both industries faced considerable difficulties due to violent social events — the Mexican Revolution and its aftermath and the Civil War. However, there were also significant differences: for starters, the fact that while Mexican publishing houses were only just beginning to emerge in the first half of the 20th-century, in Spain there was a process by which mechanised industrial book production was underway. Another important difference was that in Mexico most of the publishing activity was concentrated in the capital city, while in Spain several cities were sharing the load of publishing activity. I have also examined the historical international context in which the Latin American Boom emerged, which comprised both the prominence of the Cuban Revolution — and the interest it caused over all things Latin American — and the, as it were, discovery of Borges in Europe. Both factors contributed to making the Boom possible. Lastly, by the 1960s the business models in both countries were also contrasting ones. In Mexico the heads of publishing companies tended to concentrate the whole chain of production and commercialisation of books: editing, printing, marketing, distribution and even sales. As opposed to this, in Spain the book industry had specialised actors for each of the links of this chain; for example, in the person of Carlos Barral as an editor, Víctor Seix as a publisher and Carmen Balcells as a literary agent. All this gave an advantage to the Spanish publishing industry — since symbolic power historically was based in Spain, the set of its publishing houses were already working as a proper industry and its business model was opening chances not available in other publishing industries of the language — but is not the whole explanation of why the Latin American Boom took place in that country. It all coalesced with the elements I will now analyse in the next chapters — namely, public policies, networking and professionalisation — all of which were part of

the articulation of the hegemony of the Spanish book industry in the Spanish speaking world.

In this chapter, therefore, I have analysed the historical factors that came together in the Boom by examining the Colonial relationship between Spain and Mexico and the divergent ways in which their book industries developed. So, on the one hand, the Spanish industry clearly had a more decentralised arrangement, a proper industrialised base and was developing a more sophisticated business model than the Mexican one; and, on the other hand, there was also a yet to be fulfilled process of decolonisation within Mexican society that subordinated local cultural production to European appreciation. This historical framework was an unavoidable and sound basis but not enough for the Spanish publishing industry to become hegemonic.

Chapter 4

Public Cultural Policies and the Boom

This chapter examines the public policies that were part of the foundations for the development of the book industries in Spain and Mexico at the time of the Latin American Boom. I analyse how in Spain these policies played a major role in creating the conditions of possibility that enabled the Boom to emerge there rather than in Mexico, where, paradoxically, there appeared to be a more overt government interest in book publishing.

This chapter, then, analyses the public policies that shaped to some extent the publishing industries in the two countries and examines how they were part of different nation-building projects in Spain and Mexico. This chapter combines with the preceding one to provide an analysis of the political economy of book publishing. The argument I develop in the chapter is that Mexico had nationalistic public cultural policies that supported governmental publishing of textbooks and a State publishing house, but had no aims of internationalisation — with the exception of Fondo de Cultura Económica — while the Spanish regime, also a nationalistic one, underwent some opening of its previous censorship on the publishing industry and started promoting that the imprints exported books to Spanish American countries. This articulated with the historical background, but was just a firm material base without, as it were, the contents to create a novel publishing phenomenon.

Before exploring these issues in greater depth, I would like to underline once more that the approach behind my research is Laclau and Mouffe's theory of hegemony. From such framework of reference, the cultural public policies of the Franco regime in Spain could not be argued as enough cause for the Boom, as they might be from a political perspective that endows government actions with an uncontested capacity for making events unfold in a certain way. In contrast, the hegemonic approach that I have adopted in this thesis assumes that events are contingent on one another and on how they interact and play out over time. Through the lens of Laclau and Mouffe's theory, therefore, I can look at each of the different factors I have analysed in my research and investigate how they articulated at the time of the events. In this chapter, then, instead of attributing the Latin American Boom — or the whole of the condition of the two publishing industries

— to specific policies created by the Spanish and Mexican governments, I will show how, although important, these policies only became truly meaningful through their articulation with the factors I analyse in all the chapters of this dissertation. This part of the thesis argues, therefore, that the political ideologies of the undemocratic regimes of Spain and Mexico, as well as their cultural public policies, had a positive and negative impact —respectively— in the development of their book industries. I will now analyse both factors in the aforementioned order, with an examination of the economic model in which such policies were displayed.

Spain under Francisco Franco and Mexico under the PRI

By 1963, the year that *La ciudad y los perros* (*The Time of the Hero*) was published, Francisco Franco had ruled Spain for 24 years, while in Mexico the Partido Revolucionario Institucional [Institutional Revolutionary Party] (PRI), which had emerged from the Mexican Revolution, had remained in power through seven different presidencies over the course of 33 years. Franco, also known as Caudillo de España (Spain's Caudillo), had come to power in 1939 after the Spanish Civil War, in which, following a coup d'état, part of the Spanish Armed Forces under his command had fought the government of the Second Republic, each side supported by different political forces and sectors of society. In Mexico, the ousting from power of President Porfirio Díaz in 1910 marked the start of the Mexican Revolution, which triggered almost 20 years of armed struggle that came to an end with the creation of the Partido Nacional Revolucionario [National Revolutionary Party] (1929–1938), which was then reorganised into the Partido de la Revolución Mexicana [Party of the Mexican Revolution] (1938–1946), before eventually becoming the PRI, which governed the country from 1930 to 2000. Franco's dictatorship remained in power until the Caudillo's death in 1975. The authoritarian regime of the PRI held the presidency in Mexico until 2000, when the Partido Acción Nacional [National Action Party] won the federal elections. The direct and indirect political and policy-related decisions of these two governments influenced how the book industries developed in Spain and Mexico, as I will now show.

By the time the Boom emerged, the governments in both Spain and Mexico had been in power for a similar length of time. Both had managed to achieve a comparable sense of stability in their societies, at least in terms of having avoided further armed conflict. In the following paragraphs, I describe the political paradigms that guided the actions of those two governments and shaped and justified their public policies, including those for education and culture, which in one way or another influenced literature and publishing in Spain and Mexico.

In Franco's Spain, the official ideology was so called National Catholicism. This ideological corpus was largely a reaction to the confrontations that had taken place during the Spanish Civil War between the Catholic Church and the anticlerical Second Spanish Republic and the intellectuals who supported it, although there had also been earlier historical precedents to this, notably the violence between 1934 and the start of the Civil War (Preston, 2019, pos. 5447). The Catholic Church exerted a powerful social influence during the Franco regime (Preston, 2019, pos. 8123), as is evidenced by the fact that the Ministry of Education was managed by Catholics and the secular legislation that had been passed during the Republic was repealed. In this we can see some link with the Colonial process of turning the Spanish American region Catholic, in the sense that both political and religious power seemed to merge then and be invested in shaping education, particularly in order to turn Mesoamerican oral societies into one homogeneous community based in written procedures. This cannot be surprising since it relates with the hegemonic aims of the Franco regime, therefore operating at different several levels for the definition of meanings in society. Consequently, during Franco's dictatorship the Catholic Church regained jurisdiction over issues such as marriage, members of the Church hierarchy became very visible in public government events, religious symbols become omnipresent in everyday life, Catholic education became compulsory, and ecclesiastical activities became a regular fixture of Spanish life.

Whereas the political ideology that was explicitly adopted in Mexico was relatively pragmatic, Spain's National Catholicism was only openly named as such in the 1960s, and though it was flexible on some points it remained doctrinal on social issues, and was Franco's ideological choice over totalitarian Falangismo (Cooper, 1978, p. 97). In other words, in Laclau and Mouffe's terms, around the same time that the Boom emerged, National Catholicism sedimented — that is, it stabilised, based on a hegemony but began to lose its power of articulation, that is to say of bringing together different social

elements that both gave shape to and acquire meaning from the hegemony they helped to establish.

Paradoxically, the harshness of National Catholicism began to wane just as the ideology acquired its official name. A relative relaxation of paradigms took place because, although the political party known as the Falange Española [Spanish Phalanx] fervently adhered to Catholicism — as manifested by actions such as “the return of the Jesuits, the criminalisation of abortion, and ecclesiastical censorship” (Fusi, 2012, pos. 2709) — the party itself was one of several sources of support for Franco. Furthermore, Franco’s government had to respond to strikes, student protests, and “nationalist demands in Catalonia and the Basque Country” (Menchero de los Ríos, 2015, p. 68). All this led to Franco being forced to reconcile different political leanings, since his supporters included political and social stakeholders who did not necessarily see National Catholicism as a desirable touchstone for the Spanish government (Botti, 1992, p. 151). The homogeneity among the social stakeholders that supported Franco’s regime was relative.

The opposing forces within Franco’s supporters included El Movimiento Nacional [the National Movement] — a conglomeration of political parties and movements that had been created to support the regime and which aspired for it to continue in the same format — and, on the other hand, the Opus Dei, which sought to restore the monarchy within Franco’s lifetime. Indeed, there were even tensions within El Movimiento itself, as Fusi (2012) mentions: the parties and political forces that had supported the military uprising of 1936 merged to form this organisation in 1937, but this heterogeneity led to fierce negotiations. There was also significant resonance for the government’s political ideology, as the Franco regime had news agencies, newspapers operating under censorship, television channels, and governmental radio stations, while private media outlets were forced to broadcast standard programming at certain times of the day. The dictatorship also had the Editora Nacional [National Publishing House], which I will discuss later in this chapter, and legislation that enabled it to appoint the directors of both public and private media outlets and to screen official news and propaganda in cinemas before the film came on (Fusi, 2013, pos. 10445–10454). As such, the regime was not entirely homogenous, but it was controlled by Franco and had multiple ways of communicating its ideological positions to the Spanish population, thus having plenty of channels of symbolic power.

This relative heterogeneity may also be what led Trevor-Roper to classify phenomena such as Franco's National Catholicism as a less radical clerical fascism than the National Socialism of the Nazis during the Third Reich (Trevor-Roper, 1981, pp. 19–38). In practice, the National Catholicism of Franco's dictatorship entailed a concordat with the Vatican: the Catholic Church was ratified as the official religion and enjoyed tax benefits of various kinds, it acted freely in the field of education, and Franco could influence Church decisions such as the appointment of bishops. Perhaps the close ties between the Catholic Church and Francisco Franco are best summarised by the fact that the motto under his portrait on Spanish coins read "Caudillo of Spain by the grace of God", and by the fact that baptism and marriage certificates needed to be presented for official paper work. This contrasts sharply with the situation in Mexico, where there was an unofficial "understanding" between the PRI governments and the Catholic Church. What this meant in practice is that although the official legislation highly restricted the Church's activities, it still had a presence in public life but kept its interference in the public and political spheres to a minimum, maintaining a low profile such that it neither disappeared nor threatened the secular nature of the Mexican state that had been in place since the 19th-century.

The set of ideas prevalent in Spain brought multiple consequences and included both commercial and cultural factors, such as what Fusi describes as "Hispanicity, the sense of a community between Spain and the Americas, which Francoism elevated to a state policy" (Fusi, 2012, pos. 2737). However, the relationship that was described by this notion of Hispanicity clearly implied the superiority of Spain over the other Spanish-speaking countries. The official nature of this ideological position is reflected in that "in 1940, the Consejo de la Hispanidad [Council of Hispanicity] was created (and then renamed the Instituto de Cultura Hispánica [Institute of Hispanic Culture] in 1946) to promote Spain's presence in the Spanish-speaking world" (Fusi, 2013, pos. 10551). According to Larraz, and related to this, the Franco regime promoted book exports from Spain to Latin America, as I will explore in more detail below.

The aim of this policy reached beyond the merely economic: books became a vehicle of "rhetorical imperialism" for the regime's notion of Hispanicity in the sense that "this new conquest of Latin America would not involve the use of weapons, but rather that of knowledge and intelligence, as part of a process in which Spain's superiority was taken as a given" (Larraz, 2010, p.137). This is why, Larraz (2017) refers how this move

has been widely labelled as “neo-colonialism” on the part of publishers in particular and Spain in general. Linking this with the Latin American Boom it could be said that this policy was indeed taking advantage of the Colonial wound, in the sense that, in some ways, it was reactivating what I referred to, in the theoretical framework, as the fetishism of writing. That is to say, publishers were aiming to take advantage of a fixation of the site of symbolic power in the registration of language, in this case literary language, paradoxically produced by Latin Americans, but published by Spanish publishing houses. In this sense, we could observe the role, over time, of sedimented culture even in industrial matters such as this. This supposedly international vision of Hispanicity and Hispanism was in practice an expression of Spanish nationalism or even imperialism. As we can gather from the previous chapter — and what we will see in the remaining ones — this points towards the likelihood of the Boom writers having views that regarded the European cultural systems as superior to Latin American ones. This would not be because they were influenced by or adhered to Franco’s vision. Latin American writers actually held such points of view even before Franco. In this sense, this, in Mignolo’s terms, shows again the Colonial wound of Spanish Americans.

In Mexican politics, the concept of “Revolutionary Nationalism” began to be used to shape the country’s nation-building project soon after the 1917 Constitution. But there was also an economic backdrop to Revolutionary Nationalism. The term first came into use before the Mexican Revolution of 1910, largely as a stance against the interventionist leanings of the US in Mexico. Revolutionary Nationalism was also shaped by multiple historical precedents that had fuelled the practice of appealing to national unity and nationalisations in response to threats from north of the border (Cordera and Tello, 1981, pp. 106–107; Freeman Smith, 1972, p. 9; Turner, 1968, p. 36). As a political ideology, then, it entailed an overlapping of historical processes and public policy.

Revolutionary Nationalism was the official ideology of the political party from its outset. One definition of this ideology that is relevant to my analysis of the processes that gave rise to the Latin American Boom is that of Bartra (1993). In Bartra’s view, Revolutionary Nationalism is made up of four sets of “attitudes and postulates.” The first is an opposition to the United States, which implied both xenophobia and anti-imperialism. The second is a tendency to nationalisations. The third is the promotion of an interventionist state. The fourth has to do with a praise of Mexican identity as the source of “political energy” (Bartra, 1993, p. 147). As I will show, these factors played a

role in the Mexican book industry being unable to either give rise to or become the driving force behind the Boom. In Mexican political practice xenophobia meant a closing of the economy to international trade, which was closely linked with economic State intervention and a policy of nationalisations, which together worked as an imports substitution strategy. This had as an outcome that the Mexican State took charge of significant publishing tasks, as I will here analyse, and, crucially, that its publishing industry was focused on local readers, leaving aside possibilities of exporting books from Mexico. I would like to emphasise the anti-imperialist aspect of this hegemonic Mexican ideology. While, as I mentioned above, the paradigms that guided the Spanish government were Hispanist and thus by definition reached beyond Spain to Spanish America, Mexico's guiding principles were, in contrast, inward-looking — indeed, one could even say that they tended to close the country off from what was happening beyond its borders.

There was one more factor. As I will examine below, around the 1960s, the Franco regime opted to opening up its ideology and to change its policies to a certain extent, notably in economic terms, even though this process was minor and perhaps did not foresee its own likely consequences. The dynamics in Mexico contrasted with those in Spain, in that the 1960s brought more hard-line politics under the leadership of the social conservative Gustavo Díaz Ordaz. Moreover, Revolutionary Nationalism seemed to have become considerably less functional by this point than it had been in previous decades. According to Benjamin, from the late 1940s on, some Mexican intellectuals had started to question whether the Mexican Revolution was still a valid source for the national project (2010, p. 209). The government's ritualistic invocation of the Revolution ultimately emphasised the discrepancies between ideas of social transformation and the actual lags of life in the country, in a way that undermined the legitimacy of the PRI governments (Benjamin, 2010, p. 210). In other words, Revolutionary Nationalism, the source of the ritualism that Benjamin describes, was turning into evidence of Mexico's social and political stagnation. In contrast, 'the Cuban Revolution was a real revolution while the Mexican one was "frozen"', according to Mexican students and intellectuals (Benjamin, 2010, p. 211). In this we can see another reason why the Boom writers were appealing to readers: they were close to the real revolution, the Cuban one. Under these circumstances, it was unlikely that a social phenomenon like the Boom would be articulated in Mexico, since its ruling regime, regardless its democratic façade, was

entering into its most authoritarian phase, therefore aiming to stagnate different cultural, political and social processes.

The Economic Models in Spain and Mexico

As I noted at the beginning of this chapter, if one were to think in purely economic terms, the most “natural” turn of events would have been for the Boom to have emerged in Mexico, given that in the 1960s the economic circumstances and social development in the country seemed ripe for this to happen. In contrast, the conditions in Spain did not appear so propitious. Due to Franco regime’s iron-fisted rule of social life in the country — which included a ban on political parties and trade unions — the standard assessment of the dictatorship is that it pursued an economic policy “based on autarchy and state control” (Fusi, 2012, pos. 2709). On the face of things, Franco controlled all aspects of social, political, and economic life in Spain. This perception went hand-in-hand with condemnation of the regime from abroad: the United Nations rejected Spain as a member between 1945 and 1955 and even officially condemned the Franco regime, and there was a breakdown in Spain’s relations with many countries (Fusi, 2012, pos. 2726; Rama, 1976, p. 364).⁵⁰ Spain thus appeared to be an isolated country ruled by a dictator, while Mexico seemed to be a field of infinite possibilities in the wake of the so-called Mexican Miracle, which I will explore in more detail below.

The Franco regime generally entailed significant economic intervention on the part of the government. For example, the National Institute of Industry, which was created in 1941, controlled prices and wages as well as building factories, roads, and fostering foreign trade (Fusi, 2012, pos. 2718). As I will explain below, this turned out to play a crucial part in Spain being the place where the Boom unfolded, even though a cultural process of this sort was from far from being a goal of the Franco regime, even tangentially.

During Franco’s dictatorship, Spain experienced periods of very high inflation, low investment, and a loss of reserves, and was usually seen as “one of the poorest countries in Europe” (Fusi, 2012, pos. 2726). This situation was perhaps the motivation behind the

⁵⁰ In several countries, according to Rama, diplomatic relations with Spain were only limited until the UN repealed its December 1946 resolution in October 1950 (1976, p. 362).

measures to open the economy and modernise various economic practices that were implemented in the 1950s, in which Opus Dei technocrats played a significant part (Preston, 2019, pos. 8203). It was not until 1959 and the so-called Stabilisation Plan that Spain began to achieve economic growth following measures such as the liberalisation of imports, the devaluation of the peseta, the acquisition of foreign credit, and, as I mentioned above, the serious promotion of foreign trade. This new shift toward a technocratic approach among some of Franco's collaborators led the government to establish the First Development Plan in 1963, which was supported by measures that included the enactment of the Priority Industries Law (Fernández Moya, 2015, p. 584). Publishing houses were included in this law, which led to the widespread implementation of "export tax relief, export credits, and priority credits [as] the financing instruments of choice" (Fernández Moya, 2015, p. 584). According to Esteban, industrialisation diversified and spread throughout Spain from 1960 onward with a high level of growth (Esteban, 1978, pp. 173–174). As I will explain in detail in the next and final section of this chapter, this set of policies included promoting the export of books published in Spain to various Spanish-speaking countries.

In the terms I have used to define it in this study, the Boom unfolded during the Adolfo López Mateos (1958-1964) and Gustavo Díaz Ordaz (1964-1970) presidential administrations, part of the period that is known as the Mexican Miracle. This term was coined by the media and has been used ever since for different ends, especially propaganda, but it is not entirely inappropriate. At the time, there was economic development due both to policies coming for the public sector and actions taken by the private sector, often in symbiosis (Hansen, 2013, pp. 57–89). So, by the early 1970s Mexico's economic development had surpassed that of other Latin American countries for three decades (Hansen, 2013, p. 90).⁵¹ While it has to be said that the Miracle was uneven in its results regarding distribution of income and regional development — in particular the disadvantaged rural workers — (Hansen, 2013, pp. 97–128), in purely statistical terms, between 1950 and 1962, GDP grew, in average, nearly 6% annually (Hamnett, 1999, p. 259). Since these points are usually associated with social

⁵¹ The term "miracle" was first used in the 1960s in reference to various countries and there was also talk of a "Spanish economic miracle." However, very few of the countries it was used in reference to experience the accelerated economic growth and palpable changes that took place in Mexico.

development, these conditions could at first glance have given rise to sophisticated cultural phenomena, they did not, however, lead to the Boom. As I will show in the next section this was due both to the policies towards publishing and the general approach to cultural policy.

The economic model that was in force in Mexico around the mid-20th-century and during the Latin American Boom was a “mixed economy” that included a strong import-substitution policy and economic intervention on the part of the State. It was considered a mixed economy because part of national investment was funded by the governments and, overall, there was significant economic State intervention (Cordera and Tello, 1981, pp. 115–116). There were protectionist tariffs to shield local industry from more competitive products from the abroad. As economic activity moved from the fields to city factories, social transformations were taking place as well.

The country’s population increased significantly and about half of it was already living in cities by the Boom years in a change that meant that the structure of the rural-urban relationship of the population was deeply transformed (Hamnett, 1999, p. 251). From the theoretical perspective of my analysis, there was no lack of a solid economic base or of incipient educational and social developments that could have accommodated the Boom. However, in Mexico the articulation of the elements that came together in the Spanish book industry was lacking, in part because of the absence of a public cultural policy to enable or promote such scenario, as we will see in the next section.

Cultural Policies and the Publishing Industry in Mexico and Spain

The prevailing public cultural policies and political ideologies in Spain and Mexico had a strong influence on publishing policies in both countries, as they were part of broader projects that implied an idea of nationhood, and of what Spain and Mexico should be in the eyes of the Franco dictatorship and the authoritarian PRI administrations.

Although Mexico was not fully democratic, regular elections took place in the country (Hansen, 2013, pp. 135–137). Similarly, although it lacked official censorship bodies, various practices limiting freedom of expression were implemented. One of these directly affected not just print media but also the publishing industry. In the second half

of the 1930s, newspaper and publishing companies were slowly expanding but still required basic paper inputs that had to be sourced from US and Canadian suppliers due to the lack of Mexican infrastructure to produce them. However, the high costs of paper imports led these industries to request that the Mexican government either free up imports of paper or impose a fixed price on Mexican paper (Zacarías, 1996, pp. 75–76; Fuentes Fierro, 1983, p. 20). General Lázaro Cárdenas's government opted for an alternative solution: the creation of the Productora e Importadora de Papel, Sociedad Anónima [Paper Production and Import Company], known as PIPSA (Fuentes Fierro, 1983, p. 20). Monopolies to produce Mexican paper and for the importation of foreign paper were thus established, and the distribution of paper in Mexico also began to be controlled by the government (Arredondo and Sánchez, 1986, p. 41, Zacarías, 1996, p. 76). In my view, this latter point was crucial: from this time on, the Mexican government became, at least potentially, the linchpin in decisions as to the quantity and quality of paper — the core input — that newspapers and publishing houses could put their hands on, and which among them were going to get it.

This policy was highly consistent with the notion of Revolutionary Nationalism. On the one hand, the government played a leading role through PIPSA, but it did so in conjunction with private companies, thus maintaining the previously mentioned mixed economic model (Fuentes Fierro, 1983, p. 24). Furthermore, the Cárdenas administration became the pinnacle of Revolutionary Nationalism when it nationalised the oil extraction companies. In this sense, the government's interventions in the Mexican economy appeared to seek to benefit society, although the potential for censorship that the monopoly on paper implied should not be overlooked. Bohmann investigated this point and found no empirical evidence that PRI governments had, in practice, restricted paper sales to “newspapers that were a nuisance” (Bohmann, 1989, p. 285). In contrast, things mostly seem to have been done following the law and there was apparently no openly arbitrary control of paper supplies and sales (Zacarías, 1996, pp. 77–78). However, even though the production of books, magazines, and newspapers was never directly prevented, censorship was a permanent threat. Once PIPSA had been established, publishers knew themselves to be at the mercy of the government and understood that PIPSA could function as a mechanism for censorship, should the government wish to do so. This almost certainly affected the way that print media operated due to self-censorship.

I will now refer to the Mexican state-owned publishing house Fondo de Cultura Económica (FCE). It is worth analysing the FCE to address at least two factors that are revealing as to why an institution as large and influential as it was did not become the driving force behind the Boom, given that at the time it was the only Mexican publishing house with considerable infrastructure for international distribution and was backed by a series of economically stable governments and a country experiencing considerable social development. Curiously enough, the FCE project was not initially to form a state institution, but rather to build an important publishing house, “the best but independent” (Anaya, 2017). Thus, the FCE’s founder sought a financial arrangement that included both private and public capital, but, according to Anaya (2017), the latter prevailed as time went by. This was, then, a key part of the Mexican State policy towards publishing.

The first of the two aforementioned characteristics has to do with what the FCE was like, as a publishing house. Garciadiego describes it as a publishing house that sought to introduce modern thought into Mexico, a goal in which, according to him, it succeeded, later also spreading it throughout the Spanish-speaking world (Garciadiego, 2016). The FCE was originally created to publish texts for the newly founded economics degree at Mexico’s National University, hence its name, but it soon extended its reach into other fields, becoming an academic publishing house with a focus on the social sciences and humanities (Garciadiego, 2016, p. 97). Despite the fact that many creative writers worked for the institution, and that it did soon start to publish some works of literature, this did not play a central role in it (Garciadiego, 2016, pp. 97–105; Díez-Canedo Flores, 2017). In contrast, what the FCE achieved was “to introduce universal thought to the Spanish-speaking world of the mid-20th-century, [which was] a milestone in Spanish-American intellectual history” (Garciadiego, 2016, p. 107). Through the task of publishing, the FCE would have been engaging in a monumental undertaking. From a sociological standpoint, historian Garciadiego is referring to Western hegemonic thought. Following such reading, as with the stances of the Latin American Boom protagonists, this would point to the Spanish American elites not having passed through a process of decolonisation. This would be so, since the idea that something labelled as “universal thought” had to come from Europe would be an indication of the acceptance of a neo-Colonial approach. To this, I would add that such development of events took place in a context with no private publishing houses, at that time, being able to translate and publish significant foreign titles, or imprints able to broadly distribute titles on the topics initially covered by FCE.

In such historic circumstances, the public policy of the Mexican government could have taken different paths. It could have avoided any issues by not entering the field of spreading certain forms of knowledge, which has turned today into a matter of debate around their legitimacy. In an unlikely scenario for the time, the Mexican government could have taken a radical turn into alternative forms of knowledge, which were acutely invisibilised then. Or, following the trends of its historic moment, as it did, the Mexican policy could assume the idea of “the need” for what was labelled as “universal thought,” which would be regarded as a need of the Mexican population that the government should suffice and so it did.

The second aspect of the FCE relates to how the Mexican government handled the evolution of the publishing house in the 1960s. The Argentinian editor Arnaldo Orfila had run the first branch of the FCE in Buenos Aires between 1945 and 1947. He took over the running of the FCE’s headquarters in Mexico in 1948 and remained its CEO until 1965, a high point of the Boom. This was a time at which censorship in Spain was beginning to ease, as I will explore below, but in Mexico it was only just beginning. According to Díaz Arciniega, Orfila had managed to transform the FCE into a well-managed, economically viable publishing house, while also consolidating it as a cultural enterprise (Díaz Arciniega, 1996, p. 142). But after Díaz Ordaz became president on 1st December 1964, tensions arose between Mexican intellectuals and the government, including around limitations on freedom of expression (Díaz Arciniega, 1996, p. 143). The publication of *Los hijos de Sánchez* (*The Children of Sánchez*) — an ethnographic study describing the life of a family living in poverty in Mexico by the American anthropologist Oscar Lewis (1965) — prompted first a negative review and then “a lawsuit against the author and publisher for writing and publishing an ‘obscene’ book that ‘denigrated’ Mexico” (Díaz Arciniega, 1996, p. 144). Although the lawsuit⁵² was unsuccessful, it marked the end of Orfila’s time at the helm of the FCE. Orfila then went on to found another more politically engaged publishing house: Siglo XXI. According to Anaya, the very fact of founding Siglo XXI was an act of defiance from the intellectuals against the Mexican government (2017). As I noted earlier in this chapter, although Mexico had taken great economic strides, it was still failing in reducing poverty and social inequality, apart from fostering this

⁵² This was put forward by the Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística (Geographical and Statistical Society of Mexico) against Lewis and FCE and the accusations included: mutiny, offences against morality and good manners, and libel (Mudrovic, 1997, p. 159).

authoritarian political atmosphere. Lewis's book drew attention to this failure on the part of the governments that had emerged from the Mexican Revolution. Decades later, Vargas Llosa would deliver the death blow to the PRI regime, in the public sphere, by calling it "the perfect dictatorship".

Díaz Arciniega tells the story that on the morning of Saturday 6th November 1965, Orfila was summoned to the Ministry of Finance. He showed up to the meeting thinking that it was about the FCE's budget but instead found that he was asked to resign on the grounds that he was Argentinian and was thus legally barred from being the CEO of the FCE, despite having held the position for 17 years (1996, pp.147–148). His dismissal was explained using a legal ploy to cover up a political decision that ran contrary to both freedom of expression and the fostering of reflection on the socioeconomic situation in Mexico. In response to the growing tensions described above — the fact that intellectuals were no longer expressing unreserved support for the PRI and the length of time the party had been in power — the government tried to silence this criticism by placing limitations on the FCE, which was at the core of Mexico's cultural public policies.

In the middle of the Mexican Miracle, the government created the Comisión Nacional de Libros de Texto Gratuitos (National Commission for Free Textbooks, Conaliteg), which was a major part of the PRI's nation-building project (Caballero and Medrano, 1999, pp. 372–377; Martínez Martínez, 2006, p. 143; Villa, 1988, p. 62). In 1960, Conaliteg began publishing the country's first Libros de Texto Gratuitos: a set of primary school publications for the different subjects covered in Mexican schools.⁵³ This implied providing books to millions of pupils (Olvera, 2013, p. 84), and was targeting a growing schooled population. Illiteracy had been steadily decreasing since 1910, the year of the Revolution, when 72.3% of the population could not read or write, a figure that had dropped to 34.6% by 1960, when the first Libros de Texto Gratuitos began to be published (Padua, 1979, p. 37). The PRI politicians behind Conaliteg argued that a public textbook distribution policy needed to be put into practice to facilitate education in Mexico.

⁵³ There are six years of primary education in Mexico, involving several subjects, so the packet of the Libros de Texto Gratuitos that each child continues to receive in 2019-2020 includes more than five books each year, which gives some sense of the publishing and distribution enterprise Conaliteg oversees.

However, this policy implied that the Libros de Texto Gratuitos were meant to be the only ones available, as they were launched as universal to all schools and compulsory for teaching at any institution, which prompted considerable controversy (Martínez Martínez, 2006). These textbooks thus became an effective example of what Anderson calls “the political levers of official nationalism”, since in and of themselves they constituted several of these “levers”: “state-controlled compulsory primary education, state-organised propaganda, an official version of history, militarism (more for show than in any real sense), and never ending statements on identity and nationhood” (Anderson, 2007, pp. 147–148). The Libros de Texto Gratuitos were indeed the ideal vehicle for the compulsory transmission of an official history of Mexico for primary school pupils that promoted the Mexican national identity as part of a policy that could barely be distinguished from propaganda (Martínez Martínez, 2006). In practice, Libros de Texto Gratuitos were frequently also the only books in most Mexican households. Mexico still lacked a significant reading population and an established book market with bookstores (Cordera and Tello, 1981, p. 127) and private distributors. It could also be argued that all this led to a discouragement of the culture of visiting bookstores and of Mexicans becoming book buyers and readers.

According to Martínez Martínez (2006, p. 143), the Libros de Texto Gratuitos initiative was part of a cultural, political, and social project that included an eleven-year education plan, that is, it reached beyond a single presidential term in office (Padua 1999, 115; Villa, 1988, 60). This set of cultural policies also included the opening of museums that promoted a national identity, such as the Mexico City Museum (1961, opening), the Viceroyalty Museum in a former Jesuit community in Tepotzotlán (1964, reopening), and, above all, the relaunching of the Museum of Anthropology and History in a sumptuous new building in 1964 (Krauze, 2014, loc. 5674). The PRI governments continued to consolidate their regime, styling themselves as the hegemonic force that Mexico needed. However, although the PRI’s vision predominates, it was not the only one.

The Libros de Texto Gratuitos programme has been a constant point of conflict in Mexican public life, as shown and analysed by Martínez Martínez (2006). The PRI’s main opposition party, the PAN, criticised the Libros de Texto Gratuitos programme from the outset, as an exclusionary education material. In the view of PAN’s ideologist Christlieb the Libros de Texto Gratuitos were a totalitarian public policy and, as a monopoly,

detrimental to Mexico's publishing industry (Christlieb, 1965, pp. 992–1012). According to Anaya (2016), in interview for this thesis, “a strong industry, in any country, is based upon textbooks circulating through bookshops, because that is what guarantees sales and their subsistence, since such are the books that are secure sales” and thus Anaya suggests that the production carried out by the Conaliteg prevented the development of the Mexican publishing industry. In contrast he expressed that in Spain “there were publishing houses that grew under Franco by way of selling textbooks” (Anaya, 2016). Also in interview with me, Pérez-Gay concurred saying that the beginning of the Libros de Texto Gratuitos programme was “the moment in which the Mexican book industry lost an enormous opportunity in two senses: in an ideological sense and in an industrial sense [...] up to such extent that today is almost impossible to cancel the programme” (Pérez-Gay, 2016). In contrast to State sponsored FCE and Conaliteg in Mexico, the Spanish imprints were private publishing houses therefore leading to a marketplace rather than to a governmental quasi-monopoly. Anaya, Christlieb, and Pérez-Gay point to a factor that is highly relevant to understanding why a country with such a buoyant economy did not have a solid book industry able to give rise to the Boom.⁵⁴

Christlieb pointed out a likely absence of legislation that backed-up the Libros de Texto Gratuito programme and even compared PRI politicians with totalitarian dictators seeking to homogenise the thought of children (Christlieb, 1965, pp. 992–995).⁵⁵ However, the part of his critique that is most relevant to understanding why Mexico did not become the linchpin of the Spanish-language publishing was the effect that he predicted the Libros de Texto Gratuitos programme would have on publishing: he claimed that producing alternative textbooks would be discouraged and that publishing houses would be restricted from producing such books (Christlieb, 1965, p. 992). Indeed, the fact that textbooks are a regular, compulsory purchase makes them a mainstay for publishing houses. Depriving Mexican publishers of this market effectively weakened them financially in comparison with their Spanish counterparts. The fact that the Libros

⁵⁴ According to León (2016), interviewed for this dissertation, an exception to this was Porrúa, a publishing house and bookshop. In his view, Porrúa, a bookstore since 1900, had an “excellent management and catalogue of school and university textbooks” in Mexico doubling as a publishing house from 1944 (León, 2016).

⁵⁵ In addition to the PAN, some entrepreneurs — particularly from city of Monterrey — and the Catholic Church also opposed the Libros de Texto Gratuitos programme and demonstrated against, as a government interference with freedom of education (Martínez Martínez, 2006, p. 144; Smith, 2001, pp. 329–330; Vázquez and Meyer, 1985, pp. 172–173; Villa 1988, pp. 69–71).

de Texto Gratuitos programme remains in force, with no signs of disappearing, even after three different political parties have occupied the Presidency is a testimony, in my view and as suggested by Pérez-Gay, to the strength of the social penetration the programme achieved.

Before delving into the Spanish case, I think it is relevant to offer some context for the Mexican government's policies toward the publishing industry. This is mostly to note that they were not foreign to their own time nor wasteful of resources, but in several ways, represented what was possible in the 1960s. In this respect, I think it would be fruitful to make a very brief comparison with Argentina. The South American country experienced severe political instability. From 1955 until 1975 Argentina had 10 presidents. In such period, due to economic crises, specifically exchange rates instability, there was a "35% surcharge on the importation of paper" (Rivera, 1981, p. 628), which reflected in a slowdown of publishing. In 1964 —supported by paper producers, the printing industry, the publishers and the booksellers— the Law of the Argentinian Book was passed with the goal of offering financial support to the industry as a whole and to export some of its production (Rivera, 1981, p. 630). Nevertheless, the succession of national administrations meant, in practice, that there was a lack of implementation of public policies in favour of book production. Therefore, between Mexico and Argentina we have differences in aspects such as the aim of exporting books, but similarities in that, in practice, as opposed to Spain, the publishing industry was neither a priority nor a recipient of significant State support toward its independent development, as we will now see.

Spain's starting point was very different from Mexico's. In 1960, illiteracy levels in Spain stood at just 13.7 % (Gabriel, 1997, p. 209) while in Mexico, as I mentioned above, it was still at 33.5% even after a significant reduction over the previous decades. All the same, the situation in Spain could not be described in simplistic terms as one that would obviously lead to the Boom.

In the early 1960s, Spain was a long way from being the intellectual oasis that would attract Latin American writers and make Barcelona, Madrid, or any city in the country the global capital of Spanish-language literature. According to Larraz, the Franco dictatorship had a negative effect on Spanish literary output due to the regime's character, which he does not hesitate to describe as "totalitarian and repressive." This

can be summed up through two specific social events: the forced migration out of Spain of, according to Larraz, the majority “of those who belonged to the literary field” and, on the other hand, the establishment of a censorship policy in the country which led to texts being checked before publication and to several books being prohibited or even destroyed (Larraz, 2014, pp. 13–14). In few words, it was a society whose intellectuals and academics, to a great extent, were in exile and in which censorship was an active presence.

Censorship affected various forms of cultural expression, including the media, for instance. However, I will limit myself here to discussing censorship within publishing houses. Although censorship in Spain was supposed to be grounded in Catholicism and nationalism, in practice there was an absence of clear guidelines; the task was largely left to the discretion of the censors themselves, and seemed to have just one unifying feature: the rejection of any book or publication that dissented with the Franco regime (Martínez Martín, 2015b, p. 28). At the same time, the government made efforts to prop the regime up ideologically.

One way that Spain achieved this was through its National Publishing House (García Naharro, 2015, p. 220). This was created in 1937, regulated in 1943, and made part of the General Department of National Information in 1952, which gave it the role of centralising and coordinating official publications (García Naharro, 2015, p. 222). The hallmark of the National Publishing House were books that were quintessentially Spanish in spirit: until 1974, the aim of its publishing initiatives was the “publication, distribution, sale, and promotion of all types of publications that contribute to the cultural and social betterment of the Spanish people and to creating knowledge of their institutions and particular characteristics, both within the country and abroad” (García Naharro, 2015, p. 222). At this point, the National Publishing House essentially produced various types of nationalist propaganda that was broad in scope but did not include an exclusionary, universal, compulsory type of publication like Mexico’s Libros de Texto Gratuito Programme did.

Martínez Martín (2015b, p. 29) firmly states that during the Franco regime “there was no freedom of expression” and that “publishers, authors and booksellers [...] operated in client or corporate networks, seeking close ties with decision-makers.” By this he means that there were publishers who benefited from having a close relationship

with the dictatorship since they were paid for printing official publications and publishing books for religious institutions, both of which were large-scale, well-paid undertakings. These publishing houses and the people who ran them were known as “blue publishers” (Martínez Martín, 2015b, p. 32). Fusi describes how the Catholic Church provided direct training for journalists at its own journalism school, spread its opinions through its own radio stations and publishing houses, and also influenced society through the censorship of books and radio programmes, noting that “religious books were published on an unprecedented scale” (Fusi, 2013, pos. 10527). The objective of these Catholic publications was, of course, to promote “Catholic principles in the form of social morals” (Martínez Martín, 2015b, p. 37). This contributed to creating an atmosphere in which publishers sought to avoid confrontations with the Franco government, among other reasons because they had to be approved and included in an official government list.

This was the backdrop against which the politician Manuel Fraga came to head the Ministry of Information and Tourism in 1962. Some members of the regime refused to turn a blind eye to the series of changes taking place in Spanish society and took Fraga’s appointment as a means for “a timid, contradictory form of liberalisation, which culminated in the new Press Law of 1966, which brought, for example, financial support for promoting films, theatre, and even high-quality music, and greater tolerance for progressive publishers and magazines” (Fusi, 2013, pos. 11019–11023). As a consequence, regular editorial censorship was formally abolished, although this did not imply that it disappeared altogether in practice, since it was suggested that publishers submit their books to be read by the Bibliographical Guidance Service, which changed its name to the Publishing Guidance Department in 1968. The law actually encouraged self-censorship in Spain. It prompted publishing houses to develop strategies that included voluntarily presenting their publications for review in the hope of receiving more lenient treatment (Larraz, 2013, loc. 3680–3684). The reasoning behind this was that approval by the department’s “readers” would prevent the “seizure” of books that had already been printed and were being distributed (Menchero de los Ríos, 2015, p. 69). This process was framed not as censorship but as a voluntary consultation that might lead to publication being authorised, suggested changes (as was the case for Vargas Llosa’s first novel, as I describe in chapter 6), or simply to the observation that publication was not

recommended. Censorship, then, was still in place during the Boom years, and yet the Boom emerged all the same.

It is clear, then, that the so-called Fraga Law of 1966 relaxed earlier censorship to a certain degree (Preston, 2019, loc. 8677), and was accompanied by changes in several areas that included culture, mass tourism to Spain from the rest of Europe, a desire for change in higher education, and the transformation of the publishing houses in response to what was happening around them (Abellán, 1971, p. 36). In turn, certain prominent members of the local Catholic Church, and the Vatican in particular, began to distance themselves from the Franco regime in response to the ideas that arose during the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). The 1960s were also a time when the figure of the “worker priest” began to emerge in Spain, and though the Catholic groups that had given Franco such radical support in the past remained active, they gradually began to wane in importance. As a consequence, according to Martínez Martín (2015b, p. 39), in practice “all sorts of things were published, and for larger and more varied readerships.” However, the cases I have looked at over the course of my research into the Boom reveal that this opening up was only relative. All the same, even Abellán, for example, describes the change in attitudes to censorship as a “thawing,” pointing to 1960 as being the start of this (1971, p. 20).⁵⁶ As Fusi writes: “liberalisation also made the work of high-end publishers like Alianza Editorial, Seix-Barral, Ariel, and Taurus possible” (Fusi, 2013, pos.11028). Despite these assessments, but in keeping with social dynamics and changes in the Church, the circumstances in Spain conspired to give rise to a sophisticated publishing industry that was able to accommodate the Latin American Boom.

Sorá describes how Spanish publishers were allegedly “always protected by state policies [that were] largely commercially motivated [and by the desire for] domination of the publishing markets on both sides of the Atlantic” — meaning, the Latin American market. He also mentions that there was a perception that Spanish publishers’ commercial practices in Latin America would constitute a form of neocolonialism (Sorá, 2017, pos. 223). Indeed, since 1946, the Book Protection Law had subsidised publishers in ways that included controlling paper prices and providing export incentives, but for years they had faced administrative obstacles and, in practice, the benefits described here

⁵⁶ “The year 1960 was around the time when this thawing began. From then on, new magazines appeared in response to different sectors’ ideological needs: *Atlántida*, for the Opus Dei; *Revista de Occidente*, for Ortega y Gasset’s liberal supporters; *Cuadernos para el Diálogo*, which was linked to Christian democracy; and *Aporia*, for the young philosophers who had emerged in the previous decades” (Abellán, 1971, p. 33).

only applied to a limited number of firms with export permits (Fernández Moya, 2015, p. 577). However, this seem to support the idea that National Catholicism and its emphasis on Hispanicity converged with the public policies of the late 1950s and early 1960s, particularly the ones that affected the cultural field by including more players in the book industry.

The other cultural policy factor that was to a certain extent inspired by the ideology of the Franco regime was the decision to expand book exports from Spain to Latin America. As early as just after the Civil War, it became clear to publishing house managers that their relationship with Latin American markets was an unparalleled commercial opportunity (Fernández Moya, 2015, p. 575). Part of this, of course, was due to the huge numbers of potential readers in a large swathe of Latin America. Beyond merely commercial factors, however, there were major reasons for making this potential relationship a reality given that various major publishing houses (Espasa-Calpe, Salvat, Gustavo Gili, Sopena, and Aguilar) had started operating in the two largest markets in the region: Mexico and Argentina (Fernández Moya, 2015, p. 576). In addition, between 1949 and 1951, the Executive Committee for Foreign Trade in Books (CECEL) was created (Rodrigo, 2015, p 106). According to Fernández Moya, this was one of the factors that helped Spain's book industry improve its financial position in the 1960s (Fernández Moya, 2009, p. 70). There was clearly a solid starting point from which the Spanish book industry could start consolidating growth in export markets, apart from the likelihood of taking advantage of previously established mechanisms for distribution given a history of trade.

Although the ideology of Hispanicity I described above, and the fact that Spanish is spoken in most Latin American countries meant that by the 1950s most publishers were already exporting to these markets, by the 1960s, according to Fernández Moya and due to government stimuli (2015, p. 587). These exports of the 1960s had to do with the book industry being deemed a priority sector in the National Development Plan, as I described above (Martínez Martín, 2015b, p. 34). This may have been a significant driving force behind the Boom, but from the perspective of our understanding of hegemony, the incentives furnished by the Spanish government to publishers would not alone have been enough for the Boom to be articulated: these favourable conditions combined with the agency of the Boom authors to make the phenomenon a reality.

Foreign trade statistics for Spain showed a significant increase in the number of book exports. Not long before the start of the Boom, in 1960, some 2,970 tons of books were exported per year, while by 1965, at the height of the Boom, this figure had reached 11,090 tons. Ten years later, when the changes that the Boom had ushered in had been consolidated, it had increased to 47,066 tons (Fernández Moya, 2015, p. 595). In 1969 alone, 41 million copies of books were exported from Spain, 82.42% of which went to the Spanish-speaking markets of the Americas (Abellán, 1971, p. 38). The possibility of higher exports was also based on a clear increase in production, as over the course of five years, between 1960 and 1965, Spain went from publishing 6,085 to 17,342 titles per year (Fernández Moya, 2015, p. 586). According to UNESCO's data, Spain even ranked seventh on the list of global publishing powers (1950-1973). Spain's publishing industry was undoubtedly a success story in the promotion of exports that was fostered by the Franco regime.

Mexico provides an unusual contrast. As I mentioned, the country followed an import-substitution model. This should have made it hard for publishing exports from Spain to enter the country, as they should have been subject to import taxes that would have made them excessively expensive for consumers. However, Spanish books entered the country freely — that is to say there were no tariffs on them, they were an exception in such closed economy — and, as the Mexican economy was growing and its currency was stable, local consumers had much greater purchasing capacity than those in other Latin American countries. Consequently, for a time Mexico was the second-largest export market for Spanish publishing houses, and eventually came to occupy first place in 1971, a development in which we can glance at Mexican interest in reading the novels of the Latin America Boom. Despite the fact that there were not even official diplomatic relations between the two countries between 1939 and 1975, imported books accounted for around 40% of the supply on the Mexican book market and Spain provided the lion's share (70%) of these imports (Fernández Moya, 2015: p. 588). A remark by Mexican novelist Juan Rulfo in 1971 may go some way to explaining this exception: "all kinds of books are available in Mexico, absolutely all, and no-one stops this from being the case because books are only thought to be of interest to a minority, so no one in power would ever think they could cause any harm" (Saladrigas, 2011, p. 51). By the end of the Franco regime, almost 50% of the sales by book publishers from Spain were to Latin American

markets, which reveals how well the internationalisation strategies of Spain's book industry functioned (Fernández Moya, 2015, p. 594).⁵⁷ Ultimately, the imports of the Spanish American countries prove how Franco's public cultural policy of exporting books to Spain's former colonies achieved its objectives.

As a consequence, despite censorship and an oppressive social environment, there were substantial possibilities for development for Spanish publishing houses. Fernández Moya states that, in the 1960s and 1970s, Spanish publishers ceased to be small family-run businesses and became more profitable, medium-sized companies as a result of the growth of both the domestic market and the export strategy described above (Fernández Moya, 2015, p. 592). This reveals a crucial difference between Mexico and Spain. In Mexico, the government fostered a quasi-monopoly around publishing through Conaliteg and the FCE, while in Spain, propagandistic undertakings and the arrangements of a nationalistic dictatorship which invoked Spain's imperial past as part of this nationalism generated economic benefits for publishing houses which ultimately strengthened the Spanish publishing industry. In a broader sense, the political regime that had emerged from the Mexican Revolution used culture, including the domestic book industry, which was then in its infancy, as a component of its political legitimacy. The publishing industry was thus used more as a vehicle to improve literacy and further public education through the *Libros de Texto Gratuito* programme and to spread the sense that the Mexican Revolution had been a success. Meanwhile, in Spain, the Franco regime also used publishing as a vehicle for legitimation, while building an industrial framework with international scope that took advantage of a series of both cultural and commercial ties that had accumulated over centuries. The Mexican publishing industry was unable to build distribution vehicles of these kinds.

The articulation of the factors analysed in this study as a whole, together with the framework of political ideologies and the public policies to which they gave rise reveal two countries with publishing industries whose approaches and objectives were clearly very different. In Mexico, the PRI governments set out, as was perhaps inevitable given

⁵⁷ However, according to Fernández Moya, Spain's dependence on the Latin American market also implied a risk that became a reality during the economic crises that the countries of Latin America experienced in the late 1970s and 1980s, which "shook the Spanish-language publishing sector to the core" (Fernández Moya, 2015, p. 594).

Mexico's social realities, to consolidate the country's national identity by implementing public cultural policies that revolved around State nationalism. They did not prioritise communication or trade with the world, or even with other parts of the Spanish-speaking world, but instead turned their focus inward, toward their own culture. In Spain, in contrast, somewhat paradoxically, despite a rigid nationalistic Catholic ideology with clearly defined paradigms of what it meant to be religious and to be Spanish, the political orientation did look beyond Spain toward Spanish America. This willingness to communicate with and influence other Spanish-speaking countries was, of course, based on the past: the shared history of colonisation that I explored in chapter 3. This coincided with the Franco regime promoting an export strategy for the book industry that was rooted in the notion of promoting Hispanicity. In this way, Spain and the Spanish publishing industry, with its solid history and its symbolic and cultural capital, in articulation with historical processes within the country, international events, and the agency of certain figures in the literary and publishing worlds — as we will see in the next two chapters — became fertile ground for the Latin American Boom to take root.

Chapter 5

The Boom's Editor, its Literary Agent, and Being a Latin American Writer

This chapter analyses how an editor, a literary agent, and an identity played a part in the construction of the hegemony of the Spanish book industry within the world of Spanish-language publishing during the so-called Latin American Boom, in the 1960s. As I have previously pointed out, interpretations of the Boom range from describing it as a mere sales phenomenon to readings that see it as part of a broader cultural and social process. My own analysis is closer to the latter one, as it focuses on social and publishing issues and, in this chapter, I look at the importance of the networking that enabled the existence of the Latin American Boom.

My argument in this chapter is that editor Carlos Barral and literary agent Carmen Balcells — in the context of Barcelona — as well as the public enacting of Latin American identity created a productive network with the literary protagonists of the Boom. In turn, the action of these agents articulated with the agency of professionalisation of the writers — which I will analyse in the next and final chapter — and, together with the rest of the elements examined in this thesis, gave birth to a broad phenomenon that was labelled the Latin American Boom, which would be the face apparent of change in the hegemonic discourse, passing from the invisibility of Latin American literature to its prominence in the international arena. At the same time, since this is the focus of my research, I claim this transformed the publishing industry in Spain making it dominant both at industrial level and, more importantly, it enabled it to shape the literary sphere in symbiosis with the cultural hegemony it consolidated.

I would like to point out that my approach is very close to the one suggested by Becker. He argued against a traditional sociology of art approach in which creativity — in art in his case, in literature in my own research — was an expression of society and the product of individual genius. Instead, he wanted to look at the “network of cooperation” that was the crucial background to the production of such works, therefore analysing them as a social phenomenon (Becker, 1982, p. xi). I coincide with Becker's take and that is why this chapter, in particular, looks at the networking of social actors required for the Latin American Boom to take place

I look into how such cooperation made possible one of the elements that would articulate as a novel hegemonic discourse. That the main players in the Latin American Boom, both from the literary and publishing spheres, undertook actions that led to the creation of a network of mutual literary and publishing legitimisation, and to the construction of cultural capital that benefited both individual authors and the whole phenomenon: not just the authors as a group, but the literature and culture of the region together with the book industry of Spain.

I analyse the editor Barral because he published some of the works by these writers, the literary agent Balcells because she forged relationships with most of the literary protagonists of the Boom adding new aspects to writer-publisher contracts. And also examine the Latin American identity of the writers involved as the enacting of such identity was key to the phenomenon. I group these three topics in this chapter since they are closely related to, but at the same time external to the Boom authors — whose individual agency I will analyse in chapter 6 — and they are the crucial elements in the networking that changed the course of the Spanish-language book industry from the 1960s onward.

The Editor

I will now analyse the intervention of an editor in the Boom and how, together with a literary agent, he was a key factor in transforming the Spanish book industry. The imprint that launched Vargas Llosa's award-winning first novel was the highbrow Catalan publishing house Seix-Barral, which, as I have written, bore the surnames of its founders, Víctor Seix and Carlos Barral, a publisher and an editor, respectively. Vargas Llosa (1998, pp. 181–182) emphasizes the importance of Seix-Barral in the “coalition of multiple circumstances” that converged to form the Boom, stressing how García Márquez wanted Seix-Barral to publish *One Hundred Years of Solitude* since it “represented literary prestige” and was part of the cultural reputation that attracted Latin Americans “to Barcelona [where Seix-Barral was located], which had attained a mythical status.” Similarly, and in a very open manner, which shows the drive of these authors, Fuentes wrote from Rome, in a letter I found during my archival research, to García Márquez, saying: “Regarding choosing between Sudamericana publishing house and Barral, my

very personal impression is that Sudamericana locates you excessively and puts you in circulation only in the Latin American world. This neither adds up to your reach nor does it take advantage of the contacts that Barral offers. I think that with Sudamericana you stay in South America, while with Barral you would win in the path of translations and that of having presence in Europe and the United States” (Fuentes, 1965). The publication of García Márquez’s novel would not take place under such imprint, but this gives us clues regarding the cultural significance attributed to the publishing house at the time and afterwards.

As Ayén (2017) points out, Barral was not only an excellent editor, he also managed to get his authors involved in the then emerging literary prizes as judges, had their work translated into German and French, and even enriched and improved their social life in Barcelona. This we can examine through networks theory. The many and important personal relationships that Barral had and decided to share with the Boom authors, locates this editor at the core of a network of many people. In this sense, we can think around the idea that “members of a higher density core could expect to be advantaged by higher levels of trust, solidarity and mutual support, with the opportunities this affords” (Bottero and Crossley, 2011). Therefore, The Barral’s work on integrating the Boom writers in European intellectual circles could be argued to enhance the possibilities of accumulation of cultural and symbolic capital by the Latin American authors.

Larraz (2013, loc. 3718–3721) also emphasizes the cultural significance of Seix-Barral, particularly its literary growth under Barral, describing it as “the most avant-garde publishing house in Spain” and praising the publisher’s work against censorship. Rama insists that publishers like Seix-Barral, which were guided or run by intellectuals, took on the task of informing and guiding readers through the world of literature by publishing works that were sometimes “difficult” but were in keeping with the demands of an educated reading public, making them “cultural enterprises” that were run more along literary criteria than business ones (Rama, 1981, pp. 66–67). This gives us a glimpse into the paradox of the multiple capitals involved in publishing, both economic and cultural. In Rama’s statements, we can also identify a discourse that seems to oppose business efficiency, or even viability, against cultural interest. The Latin American Boom was, indeed, not the prevalence of literature over business, or of economic interest over

cultural value, but an arrangement that, without being free of tensions, was not a mere opposition.

Barral's decision to engage with Latin America as part of his editorial strategy was not entirely unprecedented. As far back as the 1920s, the directors of Spanish publishing houses had been in no doubt that the Latin American market was an area of great opportunity for the Spanish book industry, so much so that while exports of other Spanish products to Latin America declined over the course of that decade, the reverse was true for books printed in Spain (Larraz, 2007). The Spanish book industry became particularly diligent in the area of distribution, working to ensure that their production began to reach places that had previously lacked sales points, thus encouraging consumption of printed matter from Spain (Larraz, 2007). In understanding this process, Larraz (2007, p. 201) also considers the importance of the Chamber of Books — founded in 1918 in Barcelona, and in 1922 in Madrid. Publishers subsequently began to invoke the cultural and social nature of their products to justify requests for State subsidies such as tax incentives for exports (Larraz, 2007). This led to a virtuous circle that included the processes of export, distribution, unionisation, and State support. These factors laid the foundations for an industry that, several decades later, would make it possible for the Boom to emerge.

Latin America also played a significant role in Spanish publishers' strategies and responses to censorship during the Franco regime. By the 1960s, Spanish publishers had also adopted practices such as creating collections with specific features, for example by publishing first editions in one collection for Spain and reprints in another for Latin America. The publisher Seix, for example, acquired shares in different Latin American publishing houses to publish books that Seix-Barral could not print in Spain due to censorship (Larraz, 2010; Barral, 2015, p. 737). This was the case with a novel by Fuentes, *Cambio de piel* (*A Change of Skin*), which was published by the Mexican publishing house Joaquín Mortiz, even though it had won the 1967 Biblioteca Breve Prize, which should have included publication in Spain. It was not until 1974 that the first Spanish edition of the book appeared (Fernández Moya, 2015, p. 592). Vargas Llosa (1998, p. 176) has also referred to his own fear of censorship at the time. As we will see in chapter 6, the Boom protagonists opted to work within a country under a dictatorship rather than in their own nations or any other Latin American country. If we think of this in publishing terms and what it implied for the internationalisation of the work of these authors, the Spanish book industry was beginning to give opportunities that were unheard of in Spanish America.

Considering the dynamics of publishing solely in economic terms, the publication of Fuentes' *A Change of Skin* in Mexico would seem to represent a loss for the Spanish book industry. However, if we take a hegemonic approach, far from being negative, this fight against censorship turns out to have increased the prestige of Boom authors and their editor, Barral, both of whom emerged as agents of modernity resisting the Franco regime.

Another action of Barral that also contributed in laying the foundations for the hegemony of the Spanish industry was that he sought to build bridges between publishing houses in Spain and Latin America in the 1960s. This was in part due to the influence of another editor working for Barral, Jaime Salinas,⁵⁸ who had a cosmopolitan orientation (Cruz, 2020). In light of the strategies that Spanish publishing houses pursued in the 1920s, as discussed above, and also considering the long historic relationship between Spain and Spanish American countries, Barral's approach could be interpreted both as a return to that earlier vocation of the Spanish book industry to continually export texts to its former colonies in the Americas and a move to take advantage of the export oriented policies of the Franco regime which, as we saw in the previous chapter, also were guided by the ideology of Hispanicity.

Other companies pursued similar tactics, which led them to design an export policy for the entire Latin American book market. Fernández Moya (2015) views this as a paradox, because it made Spain into a book-producing power despite being a country with low readership rates. The purpose of this production was, at least in part, then, to export it. This constitutes another paradox of this hegemonic process. The construction and definition of social paradigms in a hegemonic discourse are not necessarily rooted in features of the social actors. That is to say, publishing and cultural capital need not to come from a society with high levels of reading and book sales. Therefore, the individual initiative and talent of leaders of the Spanish book industry such as Barral played an important part in overcoming obstacles to cultural production and consumption. This, I argue, together with what we will see in the next chapter, points towards the role played by the agency of the actors involved in the Latin American Boom against the structures they encounter and against which they acted. As I am and will keep showing, the bases

⁵⁸ Salinas (27th June 1925, El Harrach, Argelia-25th January 2001, Grindavík, Iceland), having studied in the US, worked at publishing houses Seix-Barral, Alianza, Alfaguara, and Aguilar; and was also in charge of libraries in Felipe González's presidency in Spain.

for such power came from various elements. We will now analyse a novel and influential figure.

The Literary Agent

In this section I look into the emergence of a novel figure in the publishing industry of Spain at the time, that of the literary agent and how it dislocated the ways in which the industry operated until then. In the early 1960s, the Boom writers were already producing works that would eventually come to be viewed as masterpieces and they even seemed to be working toward achieving deliberate commercial ends. However, it would take the literary agent Carmen Balcells for them to fully achieve their objectives and see tangible changes in their daily lives. In this sense, Balcells was an unprecedented figure in the Spanish publishing world, largely because she looked beyond the Spanish-speaking countries and gave the Boom writers international influence. Her tactics led, for example, to the creation of Latin American literature as a sales category, which has endured into the 21st-century.

“Literary life changed for Spanish-speaking writers thanks to Carmen Balcells”, says Vargas Llosa (2017). To use the terms of my theoretical framework, Balcells had a dislocatory effect on the book industry, that is to say, she broke the previous hegemonic understandings, by transforming the business side of publishing, insisting on new rules regarding contracts, promotional activity, and advances, while also making a significant impact on the lives of the writers in question. In this we can, again, think in terms of networks. Castells has written about one of several related powers, one of them being “network power [which] is the power of the standards of the network over its components” (Castells, 2011, p. 775). What we can see is that Balcells seems to have turned into the bearer of such network power as, at least for some time, she was defining the standards and deciding who entered the network which she almost seemed to hold together as we can read in different testimonies. Ayén, for example, argues that the Boom “indirectly enabled the literary agent Carmen Balcells to change the rules of the game in the relationship between writers and publishers” (2014, pos. 249). Vargas Llosa (2017) fleshes out these claims when he describes and analyses Balcells’ work as follows:

Publishers used to think that they were doing Latin American writers an enormous favour by publishing them, and Carmen Balcells convinced them that it could be more than just a gesture of pity and charity, that it could actually be an excellent business decision if they did their work properly. She educated many Spanish-language publishers and made them into modern, ambitious companies that were able to set aside their provincial mindsets and instead launch books thinking in terms of the wider Spanish language, which had the potential to be an extraordinary market. Carmen Balcells was exceptional in being able to see that.

From a sociological perspective, analysing the hegemonic logic of events, the Boom did not precede Balcells. Instead, she articulated in a chain of equivalences with other social elements, each of them being necessary for the new configuration. Balcells' actions, then, were part of what enabled the Boom, in articulation with factors such as literary quality, the aims of the Spanish publishing business, the agency of the Latin American writers in question, and the general context in which events unfolded. But also, as we can note she was crucial in that she was able to dictate the standards and therefore be a significant part of the network regardless the novelty of the figure of the literary agent in the Spanish language publishing industries.

In contrast, Ayén (2017) seems to suggest that Balcells basically took advantage of the Boom. In fact, he insists that works such as *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and *The Time of the Hero* became successes without any intervention on the part of Balcells, although he recognises that their spread throughout the Spanish-speaking world and into other languages was affected by her actions. My own analysis, in contrast, places greater emphasis on her role, such as the fact that, by 1969 — that is to say, only two years after its original publication — Balcells had sold the rights to *One Hundred Years of Solitude* in 20 countries (Ayén, 2014). Time has proven the book was exceptional, but surely without Balcells its impact might have taken a longer time to be felt, if it would have happened at all.

Vargas Llosa (2017) argues that it was the editor Barral who encouraged Balcells to become a literary agent because he preferred not to discuss money with authors, so she ended up working as an intermediary between writers and his publishing house Seix-Barral. Soon Balcells realised that, rather than working for publishers, literary agents need to act “against publishers and in the interests of writers.” Over time, Balcells'

influence went beyond the Boom, as she went on to represent other authors who were not from Latin America, such as the Spanish writer Max Aub, who was exiled in Mexico and had been unable to publish any of his work due to censorship in Spain (Larraz, 2013). Another aspect of her work that has gone largely unnoticed due to her almost exclusive focus on the great writers of the Boom is her representation of publishing houses operating in other languages. She was responsible for Spanish-language editions of works originally published by imprints such as Princeton University Press and MIT Press, as Granados emphasised to me in interview (2016), thus, to some extent, Balcells was also shaping the topics of discussion and approaches that were in vogue in academic and intellectual spheres at the time.

Vargas Llosa describes how, before they began working with the Balcells literary agency, many writers (himself included) did not even read the contracts that publishing companies gave them. These generally entailed surrendering the rights to their work in perpetuity, including translation rights and other extreme clauses, merely for seeing their work published, especially if the publishers in question were ones that they held in high esteem (2017). García Márquez, for example, published a couple of books “with a real stranglehold of a contract” (Ayén, 2014, pos. 618). However, all this changed when Balcells began to represent the Boom authors. Vargas Llosa (2017) says that she “was key to publishers starting to respect authors’ rights, accepting that contracts had an expiry date, and clearly establishing that translation rights are in no way the publisher’s property.”

Herralde (2017), in interview for this thesis, highlights the following aspects of Balcells’ work as a literary agent: obtaining higher royalties for writers and establishing different contracts for simultaneous editions of the same title. After García Márquez was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1982, Balcells went so far as to break the contracts for his work down by country and contract duration, and was even able to sell the same book to different publishing houses in the same country at the same time (Ayén, 2014, pos. 504). The main features of the new type of contract that Balcells developed were that rights to literary works would yield writers a share of royalties; they would be broken down by country, that is, they would have territorial limits; and that there would be a clear time limit on them, which had not previously been the case in the Spanish book market, a practice which in my professional career I have known both as split markets [*mercados divididos*] and as territorial division of copyrights [*división de los derechos de*

autor] (Barcha, 2017; Ramírez, 2017; Gutiérrez, 2017; Labastida, 2017; Ayén, 2017). Balcells' individual agency was fundamental to strengthening the writers' position. At the time, this implied an enormous transformation in the book industry and heralded the rise of the figure of the professional writer in Spanish-speaking countries, and even had an impact in English-speaking publishing as could be argued from Andrew Wiley's — CEO of The Wiley Agency, one of the top literary agencies in the world — attempt at buying Balcells Agency.

The prestige and popularity of the Boom among readers and its authors' loyalty to Balcells gave her enormous negotiating power, or as I called it before “network power”, which she used to obtain greater benefits for all of her clients. This included writers that were less well-known than those of the Boom, who benefited greatly from being represented by her as she demanded similar contract conditions for everyone that her agency represented (Ayén, 2017; Gutiérrez, 2017; Ramírez, 2017; León, 2016). Balcells also worked with publishing houses to plan the launches of her writers' books, encouraging them to design more ambitious promotion strategies than they had originally intended, which helped modernise Spanish publishers and take them to the international market (Vargas Llosa, 2017; Labastida, 2017). Through tactics like these, Balcells turned the power relations between writers and publishers in the Spanish-language book world on their head, shifting them in favour of the former, as I was told in several interviews (Granados, 2016; Gutiérrez, 2017; León, 2016; Ramírez, 2017; Vargas Llosa, 2017). A new political economy of the book industry was in the making with the Latin American Boom.

Balcells' influence over the Boom writers reached far beyond improved contract conditions, however. She created a supportive intellectual and economic environment for them and strengthened the friendships among them when she effectively made them into neighbours by bringing them to Barcelona (Barcha, 2017), where they began to share aspects of their day-to-day lives. Balcells represented García Márquez's commercial interests from 1962 onward, specifically the translation rights to his work. However, the two did not meet in person until 5th July 1965, when she travelled to Mexico City to tell García Márquez about a contract worth USD 1,000 for the four books he had published up to that point. He was far from satisfied with that offer (Saldívar, 2014, pos. 6691; Ayén, 2014, pos. 483–492; Barcha, 2017). A business and personal relationship could have derailed at that moment, but it did not.

Despite this reaction, the next few days marked the start of a lifelong friendship between the literary agent and the first of the Boom writers to win the Nobel Prize in Literature, which culminated in the signing of a “contract” with no legal value but in which, as a gesture of friendship, García Márquez surrendered the rights of all his works in every language to Balcells for the next 150 years (Saldívar, 2014, pos. 7156). The humorous nature of this clause, as described by Vicens (Ayén, 2014, pos. 483–492), would seem to contravene the notion of authors’ rights, and emphasizes the operation of symbolic capital in the processes in question. In the words of Díez-Canedo Flores (2017) and Gutiérrez (2017), while interviewed for this dissertation, what was important for Balcells was the “tangle of relations, that thing we call ‘trust’”. In terms of my analysis of hegemony, I find Díez-Canedo Flores’ view plausible, in that the ties between Balcells and the Boom writers were based not just on the legal terms of contracts but also on personal factors.

Balcells’ business and social skills were unquestionably important. However, some writers chose not to follow the path of literary professionalisation that she was anxious to carve out. Julio Cortázar, for example, preferred to set the pace for his creative process himself. He and his wife Aurora Bernárdez were translators for UNESCO (Hars, 2014, loc. 3250) and he refused to be represented by Balcells, who only obtained the rights to his work after his death, when Bernárdez took such decision as his heir (Ayén, 2014, pos. 10903; Gutiérrez, 2017). Ultimately, I agree with Granados (2016) that Balcells’ actions during the Boom made her a “disruptive radical” within the book industry, as he told me in our interview. The dislocatory nature of her work is revealed in that publishers began approaching Boom writers directly and offering them better contract conditions in exchange for cutting her out of the relationship, and some even took legal action against her (Vargas Llosa, 2017). Carmen Balcells proved to be a dislocatory force.

We must consider that all this took place in a specific site. A place which is not even the capital of Spain managed to become the birthplace of the Latin American Boom. As a consequence of the Boom, Latin America went from being nearly culturally invisible to become a focus of global cultural attention. However, the city where distinct factors converged to create the Boom was not in Latin America. Instead, as Vargas Llosa (1998, pp. 181–182) has stated quite categorically: “the capital of the Boom was Barcelona.” In earlier decades, “Paris had been the Mecca of any Latin American with artistic ambition”

(Ayén, 2014, pos. 1967). But the Boom years shifted the Latin American literary capital over the border and into Spain, and the lives of the Boom writers were transformed by the professionalisation of their literary undertakings and the revenue they would start earning from sales of their books.

Barcelona was home to the literary agent Balcells, the editor Barral, and his abovementioned publishing house, Seix-Barral. Before long, the city became a privileged site for Latin American writers (Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 3829), including García Márquez and Vargas Llosa. Although Fuentes did not live in the city, he travelled there frequently: “‘there was a real pull toward Barcelona’, Fuentes recalls. ‘I went there often.’” (Ayén, 2014, 10520). This geographical convergence was not a coincidence but was instead instigated by Balcells.

The same year that García Márquez met his agent in person for the first time, he had spent all his savings and then borrowed money from friends to write *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, which he took 18 months to complete, running up debts of over USD 10,000 (Cremades and Esteban, 2002, p. 262; Novoa, 2012, p. 491). Although he said that he would have gone to Barcelona anyway on the heels of Ramón Vinyes — a revered author of his — it was Balcells who convinced García Márquez to move there for financial reasons (Ayén 2017), which he did in 1967. He was not the only Boom protagonist persuaded by the literary agent to reside in the Catalan capital.

As for Vargas Llosa, his life began to change between 1962 and 1963. He was living in Paris, working for Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française and at Agence France-Presse, while also giving Spanish classes at the Berlitz School. Vargas Llosa told Mexican writer José Emilio Pacheco that he had intended to self-publish the novel that would end up being published as *La ciudad y los perros* (*The Time of the Hero*). This meant paying for printing it without the involvement of any publishing house (Pacheco, 2017). In the midst of all this, Vargas Llosa sent the novel’s manuscript to Seix-Barral in Spain, where despite a negative verdict from some of his employees, the editor Barral set out to read the novel that he would eventually publish (Armas, 2002, p. 34). This was the turning point in Vargas Llosa’s literary career.

In 1962, Barral travelled to Paris to let Vargas Llosa know that “we are going to put the book forward for the Biblioteca Breve Prize, Mario, which we need to win to get past the censors” (Ayén, 2014, pos. 2024). As I mentioned above, the novel won the prize, marking the start of one of “the most dazzling literary careers in the Spanish language”

(Ayén, 2014, pos. 2024). As time went by, Vargas Llosa would also be an exceptional literary figure in any language. It was also the beginning of a close friendship between Vargas Llosa and Barral (Vargas Llosa, 1998, pp. 175–176). As in the friendship between Balcells and García Márquez, the relationship between Barral and Vargas Llosa went beyond economic and legal aspects to include affective ones, thus creating a complex and dense network linking the actors involved in the Latin American Boom.

Again, I would like to stress that the theory of hegemony enables me to take this into account as, in this framework, subjectivity is deemed to play a part in shaping the public sphere, that is to say, it was not only self-interest or rational choice that led each of the actors of the Boom to engage in the phenomenon, but also emotional links which perhaps consolidated the possibility of it taking place. This does not deny the pragmatic and power elements of this networks of relationships. As Crossley writes, “actors belong to networks [underdeveloped and often tacit], that actors enjoy ties to others who enjoy ties to others still, and so on [...] these ties form patterns or structures that, in turn, constitute social structures” (Crossley, 2010, p. 347). Which can clearly be seen in the chain *The Time of the Hero*, Biblioteca Breve Prize, personal relationship Barral-Vargas Llosa, and, as I will now describe soon afterwards also Vargas Llosa-Balcells; all of which was transforming the social structure of publishing or, in my theoretical terms, constructing a new hegemony.

Over the next three years, García Márquez joined forces with Balcells to convince Vargas Llosa to move to Barcelona too (Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 4184). The previous years had not been easy for Vargas Llosa, who had moved to London to teach at Queen Mary College, University of London. Vargas Llosa was living with his second wife and two small children in dire financial circumstances. Donoso (2018, p. 66) writes that:

he was living in terrible conditions: he would lock himself away in one half of their two-room flat while she tried to keep the children quiet in the next room so that he could finish *Conversación en la catedral* (*Conversation in the Cathedral*). Whenever they weren't working or looking after the children, they would spend their time trying to catch the rats that the flat was infested with, and when they weren't hunting them, they were talking about them: how many did you see yesterday, I think there's one under the table, I killed three, they ate the bread.

Despite the publication of his first novel and the literary prizes it had garnered, this was the situation that Vargas Llosa found himself in before Balcells came onto the scene.

Between 1969 and 1970, Vargas Llosa had attempted to develop a career as an academic, trying to combine a job that would pay the bills with his work as a writer. He had taught at King's College, London, and at the University of Puerto Rico. On 16th April 1969, he had just finished writing *Conversation in the Cathedral* and was working on his doctoral thesis when he received a letter from Balcells urging him to move to Barcelona or any other place he wished, at her or Barral's expense. She explicitly asked how much money he would need to set himself up in Barcelona and write full-time, mentioning Barral's financial commitment to the idea (William, 2014; Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 4138–4148). Notice how this sponsorship commitment came when Vargas Llosa had written only three novels but, crucially, after 1967, when the Boom was a fully sedimented phenomenon marked by the publication of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*.

Vargas Llosa answered by saying "I'm delighted that you have realised that writers need to be professionals" (Ayén, 2014, pos. 2962). Vargas Llosa (2017) tells how, not long after, Balcells showed up unannounced at his flat in London, saying, "Hand in your notice at the university today and become a full-time writer." "Carmen, you're crazy," I answered, because I had never thought about focusing entirely on literature. Making a living as a writer seemed inconceivable to me, impossible." In a context with a growing readership, public policies favouring book exports —as we saw chapter 4 — and all the elements that I analyse in this thesis, Balcells had transformed that "inconceivable" idea into a reality through the previous years, enabling the Boom authors to earn a living through their writing.

Vargas Llosa remained in Barcelona from 1970 to 1974. He received a warm welcome from the intellectual and publishing elite to a city that was, as Armas describes, home to "the power and the glory of the Spanish publishing world" (Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 4207–4218). All of which bears witness to the networking that took place in Barcelona. This period during which García Márquez and Vargas Llosa lived in Barcelona marked their consolidation as professional Spanish-language writers, a label that also applied to Fuentes.

Ayén is certain that the city's publishing industry was a key factor in it being able to dispute the cultural power of Madrid, despite being smaller (2014, pos. 87). According to Vila-Sanjuán (2016), while interviewed for this dissertation, Barcelona is "the great

publishing centre [...] of the Spanish language,” due to the continuous editorial activity it had seen over the course of five centuries. This has operated on an industrial scale since the last quarter of the 19th-century, to an extent unrivalled by any city. Vargas Llosa (2017), also in his interview with me, concurs: “[Barcelona] has been [Spain’s] great publishing metropolis since the 19th-century, and also has a more international spirit [than Madrid]”. In the 1960s, Barcelona “was a very welcoming microclimate for the Boom writers, a Spanish-speaking European environment where important publishing decisions were made” (Vila-Sanjuán, 2016). As I have written, during their years in Barcelona, the major Boom authors consolidated as full-time writers, to a great extent thanks to the initiative of Carmen Balcells. It was thus that Barcelona became the capital of the Latin American Boom.

Being a Latin American Writer

In the final part of this chapter I analyse the paradox of the Boom making reference to Latin American identity while looking for international markets and recognition. The Latin American nature of the Boom and the identity leanings of the writers towards the region — their exploitation of “Latin Americanness” — were important factors in the Boom’s development. At a lecture in 2017, Vargas Llosa reflected on this, speaking of García Márquez in the context of the Boom: “Both of us were discovering at the same time that we were Latin American writers rather than Peruvian or Colombian ones, that we belonged to a shared motherland that we knew very little of, that we barely identified with. The awareness that exists today of Latin America as a single cultural unit was practically non-existent when we were young.” This was yet another turning point linked to the Boom and another paradox since, as I have just described, the phenomenon was based in Barcelona and set in motion by dwellers of that city.

Ayén said, when interviewed for this thesis, that the Boom writers were “proud to put Latin America on the map” (2017). This was not just a matter of personal experience; it was also evident in the projects the Boom writers talked about. There was, for example, a shared project to write about the dictators that had ruled different Latin American countries in the 19th-century. The evidence for this includes the letters I consulted during my archival research that Fuentes sent Vargas Llosa on 22nd February 1967 (Esteban and

Gallego, 2011, pos. 3012–3024), and another two to García Márquez on 5th July 1967 and 6th February 1968 (Fuentes, 1967; Fuentes, 1968), suggesting possible titles for a collaborative work and assigning characters and chapters to different writers, García Márquez and Vargas Llosa included. This was not just idle talk among intellectuals but was instead a project that they actively pursued, at least as far as Fuentes was concerned.

At another point, Fuentes was pleased that staff from the French publisher Gallimard had been speaking highly of the Boom Latin American writers. Fuentes reacted by saying that he thought it was important for them to continue operating as a group (Fuentes, 1968; Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 3035), or as a network, as it were. He remained in touch with the publisher over the course of a year and later spoke of negotiations that included almost daily telephone calls and the hope that the book on dictators might become “one of the supreme works in Latin American literature” (Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 3046). That is to say, the axis of action seemed to come from being Latin American authors expressing themselves about the region. While the project was not realised as Fuentes had first thought of it, Fuentes himself, García Márquez and Vargas Llosa would independently, and later in their literary careers, write works on dictators: Fuentes an opera about the Mexican López de Santa Anna, García Márquez a novel about the Venezuelan Bolívar, and Vargas Llosa a novel about the Dominican Trujillo.

Esteban and Gallego (2011, pos. 2989) describe Fuentes as “the enthusiast, the diplomat, the PR person, the businessman, the one who could smell out success.” Ayén (2014, pos. 10370) goes even further: “Fuentes made friends with all the Boom authors, actively seeking them out and praising their work, as he did with other writers right up to his death, inviting young writers he thought had potential out to lunch.” Therefore, Fuentes deliberately set out to create networks in the literary sphere. Ayén (2014, pos. 10498) says that Balcells described Fuentes as someone who “was enveloped in an aura of worldliness, culture, elegance, and good connections.” Although, as mentioned above, the dictators project never came to fruition in its original version with Gallimard, it shows the importance of individual agency in the articulation of hegemonic operations as I will fully explore in chapter 6.

Joint initiatives such as those described here do not, of course, imply that there was total and explicit agreement among the main players in the Boom, since, as we saw before, networks could be tacit and implicit. Similarly, there were dozens of other authors

around the core group, like Donoso, who felt that they had lost out by not having achieved what Cortázar, García Márquez, Fuentes, and Vargas Llosa had in terms of prizes, sales, and royalties from their books (Donoso, 2018; Ayén, 2017). This inequality was part of the political economy in process throughout the Boom years.

This, as it were, Latin American spirit coexisted with the aforementioned paradoxical drive for internationalisation, which then negated the local. In fact, as the ideas behind his own work illustrate, Vargas Llosa (2017) believes that there was a creative direction at the start of the Boom that “prompted the rise of a series of writers in the Spanish-speaking world, mainly in Latin America, that were not writing in local, regional, or national terms but were instead following an absolutely universal criterion by using language, techniques, forms of composition that were entirely modern [...] This happened in Latin America but not in Spain, because Spain was cloistered within a profoundly repressive, censorious system.” That is to say, the discourse utilised by, at least, this author was one of modernisation against tradition, while paradoxically claiming the heritage of Latin American identity, within yet another paradox, that of the Boom being launched from Spain a country, as we saw in chapter 4, promoting the export of books from an ideology of Hispanicity.

Donoso (2018, p. 62–64) viewed Fuentes as the “intellectual organiser” of the internationalisation of the Latin American novel in the 1960s because he worked actively to that end, such as through his book *La nueva novela hispanoamericana (The New Spanish-American Novel)* (1969). In Donoso’s words, Fuentes was the “the first active, conscious agent for the internationalisation of the Latin American novel” (Ayén, 2014, p. 10381). Likewise, in 1968, Vargas Llosa gave a series of lectures at Washington State University on the Latin American novel and led a seminar based on his book *García Márquez: Historia de un deicidio (History of a Deicide)* on the Colombian writer’s work (Williams, 2014, p. 36–37). That is to say, there was a network of mutual support among the Boom protagonists.

Although in 1969 Vargas Llosa said that “It is a beautiful thing that most members of the Boom are great friends, there is a real sense of camaraderie among others” (Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 3984); ideological and even personal differences persisted. Rama, for instance, wrote to Vargas Llosa about a public debate, expressing his preference for Cortázar and his correspondent over García Márquez and Fuentes (Esteban and Gallego, 2011, pos. 2726). Such positions, however, did not prevent actions

that benefited the writers both as individuals and as a group. That the main players in the Latin American Boom undertook actions such as these led to the creation of a network of mutual literary and editorial legitimisation, and to the construction of social and cultural capital that benefited both individual authors and the whole phenomenon: not just the authors as the Boom, but the literature and culture of the region. All this brought a social dimension to their actions.

As the information I have compiled here and my own analysis have shown, in the 1960s high-quality literary creation met with the action of a literary agent and a motivated editor to create an unprecedented sales phenomenon and a focus of cultural attention and literary and editorial symbolic capital. These elements would articulate with other social phenomena and would make possible the hegemony of the book industry of Spain within the Spanish-speaking world.

In the 1980s — by which time Carlos Barral was a senator — several of the practices Balcells had instigated became enshrined in Spanish intellectual property law, including limiting contracts in terms of length and territorial scope (restricting them by country, not for the language as a whole, and establishing higher revenue if the rights to all Spanish-speaking countries are surrendered) (Ayén, 2017). This reveals that the counterhegemonic action that Balcells initiated eventually sedimented and became part of a new hegemony, an updated way of doing things within the book industry, this time at the international level.

The Latin American Boom thus revealed its paradoxical nature. On the one hand, it laid the foundations for the hegemony of the Spanish book industry, which was home to this cultural and social phenomenon and which it exploited economically, even though, on the other hand, its literary content was created by Latin Americans, whose very actions expressed several of the paradoxes of the region's societies as we will see in the last chapter of this research.

In light of these factors, my own interpretation draws on the arguments mentioned above to understand the Boom as a broad social, cultural, and publishing phenomenon that drew attention to the Latin American cultural output and boosted Latin American authors' readership and the publication and translation of their books in part due to the networks created by the actors involved. This led to the articulation of a new hegemony, at the heart of which were the phenomena described above, together with the

ones analysed in the rest of this thesis. As we can see, the hegemony of the Spanish book industry depended not just on an economic apparatus or on the presence of an elite of authors, but mostly on the articulation of several factors. These included the confluence of multiple subjectivities with common ends, as the main players in the Boom built their careers with the support of an editor as highly respected as Barral and guided by a literary agent as insightful as Carmen Balcells.

In chapter 5, therefore, I have analysed the fundamental events of the Latin American Boom in the world of publishing, looking at the networking among writers, the editor Carlos Barral, as well as the literary agent Carmen Balcells. The argument of the chapter has been that there was a networking process by both the literary protagonists of the phenomenon and the key actors of the Spanish book industry who were reshaping the processes and scope of publishing. These elements articulated with both the historical background and the policies factor. But there was yet one more element for the publishing transformation to take place.

Chapter 6

Latin American writers vis-à-vis their circumstances

This chapter examines the agency of professionalisation of the main players in the Latin American Boom, and the ideology from which they acted while becoming international cultural figures. The ideology was one of cultural globalisation as the basis for the internationalisation of the Latin American novel. The agency of professionalisation was the set of individual actions — often against the cultural, social, and national contexts they were born into — that the authors systematically put into practice in order to become the kind of writers of global profile they came to be. I will build up an overview of the publishing landscape during those years by examining the relationship between the Boom novelists and various figures from the world of publishing at the time, especially the literary agent Carmen Balcells and editor Carlos Barral, with a focus on how individual actions were part of the process of consolidation of Spain's publishing hegemony and of the emergence of an international publishing horizon.

Therefore, the focus of this chapter is the agency of professionalisation of the Latin American authors I have been analysing in this study. I examine their actions to take their work to international audiences and transform the cultural success that derived from their literary activity into economic gains. My argument in this closing chapter is that, in different ways, these writers had an aim to break with the previous modes of cultural production authors had experienced in their Latin American countries, and how this meant they worked towards building a new transnational literary and publishing reality addressed to their idea of a global audience. From my theoretical point of view, this was possible only in as much as all the factors analysed in this dissertation articulated with each other and launched the consolidation of the hegemony of the Spanish book industry.

As I mentioned above, I will also explore the factors that underlay the ideology from which the Boom novelists appeared to act, i.e. an ideology of globalisation. According to the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe, ideology is the facet of a hegemonic discourse which gets to construct what is contingent as part of a system that appears to be a conclusive horizon, and which seems to be universal (Torfing, 1999, p. 302). That is to say, ideology, in this context, is a construct that presents itself explicitly as an overall explanation and system of meanings, but which is actually only a very

specific part of the hegemonic system which is the element that in practice is ordering meanings in a given society, including such very ideology. Therefore, I will analyse the implicit social construction that gave meaning, and therefore justification and legitimacy, to the actions of those involved in the novel appreciation of Latin American literature and its accompanying transformation of the publishing industry.

This concept of ideology includes both material practices and intangible paradigms. In this case, therefore, the unspoken idea of globalisation the Boom writers were acting from included, in terms of material practices, the income coming from contracts in different countries, guided by the idea of internationalisation of the Latin American novel; as well as, in regards of cultural prestige, the aim of becoming public figures with echo in several countries, therefore investing their time in, for example, interviews with media outlets from as many countries as possible, again guided by the notion, coming from their ideology of globalisation, that the publication of their books in other languages was not enough for the kind of cultural impact the Boom authors were aiming to have. This section of the thesis, thus, explores what the protagonists of the Boom did, by themselves and for themselves, to generate the social and cultural phenomenon that engulfed them, that is, how they constructed themselves as public figures and how this affected the creation of a new publishing model.

The previous chapters of this thesis have provided an explanation of how, through their own actions, the Boom writers played a decisive role in transforming the practices of Spain's publishing industry, which, largely as a consequence of this, would come to occupy a hegemonic role in the Spanish-language book industry.

As I explained in the introduction to this thesis, the Boom was not a movement that was clearly or easily defined in cultural or literary terms but was instead discernible as a publishing phenomenon, as I sought to demonstrate in this thesis. In any case, the Boom had a major impact on the public sphere around the world and even came to play a role in political disputes, as I examined in chapter 3. Now, after analysing the Colonial historical background, the public policies that favoured a publishing sector in process of strengthening, and the networking of the Boom actors, I will now explore the subjective positions that the Boom writers held regarding their countries' literature, the professionalisation of their craft, and their literary and cultural activity, to show how this shaped the activities they engaged in to become the kind of writers they set out to be.

As I mentioned above, I hope to achieve these ends in this chapter by mapping out the publication history of the Boom authors and tracking the agency of professionalisation of those involved. That is to say, my claim is that the agency of the Boom protagonists seemed to seek the dislocation of the previous hegemonic discourse — one which disregarded and even prevented a place for Latin American authors among the prestigious writers of the Spanish language, which in turn prevented any chance of professionalisation for Spanish American writers in their own countries or elsewhere — or, as it were, against prevailing social structures that shaped their societies. As I noted in the introduction to this thesis, I focus on the four Latin American writers who are most often identified as being the main players in the Boom and who I list again here by birth year: Julio Cortázar (1914), from Argentina; Gabriel García Márquez (1927), from Colombia; Carlos Fuentes (1928), from Mexico; and Mario Vargas Llosa (1936), from Peru. These four writers offer the greatest potential for my analysis of the fundamental factors behind the sea-change in publishing that the Boom implied.

The four of them had somewhat similar backgrounds. First, they all came from countries run by dictatorships, authoritarian systems, or a hegemonic political party. There were also similarities in their relationships with publishing houses in each of their countries and regions; their personal link with the Spanish publisher Barral; their ties with the cultural milieu in their countries of origin; the hardships that their early works faced; the decisions they made to emigrate from their countries or otherwise shape their professional life; and, particularly, their relationship with the Spanish literary agent Balcells. As I have explored already in this thesis, these were factors that articulated to create Spain's hegemony in the world of Spanish-language publishing.

One aspect that triggered these writers' seemingly individual or private actions was their discomfort with the literary contexts of their countries of origin. This was due to the overlapping of their personal goals and their yearning and subsequent quest for an international publishing horizon that was unavailable to them in their own countries. This was a social phenomenon that reached far beyond these writers' own life stories and, indeed, the world of literature. Because of this, it is important to emphasise that in Donoso's chronicle of the Boom, his leitmotif is "the internationalisation of the Latin American novel" (Donoso, 2018, p. 18).

On the psychological plane, which is beyond the bounds of this study, this may even be a question of self-exile of these authors from their countries. I wish to emphasise

that my interest in the way in which these authors experienced the literary sphere lies not in the psychological or literary dimensions, but rather in the social implications of Latin America's literary scenes, circles, or cliques.

In 1960, García Márquez spoke expressly of “our literary backwardness” when referring to Colombian literature (2015, p. 661). In 1957, shortly before his first trip to Paris, Vargas Llosa wrote a literary review in which, he would later recognise, “I used very harsh words against Peruvian writers in general, who I said were telluric, indigenists, regionalists, and interested only in romantic portrayals of the customs of the country” (2015b, pos. 6145). García Márquez concluded: “broadly speaking, Colombian literature has let the nation down” (2015, p. 664). In both cases there seemed to be a globalist background to such assertions. That is to say “the sense in which globalisation means the export and import of culture. This is, no doubt, a matter of business; yet it also presumably foretells the contact and interpenetration of national cultures” (Jameson, 2004, p. 58). We will see how this coming together of business and interpenetration of national cultures interacted with the authors' agency in the rest of the chapter.

Fuentes agreed, albeit in less dramatic terms, when he wrote, while the Boom was in full swing, that “novels like *La ciudad y los perros* (*The Time of the Hero*) or *La casa verde* (*The Green House*) are strong enough to take on the realities of Latin America but not in a way that is limited to the region itself but rather as part of a larger vision of life that includes all men, and which, like the lives of all men, is hard to define with Manichaeian simplicity, as it reveals ambiguous conflicts in motion” (Fuentes, 1969, p. 36). By this, Fuentes was referring to the fundamental contrast that he noticed between the novels written by the Boom authors and the forms of Latin American literature that had preceded them, which tended, according to Fuentes, to be attached to an unsophisticated form of realism focused entirely on the region itself, making it unlikely that it would ever reach readers beyond their borders. My own interpretation, from the reading of texts as the above mentioned by Fuentes and the others Boom authors in which I base this chapter, is that the discomfort towards their own national literatures — written by the authors of generations preceding them — was also related to the scant earnings they received from publishing their books in their countries of origin, and because they knew that they were not part of local circles in which making a living from writing was a real possibility. Fuentes was the exception to this, as he could dedicate himself mainly to

writing in Mexico, but not to the standards that he and the other Boom protagonists would be able to reach once they were published and promoted from Spain.

This was also linked with the state of affairs more generally in their countries of origin, since, in the 1960s regardless the rapid economic growth and industrial diversification that most countries of the region were experiencing, “this was accompanied by the rise of almost insoluble contradictions” (Martín-Barbero, 2006, p. 649), in Latin American societies. More broadly, it also has to do with a global aspiration in which the agency of the authors in question and their countries of origin are intertwined as, it could be said, the cultural structure of their literary milieus would have limited the reach of their work had they constrained themselves to it.

One of the problems that derived from this seemed to torment García Márquez in 1960, when he wrote that “the idea that the world is paying attention to our literature is entirely false” (2015, p. 662). There are at least two aspects to this. On the one hand, Latin American literature at the time had a very limited reach, at least from a global perspective. That is to say, this was a group of enlightened Latin Americans who, as such, seemed to guide their agency from an aspiration for a global readership. This, in turn, implied a major practical consequence: they had to, as it were, escape the structure of their societies, given the limited interest in and low readership for their work in the region, let alone the world. There was no critical mass of readers that would enable the Boom writers to become professionals and live from their craft. I would to draw the comparison with what Shattock found for English writers in the 19th-century, when several conditions were met for the professionalisation of authorship to take place, namely: the explosion in the number of periodical publications, the adoption of a more business-like approach to their careers from the part of writers, a more nuanced role of publishers by way of the emergence of literary agents and the consolidation of author’s guilds and of copyright acts (Shattock, 2012, pp. 65–75). Through their publishing decisions, which were probably based on their globalising ideology, which could be described as “a powerful discourse and idea that can give a picture of multiple inputs, equalisations, hybridity and convergence” (Martell, 2010, p. 311), the Boom novelists helped create a new Spanish-language publishing ecosystem that came to be structured and to operate on an industrial scale that resembles Shattock’s finding in several ways.

In the following sections, I will examine the agency of professionalisation of the literary protagonists of the Boom through their publishing careers. I will focus first on Cortázar, who did not have a relationship with literary agent Balcells at all. Then, in an incremental fashion regarding their dealings with Balcells, I will analyse Fuentes, who had on-off ties with her as his second literary agent. I will end by looking at Balcells' two prodigal children: first García Márquez as an eminent global author, and finally, I will examine Vargas Llosa, who built his global authorship from Spain with a close relationship with Balcells. The process of the Boom shows us — to paraphrase Pacheco (2017, p. 34) — how the publishing industry made Latin American writers and readers, who used to be isolated from each other due to the lack of distribution of the region's cultural goods, into contemporaries of each other, who were finally managing to recognise themselves as a cultural region through the circulation of literary goods.

Julio Cortázar: The Cosmopolitan Transition

The oldest of the four writers analysed here faced a fledgling Latin American publishing industry. His path sums up the transition in the world of publishing for the Latin American writers who came before and after the Boom. Cortázar's work was published in different countries but such spread was not due to an ordered intention or to publishing internationalisation, neither did it financially benefit the Argentinian to the extent that would be experienced by the other Boom protagonists.

In this sense, Cortázar marked the turning point between two generations. He refused to be represented by Balcells, who only obtained the rights to his work after his death (Gutiérrez, 2017; Ayén, 2014, pos. 3647). His publications were not managed by a literary agency but instead by the writer himself. However, this may have been because representation by a literary agency was still unthinkable in the Spanish-speaking world when Cortázar started to publish his work. It is noteworthy that he built up his career from France, publishing his books in Argentina and, to a more limited extent, in Mexico and Spain. As was the tradition in Latin America at the time, Cortázar remained the type of writer who reached agreements with his publishers directly, and was the only member of the Boom who did not have a literary agent during the Boom years and therefore did not work with Balcells, as I mentioned above. There was no model of a professional Latin

American writer for Cortázar to follow, although in many ways he himself became a model of what a Latin American writer could become by reaching an international literary audience.

His full name was Julio Florencio Cortázar Descotte. He was Argentinian with an exceptional, broader, cosmopolitan aspect to his life that chimes with the globalist approach of the Boom writers: Cortázar was born on 26th August 1914 in Brussels, where his father was working, and died in Paris in 1984. His diverse family origins are probably what brought him into contact with different languages, something that would shape his future as a translator. His maternal grandmother was German, his Argentinian mother grew up speaking French at home, and his father was Argentinian (Herráez, 2011). He claimed his childhood had been an unhappy one, which really left a mark on him (Goloboff, 2014, p. 24). His health problems led him to be a voracious reader, encouraged by his mother. As his father could not support him financially, he certified himself as a teacher and worked in different cities in Argentina (Arias, 2014, pos. 246–274). He spoke French, Spanish, German, and English, and would later become a translator for several publishing houses (Arias, 2014, pos. 380). Translation remained his main source of income throughout his life.

In 1938, Cortázar published the book of poems *Presencia* [Presence] with the publishing house El Bibliófilo, under the pseudonym of Julio Denis (Harss, 2014, loc. 3225). In 1945, the Chilean writer Gabriela Mistral became the first Latin American to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature. In 1946, Borges published “Casa tomada” (“House Taken Over”), one of Cortázar’s first short stories, in the magazine *Los Anales de Buenos Aires*, with illustrations by Borges’s sister Norah (Atadía, 2019, p. 964). In 1948, Cortázar met Aurora Bernárdez, a literature graduate from the University of Buenos Aires, whom he later married. It was Bernárdez who would eventually administer Cortázar’s works after his death, despite them having divorced decades earlier.

In 1948, Cortázar became a translator from English and French into Spanish. He was the manager of the Argentinian Chamber of Publishing until 1949. That same year, he published *Los Reyes* [The Kings], a dramatic poem about the Minotaur, “the prototypical Cortazarian monster treated so sympathetically” (Boldy, 1980, p. 21), with the publisher Gulab and Aldabahor. In 1950, Cortázar travelled through Europe, an experience which, as we will see later in this chapter, Vargas Llosa would also claim played a fundamental part in his own development as a writer. In both cases, this reveals

the framework of Eurocentric ideology of which the Boom writers were part — as member of societies showing Colonial wounds.

Cortázar wrote, “I have asked myself if deep down what I’m looking for is to stay in Paris forever. Perhaps I am, perhaps my intellectual desire (I live there already, as well you know) is an absolute desire which is all-absorbing” (Cortázar, 1951, pos. 6333). Even more importantly, from the point of view that I am advancing in this chapter, Cortázar noted that “my generation turned its back on Argentina [...] We read very few Argentinian writers [...] Instead we dreamed of Paris and London. Buenos Aires was a punishment of sorts. Living there was like being in prison” (Harss, 2014, loc. 3214–3219). As we can see, thoughts of this kind are echoed in the ideas of García Márquez and Vargas Llosa that I mentioned above: these writers yearned to distance themselves from their own national literary traditions. In this sense, it would not be accurate to speak of the Boom writers’ moves abroad as forced exile, despite the political circumstances in their countries. Instead, it would perhaps be more appropriate to describe it, as Donoso did, as self-exile in order to live far from the problems back home (2018, p. 74). Consequently, we can perhaps say that the Boom writers’ own agency of professionalisation is what took them physically and culturally away from their region of origin, in order to achieve their personal, literary and intellectual goals in different, more propitious contexts.

In 1950, Guillermo de Torre, a literary advisor at Losada in Buenos Aires, rejected Cortázar’s novel *El examen* (*Final Exam*). Cortázar would never work with the publisher again (Arias, 2014, pos. 972), and *Final Exam* would only be published posthumously, in 1986, by which point Balcells was representing his work. However, in 1951, Cortázar managed to publish his first book of short stories, *Bestiario* (*Bestiary*), with the imprint Sudamericana in Buenos Aires (Arias, 2014, pos. 1111; Dalmau, p. 209).

In 1951 the French government awarded him a scholarship to study literature in Paris. In Paris he met Vargas Llosa and other writers, such as the Chilean Jorge Edwards, the Peruvian Alfredo Bryce Echenique, and the Colombian Plinio Apuleyo Mendoza (Herráez, 2011, p. 224). This speaks to the pull of Europe in general and, at that point, of Paris in particular. All of them would eventually become key figures in Latin American literature. Rather than converging in some Latin American capital, in the 1950s, these writers came together in a city that spoke a different language but was a cultural metropolis.

Cortázar went to Paris with Bernárdez, whom he married on 22nd August 1953. He and Bernárdez both worked as translators for UNESCO, where they spent six months of every year focusing on, as Harss puts it, “keeping the Spanish language pure” (2014, loc. 3256). Cortázar also worked as a book distributor and radio announcer (Arias, 2014, pos. 1266–1274). His literary translations included works by Marguerite Yourcenar, Edgar Allan Poe, André Gide, G.K. Chesterton, and Daniel Defoe. Although writers like Harss seem to want to put a literary spin on these activities by speaking of “keeping the Spanish language pure,” in practice these jobs were largely financially motivated, serving as a source of income that allowed him to write his own books in his free time, as was also true of many other Latin American writers.

In 1956, the Mexican writer Juan José Arreola published *Final del juego* (*End of the Game*), Cortázar’s second book of short stories, through Los Presentes, his publishing house in Mexico (Herráez, 2011, p. 347). However, the distribution of the book was extremely limited, unsystematic, and not international: its audience was constrained to a very small number of local readers.

Before the Boom years, Latin American authors published their work wherever they could and it was often the case, as it was for Cortázar, that these editions were not distributed throughout the rest of the Spanish-speaking world. At the height of the Boom, it was easy to see the transformation that was taking place in the Spanish-speaking cultural sphere. For example, in an article published in 1966, the Spanish writer Pere Gimferrer argued that “the fact that the distribution system is often inefficient and the longstanding isolation of Spanish-language literature on either side of the Atlantic have made it hard for readers in Spain to discover Julio Cortázar” (Gimferrer, 2004, p. 390). Speaking not just of Cortázar, the Brazilian poet Drummond de Andrade said in the early 1960s that “we have only found out about these Spanish American writers recently and it has been a real surprise. Where have they been?” (Pacheco, 2017, p. 91). The Boom writers’ global aim, which they seemed to embrace, would become a reality from the series of factors that I analyse in this thesis, beginning in 1963 and entering into a stage of normalisation by 1967. Before that point, their careers tended to follow the pattern I have described for Cortázar.

In 1959, the publishing house Sudamericana published *Las armas secretas* [*Secret Weapons*], followed in 1960 by *Los premios* (*The Winners*). The latter was published in French by Fayard the following year, after which Cortázar found out that Pantheon was

interested in publishing it in English (Cortázar, 1961, pos. 3967; pos. 4916), although this did not actually happen until 1965, when it came out in New York as *The Winners*. This may have been due to Cortázar's time in Paris and his personal ties with publishers there, which enabled him to offer the book to them in person, as publishing Latin American literature in translation was unusual at the time. We also should not lose sight of the fact that this was a time when the figure of the literary agent had not yet begun to play a role in Latin American writers' careers or in the Spanish-language publishing industry.⁵⁹

In 1962, Cortázar published *Historias de cronopios y de famas* (*Cronopios and Famas*) with the Buenos Aires-based publishing house Minotauro, whose books were distributed by Sudamericana. In 1963, Sudamericana released the novel *Rayuela* (*Hopscotch*), which was far more successful than any of his earlier books, selling 5,000 copies in its first year (Atadía, 2019, p. 967). Spanish critics began to recognise Cortázar as a major Latin American writer, which sparked an increase in sales of his earlier books. If we remember Shattock's analysis (2012, p. 65–66), what we have is a tangible increase in the potential and actual readership of these authors. Therefore, this was a key moment in the path to their professionalisation as writers: reaching not just the “select few” — who nonetheless brought them literary prestige — but also the critical mass of readers needed to become professional writers with a global reach. This could also be expressed in Bourdieu's terms in that niche literary prestige for Latin American writers was taking place within the “field of restricted production”, which tends to establish its own criteria to value its works and does not seek commercialisation (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 115). For many years, Cortázar's literary career was clearly located in this field. The Boom represented a transition to the “field of large-scale production”, which “obeys the imperatives of competition for conquest of the market” (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 125). This second field, due to its scale is, therefore, profitable, i.e. enabling the professionalisation of Fuentes, García Márquez and Vargas Llosa. Thus, what usually is a contention between these two fields, seems to have been bridged by the Latin American Boom.

⁵⁹ However, in a letter to Paul Blackburn from Paris dated 27th March 1960, Cortázar says that his Argentinian publisher had offered to become his literary agent “throughout the world”, which he would have accepted, with the exception of the United States, in order for Blackburn to be able to represent him there. He even suggests that Blackburn should contact Knopf, which it seemed might be interested in publishing one of his books (Cortázar, 1960, pos. 3967). Despite these claims, I have not found any documentary evidence that anyone actually acted as Cortázar's literary agent in his lifetime. In contrast, there is ample evidence of the role the author himself played in managing the publication of his work.

This turned into a moment of consolidation for the author. I would like to stress that this was mainly due to his own efforts to find publishers and have his work published. That same year was the first time that Cortázar formed part of the jury for the Casa de las Américas prize in Havana. This was the start of his intellectual alignment with the Cuban Revolution, which would mark his future and that of the Boom writers in general, as I explored in chapter 3.

In 1966, Cortázar published *Todos los fuegos el fuego* (*All Fires the Fire*), a book of short stories, again with Sudamericana. The following year, García Márquez's *Cien años de soledad* (*One Hundred Years of Solitude*) was published which, as I argued in the introduction to this thesis, marked a turning point in publishing and the Boom's highpoint. From that moment on, the factors that came together to form the Boom created the circumstances in which Spain's publishing industry would come to dominate the book industry in the Spanish-speaking world. However, as I show here, Cortázar's publishing trajectory was very different, despite him playing a central role in the Boom in literary, cultural, and intellectual terms.

In 1967, far from considering entrusting the rights to his work to a literary agent, Cortázar opted to show his support for another Argentinian living abroad — Orfila Reynal, who was living in Mexico. Orfila, as we analysed in chapter 4, had run the state-owned publishing house Fondo de Cultura Económica (FCE) but was dismissed in 1965 after which he had founded the imprint Siglo XXI. As part of what seemed to be a gesture of solidarity to help Orfila Reynal build up a prestigious catalogue, Cortázar published *La vuelta al día en ochenta mundos* (*Around the Day in Eighty Worlds*) in 1967 with Siglo XXI, followed in 1969 by *Último round* [Last Round]. Sorá wrote of the publishing house that "Siglo XXI had the chance of becoming the foremost publishing house of the Boom, given that the main Boom authors gave Orfila carte blanche to publish their work" (Sorá, 2017, pos. 2821). However, it was not the case that Siglo XXI became a key publishing house in the Latin American Boom. According to Sorá, this was because Orfila operated on the principle of only releasing previously unpublished works and was against fighting for the rights to works that writers had earlier granted to other publishers. I would emphasise that, in addition to the contrasting circumstances of the publishing industries in Spain and Mexico, which I described in chapter 3, and the backdrop of public policies and local and international factors that I explore in chapter 4, this was largely shaped by the agency of one of the people involved in the process. If Orfila had acted differently, or remained at

FCE, it would have meant that there would at least have been an attempt by a Mexico-based firm to publish many of the books that created the Boom.

In parallel with this relationship with Orfila and Siglo XXI, Cortázar also continued working with Sudamericana, publishing *62/Modelo para armar (62: A Model Kit)* with this publishing house in 1968, followed by a collection of short stories in 1970. Argentina remained, therefore, at the heart of Cortázar's publishing relationships, but these began to open up to include other locations.

The history of his books aside, there is other documentary evidence that reveals much about Cortázar and his relationship with publishers. Ayén includes a letter from Cortázar that quotes a telegram addressed to him by the editor Barral. In the telegram, Barral urges Cortázar to send a new novel to compete in the Biblioteca Breve Prize, which seems to suggest that he would be awarded the prize. Cortázar was outraged by this and described Barral as “an idiot or a cheat” and said that he did not even answer (Cortázar, 1967, pos 7559). This reveals one substantial difference between him and the other Boom writers.

Unlike them, Cortázar never received any major prizes, starting with Barral's Biblioteca Breve Prize which, as I have mentioned, ushered in the Boom when it was awarded to Vargas Llosa for *The Time of the Hero*. The reason for this was simple: very few of these prizes existed when Cortázar was setting out on his literary career. When Barral asked Cortázar to submit a text to compete for the prize, he was already an international literary name and so the logic of promoting his work through prizes was perhaps alien to him.

Some comments are very revealing: “Balcells never pushes deadlines on [her writer clients] but she does make them into professional writers, or at least the ones she thinks are great authors. This is perhaps why she never represented Cortázar while he was alive, because he always looked on himself as an ‘amateur writer’ and kept other jobs” (Ayén, 2014, pos. 3651; Cortázar, 2009, pp. 233–234). Cortázar's form of agency seems to be that of someone who dismisses social structure and therefore wishes to engage in his literary work independently of economic success. This contrasts with the series of decisions that the other Boom writers took to ensure that their works generated both symbolic and economic capital. But we can put this in Laclau and Mouffe's terms and point out that Cortázar's agency was a contributing factor to the overall outcome of the phenomenon in that such agency was providing an alternative to the hegemonic

discourse that prevailed before the Boom and even that which was under construction, whether it imposed itself over other discourses or not — it did not, of course. That is to say, if the novel social system of meaning was one advocating that worthy writers should professionalise, i.e. live from the royalties of their books and their public activities, the Argentinian did not adhere to such track. Cortázar was, therefore, acting from his personal stance and having a social impact.

Cortázar published his first book with a Spanish publisher in 1971 and began to travel regularly to Barcelona, where he worked with the publisher Esther Tusquets, who published his book *Prosa del observatorio* (*From the Observatory*) in 1973, through Lumen imprint. That same year, Sudamericana published *Libro de Manuel* [Book of Manuel], while in Barcelona, Beatriz de Moura published *La casilla de los Morelli* [The Morellis' Box] with Tusquets imprint. In 1974, *Libro de Manuel* would go on to win the Prix Médicis étranger in France, which Cortázar accepted.

So, by the mid-1970s, Cortázar was publishing his books in Argentina, Spain, and Mexico. His experience in the latter — which was documented by the Mexican writer Vicente Leñero — once again provides evidence of a *modus operandi* that stands apart from the professional trajectory of the other Boom writers. Leñero records how Cortázar handed over a comic, *Fantomas contra los vampiros multinacionales* (*Fantomas vs the Multinational Vampires*) to be published by the *Excelsior* newspaper through his personal relationship with the newspaper's editor, Julio Scherer García. This book became the publication's "greatest literary hit," according to Leñero (2015, pos. 1762). It is very likely that if Cortázar had had a literary agent of the type Balcells would eventually become, he would not have been subject to the treatment that Leñero describes (2015, pos. 2709), namely that Cortázar was furious because one year after the book was published he had not yet been paid a cent for his work. This clearly contrasts with the certainty obtained from the creation of writers' associations and the consolidation of copyright acts that enabled the professionalisation of English writers according to Shattock (2012, p. 75). There would be no creation of writers' guilds in the times of the Boom but, as we will see with the other Boom protagonists, Balcells was the figure constantly working for the benefit of the authors.

In 1976, the start of a new military dictatorship in Argentina marked the end of Cortázar's publishing history in his country of origin while he was alive. From that point on, he resigned himself to his new books being vetoed there, and his last works were

published in Spain and Mexico (Dalmau, 2015, p. 539). The publishing houses Hermes, Siglo XXI, and Nueva Imagen, in Mexico, and Alfaguara, in Spain, published his books from 1977 onwards.

As an example of the very specific way in which he handled his career as a writer, Cortázar published single print runs of different books in the first three years of the 1980s with publishing houses in Mexico, Argentina, and Nicaragua (Atadía, 2019, pp. 972–973). He died in Paris on 12th February 1984. Cortázar had separated from Bernárdez, been in a relationship with Ugné Karvelis toward the end of the 1960s, and then married Carol Dunlop in 1981, who died barely a year later. He and Bernárdez started a new relationship toward the end of his life and she inherited the rights to his literary work (Cruz, 2017). We must remember that she was also from the world of literature. In fact, Vargas Llosa once wrote that “the perfect couple does actually exist. Aurora and Julio have managed to perform the miracle of creating a happy marriage” (Dalmau, 2015, pp. 425–426).

In 1986, two years after Cortázar’s death, it was Bernárdez who enabled Balcells to handle the rights to his work, after which the Spanish publishing house Alfaguara began to release its Biblioteca Cortázar (Cortázar Collection). This brought all of his work together, which until then, as I have described in this section, was spread around different publishing houses and was thus inaccessible to most readers, who could only acquire his books in certain places.

As I said at the beginning of this section, Cortázar illustrates a hinge point. The Argentinian was in between the previous ways of doing things in the publishing industry and the novel ways under construction. The old ways, which I have described with detail here, meant not only dispersion but also self-cancelling reach for the writers’ work. Likewise, this meant that Latin American writers handling their own careers had to make a living from other sources. On the other side of things, the emergence of the literary agent and the internationalisation of the Latin American novel was building the professionalisation of writers as we will now see.

Carlos Fuentes: A Driven Publishing History

The Mexican novelist Carlos Fuentes is a clear example of the specific agency of the Boom writers who were clashing with the structure of their societies when deciding and striving to become professional writers by rejecting other paths for professional and individual development. These writers were committed both to creating their work and finding ways of getting it to readers. Fuentes was a pro-Boom activist of sorts. According to Ortega, Fuentes was “one of the public voices who heralded the ‘Boom’ of the Latin American novel in the 1960s” (Ortega, 2014, pos. 159).

The individual agency of these authors, as I am attempting to demonstrate in this chapter, was one of the factors that made the Boom possible. As well as promoting their literary careers, through this agency they contributed to the dislocation of previous social structures and the creation of the hegemony of Spain’s publishing industry within the Spanish-speaking world. Specifically, and in line with the adoption of some writers’ more business-like approach to their careers (Shattock, 2012, p. 66–71), Fuentes exemplifies how this generation of intellectuals decided to professionalise their writing activity to the detriment of other professional options they might have explored as a way of making a mark on public life in their countries. This does not mean that they turned their back on, for example, political influence, since, as Evetts argues “sometimes professional groups are also elites with strong political links and connections” (2003, p. 397). Even more so in the case of writers-cum-public intellectuals in Latin America. However, the Boom authors definitely make a choice for writing and life as public figures as I will now illustrate with Fuentes’ case.

As I explored in the first part of this chapter, Cortázar was financially dependent on his work as a translator at UNESCO and did not find market conditions that would enable him to make a living from his literary work. In contrast, both García Márquez and Vargas Llosa, as I will examine in the next sections of this chapter, sought to create the conditions to make this possible, as did Fuentes.

In November 2010, during a dinner in the Mexican city of Guadalajara, I had an informal conversation with Fuentes about books that analysed the socialisation of Mexican politicians, and the paths to the creation of elites they had followed in the 20th-century — that is to say, how people reached positions of power in Mexico, including that of President. I brought up factors like that they tended to have studied law and that it

must be done at Mexico's National University School of Law, both of which were true of Fuentes himself, but then another step was that the person would have to become the private assistant of a professor with a promising political future who was working inside the government. Fuentes stopped me and said — here I paraphrase as the conversation was not recorded —: “You are describing my generation; I saw it with my own eyes... You see, in the last class of my undergraduate program, my constitutional law professor, José Campillo Sáenz, who was still very young at the time, asked me to stay behind after my classmates had left and asked me if I wanted to become his private assistant. I almost didn't let him finish the question before answering “Thank you very much, sir, I am deeply honoured, but let me tell you: I've decided to become a writer.’

‘But Carlos,’ he said in surprise, ‘writing isn't a profession, it's not something you can make a living from.’

‘Well, that's a risk I've decided to take,’ I answered, very sure of myself. Do you want to know, Consuelo, who he offered the job to instead of me?,” Fuentes asked.

“Of course, please tell me, Mr. Fuentes”, I said.

“Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado, who went to become president of Mexico from 1982 to 1988,” replied Fuentes.

This anecdote reveals one of several ways in which Fuentes' personal and professional development could have followed a different path to the one that made him a key figure in the Latin American Boom. It also suggests that opting for a literary career was a conscious decision on his part, one that he would go to great lengths to make a reality. Indeed, it was Fuentes who ushered in the model of the professional writer in Mexico. A writer who could make a living from writing through the royalties of their books. Krauze described this choice as follows: “In a generation that was almost entirely marred by misfortune, pettiness, political ambition, or laziness, Fuentes's attachment to his profession remains exemplary” (Krauze, 1992, p. 32). The Mexican literary environment was not the yardstick that Fuentes was measuring himself against, despite knowing it well. Instead, he sought to become something that did not yet exist in Mexico or even the rest of Latin America at the time: a professional writer.

Fuentes was the son of a Mexican diplomat. Due to his family background, he grew up among writers and lived in several countries. Neither Alfonso Reyes nor Octavio Paz, two Mexican writers who spent most of their lives in the diplomatic service, were able to support themselves through their literary work, at least during their youth and never had

a literary agent. The fact that Fuentes spoke fluent English and French helped him to establish relationships with literary agents in other languages very early on. This is crucial simply because, at the start of Fuentes's literary career, there were no literary agents in the Spanish-speaking world, as I mentioned above in connection with Cortázar.

Fuentes wrote a novel that, as we have seen before in this dissertation, in literary terms was a landmark in Latin American literature: *La región más transparente* (*Where the Air is Clear*), which was published in Mexico by FCE in 1958 — before the Boom. According to Pacheco, this was the work that showed Mexico to a generation of readers (2017, p. 288). Pacheco also argued that the novel alluded to the failure of the Mexican Revolution nearly 50 years after it began, which he said Fuentes looked on as a revolution that had been betrayed (Pacheco, 2008, p. XXIX). According to Celorio, with his first and third novels, *Where the Air is Clear* and *La muerte de Artemio Cruz* (*The Death of Artemio Cruz*, 1962), Fuentes closed an earlier cycle of Mexican novels and became the “visionary precursor” of the “new Spanish American novel” (Celorio, 2018, p. XVIII). Pacheco also writes that “on Monday 7th April [1958], a new literature began” (Pacheco, 2008, XXIX). Celorio and Pacheco both speak of the “new Spanish American novel”, a description coined by Fuentes himself (Fuentes, 1969).

In this sense, Fuentes's work was ideologically linked to a desire for literary disruption that was shared by all the Boom writers: their environment would be the world, which, in turn, points to the authors' contribution to the construction of a new hegemonic discourse, which would be one addressed to their idea of a global audience. That is, beyond the literary characteristics of their work, there was an aim of globalisation understood as “the classical theme of universalism and its modern forms of modernisation and the global spread of capitalist relations” (Pieterse, 2015, p. 53). These were actions guided by an ideology that saw international recognition as a greater good due both to reasons of global prestige and economic earnings.

Fuentes publishing trajectory has not been exhaustively mapped,⁶⁰ but reconstructing it sheds light on the professional journey of a Mexican author who went international and began publishing his books in Mexico before going on to do so in Spain and being translated into several languages.

⁶⁰ As I said before in this thesis, Fuentes is the least documented of the four authors who are the focus of this thesis: although his personal archive and correspondence are in the Princeton University library, he is the only one of the four who has yet to be the subject of a full-length biography.

The decisions that Fuentes made regarding which imprints would publish his books sheds light on how literary projects arose in Mexico. Fuentes published his first book, the short stories collection, *Los días enmascarados* [The Masked Days] in 1954, with Novaro, in Mexico, which would later be republished by Era, a Mexican publishing house that was founded in 1960. His next book, which is also his first novel, *Where the Air is Clear*, was published in Mexico in 1958 by FCE, which would go on to publish *Las buenas conciencias* (*The Good Conscience*), in 1959, and *The Death of Artemio Cruz* in 1962, the same year that *Aura* was published by Era. Fuentes's publishing history, then, includes both private publishing houses and Mexico's state-owned publisher FCE.

Fuentes' editor at FCE had been Joaquín Díez-Canedo, to whom I have referred before in this thesis, and who founded the independent Mexican publishing house Joaquín Mortiz in 1962. From such relationship, it followed that in 1964, Joaquín Mortiz would publish seven short stories by Fuentes under the title *Cantar de ciegos* [Song of the Blind]. In spite of its recent foundation Joaquín Mortiz had already established itself as a prestigious imprint, but, as the rest of the Mexican publishing houses — except for FCE — was unable to offer international distribution. In other words, in terms of distribution over the Spanish-speaking world, what we can see is that the Latin American Boom was marked by neocolonialism, “understood as the control, by the former colonisers, of the political and economic institutions of the former colonies” (Rao, 2000, p. 176). In this case, even though there was a partnership between Joaquín Mortiz and Seix-Barral, the latter was the one controlling international distribution, probably because there was a history of book exports from Spain to its former colonies and contemporary governmental support for such practice, as we have seen in chapters 3 and 4.

Fuentes was in some ways one step ahead of the Boom by getting his work translated.⁶¹ *Where the Air is Clear* was first published in German in 1960, under the title *Landschaft in klarem Licht*, by the Berlin-based publisher Verlag Volk und Welt. *Las buenas conciencias* was then published in 1961 in English as *The Good Conscience*, with

⁶¹ The information in this and the following paragraph comes from research I carried out in Fuentes's private library, which, as mentioned in the methodological chapter, his widow, Silvia Lemus, graciously allowed me access to, and where I was helped by the librarians Julia de la Fuente and Rosario Martínez. I visited the archive in Mexico City on 16th July 2019. I was able to browse the translations of Fuentes's works at the only complete collection of these, as his publishers always sent him — and continue to send Lemus — five copies of each published work. It is therefore, to my knowledge, the only place where every single edition of Fuentes's works is to be found, including the different translations of his novels and books in other genres.

Farrar, Straus & Giroux. In 1964, two years after Vargas Llosa was awarded the Biblioteca Breve Prize for *The Time of the Hero*, the French translation of Fuentes's novel *Where the Air is Clear* was released by the prestigious publishing house Gallimard as *La plus limpide région*, with a prologue by Miguel Ángel Asturias, a Guatemalan author from the previous generation. Asturias would become only the second Latin American to win the Nobel Prize for literature, which he was awarded in 1967 when the Boom was in full swing, although he played no part in it in either cultural or publishing terms.

In 1964, *The Death of Artemio Cruz* was published in German as *Nichts als des Leben* by Deutscher Bücherbund, and a Dutch edition followed a year later, under the title *De dood van Artemio Cruz*, with the Nieuwe Wieken imprint. A French translation, *La mort d'Artemio Cruz*, was published in 1966 by Gallimard, which would continue to publish Fuentes's subsequent books. His short novel, *Aura*, was published in English in 1965 by New York publishers Farrar, Straus & Giroux. In 1966, *Where the Air is Clear* was published in Czech as *Nejprůzračnější kraj* by the publishing house Odeon. *A Change of Skin* was published in Italy by Feltrinelli in 1967, under the title *Cambio di pelle*. This overview gives a clear idea of how widely Fuentes's work was published and how skilful he was at building up symbolic capital. Even things that might at first glance appear to be minor details — such as the prologue by Asturias, for instance — reveal how committed he was to setting himself on the path to becoming a professional writer in the historical context in which he lived, through a struggle for symbolic power.

The years in which the Boom authors became well-known international figures saw editions of Fuentes's work published in France, the United States, Italy, Germany, Sweden and Great Britain (1975, 1986), in addition to translations into languages like Bosnian, Danish, Japanese, Lithuanian, Polish, Romanian, and Turkish. As can be seen, these translations were concentrated in certain languages and there is no doubt that the focus was a Eurocentric one, but their scope was vast and the process uninterrupted.

In 1967, Fuentes published two novels. The first of these, *Cambio de piel* (*A Change of Skin*), had won the Biblioteca Breve Prize that year, but could not be published in Spain due to the censorship of the Franco regime, so — as planned in the previously mentioned alliance between Seix and Barral, in Spain, and Díez-Canedo, in Mexico — it was published in Mexico by Joaquín Mortiz imprint and would not be published in Spain until 1974.⁶²

⁶² At the same time, as pointed out in previous chapters, the Spanish publisher Seix and Barral bought shares in renowned Spanish American publishers such as Joaquín Mortiz in Mexico, which became “the

The second of his novels to be published in 1974 was *Zona sagrada* [Sacred Zone], which was released by Siglo XXI. After the Boom, Fuentes went on to publish essays in 1968 with Era and a novel and an essay, both in 1969, with Joaquín Mortiz. He also published two books of essays with the latter imprint in 1970 and 1971. Fuentes's literary output was constant, and the quality of his work gained momentum after he began his professional relationship with Balcells.

At the end of the 1960s, José Luis Ramírez, the managing director of the Mexican publishing house Diana, introduced Fuentes to Balcells at the former's request. Ramírez and Fuentes had met by chance at a series of publishing and literary activities that were taking place in Madrid. When I interviewed him for this thesis, Ramírez recalled saying to Fuentes that he would be having lunch with Balcells the next day: "I've never met her," he [Fuentes] said. 'I'll introduce you to her if you like,' I answered. 'My wife and I are having lunch with her and her husband, Luis Palomares.' And that was how she met Carlos Fuentes. But Carlos Fuentes seemed to be almost full of himself. He said he had publishers in Argentina and everywhere else, so I think Carmen didn't take him on. But he and Carmen later became very good friends. She represented him very well. Carlos Fuentes was a very pleasant person" (Ramírez, 2017). My reconstruction of events, which brings together testimonies and documentary evidence (Fuentes, 1971), points to this encounter taking place before 1971, even though Ramírez remembers it as having happened afterwards. However, Fuentes and Balcells had started corresponding professionally by 1971 and already had a fluid personal relationship, even though she was not yet formally his agent.

Fuentes explicitly wrote to her in 1971 that "I must insist on how interested I am in you representing me." Likewise, in a very revealing comment, Fuentes said to Balcells that "I have never proceeded without an agent anywhere in the world other than Mexico" (Fuentes, 1971). That is to say, in his own country, he played by different rules, as there were no agents and the conditions were not quite right. Outside Mexico, he worked with two literary agents, according to the letter: Brandt & Brandt for the non-Spanish-speaking world and Simone Benmussa for everything drama-related, but exclusively in Europe. In the same letter Fuentes expresses his dissatisfaction with Mexican publishing houses' international distribution system. Several of these factors speak to the unviability of the

publishing house in charge of releasing works that Seix-Barral could not due to censorship in Spain" (Prats, 1995, p. 141).

Mexican publishing industry as a starting point for the Boom.

A letter from Balcells, which I consulted for my archival research, dated 12th February 1971, is emphatic: “It is now absolutely essential for me to clarify a few points about our work together. I want to stress that an author of your standing has absolutely no need for an agent. Agents cost money in return for services whose efficiency is questionable. These services are justified if you are bored with dealing with publishers. In response to your question ‘Would you like to get involved?’ my answer is that I would like to, but I am aware that my work would bring you little or nothing that you could not achieve on your own” (Balcells, 1971). In earlier correspondence between the two, it is clear that there was already some sporadic form of representation between them, since there is a long letter dated 11th November 1970 in which Balcells explains in detail a proposal from the publishing house Salvat to print and distribute mass-market editions of one of two titles at newspaper stands in both Spain and Latin America (Balcells, 1970), *The Death of Artemio Cruz* or *The Good Conscience*, both of which had first been published by the FCE.

The 1970s were a time of intellectual consolidation for Fuentes. In 1972, he joined the Colegio Nacional, an institution that brings together the foremost academics and intellectuals in Mexico.⁶³ As the Franco regime ended in Spain, following the dictator’s death in November 1975, Fuentes published a new novel, *Terra Nostra*, in a joint edition between Seix Barral in Spain and Joaquín Mortiz in Mexico. The book went on to be published in English by Farrar, Straus & Giroux a year later. In 1976, he published a new book of essays in Mexico with Joaquín Mortiz. *Terra Nostra* won the Xavier Villaurrutia Prize in Mexico in 1975 and the Rómulo Gallegos Prize in Caracas, Venezuela, in 1977. Vargas Llosa had won the first-ever Rómulo Gallegos Prize in 1967 for *The Time of the Hero*, and Gabriel García Márquez had won the second, in 1972, for *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. In response to this, Esteban and Gallego write that “the winner in 1977 was Carlos Fuentes, who would close the Boom triad with *Terra Nostra*” (2011, loc. 1090–1091). As can be seen, unlike Cortázar, the three youngest members of the Boom were already fully engaged in the logic of international literary prizes. By this point, all three were well-established and their careers had been transformed by going international and

⁶³ The welcome speech was given by Octavio Paz.

becoming professional. Prizes began to contribute to the canonisation of their works and names.

Gabriel García Márquez: The Leap to Global Authorship

Gabriel García Márquez and Mario Vargas Llosa would win more prizes and be more widely read than any of the other Boom authors or than any other Latin American writers for that matter. Both contributed directly to the Boom — and, perhaps unsuspectingly, to the creation of Spain's publishing hegemony — through a combination of ideology and the agency of professionalisation, and also of an accumulation of symbolic power that I have referred to throughout this chapter. In tangible publishing terms, in contrast with Fuentes's and Cortázar's publishing histories, García Márquez, without his publishing career being free of obstacles, had a clearer path.

García Márquez was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1982, when he was fifty-five. Unlike Fuentes and Cortázar, García Márquez had a literary career that was closely tied to Carmen Balcells. Before becoming a world-renowned author, García Márquez had tense relations with literary and cultural circles in his country of origin. Although there was a certain critical distance between Cortázar and Fuentes and their respective cultural spheres, the two future Nobel laureates were a source of public conflict in this regard, as I will now show and as we will see in the next section of this chapter.

In 1960, in an article in the Colombian publication *Acción Liberal*, García Márquez stated categorically that: "To this day, no Colombian author has a robust body of work that can be compared, for example, to that of the Venezuelan Rómulo Gallegos, or the Chilean Pablo Neruda, or the Argentinian Eduardo Mallea" (García Márquez, 2015, p. 660). From his perspective, Colombian literature did not have — and perhaps did not deserve — any real standing even within the Latin American region. In his view, "ever since colonial times, the history of Colombian literature can be reduced to three or four individual successes and a tangle of false prestige [...] the problem is not quantity, but quality" (García Márquez, 2015, p. 660). The apparent rawness of his assessment of his own literary tradition, his outspoken criticism of the Colombian literary milieu, that is to say of the social structure he was immersed in, and above all, his identification of literary

talent as “individual success” seem to have guided García Márquez’s agency of professionalisation. From this stance, which resembles what Becker puts into doubt regarding the idea of “genius” (1982), García Márquez became one of the most popular novelists in the world in any language, linking literary dedication with individual effort guided by the discourse of globalisation that shaped the actions of the Boom protagonists, which required an industrial, international publishing profile: what he achieved through the Boom.

García Márquez became Latin America’s best-known novelist, while Balcells, Martin writes, became “one of the most influential agents not only in Spain but in the whole of Europe” (Martin, 2008, p. 329). As I explained in the previous chapter, the Latin American Boom and the consolidation of the hegemony of Spain’s book industry over those of other Spanish-speaking countries entailed certain core elements such as contracts with limited timeframes and clearly established royalties, which increased with successive additions, the dating of royalty payment periods — which was not the case before, leaving payments up to the arbitrary decision of publishers — and the split into territories of the market — this latter being clearly observable in connection with García Márquez’s work, as seen in documents coming from my archival research (Agencia Literaria Carmen Balcells, 1997, 1998). We can reflect on this by mentioning that McClelland categorises professionalisation into two: on the one hand “professionalisation ‘from within,’” which refers to the social actors managing to manipulate the market, and “professionalisation ‘from above,’” in which domination comes from forces external to the social actors (McClelland, 1990, p. 107). As we can gather, the Latin American Boom was an experience from “within,” in which the writers like García Márquez, its editor and its literary agent aimed and managed to shape the literary and publishing market.

As I have mentioned before, the link between the protagonists of the Boom was not limited to professional and economic factors, although finances did always play a crucial role. It was in many ways a symbiotic relationship that involved both professional and personal factors relating to the agency of those involved. This network favoured the international development of the authors in question, the consolidation of Balcells as a literary agent, and a transformation of the dynamics of the Spanish-language publishing industries.

As an example of this, García Márquez’s relationship with Balcells brought about major changes in his personal and family circumstances from 1965 onwards. As we saw

in the previous chapter, from 1962, Balcells had represented García Márquez before different publishing houses for translations of his work, but Martin writes that these efforts were largely “hypothetical” — they did not bring about significant results. In practice, at the outset of this career it was García Márquez himself who went about the arduous task of getting his books published in Spanish, a not so distant experience from what we have seen for Cortázar in this chapter. In 1965, despite an initial disagreement in Mexico City between García Márquez and Balcells, where he was living at the time, things began to change.

Balcells met, at that moment, with García Márquez to inform him of a translation contract with Harper and Row for four novels, worth just USD \$1,000 — as we saw in the previous chapter. García Márquez’s reaction was one of contempt and arrogance, according to Martin. However, after three days of sight-seeing and gatherings in Mexico, amidst a sense of camaraderie, García Márquez festively signed the pseudo-contract authorising Balcells to represent him in every language, on both sides of the Atlantic, for the next 150 years (Martin, 2008, p. 294). What I can now add, is that Balcells immediately negotiated reprints of the two books that García Márquez had already published with Era, the small Mexican, imprint, with new improved conditions for García Márquez. Not long after, she would also arrange Italian translations of his work with the well-known publishing house Feltrinelli.

Of course, García Márquez’s career was not only about literary success, but it is worth noting how, in terms of agency of professionalisation and life stories, the networking analysed in the previous chapter between the Boom authors also played a part in their success. Similarly to the situation I described above regarding Cortázar, Guillermo de Torre, who was married to Norah Borges, Jorge Luis’ sister, — one of the leading Spanish critics living in exile, and one who had rejected a book by Cortázar — also turned down García Márquez’s first book, sending him a letter that even went so far as to bluntly say that he should seek out another profession for himself: “declared that he had no future as a novelist” (Martin, 2008, p. 154; Maisterra, 2004, p. 536). At that point García Márquez could have succumbed to the prevailing social structure and abandon his pursuit of a certain idea of the way in which a Latin American writer could live.

García Márquez persisted in writing and it is also worth noting that several events show that the literary protagonists of the Boom had strategies for creating social and

symbolic capital, including literary prestige. These authors deployed such capitals to achieve international recognition and increase their economic capital. García Márquez, for example, — even though he was living in Mexico — sent *Cien años de soledad* (*One Hundred Years of Solitude*) to Argentina for publication. According to Ayén this was “to raise his international profile... The fact that a Colombian living in Mexico chose to publish in Argentina foreshadowed the global Spanish-language market that the Boom was about to open up” (Ayén, 2014, pos. 831). Examining the story of the publication of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* sheds light on these networking, symbolic, and, ultimately, hegemonic processes. On Fuentes’ recommendation — which points to networking — the Argentinian journalist Harss interviewed García Márquez in Mexico. When asked about what he was writing, the Colombian made reference to *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Sometime later, back in Argentina, the editor Francisco Porrúa learned about García Márquez through Harss (Ayén, 2014, pos. 612; Martin, 2008, p. 302). This led to Porrúa contacting the Colombian author and that started conversations on the publication of several titles. Without Balcells’ intervention but as agreed with Porrúa, once he completed *One Hundred Year of Solitude*, García Márquez sent part of the novel to Argentina, not the whole, due to his precarious economic condition at the time. Porrúa replied with a contract and an advance, which would mark the turning point in the financial circumstances of the writer (García Márquez, 2007, pp. 39–40; Barcha, 2017). The deal for the publication of *One Hundred Year of Solitude* had been brokered between Porrúa and García Márquez.

The aforementioned opening of the market, I contend, was part of what would come to be labelled as globalisation, when free trade among nations became a goal. However, in the 1960s the Latin American Boom shows to be both an economic and cultural process in which cultural identity played an important part. As Pieterse would argue “globalisation can mean the reinforcement of or go together with localism” (Pieterse, 2006, p. 662). As we saw in chapter 5, Boom writers were bearers of their regional identity and thus were at a paradoxical crossroads between Latin American identification and international appeal. On the one hand, the Boom novelists needed to appear to be more than just a marketing ploy, on the other, to achieve global acknowledgment, it was in their interest to be perceived as being special — both individually and as members of cultural community — not just as parts of an indistinct

whole, a homogenous regional literature called the Latin American Boom. García Márquez was one of the writers that got the balance between outstanding individual literary talent, showing clear links with Latin American culture, and achieving broad global appeal to a variety of publics.

Again, it could be stressed that his process of professionalisation was linked with networking, as seen in the case of García Márquez. Of the two key publishing figures in Barcelona, Balcells and Barral, García Márquez only had a relationship with the former. Despite Martin's claim that Barral was the driving force behind the Boom, García Márquez did not publish any of his books with Seix-Barral. In contrast, Balcells came to administer many of García Márquez's literary and even personal affairs to enable him to spend every moment writing his next book (Martin, 2008, p. 334). Martin describes the relationship between them by saying "Balcells began to act as a kind of sister, a sister he could tell almost anything, a person who would come to love him dearly and who would make any sacrifice on his behalf" (Martin, 2008, p. 341). The story also goes that, years after the Boom proper, by which point García Márquez was a global literary figure who had had close ties with Balcells for years, he asked her on the phone "Do you love me, Carmen?" She replied, 'I can't answer that. You are 36.2 per cent of our income'" (Esteban y Gallego, 2011, pos. 4988; Martin, 2008, p. 341). The financial success the relationship bought both parties was now unquestionable and, as I have shown, was also dependent on something as individual and subjective as personal ties between two people.

In his literary career and as a public figure — having access to anyone at any time, for instance, to President Bill Clinton — García Márquez rose above the circumstances typical of most Colombian writers, whom he looked down on, but was not entirely without empathy for. Writing in the early 1960s that "incidentally, it should be said in favour of these occasionally good writers that their work is even more deserving of praise in Colombia because it is created in hours that are stolen from the chores of daily life. When the conditions for writers to become professionals do not exist, literary creation is relegated to the time that is left when normal occupations are complete. It is, by necessity, a literature created by tired men" (García Márquez, 2015, p. 663). This form of life, in which writing plays second fiddle to jobs that provide a livelihood, might well have been García Márquez's fate. However, as I examined in this section, it was also one of the reasons why the Boom authors were seeking more promising publishing horizons. One

of the factors that came into play to prevent García Márquez from following the footsteps of other Latin American writers was the combination of his literary commitment with the other factors I have analysed in this study and the professional talents of Balcells.

Mario Vargas Llosa: Constructing Global Authorship from Spain

Mario Vargas Llosa received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2010, at the age of seventy-four, being the symbol of the global author in the Spanish language, having competed for the Presidency of Peru in 1990, and showing social impact around the world as an international public intellectual. First propelled by editor Carlos Barral, published for the length of the period covered in my research by Seix-Barral imprint, and hand in hand with literary agent Carmen Balcells; Vargas Llosa was, among the Boom authors, the writer who most consistently constructed his literary career from Spain.

The overlapping of an ideology of globalisation and the agency of professionalisation was highly productive for the Latin American Boom writers in their quest to escape the social structures that would have prevented them from achieving their literary and economic goals. In this sense, even when he was still in his twenties, Vargas Llosa was clear about his profession: “I would only be a writer if I spent morning, afternoon, and evening writing, pouring all the energy that I was squandering on so many other things into writing [the multiple jobs he referred to as ‘food sources:’ working at a library, a newspaper, and a radio station...], and if everything around me was stimulating, a place where writing did not seem like such an extravagant, marginal activity, unlike in the country I was from” (Vargas Llosa, 2015b, pos. 6126). In this, we can see the multiple faces of hegemony. The concrete reference to “food sources” alludes to a material aspect and yet it also involves a tension against the intangible character of literature. This circumstance needed to be changed bringing both elements together, since hegemony comprises both dimensions, is founded on them and on the articulations created among them.

Winning the Biblioteca Breve Prize was the turning point that gave meaning to Vargas Llosa’s prior actions. He described his life before leaving Peru to pursue a PhD at the Complutense University of Madrid in these terms: “I spent all my energy and time, in those last months in Lima, working to scrape together the money and get ready for my

trip. Although the scholarship was only supposed to last one year, I was determined that it would last forever. After Spain, I'd find a way to go to France and stay there. In Paris, I would become a writer, and if I ever went back to Peru, it would only be to visit, because in Lima I would never be anything else than the proto-writer I had become before I left" (Vargas Llosa, 2015b, pos. 7189–7193). Vargas Llosa's memoirs and some of his accounts reveal that this decision — which goes so far as to seem obstinate — was not an easy one, as it implied hardship and sacrifice. However, the future Nobel laureate's decision to stay away from his country endured, as he did not see Peru as an appropriate cultural space for his literary development. As we have seen, years later, in the 1960s, Vargas Llosa would write to Balcells saying "I'm delighted that you have realised that writers need to be professionals" (Ayén, 2014, pos. 2964), as part of the exchanges through which she convinced him to live in Barcelona, spend all his time writing, and receive a monetary retribution for doing so.

The experience that brought Vargas Llosa to such point is a good example of how significant the change in the possibilities for the literary career of a Latin American writer was. Therefore, it is worth analysing his early career to look into the relationship between an aspiring Latin American writer and publishing houses around the mid-20th-century. Vargas Llosa attempted to publish his first novel with a Spanish-language publishing house based in Paris and then with an Argentinian publisher, but was unsuccessful (Ayén, 2014, pos. 1999; Williams, 2014, p. 25). Indeed, as seen before in this thesis, Pacheco writes that Vargas Llosa said to him that he had considered self-publishing the book that would come to be known as *Time of the Hero* while it was being judged for the Biblioteca Breve Prize, which he felt he had no hope of winning, despite going on to do so (Pacheco, 2017, p. 418). I am coming back to this because, although Vargas Llosa was living in Europe at the time, I think these events point to how his actions were still shaped by the Peruvian paradigms followed by writers of the time. This seemed to be, in most cases, thinking of the life of a writer as mostly a creative but not an economic endeavour. It also showed, for such young writers, the lack of a symbolic capital that enabled them to follow a different path.

In such frame of reference, publishing *Time of the Hero* in the Spanish-language Paris-based publishing house that Vargas Llosa approached would not have fulfilled any of the elements required for authorship professionalisation (Shattock, 2012, p. 65–75). Such imprint was small and while it might have brought Vargas Llosa personal

satisfaction and even some recognition in limited circles, releasing the novel through it would have led him neither to become an internationally known writer nor to the professionalisation of his craft.

Ayén recounts a conversation between Vargas Llosa and the academic Claude Couffon. The scholar suggested that Vargas Llosa should send *Time of the Hero* to the editor Barral. Vargas Llosa apparently answered that a book like his could not be published in Spain because of the censorship policies that operated under the Franco dictatorship. Couffon reacted by explaining the different ways Barral found to get past the censors, sometimes even by publishing in other countries, as a plan B. Vargas Llosa was persuaded and sent the manuscript to Barral. However, those working with Barral did not look positively on the novel. In fact, it was almost rejected outright. However, quite by chance, Barral himself read it and sent Vargas Llosa a telegram telling him that he would be visiting him in Paris and adding “I have decided to include you in the Biblioteca Breve Prize stop Keep this strictly secret in Paris stop Barral” (Ayén, 2014, pos. 2013–2018; Barral, 1962). This sequence of events points to how the construction of Spain’s hegemony in the Spanish-language publishing world was not self-evident.

Under the Franco dictatorship, censorship was an important limitation to literature and publishing, and cultural production in general. However, as we have seen in chapter 3, the Fraga Act is considered a relative relaxation of censorship around the time of the Latin American Boom. We can also consider what Evetts has pointed in the sense that when “professionalism” has been built, based on a demand, from “within”, it usually finds States’ willingness as it means that the delegation of the power of expertise “is in the State’s best interest” (Evetts, 2003, pp. 409–410). That is to say, as the Boom’s symbolic power was so clearly in the publishing and literary realm, it perhaps was not seen as a political threat by the Spanish dictatorship, regardless the intellectuals’ ties with the Cuban Revolution. As opposed to this, the Latin American Boom could actually be regarded both as a success for the book exports policy of the regime and culturally for the ideology of Hispanicity.

Having said this, I would like to dwell on the importance of the individual actions of those involved: the agency from which they faced the social structures they had to deal with. This included even skills like the ability to work hard, and that of Barral towards the censors in the creation of the Boom. In this case, both Vargas Llosa’s decision to try his luck with Barral, and Barral encouraging Vargas Llosa and taking the risk of the

censors' reaction, were decisive factors in sparking the Boom. Evidence of this can be found in Barral's manoeuvres to sidestep the censors, which drew on his knowledge of the context in Spain at the time, his personal relationships with key international cultural figures, and his ability to work in adverse environments.

Barral sent the manuscript of *Time of the Hero* to figures like the French public intellectual Roger Caillois, Cortázar, and the Scottish poet and translator Alastair Reid, all of whom wrote back praising the young writer (Ayén, 2014, pos. 2008–2081). As a consequence, the novel was no longer just the first book for the then young Latin American writer, but a work enshrouded in greater symbolic value. In the process of publishing it, Barral showed that he knew how to negotiate and was building a catalogue that would enter into dialogue with Latin America and would spearhead the publication of new writers and new topics, linking together the Spanish-speaking countries on both sides of the Atlantic. This was a fundamental publishing and cultural element for the existence of the Latin American Boom and the articulation of the hegemony that would place the Spanish book industry at the centre of the industries of the language.

After a meeting with the head of the Spanish censorship office and being requested to make changes on 17 pages, he said to Vargas Llosa: "My opinion on all this is that [...] we will have to compromise on some points" (Barral, 2015, p. 459). Barral and Vargas Llosa met up and made changes to eight sentences, which would soon be changed back to their original versions in subsequent editions (Ayén, 2014, pos. 2119). This was the way that Barral fought his literary and publishing battles: avoiding all-out confrontations of the kind that might lead to ruptures, and instead finding alternative ways to expand his publishing activity.

As I have already recounted, fascinated by the novel *The Green House*, Balcells convinced Vargas Llosa during one of these precarious periods of existence to give up teaching and the financial difficulties of life in London and move to Barcelona to write, living off a stipend that Balcells herself financed in exchange for being his literary agent not just for translations of his works but also in his dealings with Seix-Barral, his Spanish publisher. The novel *Conversación en la catedral* (*Conversation in the Cathedral*, 1969) marked the start of the Spanish-language publishing relationship between Balcells and Vargas Llosa (Ayén, 2014, pos. 2955). Economic hardship was left behind, and writing finally became Vargas Llosa's main activity, one that he was fully committed to. This was furthered by Seix-Barral's promotional efforts (the prize and arranging translations

through Barral's network of international publishers), Balcells's work to raise Vargas Llosa's profile and that of his writing (particularly by increasing the numbers of editions of his books, to the cultural and financial benefit of both author and agent), and the broader cultural context. The links that would come to form Spain's publishing hegemony began to articulate with each other.

By bringing Vargas Llosa to Barcelona, Balcells was clearly not making an outside bet: she herself acknowledged that "the quality of his work was already superlative. With books like *The Time of the Hero* and *The Green House* under his belt, it was not at all reckless to pay him to focus entirely on his writing. Our interests overlapped — by no means was I diving into an empty pool. I thought, London is a literary agents' paradise, and someone will steal this boy away from me, so I took him with me to Barcelona, far from the eyes of potential rivals of mine. What's more, I had a financial cushion of sorts, a sponsor, the businessmen Alberto Polo and his wife Merche, who had said to me 'Don't you worry, Carmen, take on whatever projects you find interesting, and if you can't cover them, we'll foot the bill, and if we lose, that's the way it goes'" (Ayén, 2014, pos. 2964). These circumstances point once more to the converging of individual interests — namely, financial gain — that guided the agencies that enabled other individual undertakings — literary creation — with tangible social and cultural consequences: the internationalisation of Latin American literature and the pre-eminence of the Spanish publishing industry.

As the events of the subsequent decades prove, Balcells' interpretation of the context, when betting on Vargas Llosa's publishing future, was not unrealistic, but instead extremely insightful. Her agency contributed to what Fuentes would describe years later: "the Boom dramatically expanded the reading market in Latin America and took literature written everywhere from Mexico and the Caribbean to Chile and Argentina to a global audience. The so-called 'Boom' generation rose above many of the limitations facing them, [...] open up the genre, and enabled the Latin American novel to go international" (Fuentes, 2012, p. 291). It is clear that this opening up of the local market and internationalisation of Latin American literature proved to be a solution to the circumstances that García Márquez had complained about regarding his country's literature, as seen in the previous section of this chapter.

The documents and letters I have examined give an account of how Balcells publicised and raised the profile of Vargas Llosa's work, multiplying the numbers of

translations and editions, and even exploring the possibility of film adaptations, even though many of these did not actually come to pass (Balcells, 1969). Ayén also notes that Balcells turned out not be wrong in her economic speculations, since between 1973 and 1974, for example, the first edition of *Pantaleón y las visitadoras* [Pantaleón and the Visitors] (1973), Vargas Llosa's fourth novel, had a print run of 100,000 copies, which is an outstanding Spanish-language publishing record even now, nearly fifty years later. Only a few months later, in 1974, the seventh edition of *Conversation in the Cathedral* (1969) would sell 10,060 copies. Results like these proved that Balcells was right when she said: "I've never been reckless: I knew that boy was a good investment" (Ayén, 2014, pos. 8074). The agency of economic players thus functioned in harmony with the agency of cultural players, in what came to be a multifaceted, mutually beneficial symbiotic relationship that took a part in dislocating the previous hegemony of dismissal of Latin American culture and of Latin Americans themselves.

The Boom authors, then, constructed themselves as international writers, finding ways of interpreting their Latin American cultural and social context and making the most of the opportunities they were able to identify. As we have seen it could be argued that this taking place from Spain would have been a neocolonial process. And yet, I would like to point to yet another possibility which, perhaps, does not contradict, but complement such interpretation. Appadurai has reflected that regarding the cultural side of globalisation, we have a "new global cultural economy" which has, as part of its complexity, the peculiarity of not being easily understood in terms of "centre-periphery models," and that not even talking about multiple centres and multiples peripheries could suffice (Appadurai, 2006, p. 588). While he is talking about the time from the turn of the 20th-century up to our time, we could argue that phenomena like the Boom were the avant-garde of cultural globalisation. Also what I have been labelling as the paradox of having a Spanish publishing revolution with Latin American contents, most certainly has an element of neocolonialism as is seen in the fact that there was a combination of a Colonial wound and policies that favoured book exports from an ideology of Hispanicity. And yet, the Latin American Boom could also hint at what Appadurai dissects: a novel circulation of culture in the world in which centre and periphery might be marked by history but could also be opening novel possibilities of industrial and cultural exchange.

The aforementioned novel possibilities were part of what Balcells took advantage of. She broke with the tradition of contracts in which writers signed their works' rights

over to publishers for life, with no major benefits in return. Her negotiations were a crucial factor in enabling Vargas Llosa to achieve his early ambition of making a living from his writing. After Balcells's death, Vargas Llosa wrote that she "revolutionised Spanish cultural life by drastically changing the relationship between Spanish-language publishers and authors. Through her, Spanish-language writers began to sign proper contracts and have our rights respected. She also caused — forced, even — publishers in Spain and Latin America to become modern and ambitious, to operate within the broader bounds of the Spanish language as a whole, and to shake off their petty, provincial visions. [Balcells] was much more than just an agent or representative of the writers who had the privilege of working with her. She took care of us, pampered us, scolded us, pulled our ears, and filled us with understanding and affection in everything we did, not only in what we wrote" (Vargas Llosa, 2015a). Once again, personal relationships are one of the factors at play here, in addition to the probable cultural impact of Balcells's initiatives: creating a framework that would enable Latin American literary creations to reach beyond the local to the global as individual authors came to realise that reaching international readers was possible. In Vargas Llosa's approach, globalist discourse seemed to be the solution to the lack of professionalisation for Latin American writers.

Balcells saw Vargas Llosa as one of the central figures in the Boom. As I have argued above, the starting point for the Boom was when he was awarded the Biblioteca Breve Prize for *The Time of the Hero*. Balcells puts it in no uncertain terms: "the most important factor in the Boom was *The Time of the Hero* and Mario Vargas Llosa" (Ayén, 2014, pos. 2252; Esteban y Gallego, 2011, pos. 660). This meant achieving acclaim beyond his own country, which Vargas Llosa managed at the age of just 26, much younger than the other Boom authors. Vargas Llosa represents the construction of global authorship from the Spanish book industry.

Carlos Fuentes summed up the Boom up as follows: "What has been the legacy of this generation of novels which were pulled around so much? I would say there were five main contributions. First of all, a handful of good novels. Next, the Boom made Latin American novels go international. It broke the constraints of the genres that were imposed on fiction at the time (rural, urban, indigenist, etc.). Because of this, it made the writer's work extraordinarily personal. Finally, it created a domestic and international market for our literature" (Fuentes, 2012, p. 295). With this description, Fuentes points

to some of the main elements of my argument in this thesis, missing only the lack of international distribution by the Mexican book industry, the process of professionalisation of the Latin American writers, and the important role played by literary agent Carmen Balcells. Fuentes connects the symbolic capital of the Boom and Spain's publishing industry — a remarkable body of literature and a well-functioning publicity machine —, a dislocation in global cultural parameters — a newfound appreciation of cultures that had previously been ignored in the West —, the transformation of local cultural practices — in the form of what the Boom writers considered a literary revolution and effectively implied a social dislocation —, the individualisation of the work of writing, and the development of domestic and international markets — with the subsequent possibility of writers becoming professionals. In all of this, the individual agency of professionalisation and internationalisation of Barral, Balcells, Cortázar, Fuentes, García Márquez, and Vargas Llosa were factors that shaped the Boom and its articulation with the Colonial history that marked the relationship between Spain and Mexico, the differences between the book industries of Spain and Mexico, the public policies that impacted the publishing industries, and the networking the Latin American Boom protagonists did, led to the hegemony of the Spanish book industry in the Spanish Speaking world.

Conclusion

In this study, I have explored how the Latin American Boom unfolded and I have analysed the social events that it comprised. Due to my focus on publishing-related criteria, I limited my study to Julio Cortázar, from Argentina; Gabriel García Márquez, from Colombia; Carlos Fuentes, from Mexico; and Mario Vargas Llosa, from Peru. Beyond the Boom's implications for the world of culture and the publishing industry, or its economic and social consequences, it also ushered in and shaped a new hegemony. Such has been my argument: the Latin American Boom marked the beginning of the consolidation of Spain's book industry over those of other Spanish-speaking countries, including that of Mexico, to which I compare it in this study.

I explore what Spain's publishing hegemony is based on and what factors underlie it. I have achieved this by comparing both book industries using Laclau and Mouffe's (1999) ideas on hegemony as my theoretical framework. In their terms, order in society is built through struggles for hegemony that are resolved contingently in favour of one of the discourses in dispute. The hegemonic discourse establishes, at least for a time (the length of which varies considerably), the social meanings that function as guidelines in the different spheres of social existence, and guide both the symbolic references and social practices of all those who are part of a given society. I realised that this theory of discourse was relevant and appropriate for my research because it allowed me to make connections between material factors and economic and symbolic ones, without making any one of these subordinate to or dependent on the others. Instead, I could explore the part each factor played in giving meaning to social existence. This thesis shows how Spain's publishing industry was able to articulate more factors than Mexico's, which is why the Boom, despite centring on Latin American literature, did not arise in a Spanish American city or publishing system but instead emerged in Spain.

In this thesis, I have linked and compared data through qualitative research in order to interpret the Boom from a sociological perspective. I have taken a consistently critical approach that gave me room for reflexivity, which was indispensable, given that for various reasons that I discuss throughout the text, I am close to many of the events that I have examined. I have curated and triangulated information on the Boom and explored earlier interpretations of it, seeking to link, contrast, and debate them as

analytically as possible. In methodological terms, my study is qualitative and draws on an analysis of the literature, a large variety of newspaper sources, semi-structured interviews with key figures, and visits to the personal archives and libraries of protagonists of the Boom to reconstruct and connect historical and political events.

My argument has empirical and theoretical dimensions. As for the empirical, I have claimed that a privileged way to understand the prevalence of the Spanish book industry over the Mexican one is to look at the Latin American Boom as the starting point of the consolidation of a novel hegemony. Empirically, what I have found is that the abovementioned process was achieved due to the articulation process around the idea of the Boom of the following social factors: the Colonial history between Spain and Mexico, the State cultural policies that promoted or prevented the development of private publishing houses, the change in the business model of the industry in Spain, the networking of novel actors and talented writers, and the aim of authors of professionalising their craft. The coincidence of these elements and their hegemonic articulation enabled the emergence of a discourse in which Latin American writers were able to become professional and their works were appreciated around the world.

As for the theoretical part for this research, the empirical case offered a fertile ground to discuss the continuity of coloniality in society and culture; and to examine whether any individual agency, or a coincidence of agencies, could play a part in broader transformations. Through the analysis of the construction of a new hegemony this study explores the processes of social change that involves elements as diverse as the organisation of an industry and the global appreciation of the cultural productions of a specific region. All this, together, led me to the examination of the possibilities of transnational hegemony in a world, that of the 1960s, with retreating empires and before the hegemony of neo-liberalism.

With transnational hegemony, I am referring to what I have observed and analysed in this dissertation, i.e. that the systems of meaning ordering a society are not only endogenous or merely impacted by international events, but — as in the relationship between Spain and Spanish America — an imbalance of power seems to be constitutive of the social system of the involved societies. Therefore, a sociological analysis of such societies seems to need to consider how the meanings attributed to events are shaped by such inter-societal relationships. Below, I will expand on the theoretical contribution this involves.

In this thesis, I have thus analysed the articulation of colonial history, an editor, a literary agent, cultural policies, and the agency of professionalisation of four authors in the construction of the Latin American Boom. I explored these factors over the course of four empirical chapters that I summarise here.

Chapter 3 focuses on how the historical element had some influence in shaping the Boom. There are two aspects to this: the shared history of Spain and Mexico as a result of the colonisation of the latter by the former, and the history of the publishing industries in each country. I begin by probing the Colonial relationship between the two countries. I go on to examine the history of publishing in Spain and Mexico in detail, with a particular focus on the factors that led to the two countries' industries being configured the way they were at the start of the 1960s. Chapter 3 ends with an analysis of the management models that had taken shape (and were continuing to take shape) in the book industries of both Spain and Mexico. By way of being a genealogy of Mexican and Spanish publishing houses, this part of my research contributes to understanding how the evolution of such companies — together with, and at the same level as, other factors — led to an articulation around the Boom, which was the basis for the hegemony among the book industries of the Spanish language.

Chapter 4 explores the public policies that framed the development of the book industries in Mexico and Spain. These two countries were guided by political ideologies that corresponded to two different nation-building projects, and both actively implemented cultural and other types of public policies that impacted their publishing industries. I show how Mexico's authoritarian governments pursued a nation-building project that focused on constructing a national identity through a closed economy. In contrast, while Spain's project was also a nationalist one, at a certain point the Franco regime underwent a technocratic shift that fostered the creation of and support for certain industries. This shift was in some senses backward-looking, and even entailed a certain nostalgia for the country's imperial past, which manifested itself in economic terms through an increase in exports, mainly to former Spanish colonies. Although this was important, it was not the only cause of the Boom, and it was not what gave rise to the other factors that were articulated around the phenomenon.

In chapter 5, I analyse the networking among the protagonists of the Boom. I explain why it is relevant to examine the Boom in publishing terms, given the emergence of figures such as editor Carlos Barral and the novelty of the figure of the literary agent in

the person of Carmen Balcells. In this part of the thesis, I describe why Barcelona became the epicentre of the Boom. More importantly, I analyse the set of relationships among authors and between writers and the literary agent and the editor and how such networking enhanced both the literary careers of those involved and the potential of the Spanish publishing industry.

Chapter 6 focuses on the agency of professionalisation of the four writers: Cortázar, García Márquez, Fuentes, and Vargas Llosa. I also examine the underpinnings of globalisation of the actions that led them to become international public intellectuals. I focus on their actions in the world of publishing, that is, how they positioned themselves and went about their literary careers in terms of where and with which imprints they chose to publish their books. I also explore how Balcells and Barral also played a role in many of these events. In doing so, I provide insight into the network of meanings that guided the actions of these writers as they forged their public profiles and published their novels in a way that ensured these reached wider readerships and gained public acclaim, earning the writers in question literary respect and significant financial gains along the way. In this way, I draw the map of the elements that got articulated around the Boom.

After considering each of the factors I have examined in this study, I can claim — as I explained before —, in Laclau and Mouffe's terms, that in the 1960s, the Latin American Boom was the empty signifier — that is to say, a social element which came to represent a plural set of meanings in such context. In this sense, the idea of the Latin American Boom was not a strictly identifiable group or clearly distinguishable process. As proved in the analyses of this thesis, this does not mean that the Boom is an arbitrary label without, as it were, content. Instead, rather than being an ambiguous or equivocal signifier, the Latin American Boom being an empty signifier means, from the theoretical stance of Laclau and Mouffe that the idea of the Boom was the social element that enable the chain of equivalences, that is to say the articulation of the processes and actors involved in the transformation of hegemony. In this case, the significance of this means that the transformation of hegemony and the centrality of the Spanish publishing industry came from the articulation that the idea of the Latin American Boom as empty signifier enabled among the following factors: certain social and cultural aspects of Spain and Mexico that were shaped by the two countries' shared Colonial history; the public cultural policies of two nondemocratic systems; different developments and characteristics of each country's publishing industries — particularly the emergence, in

Spain, of the literary agent, and clearly defined roles for the editor and the publisher — and the agency of professionalisation of four writers, all of whom were exceptionally talented and had a clear international vision that brought them to effectively network among them. The articulation of these social factors, due to the empty signifier the Latin American Boom, created a chain of equivalence that led to Spain, and particularly Barcelona, becoming the capital of the Spanish-language publishing industry and the epicentre of its activity.

With the aforementioned, my sociological perspective manages to show how it is possible to analyse the Latin American Boom in publishing terms, to map the development of this phenomenon, and explore the varied, tangible consequences it brought. It is essential, therefore, to summarise the transformations that swept Spain and Mexico's publishing industries. These also form part of the empirical findings of this research, which centre on how the Boom affected publishing practices, although I should stress that they were also marked by changes in literacy patterns, economic growth, social transformations, and various developments in the field of printing. For the first time ever, a literary agent — namely, Carmen Balcells — came to prominence in the Spanish-language publishing industry and changed the rules of the book industry. Literary prizes were created that went on to shape the new canon of Spanish-language literature. These played an important role in attracting public attention to new novels being written in Spanish. There was a wave of translation of books that were originally written in Spanish, and this process was managed systematically. The publishing business in Spain was given an international scope in order to export, distribute and market books in Spanish America. The role of editors also began to change: the prime example of this was Carlos Barral, who played a major part in the Boom (or perhaps even set the whole process in motion) on three fronts: he sponsored the creation of literary awards, including the Biblioteca Breve and Formentor prizes (see Appendix 3), encouraged Balcells to become a literary agent, and, of course, published many of the Boom writers. The Boom also changed authors' circumstances considerably. For the first time ever, they were able to become professional writers, live off the royalties of their book sales, gain recognition, and become public intellectuals on both sides of the Atlantic.

Going on to a different level of analysis, the theoretical contribution that my thesis makes is to look at hegemony from a transnational perspective. I have mentioned that the Boom was part of the avant-garde of cultural globalisation. By now, 2020, it has become

clear that cultural globalisation is not a mere process of homogenisation around the world as it was first thought (Ritzer, 1998; Ritzer, 2019). As Appadurai has written, cultural globalisation does take advantage of a variety of “instruments of homogenisation”, and this was quite clear from the Spanish side in the Latin American Boom; but such tools do not work in a straightforward way. As opposed to that, the instruments of homogenisation face “local political and cultural economies” and the outcome often takes the form of “heterogenous dialogues” (Appadurai, 2006, p. 596). I stand close to this view, since the paradox of a Spanish publishing phenomenon based on Latin American literary works appears as one of such heterogenous dialogues.

The novelty of my approach lies in its difference with previous studies. These have explored hegemony using Laclau and Mouffe’s concepts from a national point of view. Mouffe has argued, for instance, that there is no available world beyond hegemony and sovereignty; implying that sovereignty and hegemony would be attached to each other and that there would not be, as of today, any other type of society than national ones (Mouffe, 2013, pp. 19–20). However, the comparative and transnational nature of my study has linked the aforementioned processes of cultural globalisation with the possibility of exploring hegemony as a phenomenon that reaches beyond national borders and can also be regional, or even global, in nature.

I argue that this is related to the way publishing companies function today in the 21st-century, and clearly did during the times of the Latin American Boom: they are global operations that aspire to sell their symbolic supply to the entire world. Appadurai states that globalisation generates “acute problems of social well-being,” but thinks that it also encourages “an emancipatory politics of globalisation [in the form of] the role of the imagination in social life” (Appadurai, 2001, p. 6). I contend this was the case with the Latin American Boom. Appadurai goes on and explains that the imagination in social life is not “a matter of individual genius” nor of “escapism from ordinary life” but a “faculty that informs the daily lives of ordinary people in myriad ways [...] often across national boundaries” (Appadurai, 2001, p. 6). If we are to look at the Boom from this perspective, we can think of the publishing phenomenon not only as neocolonialism from the part of Spain and from social actors/writers who would be bearers of a Colonial wound. From the perspective of the imagination in social life, we can think of the Boom as a transnational operation opening previous social ways, in which Latin American culture was subordinated, and through imaginative ways in several fronts led to the socialisation

and positive appreciation of the production of literary works of authors from the region involving the Spanish publishing industry.

If this is what happened with the Latin American Boom, it has to be a process that overcomes what Rao has identified as the “the hubristic, false internationalism of globalisation-derived theories” (Rao, 2000, p. 178); that is to say, I cannot argue that the process has been shaped by the imagination in social life from the ingenuity of assuming neither an equilibrium of power between nations nor the absence of several forms of conflict among the social actors and forces involved.

I am not claiming that the Boom was a cultural production without a place, or that I originated in, as it were, neutral site. This would be against the sociological evidence I have shown in this dissertation and would be aiming at denying the historical and industrial production advantages of Spain. Nevertheless, as we have seen, Mexico was inward looking in the 1960s and it was largely closed to cultural exchange, at least from the governmental side. In contrast, thinking with Pieterse around the notion of “translocal culture,” we could think of such translocal culture as being located, but with “an *outward looking* sense of place” (Pieterse, 2006, 673). The abovementioned exercise of the imagination in social life within globalisation would then be an “*increase in the available modes of organisation*” (Pieterse, 2006, p. 663). As I have shown, hegemony implies the modes of organisation and the relationship of such modes with the rest of the network of social meanings that give sense to a society. The Latin American Boom would then be regarded as a novel transnational circulation of cultural production which would have opened an inward-looking society through new modes of cultural and industrial exchange. The theoretical implication and significance of this is that hegemony would be not only related with sovereignty and, thus, with national societies, but would also work across societies.

I contend that it is possible to look at this from the concept of hybridity. According to Pieterse in cultural hybridity we do not have free of conflict cultural and social mixtures, he argues that we can find power relations and hegemony “inscribed and reproduced” within hybridity, that is to say that in globalised culture we could still locate asymmetries and their attached conflicts (Pieterse, 2006, p. 669). In this sense, for the Latin American Boom to be an example of, as it were, a positive side of globalisation, it needs not to be seen under the romantic light of harmonious co-participation of cultures,

but could be analysed, as I did, showing the multiple tensions across it and with a transnational hegemony linking them. I would conclude this by referring again to Appadurai, who argues that at the centre of global culture, which as we saw he considers to be heterogenous, we have “the politics of the mutual effort of sameness and difference” (Appadurai, 2006, p. 596). He claims that both are in constant confrontation and in doing so, curiously enough, both stances incarnate the Enlightenment logics of “the triumphantly universal and the resiliently particular” (Appadurai, 2006, p. 596). Latin American particularity and global literary reach, through the Spanish book industry, show a system of cultural production and exchange under a transnational hegemony.

Throughout this thesis, then, I have shown that the Latin American Boom was the cornerstone for the hegemony of Spain’s publishing industry within the Spanish-speaking world. I have compared how two very different book-related political economies operated in Spain and Mexico. The political context in Mexico, which was ruled for decades by a single political party, did not favour the development of the publishing industry, despite the country enjoying greater intellectual and creative freedom than Spain. The strategies that were implemented in Spain, however, meant that the construction of a literary career became a possibility. This country also implemented public policies that favoured the publishing industry and the emergence of a new management model. The articulation of these factors generated a political economy of the book that enabled writers to become professionals, benefited the industry, and contributed to works that were first published in Spain reaching international audiences through translations into multiple languages. All of these factors implied that the Spanish book industry, among other consequences, became the desirable site of publication for writers in that language. It also meant that the publishing houses of the country were the ones that gained economic and creative strength; that the cultural and intellectual point of reference was clearly located in Spain or, to mention a 21st-century example, that in order to internationalise, a Mexican publishing house such as Sexto Piso would have to open a branch in Spain in order to actually achieve such purpose. This points to the implications of hegemony.

This study has opened up other lines of research on issues that relate to the topics I have examined here.⁶⁴ These, in some sense, are related with the limitations of my own research of which I would like to point out two, before referring to other lines of investigation. On the one hand, my hegemonic approach allowed me to link objects of study which, to my knowledge, are rarely brought together. However, this approach also narrowed down the presentation of my analysis of each element. It could be argued that the topics of each of the chapters of my dissertation could be expanded into a thesis, offering more data and detailed analysis of the intricacies each issue entails. On the other hand, again related with scope, an analysis like the one I have presented would benefit from drawing comparisons with the publishing industries of other languages, particularly English, French and Portuguese, which I was unable to engage with here due to length limitations.

Regarding the new lines of research, they are as follows. The role of women in the Latin American Boom could be examined from different theoretical perspectives. Another potential line of research would be to examine how the hegemonic process whose origins I explore in this thesis developed subsequently, such as by examining how in the 1990s large publishing conglomerates were created that eventually absorbed the different imprints that originally published the Boom writers, such as Seix-Barral. Apart from the aforementioned issues, the role of secondary players in this process — such as the many writers that did not gain the prominence of the Latin American Boom protagonists — and other related social phenomena is another field worth exploring.

Other publishing industries could also be compared with those of Spain and Mexico, be it during the period I have focused on or at other times. As far as comparative studies are concerned, it is clear to me that the most significant starting point would be comparing Spain's publishing industry with that of Cuba, due to this country's political and cultural importance in the 1960s, and that of Argentina, which has a long history and reputation for quality, yet paradoxically did not become the capital of the Boom, despite being the place where the most important Boom novel, *Cien años de soledad* (*One Hundred Years of Solitude*), was first published. My research provides a model for applying the

⁶⁴ While it would be a historic approach, rather than a sociological one, I would like to note that no biographies of Carmen Balcells or Carlos Fuentes have yet been written — in the case of Balcells, as well as her publishing career, a study of this sort could explore her close personal relationship with the two protagonists of the Boom who went on to win the Nobel Prize for Literature, García Márquez and Vargas Llosa.

theory of hegemony and shows how historical, cultural, political, economic, and social discourses can be compared and interwoven in studies of issues that relate directly to those I have explored here or, indeed, of issues of an entirely different nature.

The Latin American Boom entailed several events. In the first half of the 1960s, at least four Latin American writers burst onto the Spanish-language literary field and, before long, the international public sphere. No Latin American writers before them had ever achieved such presence and resonance. Two of these authors went on to win the Nobel Prize for Literature and they all were awarded several literary prizes that were established in the 1960s. During the Boom years, several Latin American writers became true professionals whose work reached international audiences and was distributed and sold throughout the Spanish-speaking world. In the process, an industrial structure was created that opened up this possibility for other authors. This change meant that the literature and culture of Latin America became globally visible.

At the start of this thesis, I wrote that I was fascinated by the paradox that the Latin American Boom was a publishing phenomenon that centred on literary works by Latin American authors that were launched onto the international stage by publishing houses based in Spain, rather than in their countries of origin. I will end with another paradox that speaks to the power and significance of the articulation of social events that took place in Spain between 1963 and 1967: the protagonists of the Latin American Boom seem to illustrate the fact that taking on the censorship exercised by the Franco regime was apparently more appealing than finding a way around the shortfalls of the Mexican publishing industry's international distribution system, which could not possibly have fulfilled these writers' aspirations to reach international audiences and to become true professionals. Although the management model for Spain's book industry was still in its infancy, it was clear to these authors that it would help them achieve their ends.

It pleases me that, as for my own academic goals, a Spanish version of this dissertation will be published shortly. Together with the knowledge on the phenomenon that I acquired and the scholarly skills on research and intellectual enquiry, all these pages are the outcome of the years dedicated to researching, thinking and writing about the Latin American Boom and the publishing industries of Spain and Mexico for this PhD thesis.

Throughout the chapters of this piece, I have offered a novel, detailed and original sociological understanding of the Boom. I went from macro to micro elements, showing how from the broad context of history up to the apparently minimal element of personal decisions, several events articulated, contributing to the emergence of Latin American cultural production into the global scene. By bringing together disperse knowledge and by going beyond literary and cultural studies this dissertation shares a sociological interpretation of the Boom seen through the theoretical lenses of Laclau and Mouffe showing how a new hegemony, that of the Spanish book industry, began to be built. Taking this approach has also led me, in these last pages, to examine in theoretical terms how globalisation could be a process partially, but effectively, benefiting the cultural production of previously marginalised countries. In this sense, the Latin American Boom writers became global authors and international public intellectuals, while strengthening the Spanish publishing industry through their success. This in turn, would help consolidate Spain's hegemony within the Spanish-language book industry. Dissecting how this happened has been the focus of this study, which by doing so contributes to the sociology of culture and the sociology of publishing.

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Websites

- Centro Regional para el Fomento del Libro en América Latina y el Caribe [Regional Center for the Promotion of Books in Latin America and Caribbean] (cerlalc.org)
- Instituto Cervantes [Cervantes Institute] (www.cervantes.es)
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística [National Statistics Institute] (www.ine.es)

Appendices

Appendix 1



INFORMED CONSENT

Title of Project: The Book Industry in Spain and Mexico. A Genealogy of Hegemony in the Spanish and Mexican Book Industries: Literary Agents and the Latin American Boom, 1964-1972

Name of Researcher: Consuelo Sáizar

As part of a research project on the book industry in Spain and Mexico, I am conducting interviews. You will be asked questions about your experience and opinions regarding the book industry in Spanish and its development over time. This research is being conducted as part of my PhD in Sociology at the University of Cambridge. The interview will take about 40 minutes and will be recorded and transcribed. At this point, your data will be anonymised and your name replaced with a pseudonym in all transcripts should you so desire. Not anonymising data could have negative consequences in the professional sphere.

If you are interested in receiving further information about this project, please contact me: cs811@cam.ac.uk

Do you have any questions?

Please tick box

1. I confirm that I have understood these instructions and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason.
3. I understand that my responses will be anonymised if I want them to be and only used for academic research.
4. I understand that my interview may be recorded.
5. I agree to take part in the above project.

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Name of Researcher

Date

Signature

Appendix 2

Interview Guide

- 1) Can you describe a typical publishing house in your country in the 1960s?
- 2) At the time, did publishing houses distribute their production internationally?
- 3) What are some of the traits, beyond their novels, that might have attracted the public towards the authors of the Latin American Boom?
- 4) What was the role of literary agents, editors and publishers in the publishing industry of your country in the 1960s?
- 5) What was the relationship between the national government and the publishing industry at the time?
- 6) Was there a dominant publishing industry in the Spanish language by the end of the 1960s?
- 7) What were the problems of the publishing industry of your country in the 1960s?

Appendix 3

Start date and date of award to Boom writers.

Literary Prizes

Prize Name	Start Date	Date of Award
Nobel Prize in Literature	1901	1982, 2010
Biblioteca Breve Prize	1958	1962, 1967
Formentor Prize	1961	2011
Rómulo Gallegos Prize	1964	1967, 1972, 1977
Cervantes Prize	1976	1987, 1994
Juan Rulfo Prize IBF Guadalajara	1991	1986, 1994
Princess of Asturias Prize	1981	1986, 1994
Carlos Fuentes Prize	2012	2012

©CSázar

Appendix 4

A Telegram by Spanish Literary Agent Carmen Balcells to Peruvian Novelist Mario Vargas Llosa

Charges to pay _____ s. _____ d.

RECEIVED

POST OFFICE TELEGRAM

No. _____ OFFICE STAMP

Prefix. Time handed in. Office of Origin and Service Instructions. Words.

Q598 MLC311 BMA043 GBLB CO ENBA

At _____ m 025 6625 BARCELONA DE 25/24 23

From _____

To _____

By _____ 1105 VIA ENTEL

MARIO VARGAS LLOSA 7 PHILBEACH GARDENS

LONDON/SW5

LLEGO DOMINGO VUELO IB424 DIRECTAMENTE VUESTRA CASA TRAIGO GALERADAS CHEQUES Y ABRAZOS STOP TELEFONO CASA 2031520 CARMEN

COL-7 IB424 2031520

RAMS ENQUIRY" or call, with this form B or

Other enquiries should be accompanied by this form, and, if possible, the envelope.

Appendix 5

A Letter from Spanish Literary Agent Carmen Balcells to Peruvian
Novelist Mario Vargas Llosa

AGENCIA LITERARIA CARMEN BALCELLS

2/

Sr.D.Mario Vargas Llosa
Puerto Rico

16.4.69

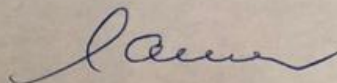
Esto le obligará a llamarme ya que de hecho lo que ha quedado claro es que la editorial te apoya económicamente y yo quiero aprovechar la firma de un contrato para que esos términos queden sobre el papel y perfectamente delimitados.

Ya hablé con Beatriz y mañana veo a Esther y te informaré en su momento de estas conversaciones.

Escríbeme a vuelta de correo contestándome estas dos preguntas:

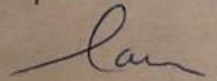
1. Cuándo tendrás el manuscrito terminado
2. Cuánto dinero quieres recibir mensualmente a cuenta de tus ediciones de lengua española, *es por tiempo indefinido.*

Espero pues tu carta. Un cariñoso saludo a los dos,



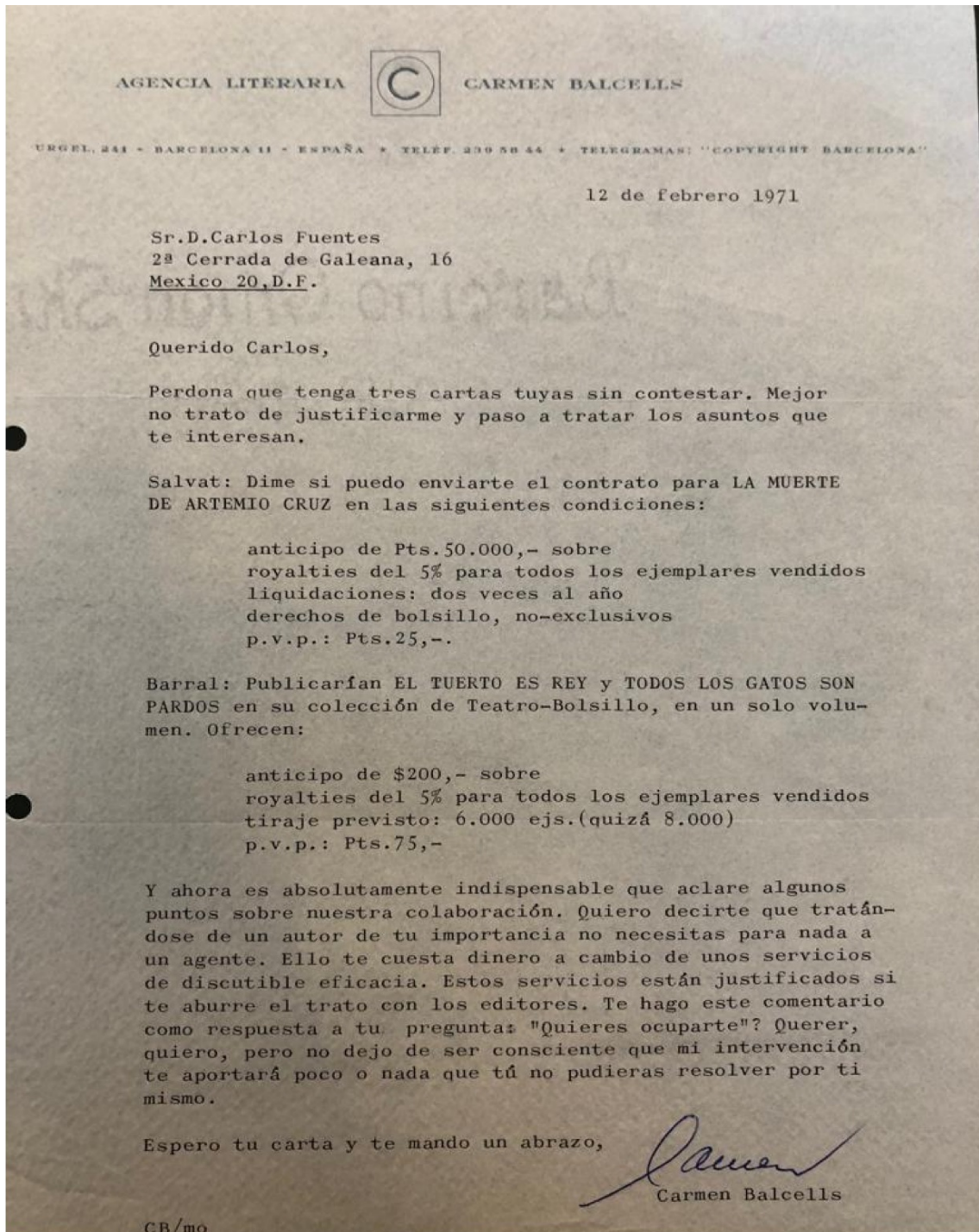
Carmen Balcells

Hay mil cosas que deseo decirte
y que se apolpean en mi cabeza, pero
lo esencial es que te pongas tranquilo
y yo me siento ya con los riendos en
la mano para que lo consigas. Todo
lo que está mencionado en mi carta
está en mi cabeza, de modo que
tu TRANQUILO! Un fuerte abrazo,



Appendix 6

A Letter from Spanish Literary Agent Carmen Balcells to Mexican Novelist Carlos Fuentes



Appendix 7

Contract by Spanish Literary Agent Carmen Balcells for Colombian Novelist Gabriel García Márquez

ADDENDUM establecido el día 27 de noviembre de 1997 entre

CARMEN BALCELLS, en representación de GABRIEL GARCIA MARQUEZ, c/o Agencia Literaria Carmen Balcells, S.A., Diagonal 580, 08021 Barcelona, España (CEDENTE) y

EDITORIAL DIANA, S.A., Roberto Gayol, n° 1219, Colonia del Valle, Delegación Benito Juárez, 03100 México, D.F., México (editor)

a los siguientes contratos:

9.9.91 y addendum 26.5.94 para OJOS DE PERRO AZUL, LA HOJARASCA, EL CORONEL NO TIENE QUIEN LE ESCRIBA, LOS FUNERALES DE LA MAMA GRANDE, LA MALA HORA, CIEN AÑOS DE SOLEDAD, LA INCREIBLE Y TRISTE HISTORIA DE LA CANDIDA ERENDIRA Y DE SU ABUELA DESALMADA, EL OTOÑO DEL PATRIARCA, CRONICA DE UNA MUERTE ANUNCIADA, EL AMOR EN LOS TIEMPOS DEL COLERA y EL GENERAL EN SU LABERINTO,
11.6.92 para DOCE CUENTOS PEREGRINOS (EXTRAÑOS PEREGRINOS. DOCE CUENTOS),
9.3.94 para DEL AMOR Y OTROS DEMONIOS y
25.7.94 para RELATO DE UN NAUFRAGO

para la edición en lengua castellana en MEXICO únicamente de OJOS DE PERRO AZUL, LA HOJARASCA, EL CORONEL NO TIENE QUIEN LE ESCRIBA, LOS FUNERALES DE LA MAMA GRANDE, LA MALA HORA, CIEN AÑOS DE SOLEDAD, LA INCREIBLE Y TRISTE HISTORIA DE LA CANDIDA ERENDIRA Y DE SU ABUELA DESALMADA, EL OTOÑO DEL PATRIARCA, CRONICA DE UNA MUERTE ANUNCIADA, EL AMOR EN LOS TIEMPOS DEL COLERA, EL GENERAL EN SU LABERINTO, DOCE CUENTOS PEREGRINOS (EXTRAÑOS PEREGRINOS. DOCE CUENTOS), DEL AMOR Y OTROS DEMONIOS y RELATO DE UN NAUFRAGO (Obra) de GABRIEL GARCIA MARQUEZ (Autor)

En virtud de este Addendum el CEDENTE y el EDITOR acuerdan los siguientes pactos.

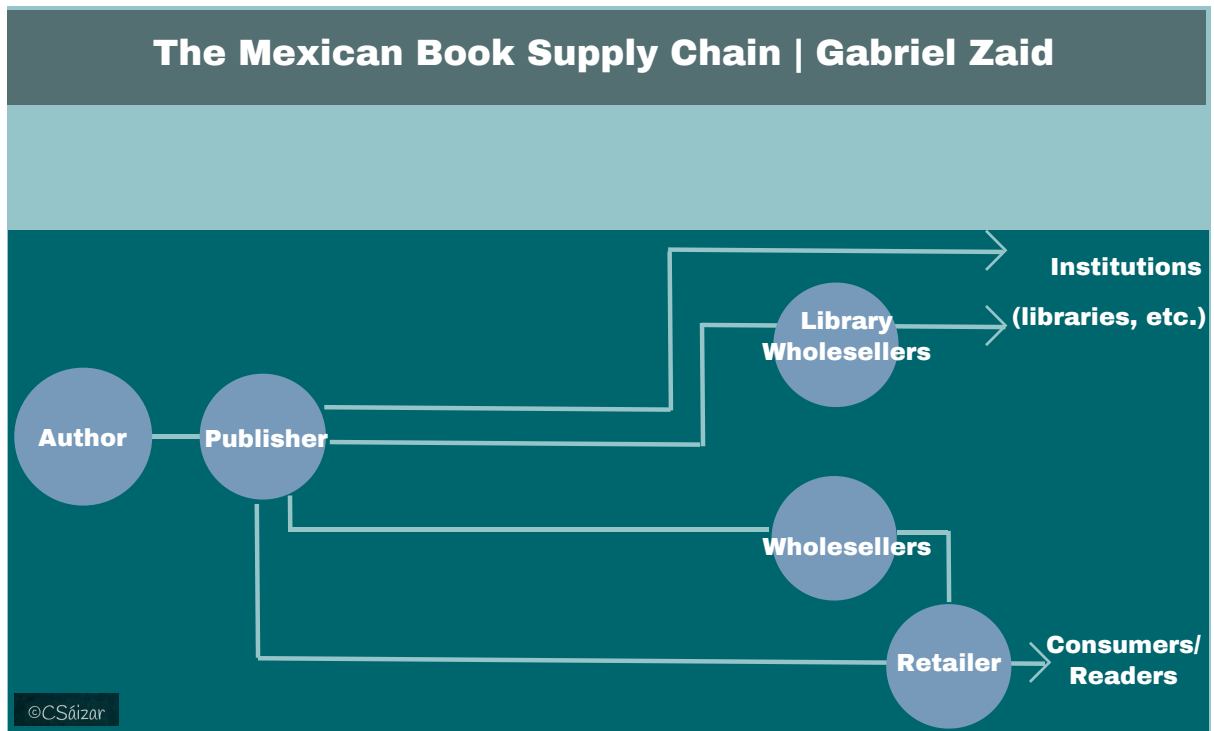
- 1) Los contratos citados quedan prolongados desde esta fecha por el plazo de doce (12) meses, es decir, hasta el 27 de noviembre de 1998.
- 2) Por la prolongación de estos contratos el EDITOR pagará al CEDENTE la suma de UN DOLAR USA (US\$ 1) a la firma de este addendum.
- 3) El resto de las condiciones de los mencionados contratos permanecen invariables.

OK. GABRIEL

EL CEDENTE

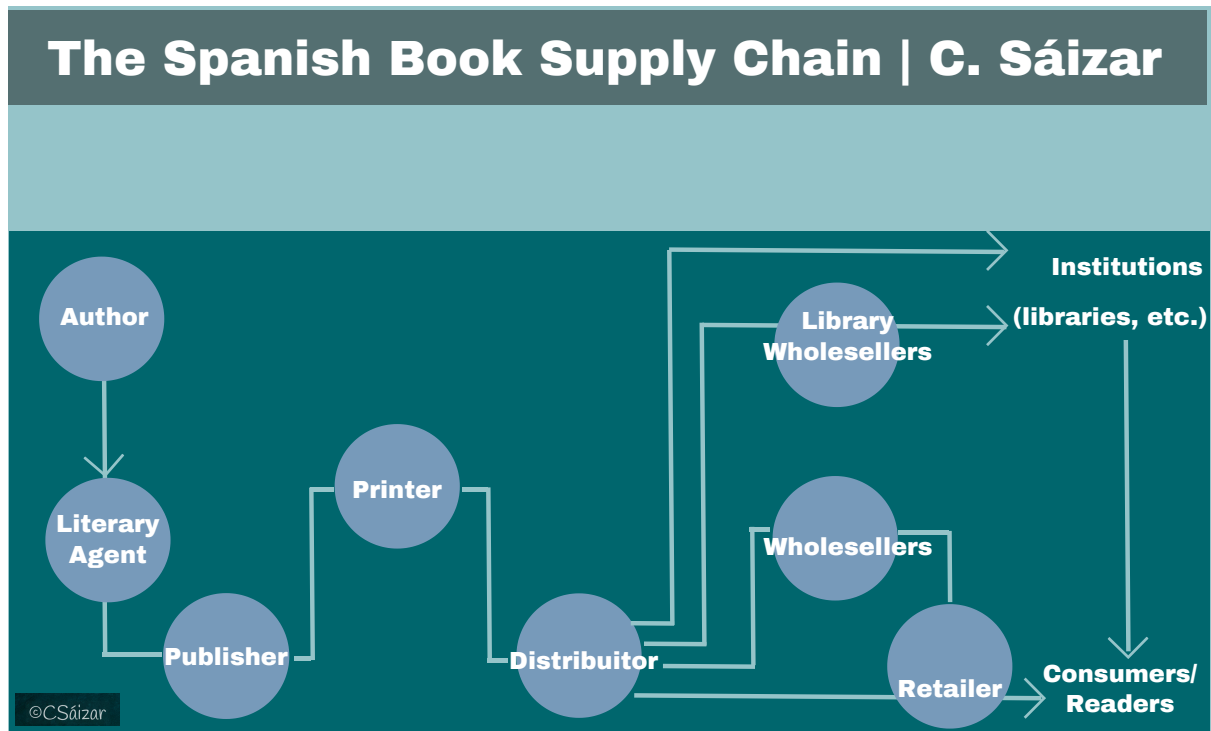
EL EDITOR

Appendix 8



Graphic representation of the book chain in Mexico, inspired by John B. Thompson's *Books in the Digital Age*, realised by @CSáizar with data from Gabriel Zaid's *Organización de la manufactura en talleres de impresión para la industria en México*.

Appendix 9



Graphic representation of the book chain in Mexico, inspired by John B. Thompson's *Books in the Digital Age*, realised by @CSáizar.

Appendix 10

