

THE EMERGENCE OF THE SPANISH PENINSULAR CAMPUS NOVEL

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to the Temple University Graduate Board

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In Partial Fulfillment  
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**ABSTRACT**

Title: The Emergence of the Spanish Peninsular Campus Novel

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This doctoral dissertation identifies a new sub-genre in Contemporary Spanish Peninsular Literature, the Spanish Campus Novel. The impetus for research was to ascertain whether or not the genre characterized the Spanish novels dealing with university life (SpCN). The texts in question build upon the British and American Campus Novel tradition while inflecting it with issues, styles and themes particular to Spanish literature.

I examined nine examples of the Spanish Campus Novel (SpCN) to determine their distinctive characteristics: Carlota Fainberg, Antonio Muñoz Molina (1999); El inquilino (1989) and La velocidad de la luz (2005), Javier Cercas; Todas las almas (1989) and Negra espalda del tiempo (1998), Javier Marias; El enigma (2002), Josefina Aldecoa; Último domingo en Londres (1997), Laura Freixas; Mimoun (1988), Rafael Chirbes; and Soy un escritor frustrado (1996), José Angel Mañas. In spite of variances in the circumstances of the protagonists, the repetition of key elements created a justification for the academic novel classification.

Chapter One reviewed criticism of the Anglo academic novel and established essential characteristics of the majority of the novels: campus location, academic protagonist, satire and humor, job-insecurity, political correctness and departmental politics. I reviewed the socio-political history of the Spanish university in order to contextualize the SpCN, both its paucity

and its recent emergence. Chapter Two examines the works of Antonio Muñoz Molina and Javier Cercas; their protagonists share the commonality of living and working in the US. Chapter Three considers two novels of Javier Marías and how the author plays with the both the academic novel and fiction. Chapter Four reviews the novels by Josefina Aldecoa and Laura Freixas and the manner in which stereotypical professors (sexually predatory ones) imply certain cultural mores. Chapter Five investigates the lyrical novel of Rafael Chirbes and its contribution to the campus novel. Additionally, José Angel Mañas' bleak comedy is investigated as unique, the only novel taking place in Spain. The conclusion summarizes the novels, the identified Anglo and Spanish characteristics and contextualizes the novels within current trends in recent Spanish Peninsular fiction. Lastly, an overview of four Latin American Campus Novels is suggested for further research.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The campus novel has been a fixture in British and American literature for over 50 years, arguably some might say for over 500 years. Mortimer Proctor, author of the first comprehensive study of the academic novel, notes that one study from 1909 argued that Chaucer's Clerk of Oxford presaged the 19<sup>th</sup> century Oxford scholar. Nevertheless, it has been during these last fifty years, as a university education became available to a larger and less homogenous population, that the campus novel emerged as a genre in its own right. In so doing, it acquired certain characteristics that were evident in enough novels that they became inherent to the genre, such as humor and satire, academic jargon and job insecurity. Lucky Jim, written in 1954 and considered a seminal work in the field, reflects all of these traits, and indeed, many believe that Kingsley Amis' novel about a British redbrick university was the first to parody academe. Heretofore, the English professor had existed in the quintessential ivory tower as a human creature, intelligent and moral, above reproach. In the early 1950s, the ivory tower still betokened wisdom and guidance. Lucky Jim exposed comically the inner workings of university life: the capriciousness of the administration, the apathy of the lecturers and the pedantry of the professorial staff. This novel established the campus novel as satire and its novelistic depiction of campus life has prevailed, even to the present day. Nonetheless, the satirical novel can take many forms and tones. Lucky Jim and A New Life (1961) by

Bernard Malamud both end with the protagonists lampooning their departments in vicious (albeit humorous attacks) and subsequently leaving academia for a better, or at least, a new life. The texts suggest that the decadence of the university or the department is too acute to be mended.

Regardless of the conclusions of the Amis' and Malamud's protagonists, a university education is not in danger of being eradicated anytime soon. In the US, 67% of high school graduates began higher education studies in September of 2007<sup>1</sup>. Compare this number to British statistics. "The 20-year Economic and Social Research Council study found that in 1986 about 10 per cent of pupils in England and Wales went to university, compared with 17 per cent in Scotland." In the late 1990s, the numbers had increased dramatically with 25% of English pupils and 37% of Scottish beginning tertiary studies.<sup>2</sup> Although the numbers are considerably fewer in Great Britain than in the US, it was still a triple digit increase. Spanish statistics are equally staggering. In 1980, 18% of the eligible population attended university in Spain. This number nearly tripled to 45% by 2005.<sup>3</sup> The Spanish numbers are even more remarkable considering that 50% of the student body did not complete secondary education as reported in *El País* in 2007.<sup>4</sup> These numbers substantiate society's belief that a university education is necessary for success as an adult. The numbers also indicate that universities continue to grow in size, importance, and relevance. Perhaps most importantly, the numbers indicate that the college experience represents a common one for a large portion of the population in the US, Britain and Spain. As already mentioned, vignettes of the common experience of those who pass through the hallowed doors of academe have been extensively portrayed

in English language literature with Lucky Jim and A New Life representing apices of style and content.

Neither the University nor its depiction, though, is limited to writers from the United States and the United Kingdom. Oxford began educating students in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and Harvard in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the two representing the educational heritage in their respective nations, but the founding of the University of Salamanca in Spain in 1218 rivals that of its continental peer. The Salamancan history illustrates its importance in the intellectual development of Spain, including but not limited to its role in the development of Roman law in the sixteenth century and its sponsoring of humanistic debates regarding human slavery in the seventeenth. Why then, one might ask, exists a body of work in English that strives to capture the university experience - a fundamental link in a country's fence of development – yet there exists no equivalent in the Spanish language? Upon asking and researching this question, unexpected answers appeared.

Firstly, contemporary texts do exist that qualify as dealing with university life and secondly, the reasons for their paucity during the expansion of the English language version followed by the recent emergence of works in Spanish about the academic life are indubitably linked to Spain's political and economic history. Thus, an affirmative answer to the question of whether the Spanish campus novel exists was discovered. As such, the ensuing research was inevitable. Since the academic novel in Spanish does exist, exhaustive analysis of the relevant texts was necessary in order to determine how it compares to the English language version. Therefore, this thesis undertakes the task of defining the campus novel in Spanish, examining the socio-political situations which

hindered and subsequently fostered its emergence, and scrutinizing the literary characteristics of the pertinent novels and their authors.

The campus novel has been studied under a multitude of names: the university novel, the academic novel, the novel of university life, but the term campus novel, in my opinion, best identifies the genre as one which has a spatial as well as a conceptual connotation. In its most basic form, the academic novel either takes place on a college campus or its protagonists are members of the university community, primarily students and professors. Elaine Showalter in her entertaining and chronological survey of the English language academic novel, Faculty Towers, references the many different critics who have contributed to its study and classification as a sub-genre of contemporary fiction. She states first that the most commonly held view is that it is largely satirical and thus, in her estimation, funny, while Ian Carter finds academic novels excruciatingly tedious because they are all the same (3). Steven Connor concurs with Carter's appraisal of repetition but without the negative connotation. He identifies two basic plot lines. If the University can be considered any of the following: a safe haven, a refuge or an insular society, the first story line recounts a disturbance to the prescribed social order. The second plot line is also predicated on the closed community. In this scenario, a character is striving to flee the ivy labyrinth (3). Janice Rossen applies a theory of hegemony to the primary theme of the academic novel. She believes that the foundation of the academic novel is competition, both within the institution and in relation to the exterior world (3). However, it is Showalter's classification that best captures the essence of a captivating academic novel.

The best academic novels experiment and play with the genre of fiction itself, comment on contemporary issues, satirize professorial stereotypes and educational trends, and convey the pain of intellectuals called upon to measure themselves against each other and against their internalized expectations of brilliance. (4)

Elaine Showalter's description of the academic novel establishes an important distinction that the other critics fail to mention; the academic novel innovates. Given so many clearly defined particulars, people and even place and time, the academic novel can dispense with most extensive background information, thus concentrating upon illuminating more subtle elements of the diegesis. Showalter mentions David Lodge and A.S. Byatt as authors whose academic novels reinvent a literary style, specifically in their cases, of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Lodge toys with the industrial novel in Nice Work (1988) and Byatt creates a compendium of Victorian poetry in Possession (1990) (7). The inventiveness and ludic nature of these novels demonstrate the unique literary prowess of their authors. At the same time, in spite of their vastly different styles, plots and characters, both are undeniably academic novels.

Although more recent studies of university fiction have not distinguished between British and American novels, the seminal studies of academic fiction in these countries focus solely upon one location. Harvard's first benefactor, John Harvard, graduated from the University of Cambridge in England and Harvard's early years reflect the English influence. The American university, however, quickly diverged from this model and became the standard for the modern research university. The US also innovated in course offerings. For example, the College of William and Mary in Virginia, the second oldest college in the US, first began to offer courses in Fine Arts in 1779. British counterparts,

Oxford and Cambridge, did not address fine arts until 1871 and after World War I, respectively. These few facts demonstrate just some of the concrete differences between the American and British systems. And, the aforementioned statistics from Britain and the US reveal even more about the role of the University in society: less than a third of eligible Britons attend university, whereas, in the last twenty years, over two thirds of American youth have attended some form of tertiary education. Therefore, a brief, yet separate overview of the British Campus Novel (BrCN) and the American Campus Novel (AmCN) will elucidate the trajectories that have resulted in the genre that is the campus novel.

Mortimer Proctor, author of The English University Novel, 1957, begins by identifying some general traits of the BrCN. For example, he points out that the university as theme is rarely sufficient to fill a novel, although some novels focusing on the undergraduate around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century manage to do so (3). Another tendency of the BrCN is the preponderance of Oxford as the university in question. It appears 85% of the time and Proctor offers several theories in explanation. He suggests that there may be a link between Oxford's accentuation of the humanities in comparison to Cambridge's greater emphasis on mathematics (4). Alternatively, Proctor proposes that the royalist political affiliations of Oxford (and as such) its history of supporting impossible causes speaks to the romantic and begs fictional development (5). The relationship between the political circumstances of a location and its influence on the academic novel may seem incongruous at first, especially since academia offers a haven from external factors, yet as will be shown, there is an undeniable relationship.

Proctor begins his study with depictions of the university from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The early character portrayals of scholars were pejorative and many of those early characters became archetypes, such as the scholar-fool (21). However, Queen Elizabeth visited both Cambridge and Oxford twice and her interest in what was being created in the Universities --poetry, drama, etc. -- as well as the gratifying welcome she received, contributed to a more widespread interest in the university. Additionally, Elizabeth's interest led to a more favorable impression of those affiliated with the institution. As a result, the university became a fertile source of characters – scholar-libertine, dullard, and even butler (21-23)! However, the increasing politicization of the university in a climate of religious oppression marked a severe deterioration in the quality of education at the end of the Renaissance (30).

Wealth disparity marked the 18<sup>th</sup> century British university. It was a world in which the wealthy and titled earned a degree in two years and the paying commoner, in four. The excesses of the rich and the diligence of the poor became in fiction the stereotypes of "fast men," "slow men," "reading men," "bloods," and "tufts" (37). Each group behaved in fiction in a seemingly exaggerated manner, yet apparently true to reality. The best example of this is the scholar incapable of interacting with society; laden with Greek and Latin and incomprehensible references, he is nothing short of an idiot. Nevertheless, as Proctor writes, "Novels of the eighteenth century, insofar as they contain university subject matter, are generically the most immediate ancestors of the university novels" (40).

The reforms of the 1800s, the establishment of standards and the move to impartial faculty appointments revived the declining university and consequently, university fiction. (Proctor 51).

With reform, it became more plausible to take an interest in the success of scholars; examination halls became the scenes of triumphs and disasters in which good very nearly always triumphed over evil. And the years of reform brought forth new subject matter as well, as extracurricular activities were gradually removed from the taverns and billiard rooms. Now were founded and expanded the debating clubs, amateur theatrical societies, undergraduate publications, and competitive athletics, which came to play such a large part in the lives of undergraduates both real and fictional. (59)

Unfortunately, though, the improvement in the reputation and quality of academia did not make it more accessible to the common Briton. As previously stated, the university is a singular, insular world. Proctor notes that the British university novels of the 19<sup>th</sup> century operate on this premise in extremis. The worlds of Oxford and Cambridge can only be compared to one another, the life there, as well as the vernacular of the students and faculty, was alien to everyone outside those spheres, thus further emphasizing the privilege and the exclusivity of academia. Proctor points out that the academic lifestyle and its accoutrements had been developing for 600 years. As a result, the Victorian novels were neither relevant to general society nor objective about the university, but they were abundant. Interestingly enough, major authors of Victorian literature: Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, the Brontes, did not contribute to this genre (11). The novels themselves, consistent with Victorian ideals, contrived to proselytize reform, none of which is worth noting, or they depicted humorously and indulgently the decadent

scholars (87). The most famous and best written of the humorous works is considered to be Tom Hughes' Tom Brown at Oxford from 1861.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century continued to lighten the mood and frequently, academia became the backdrop for romances and melodramas (118).

Beginning about 1880, however, university fiction began to reveal tendencies toward a more specialized kind of romantic novel . . . This was its assumption of the view -- supported ever since by enthusiastic old grads -- that actually the days spent in the camaraderie of college life are the best a man is ever apt to see. And even more, it created a breed of undergraduate Crichtons qualified to populate the new utopia. It was now that the undergraduate stood forth, much like Tom Brown, as a healthy and usually pure young man with sound instincts which his love for clean fun could not pervert. (120)

The vision of the hardy undergraduate remains perpetuated in pop culture via television and movies such as *Brideshead Revisited* adapted from Evelyn Waugh or *Maurice* from Merchant-Ivory Productions. In his conclusion, Proctor ponders why university fiction, spanning over 3 centuries, never consistently produced great works. He proposes that its absence is due in large part to the omnipresent stereotypical character and that the academic novelist feels compelled to rely upon the stereotypes as the only source of material (184–85). Yet, at the same time, the novels, even the mediocre ones, have managed to document the century of reform in England. “As a literary genre, it has always reflected conditions within Oxford and Cambridge far more closely than it has followed any literary trends or movements” (185). This is the background into which Kingsley Amis burst with Lucky Jim in 1954. Proctor comments on Amis’ innovative text and observes that “Amis is a blunt and violent writer, impatient with subtleties, but his iconoclastic bludgeoning has been governed by a sure ear for professorial gibberish

that leaves the reader with the sense that higher education may after all be simply a matter of comic lunacy” (176). Amis changed the theme, style and insularity of the campus novel with Lucky Jim. Henceforth, the BrCN no longer was limited to pseudo-realism and stereotypical humor; it became a genre of innovation and surprise, embracing its roots as it grew beyond them.

Briefly, the question of women must be considered, especially since two of the most brilliant British writers who have written campus novels are women: A.S. Byatt and Zadie Smith. In the 1940s, Christopher Hobhouse described the women students and dons of Oxford, in scathing terms. Their intellectual rigor is mocked:

Though their numbers are so small, a casual visitor to Oxford might well gain the impression that the women form an actual majority. They are perpetually awheel. They bicycle in droves from lecture to lecture, capped and gowned, handle-bars laden with note-books, and note-books crammed with notes. Relatively few men go to lectures, the usefulness of which was superseded some while ago by the invention of the printing press. The women, docile and literal, continue to flock to every lecture with mediaeval zeal, and record in an hour of longhand scribbling what could have been assimilated in ten minutes in an armchair. (Proctor 135)

An even more egregious sin to Mr. Hobhouse is the women’s aesthetic sensibilities – or lack thereof:

Very few of the women take the least pains to be attractive or even mature. Fifty years have not mellowed them; they still care nothing for appearance or comfort. They run no bills in the High Street, but deck themselves in hairy woolens and shapeless tweeds. Their domestic background is equally repellent. Instead of a quiet pair of rooms, guarded by an impenetrable "oak," upon a secluded staircase, each girl has a minute green-and-yellow bed-sitter opening off an echoing shiny corridor . . . Instead of claret and port, they drink cocoa and Kia-Ora. (Proctor 136)

The women who began invading, if we are to agree with Mr. Hobhouse, the sacred halls of the University, also began to fictionalize it. Their efforts were primarily romantic, melodramatic, and catalogues of the delights of setting up house in the dormitory (142). These delights included detailed depictions of interior design and the preparations and preoccupations of marriage. Proctor classifies these books and concerns as “preposterous bypaths”, almost impeding the evolution of academic fiction. It is Elaine Showalter who is able to vindicate the academic woman novelist. Dorothy Sayers, novelist and translator, wrote Gaudy Nights, in 1936, and modeled the setting after her own Oxford experience. Sayers portrays the female dons positively, neither the one-dimensional ninnies nor the hags that Hobhouse describes. Showalter underscores Sayers’ feminist leanings as her novel not only breaks the female mold, but also surpasses the male paradigm. Showalter writes, “However sexless, arid, and withered the male academic may be, Sayers proves that the female academic does not have to copy him” (7).

Mortimer Proctor’s western contemporary, John O. Lyons, examined in equal profundity the rise of the campus novel in America in 1962 in The College Novel in America. It is worthwhile to note the dates of these two critical editions. Both Proctor’s and Lyons’ texts were published after the appearance of Lucky Jim, a novel that was not only a campus novel, but also a critically acclaimed and financially successful one, winning the Somerset Maugham Award for fiction. In his introduction, Lyons ponders the lack of excellence in the academic novel in spite of its fertile and apropos dimensions. It adheres to Aristotelian conditions and the protagonists represent articulated diverse subjects (xiii). Like their British counterparts, American literary heavyweights had not

written about or included the university in their novels by the date of Lyons' book. With American writers such as Philip Roth, Francine Prose and Jane Smiley adding to the genre in the last twenty years, Lyons' estimation of the campus novel as a lighter genre stands corrected.

Nevertheless, Lyons' work is critical to the history of the campus novel and he states simply, yet profoundly that in England and America, "this most serious type of novel of academic life is basically anti-intellectual" (xv). Although the subject is beyond the scope of this investigation, the anti-intellectualism and the anti-university sentiment is a constant in American history, especially in the recent election year of 2008 when the universities are suffering attacks from conservative politicians, media and bloggers for their liberal bias.<sup>5</sup> Lyons extrapolates from the theme of the early campus novels to explicate why this attitude exists.

Historically, the novel's audience is one that is romantic and it does not want a cloistered excitement. It is an audience which has perhaps a Protestant suspicion of the monastic nature of the academy, and a middle-class anti-intellectual impatience with intellectual drama. For this reason the academic type in fiction has often been conventionalized and labeled satire and ridicule so that the novelist and his readers can quickly get back to the real world of men or the forest where true education takes place.  
(xvii)

In spite of the faults of the academic novel, Lyons devotes a study to its American evolution. The following two traits signify for him the crux of the CN: a university education is examined soberly and professors and students are present (xvii) and the novel has an agenda, whether for tolerance or pedagogical betterment, the AmCN campaigns actively for its cause (xviii).

Lyons examines in great detail how the American intellectual came to be regarded with suspicion especially when historically the Western World has revered the hero-scholar - Alexander and Caesar (3). He proposes dual factors. Firstly, the advance of the nation was due in large part to practical professions: engineers and businessmen. Synchronous with the great expansion of the country in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the Romanticism of New England celebrating nature as typified by Emerson and Thoreau (5). Thus, the universities did not produce the men who made the world go round. Notwithstanding this attitude, Lyons identifies AmCNs from as early as 1828. Nathaniel Hawthorne's Fanshawe ranks as the first AmCN; its setting and plot take place in a New England university. Notably, Hawthorne describes the imaginary university as one in which the education concentrated on the pragmatic and not the abstract. In other words, the country setting resulted in a virtuous and worthwhile education (6). Hawthorne's dalliance in the CN, however, did not result in a litter of copycats. The AmCN did not really emerge for another 70 years or until Harvard had established itself as an exceptional - in terms of uniqueness and exclusivity - institution. Interestingly enough, the emergence of the AmCN does reflect a copycat effect, but not of fiction copying fiction; instead life imitated art. Hughes' character, Tom Brown, Tom's milieu, the raucous Oxford of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and Tom's antics became the model for the Harvard undergraduate's behavior (Lyons 8). The novels that then emerged sought to record the exuberance of the American undergraduate (who, bear in mind, was imitating the fictitious British student). However, even in the comic retelling of the clowning around of the American students, the AmCN differs from the BrCN. Lyons elucidates,

“But a peculiarly American tone to them (*the novels*) makes these pranks discordant.

Although the authors seem to view the undergraduate’s life as a golden one, there is a recurrent suspicion of the values of the closteted education process” (emphasis added 23).

In spite of misgivings about the University, students continued to attend it and the AmCN continued to evolve. Post World War I AmCNs differed from their British contemporaries by their detailed description of social, specifically sexual, activities (Lyons 24). F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *This Side of Paradise*, 1920, is responsible for this trend, but also responsible for featuring the first actual intellectual experience of the student (Lyons 28). One of the thematic consequences of the trend was the notion that the university represented a place of worldly wisdom in contrast to the purity of youth (31). The novels of the 1920s vilify the debauchery of the university while precisely documenting them, as well as abhorring the greater admission of students to academe (Lyons 45).

The academic women and their novels are fascinating for themselves as much for their divergence from their British counterparts. Many of the AmCNs from the 1930s and 1940s which treat women and/or are written by women express anger over the absurd restrictions placed on women’s freedom, the fostering of conformity by the faculty and “the situation of controlled ignorance in an entirely feminine society which leads to Lesbianism” (Lyons 59). In short, Lyons summarizes these novels as hopelessly terrible, reflecting perhaps, the lack of education that the graduates receive. If these pathetic novels are the sum of their scholarly achievement then the women must not have achieved much (62). A singular exception is Shirley Jackson’s *Hangsaman* (1951) which

manages to epitomize not only the women's campus novel, but also the AmCN. Lyons writes about the protagonist, "At the end of the novel the bulk of the college buildings present to her a reality which she has rejected, but one in which she can lose herself" (67).

Synchronous to the emergence of the AmCN written by women is the *Bildungsroman*, a sub-genre from which examples can be found as early as 1920. The evolution of this sub-genre bespeaks a sociological bent. In the 30s, the protagonists reject the conformity of the campus for a more artistic, avant-garde life, yet by the 50s, the situation has reversed. The students flee the unstructured, ungoverned university for the staid and conventional life found in the suburbs (Proctor 100).

In spite of the long history of the student as protagonist, this study focuses on the hero - faculty member and the more recent and award-winning novels that address this perspective. Even in 1962, Lyons hazards a reason as to why the novels of professors might be more critically well received than those that feature students. He explains that over the course of a novel dealing with an undergraduate experience, the student's immaturity and lack of imagination and curiosity prevent any character development from occurring (105). Unfortunately for the faculty members who enjoy reading about themselves and their colleagues, the portrayal of the professor is rarely flattering. Lyons lists four scenarios. In the first, the professor is either an eccentric or an innocent, down-to-earth thinker who seeks to reveal the hypocrisies of his companions. Satire results. The next two types are contemptuous variations of the learned man. In the first, the scholar cannot function in the "real world" in spite of his breadth of knowledge. On the

other hand, the learned man represents a diabolical force who abuses his knowledge by controlling others with his superior education (Lyons 106). Interestingly enough and once again unique to the AmCN is the professor as murderer with examples from 1929 – 1953. Some of the reasons for the murders include the professor's plagiarism of the victim's work. It is notable that someone from outside academia then solves the murder; apparently higher education does not hone deductive skills (108). A final character type combines both the pure and the absurd. In this case, the professor represents integrity, wisdom and history via his pipe and conventional tweeds. However, his virtuous and scholarly world deteriorates at the introduction of the femme fatale, or simply, a woman, and the comic, satiric AmCN results (Lyons 123). When the woman is not creating havoc in the life of the professor, she is the professor. The women faculty of the 1940s seem to be limited, however, to falling in love with the (married) university president. Eventually order is restored and social norms are respected. The women may continue teaching but with great piety (Lyons 126-28).

One of the most important considerations for the academic novel and one that will gain relevance in further chapters is the composition of the academic population and how those factors and political factors influence the development of the campus novel. As the previous numbers show, a much larger percentage of American students attend and have attended tertiary education than their British counterparts. As a result, the focal point of the BrCN has been primarily the exclusive world of Cambridge and Oxford; their iconic status has been as much related to class and money as education. The indulgence shown to so many of the students and dons as well as the criticism is related to the notion that

from these hallowed halls come the leaders of the country. Lucky Jim's setting in a red brick university broke the chokehold of mystery and solemnity and addressed people of an ordinary, i.e., not privileged, background in a university. The omnipotent awe that a university education inspired was reduced to a comic mess. In contrast, American universities – other than the Ivies – were never the substance of myth.

In fact, because of the enormous expansion of state-run universities after World War I, many of the novels went so far as to question the idea of tertiary education for all. Consequently, one theme of the AmCNs is the worry about the tendency towards professional schools and the belittling of the liberal arts education. Finally, another constant in the AmCNs, generally unseen in the early BrCNs, is the handling of social ills, such as racial tensions and the tendency towards alternative, progressive education (Lyons 163). These last novels satirized the failures of the universities, albeit romantically. Lyons writes, “This is most evident in the resolution which either has the protagonist leave the profession in a huff, or gives him the sentimental consolation of teaching – the occasional light of awareness in the eyes of the dull student or the watery-eyed nostalgia of the old grad” (Lyons 163). In short, the American University is the stuff of dreams and they are either fulfilled or disillusioned, but the University is never a neutral force for its populace, nor just a paycheck for its faculty. This non-committal attitude towards teaching, research, shaping young minds will be unique to the Spanish Campus Novel (SpCN). Consequently, a brief summary of the history of the Spanish University may help to explain the absence of explicit pathos in the novels thus far identified.

The roots of learning and scholarship in Spain go back centuries from the centers of culture and investigation of the Moorish caliphs to the establishment of the oldest Iberian University in 1212 in Palencia. The *studium generale* of Palencia, never officially titled a university, did not endure past the 1260s. However, the University of Salamanca, founded a scant two years after Palencia by Alfonso IX, remains one of the premier institutions of higher education in Europe today (Rodríguez-San Pedro). In 1255, under Alfonso X, El Sabio, a papal bull established that a degree earned at Salamanca was to be recognized throughout the Christian world. Only ten years earlier, in 1245, an Ecumenical Council had acknowledged Salamanca as one of the four most famous universities along with Bologna, Oxford and Paris (Iyanga Pendi 97). Albert Jiménez explains that the emergence of the medieval university was due in part to the need for professionals and a place for them to train.

Throughout the 13<sup>th</sup> century in Europe, civil and ecclesiastical power grew tremendously. The universities strove to impart the necessary cultural knowledge that the scholars needed to engage in the burgeoning bureaucracies (Jiménez 11). However, the practical marched metrically with the spiritual. In addition to the humanities: grammar, rhetoric, mathematics, astronomy, law, etc. which prepared the students for their roles in the administration of the state and the Church, the Colleges of Theology sought to answer the primordial divine questions of the ages and convert skeptics via intellectual discourse (Jiménez 12; Iyanga Pendi 8). The early medieval universities were royal, secular and primarily democratic institutions (Jiménez 109). Thus, the medieval University did not only offer education, but it embodied the essence of the time.

After 1300, there would be a reaction against central governments. The funding of the universities turned towards the Church and the Church willingly accepted the fiscal maintenance of the institutions and therein began to incubate a greater ecclesiastical authority (Jiménez 111). When a Christian monarch established (or funded) a university, any goals of political conquest were intimately linked with religious conquest and the graduates of the university were called upon to convert the infidels (Iyangi Pendi 12). Thus, medieval power was bestowed by the universities to those who funded them.

The foundation of more than twenty new universities by the Reyes Católicos in the 15<sup>th</sup> century further underscored the symbiotic relationship that had developed (Rodríguez-San Pedro). Over the next two hundred years, the University in Spain became even more decentralized as local universities or colleges appeared. Unfortunately, the exponential expansion did not translate into greater scholarship. Reforms were necessary to prevent an imminent collapse of many of the universities. In 1807, the *Plan Caballero* attempted to reform the deteriorated and impoverished system by having the state take over matters, resulting in a reenforcement of the figure of the rector and the closing of the smaller, bankrupt institutions (Rodríguez-San Pedro). The penury, however, did not end there. The end of tithing to the Church in 1837 significantly affected the University; the funding now relied upon student tuition. This marked a definitive transition from the “old” university (autonomous, financially and organizationally) to the “new” university, a centralized and state-run institution whose faculty were government employees (Rodríguez-San Pedro).

It is worth remembering, at this point, that the serious reforms in the university of 19th Century Britain signaled a dramatic increase in the quality and prestige of the university. Both the reforms and the institutionalization of the extra-curricular - debate clubs, supper clubs, sports, etc. explain how the Anglo institutions became not only a venue for scholarship, but also the forerunners of the university life-style, which was so richly and frequently documented. In contrast, the Spanish government's seizure of the university in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century impacted the trajectory of tertiary education in Spain and thus the development of the SpCN. One of the results of the reforms included the recasting of the rector, previously an academic figure, as a ministerial appointment. Additionally, the primary university became that of Madrid further reinforcing the relationship between the political hierarchy and education (Rodríguez-San Pedro). The debate about the educational system of Spain was not limited to newspapers and government mandates, however. Benito Pérez Galdós' 1885 novel, El amigo Manso has an underlying pedagogical message which addresses the Spanish university of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. When a concerned parent turns to Professor Manso for help in educating her university aged son, Manso accepts and launches a five-pronged approach, an approach which contrasts greatly with the college classes the young student had been skipping. Manso seeks to engage the student holistically by incorporating techniques which contribute to the student's development; he employs methods from the following categories: instructional, affective, motivational, social and ethical. This method mirrors contemporary pedagogical theory, thus underscoring the importance of both the student and the expertise of the teacher in 19<sup>th</sup> century discourse while reminding the reader that

these practices were not generally implemented. This predecessor to the contemporary SpCN exhibits more closely the reformist bent of the AmCN than the self-referential, individualistic Spanish academic novels of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Another serious detriment to the development of the Spanish educational system was found in the paucity of the elementary schools. Fewer than one third of Spanish children attended school or even had a school available to them. Illiteracy was at 70% at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with female illiteracy nearing 90% (Álvarez Junco 47). As a result, few young people attended university. In 1900, there was a total of 15,000 university students, with the majority enrolled in law or medicine.<sup>6</sup> Because of the continued penury of state run education, private institutions, mostly Catholic, flourished. Consequently, the private schools had no supervision by the state and even more astoundingly, the Church claimed the right to monitor the public schools to make sure that they adhered to Catholic dogma (Álvarez Junco 48). Advances were being made, however, and in 1907, a “Junta para Ampliación de los Estudios” was formed with the aim of encouraging study abroad countermanding the isolationist policy that had prevailed since 1559. But, the battle between secular and religious education continued to rage under Primo de Rivera, who allowed El Escorial and Deusto to bestow degrees upon students. Notwithstanding, those same policies led to student and faculty protests against Primo de Rivera’s conservative policies, protests which then played a significant part in his collapse. As Christopher Cobb notes, “It {education} has regularly served in a very evident way either to maintain and provide support for the given social order or, conversely, to promote change” (133).

The liberalization and expansionist views of education were short-lived, and with Franco's rise to power, became essentially defunct. In order for Franco to achieve his goal --the re-Spanishification and re-Catholicization of the nation-- he, like so many other Spanish leaders before him, took control of the schools. "The re-Catholicization of education meant compulsory study of sacred texts, and the subordination of all forms of teaching and student behavior to Catholic moral norms" (Alted 196). Franco's policies affected the university both spiritually and politically. Another one of the objectives of educational reform, besides indoctrination, was the development of an elite, educated class who attended university. In order to attain the necessary qualifications, a student had to achieve a baccalaureate generated around a highly Catholicized version of the Classical Humanities and all students had to belong to the SEU, the Sindicato Español Universitario (Alted 199). The SEU's task was to aid in the incorporation and dissemination of the government's propaganda.

Another interventionist policy and committee in Franco's regime designed to eliminate the intellectual autonomy of the universities and the critical thinking of students was the CSIC, or the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas. The CSIC held the purse strings; it determined who received moneys designated for higher education and research – and it endeavored to nullify any progress that the ILE (Institución Libre de Enseñanza) or the Junta de Ampliación de Estudios had achieved in the previous 40 years. In the 1950s, however, the first group of students raised under repressive conditions entered the university, and increasingly, student movements and illegal leftist student groups garnered more power than the SEU. In 1956, an acute protest in Madrid

resulted in a three-month state of emergency (Graham 433). The protest centered on the students' forced membership in the SEU, state-required censorship and the state's control of their classes. And the protests did not end there. A series of lectures designed to enlighten students about the cultural situation of Spain was organized by students in the winter of 1964 – 65 and one event exploded into violence when a rector prohibited a scheduled lecture. The students began a silent march and were set upon by the police (Herr 15). Professors were fired, students continued to protest and in 1966, the University of Barcelona was closed (Herr 1966). "Under Franco, the universities were kept firmly under the thumb of the government, who could remove lecturers and professors whose political outlook it disliked" (Hooper 316). This governmental control of the university would account for the lack of satire of the university in fiction. On one hand, any satirical fictional work would have been seen as inherently critical of the government and probably censored. On the other hand, the university lacked autonomy and was not a force driving public opinion, nor a home for a desirable life-style. There was absolutely no glamour in the Spanish university of the Franco years; there were simply no humorous anecdotes to recount. The two most memorable novels of the Franco era that even mention the university or students, La colmena (1951) and Nada (1944) offer starkly bleak visions of a youth's life, far from the care-free refuge of the British or American university.

Obviously, the tremendous political upheaval and the subjugation of freedoms during Franco's dictatorship impacted university life and thus, any real potential for a fictional depiction the Spanish University. The subsequent relaxation of state control and

the ensuing passion of the 60s and then the rapid change of the 70s still may not have resulted in humorous campus novels, but these decades did result in an explosion of university students, changes in campus atmospheres and a greater accessibility to a university education. With the student population increase and the sustained fervor that Spaniards feel for education, it was only a matter of time before the SpCN would emerge as a genre on par with its English language counterparts. John Hooper helps to explain the dichotomies in the Spanish educational system and the reasons why it is still trying to establish a national standard. He asserts that Spaniards historically have respected and valued education and culture yet the actual public system has never been able to deliver either (312). He writes, “Perhaps the strangest act of the Spanish educational system is that, despite the inadequacy of secondary – and, to a lesser extent, primary – schooling, Spain has proportionately one of the biggest university populations in the developed world” (316).

Unfortunately, the steep increase in enrollment during the last third of the twentieth century was not accompanied by an increase in either faculty or resources and by the 1980s, the Spanish university was in dire straits (Alted 323). The system was at a crossroads between the overburdened public university and the out of favor Catholic university. Not until 1991 were minimum standards for all universities established and at that point private universities became viable options for higher education. Nevertheless, the university system continues to be plagued by problems such as high student-faculty ratios, unfair promotion and tenure decisions and salaries below those of equivalent public positions (Alted 323). John Hooper amends that “Money is not the only problem,

though. Spanish university education may not be in crisis, but it is lacklustre, and many have questioned whether it is performing its essential task of providing society with an intellectual elite. Outside the private sector, there is little pressure on either students or teachers.” For example, students can fail and retake their exams, as many as six times and the lack of competition for entrance does not foment excellence (317-18). A further misfortune for many of the students is the fact that a chronically high unemployment rate propels them to study, only to then graduate and be well educated, yet still under or unemployed. Spanish parents encourage their children to study, but the end result has been a glut in the university educated employment market and a paucity of tradespeople (Hooper 315). Espido Freire has devoted a book to this generation, Mileuristas. The term was coined in a letter to the editor in *El País* in 2005. The *mileuristas* are young Spaniards who have their bachelor’s degree, frequently a master’s; they are multi-lingual, and they have substantial work experience, albeit unpaid. Their salary reaches no more than a 1000 Euros a month {mil euros}. Freire expands the categorization to include men and women born between 1965 – 1980, with an urban lifestyle, and roommates (12). The *mileurista*’s attitude toward education is one of disillusionment. They feel strongly the injustice of having submitted to all of the demands of the system: advanced degrees and internships; yet their fate is no different than that of their uneducated contemporaries (Freire 15).

As mentioned previously, female literacy was tragically low at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Obviously, not being able to read hinders access to higher education. Note that at the same time that British and American universities were creating single-sex colleges for women, in Spain, only one woman was able to achieve a degree (Álvarez Junco 47).

One hundred years later, women in Spain have finally equaled men in their presence in the educational systems. By 1995, there were more women than men enrolled in college courses and their success outstripped that of the men (Montero 385). Nevertheless, the inequity of pay between female and male graduates remains significant. Women earn 31% less than men with a bachelor's degree and contradictorily, about 34% less than men when comparing graduates with doctoral degrees (OECD 22). Correspondingly, women are greatly underrepresented in the faculty of the universities, mostly owing to their delay in entering the university at all (OECD 69). In this study, women are authors of only two of the novels, and this ratio (two versus five) is consistent with the historical data regarding women's presence in education. As women graduate and the faculty better represents the population, a rational expectation is that there will emerge more SpCNs written by women.

A history of the university in Spain does not fully account for the dearth of the SpCN in mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, though. In spite of the political repression, the censorship and the mediocrity, students were attending classes and degrees were being bestowed in Spain. Francisco Márquez Villanueva describes university student life, or better stated, its absence in post – war Spain. In his experience, the sum of the student community consisted of a cafeteria with garbanzos. There were no sports facilities, associations or activities (224). In fact, frequently there were no professors. Márquez Villanueva writes that the students managed to become autodidacts since the professors were often late or never came (224). The university was a source of constant frustration for both the students and the professors. Books were unavailable and the remaining faculty frequently taught courses outside of their discipline due to the huge numbers of exiled professors (225). Thus, how can a campus novel exist when the campus itself is non-existent? Consequently, the tradition is emerging later and in very divergent terms. In

order to truly begin to understand how the Spanish Campus Novel fits into the schemata of the genre, it is necessary to have a broad sense of what a campus novel is.

### The Campus Novel

In its most fundamental form, the campus novel can be defined either by the primacy of the setting of the action, on university grounds or by the relation of its protagonist to the university; the protagonist could be a member of the faculty: a full professor, an adjunct instructor, a TA, or even a student or administrator. However, when examining the greater canon, certain traits have predominated in the American and British campus novels such as: parody and satire, humor, academic jargon, job insecurity, self-importance and archetypal university professionals: the bumbling professor, the ambitious theoretician, the sexually charged feminist and/or the ubiquitous duplicitous departmental chairman/woman. Other more subtle but often humorous motifs include the wonderfully malicious gossip and academic specific referentiality. The novels may not be written only for an audience of academics but they are a lot funnier if you get the joke! Additionally, integral to these traits is *either* the clear conviction that the University functions as a microcosm of greater society and that the foibles and follies of its members represent those of the human race *or*, the equally clear rejection of the microcosm theory. The chosen tenor often informs the climax of the text and the subsequent denouement. For example, in Zadie Smith's On Beauty (2005), Howard Belsey's final momentous lecture, the one that will make or break his career, becomes a love letter to his estranged wife, essentially choosing her over him and this final decision closes a chapter on the reflective window into academia. Another more recent characteristic that has become de rigueur in the last two decades is an appraisal of political correctness and its impact upon the institution. Often this subject matter coexists with that of literary criticism as the two

address both academics' attitudes towards the sanctity of the canon and the importance of the student. It is not infrequent to find in these novels that the most extreme theorists are also those who are most likely to support unsubstantiated student grievances, as seen in Philip Roth's The Human Stain (2000). As Showalter has so deftly shown, the more artful examples of the academic novels also embody the complex literary theories that are addressed in the text, at times ironically and at times with the greatest sincerity.

### The Spanish Campus Novel

Bearing in mind the historical tendencies of the campus novel, I suggest that the Spanish Campus Novel is a recognizable heir to its antecedents, not perhaps due to direct literary influence, but because the experience of the Spanish authors is also set in the peculiar, yet common world of the university. It would be irresponsible, though, to imply that the Spanish campus novel merely conforms to the established genre when, in fact, it adds three new dimensions: thematic, linguistic and cultural. Thematically, one such issue is the role of globalization and its influence on the novel. Globalization manifests itself in academia through the international job market and the diverse backgrounds of the professors. Spanish nationals comprise a portion of the faculty in Spanish departments in both the United States and Britain, and this cross-cultural exchange or multi-ethnic space, the campus, creates a unique insider/outsider perspective which is usually absent from the Br/AmCN. The Spanish academic abroad is both part of the Anglo system, being a faculty member, and yet s/he is also an observer, having been bred and educated in Spain. This dual perspective allows the text to satirize and scrutinize the American or British system as well as the Spanish university system.

Complementarily, the Spanish Campus Novel also frequently addresses the themes of displacement, the sense of not belonging. Although the marginalization of the academic, either explicitly through his actions or implicitly through his sense of not belonging, is commonplace (Jim Dixon in Lucky Jim and Sy Levin in A New Life or Tim Monahan in Moo), the Spanish novel further accentuates such alienation by his/her foreignness. While many nationalities comprise the American and British Spanish Departments that figure in the novels, an essential story line is the effort by the protagonist to make sense of his/her new surroundings, categorizing what information needs to be assimilated and processed (the purely academic) as well as dealing with the social aspect, sometimes perceived as culture shock. In English, the academic as ex-pat is the exception, not the rule. David Lodge in Changing Places hilariously employs the international exchange of academics --Philip Swallow to Euphoria, USA and Morris Zapp to Rummidge, England-- to describe both the literary trends of the seventies as well as the changing societal norms of each country. The majority of Spanish professors who have written academic novels, however, have also worked in countries in which the native language is not Spanish. Linguistic identity is akin to national identity and the survival outside of one's linguistic sphere further distances the Spanish protagonist from the milieu.

The second dimension predominant in the Spanish Campus Novel pertains to the frequency of code-switching, a linguistic term used to describe bilinguals who mix languages during communication. Given that the majority of the texts take place outside of Spain and Spanish-speaking countries, the setting of the text factors into the semantic

analysis of the text. Questions to be considered include: what words or phrases are code-switched, is there a pattern within a novel or between novels, what message does the reader glean from the non-Spanish semantic selections and how non-translatable jargon in English is conveyed.

The third dimension is cultural and it appears in the protagonists' attitude towards their work in the profession. In the English language novel, almost all of the faculty members attribute a near megalomaniacal importance to their roles in the shaping of young minds and the significance of their research. Their eventual success in their profession or their disillusionment with the university often serves as the primary narrative, into which are woven the subtexts. For many of the protagonists of the Spanish Campus Novel, however, the position of professor or instructor is a temporary stop and often merely a way to pay the bills. In contrast to the academics' jobs shown in the AmCN and the BrCN, the career of a faculty member in the SpCN is often regarded as a poor substitute for being a professional writer; the faculty member tends to disdain teaching and academic roles, whether these are educational or administration.

Another addition to this literary genre, which is now multinational and multilingual, is the examination of the Spanish University as evoked in the novels. As previously mentioned, the university suffered a loss of authority and motivation in the decades immediately following the Spanish Civil War. Francisco Márquez Villanueva's essay highlighted the fact that a university education in the 1950s occurred only *in spite of* the university: classes were cancelled, professors were exiled or worse, students did not attend class, doctoral defenses were postponed, counseling was unheard of. The

reestablishment of the university in Spain as a place of learning and scholarship has resulted in the (re) emergence of this genre. A thorough investigation of works such as Soy un escritor frustrado (1996) and El enigma (2002) by Josefina Aldecoa will begin to create a corpus of criticism about academic life in Spain at the 20<sup>th</sup> turn of the century and into the 21<sup>st</sup>.

The university as an essential institution and hallmark of a nation's intellectual capacity naturally is not limited to the US, Great Britain or Spain, but novels about the university will be limited to these three countries due to the scope of this dissertation. Other national or transnational combinations could of course serve as the objects of study in a dissertation considering the campus novel from other perspectives. My perspective, as stated earlier, is historical, so as to contextualize the SpCN, and national, so as to concentrate on Spanish Peninsular examples of this literary genre.

Similarly, the characters in a CN, while most obviously students and professors, could also be administrators, employees, relatives and residents of the university town. I have selected Spanish novels chosen in which the primary protagonist earns his/her living as a university instructor with the exception of the novel, Último domingo en Londres, whose collective protagonists represent the gamut of university society. This decision emanates from the dearth of contemporary – since 1990 - novels whose protagonists are students. As the statistics previously mentioned demonstrate, though, the sheer quantity of students enrolled in Spanish universities predicts that student-protagonists will soon emerge. The student-protagonist has occupied a place in Spanish literature in novels

belonging to other types, and so a parallel investigation into the student –driven university novel may soon be possible.

The canon of Spanish literature abounds with student-centered texts, especially post Civil War novels. Carmen Laforet's Nada (1945) epitomizes the youth experience in post Civil War in Barcelona, just as Luis Martin-Santos' Tiempo de silencio (1961) illustrates oppressed student life under Franco. Additionally, Camilo José Cela's La colmena (1951) evokes the student as a figure of protest against both the conventions and the restrictions of post Civil War Spain. But these three novels do not mark the beginning of the university student novel. That distinction arguably belongs to Pío Baroja and his novels, Camino de perfección (1901) and Árbol de la ciencia (1911). The latter follows the gradual and complete disillusionment of the young student Andrés Hurtado through his university studies and subsequent career as a doctor in various locales. All of these novels reflect the student obsession with self and existentialism across varying political and philosophical backdrops. The emphasis in these texts is not the university, but the protagonists' student roles. The university student is at a point in life at which blind acceptance of social institutions and rules is not the norm, and it is through the eyes of these protagonists that the harsh reality of society is portrayed. As Spanish student university novels emerge in this millenium, a time of maximum freedom, yet still limited economic opportunity, it will be worthwhile to note how the works compare to or differ from their Anglo predecessors. One recent example is Mundo Burbuja by José Ángel Mañas, from 2001, an unfortunate work by an otherwise promising author. In this work, the Spaniard again travels, not for work, but for study and the protagonist's memoir of

semesters in England tries to capture the modern student in his unsurpassed hedonism and excess with the bulk of the novel relating episodes involving sex and drugs.

Unfortunately, instead of an insightful reflection on the contemporary student, the novel reads like a MySpace page, full of clichés and exaggerations and meaningless hand wringing over nights of debauchery.

More subtle and multifaceted depictions of the academic life are to be found in the authors who figure in the following four chapters. The American campus provides the backdrop for two of Spain's most distinguished authors, Antonio Muñoz Molina and Javier Cercas. Antonio Muñoz Molina's Carlota Fainberg (2002) lampoons academic institutions and their populations in America. This satirization of the distortion of the academic's social instincts is brought into further relief by events related to the protagonist's loss of his security: tenure. In barely two pages, Muñoz Molina summarizes the afflictions and intrigues of academic departments; the very same afflictions that ailed Kingsley Amis' Jim Dixon and Malamud's Sy Levin. A recurrent aspect in the SpCN is the narrator as outsider and so he is, twice removed. A second author of two relevant novels is Javier Cercas. Both of his novels, El inquilino (1989) and La velocidad de la luz (2005) reference Cercas' time on a Midwestern campus as a TA. El inquilino portrays an Italian professor whose life is usurped by his tenant. In La velocidad de luz, Cercas' protagonist, an incipient author, starts out by writing a novel while teaching Spanish in the Midwest. The protagonists' narcissistic obsessions with themselves and their success echoes much of the satiric commentary on the faculty in the

campus novel: their selfishness, their hyper self-esteem, their superiority and their self-aggrandizing.

Chapter Two crosses the pond to feature the eminently readable Javier Marías. He has taught in both Britain and the US; he has also translated into Spanish classic works from the English canon, such as Tristram Shandy (1759-1769). He maintains that he counts amongst his most important influences Vladimir Nabokov, Laurence Stern and Juan Benet. In Todas las almas (1989), Marías allows the reader to enter a world of Oxfordian intrigue and comedy when his protagonist negotiates an extramarital affair with a fellow professor. Negra espalda del tiempo (1998), which refuses categorization, is ostensibly about the creation and genesis of Todas las almas. Memoir and essay combine to exude postmodernism as the text juggles notions of reality and imagination, self-referentiality, irony and satire. Much of the work's humor comes at the expense of the academic world.

The works of Josefina Aldecoa and Laura Freixas are considered in Chapter Three; in the novels of these writers, the importance of familial and amorous ties shares the stage with academic success and ambition. Josefina Aldecoa's El Enigma (2002) also removes the academic from Spain and envisions him at a prestigious East Coast University, but only for a semester. The professor's abrupt social transition - from talented critic (although beleaguered and misunderstood husband) to distinguished Visiting Professor at an important university - engenders a renaissance in this man's future life expectations. Aldecoa's novel reflects on both American and Spanish academic life and the privileges afforded by the company of like-minded intellectuals.

Thematically the novel catalogues many of the recurrent motifs in Br/AmCns: adultery, intellectual integrity versus societal pressures, current campus politics and the identity of the academic. Laura Freixas' Último domingo en Londres (1997) is also populated by scholars searching for their identities. These identities are easily labeled: the perverse professor, the tormented doctoral student, and the sexually ambiguous scholar. These labels, however, are carefully rejected as the complexity of the individual reasserts itself. This text takes in the range of academia: the graduate student, the undergrad, the professor, and above all, the published author, contemplating their roles as they interact between them and their undesired awareness of the passage of time at each academic hallmark.

The final chapter marks a shift away from the English speaking world of academia to return closer to the patria, albeit not necessarily in it. An even more compelling reason for the deliberate linking of the final two authors, Rafael Chirbes and Jose Ángel Mañas, though, is the similarity of their protagonists: unpublished writers moonlighting as academics. Unfortunately for the protagonist of Mimoun, Rafael Chirbes' novel (1998), a transcontinental move to Morocco does not provide a life-changing perspective. A Spanish professor and impotent author tries to escape from the dissolute *vida madrileña* by fleeing to Morocco to be a professor. The professorial obligation of attending and dictating classes is infrequently alluded to in the campus novel despite its central import in most job descriptions. Yet what *is* a constant in the campus novel, (including Mimoun) is the odd disconnect between the essentially inoperative individual, who is socially deformed, and the conscientious academic who

manages to teach despite a complete lack of interest in his classes. A similar situation assails Jose Ángel Mañas titular character. Soy un escritor frustrado (1996) presents a disagreeable protagonist, identified only as J., who is unfulfilled by his role as professor. This novel occupies a unique, yet important role in that its protagonist is the only one who lives and works in Spain and who does not travel abroad for employment in his academic career. He recognizes his superiority as a critic, yet his only aspiration is to become a published, acclaimed writer. J.'s barely veiled disdain for his colleagues and students and the window into their world represents a unique perspective in the SpCN. In comparison with the other examples of the genre, Soy un escritor frustrado is the first in which the reader can observe the way in which the globe trotting professors themselves may have been educated. This novel initially impresses the reader as a perversely outrageous memoir, yet its very excess is what clinches its significance as a Spanish campus novel. Every character who is not a victim is satirized, and following Malamud and Amis, true happiness is to be found only outside of academe.

## CHAPTER 2

## ANTONIO MUÑOZ MOLINA AND JAVIER CERCAS

Antonio Muñoz Molina: Carlota Fainberg

America is the first stop on the international tour of college campuses. Two of Spain's preeminent authors, Antonio Muñoz Molina and Javier Cercas, drew from their experiences in American<sup>7</sup> universities to craft novels whose framework delineates them as campus novels. The two authors' works will be explored in tandem due to the seemingly superficial commonality of the campus location in the United States.

Antonio Muñoz Molina, winner of multiple literary awards in Spain, including the Premio Nacional de Literatura in 1987 for El invierno en Lisboa and again in 1992 for El jinete polaco for which he was also awarded the Premio Planeta, experienced the American University as an insider when he spent a semester as a visiting professor at the University of Virginia. The narrative frame of his novel Carlota Fainberg, from 1999, owes its genesis in part to his brief residence in Virginia. In Muñoz Molina's introduction to the novel, he writes:

Los caminos de la ficción siempre son sinuosos: en el relato que escribí entonces intervenía el recuerdo de un par de visitas a Buenos Aires, de un semestre como profesor invitado en la Universidad de Virginia, de un viaje en coche a través del Estado de Pensilvania, de un soneto de Borges sobre un personaje de la novela de Stevenson (11).

An author's past job experiences, however, are not enough to categorize his work; the text itself must also comply with the parameters of the genre, and in this regard Carlota

Fainberg may justifiably be categorized as an academic novel, although it is not limited to this denomination.

Carlota Fainberg lampoons academic institutions in America. An assistant Spanish professor named Claudio is the protagonist, anxiously awaiting tenure<sup>8</sup>; we meet him when he has the opportunity to travel to Buenos Aires to attend a conference where he will speak on a “dead, white male” in the Hispanic canon, Jorge Luis Borges. In the airport en route to Argentina, he meets a compatriot whose physical appearance, dress, mannerisms and speech epitomize the Spanish middle-class male. It is the professor’s outsider status (that of an American resident) which gives him an insight he might not have had if he had been surrounded by other examples of the type in his native Spain. The two men talk, and the newfound acquaintance engages the narrator/protagonist in a story of passion, betrayal and mystery, triggering a mental and - oh so - academic critique in the professor’s mind; Claudio cannot help but analyze his new companion’s discourse as a text, which of course the reader knows that it is. This satirization of the distortion of the academic’s social instincts is brought into further relief by subsequent events related to the protagonist’s loss of his job security, tenure. His position is given to Ann Gadea Simpson Mariátegui, a postcolonial and feminist critic, who publicly humiliates Claudio in his much anticipated conference in Buenos Aires. These are just but a few of the incidents in which Muñoz Molina summarizes the afflictions and intrigues of academic departments; the very same afflictions that ailed Kingsley Amis’ Jim and Malamud’s Sy Levin. The end of the novel remains open as Claudio struggles to decide whether to remain at the University in the ignominious, i.e., untenured position he

has been offered, or to return to Spain to start over, an ambiguous ending, one not often found in English language counterparts, yet at the same time (as will be shown) consistent with the SpCN.

Critics have studied Carlota Fainberg on many levels attesting to the richness and complexity of the text, including its relationship to “Transatlantic Academic Novels” (Marr), its use of code-switching (Callahan) and the more traditional approaches of memory (Peters, Winters) and irony (Sherzer). A summary of these articles can enhance both the interpretation of this text as well as underscore its seminal role in the SpCN genre.

Carlota Fainberg belongs to the genre of SpCN. Claudio, the protagonist, is a University professor whose chance encounter with Abengoa originates from his travel to a conference. The final passages of the novel occur at Claudio’s university, Humbert College.<sup>9</sup> Besides locale, many of the tropes from the AmCN and BrCN are made evident by the protagonist and his/her foibles. One of the recurrent aspects of the Spanish campus novel (SpCN) is the narrator or protagonist as outsider. This role of unwitting interloper provokes Claudio’s reflections and accounts for much of the humor. In this work, Claudio is truly an outsider, three times removed. He narrates his role in the university as if he were a permanent member, yet neither by his rank nor his nationality is he a part of the environment that he calls home. He is physically removed from the scene of Abengoa’s action, the hotel Towne Hall in Buenos Aires, and when he does venture forth to the locale, he realizes that he is both physically and chronologically removed from the events. The death of Carlota, the titular character and the focus of Abengoa’s

tale, occurred twenty years before his arrival. Even with his countryman Abengoa, he is not in his own cultural habitat; he is merely aware of the other's unapologetic *Spanishness* and his inability to behave either as an unrepentant Spaniard or an assured American.

Firstly, passages of the novel are both humorous and satirical as Muñoz Molina allows Claudio to question the uniqueness of his fellow faculty; he turns his newly critical eye to the uniformity of the conference attendees. In this passage Claudio reflects on their exterior conformity “aunque exteriormente (*yo, Claudio*) era idéntico a casi todos ellos, distinguiéndome apenas por el nombre que llevaba en el badge plastificado de la solapa” (150); he is also aware of the professors' shared mannerisms:

aquella fue la primera vez que me di cuenta de algo muy curioso: todos los *scholars*, aun hablando idiomas diversos y viniendo de varios continentes, repetíamos siempre el mismo gesto durante la lectura de nuestros papers, e incluso después, en las charlas de pasillo o en los comedores: cada vez que queríamos indicar que citábamos algo, que lo entrecollmábamos para ponerlo en duda, extendíamos los brazos a los costados para dibujar en el aire, con los dedos índice y corazón de cada mano, el signo de las comillas, como si las puntas de los dedos rascaran o aletearan brevemente en el vacío. (151)

The detailed description of the gesture abundantly familiar to anyone who has attended a conference satirizes and trivializes it. The words chosen to describe the movement, *dibujar*, *rascar* and *aletear*<sup>10</sup>, are light weight. They suggest levity and humor in a circumstance that is deemed to be a prudent observation of academic honesty. The faithful citation of another's words is so paramount that Claudio's colleagues cannot distance themselves from written discourse and must adhere to academic standards even when engaged in casual conversation. Claudio envisions academics postponing eating in

order to place their sandwich on their plate to “make quotation marks” in the lunchroom or dropping their books in the hallway to verbally and non-verbally quote pithy remarks. The picture is absurd.

Claudio’s sudden ability to intuit incongruities in his milieu is not limited to the nonverbal variety, however. Initially, Claudio’s interior monologue reflects his academic training. He edits his language even when thinking and replaces accurate but non-theoretical words with the jargon of his profession. The following examples from the first part of the text illustrate this phenomenon: “donde se interpretan (descodifican más bien)” (29) , or, in this longer passage:

Pero él, Abengoa, estaba claro que vivía en otro mundo, no sé si más feliz, pero sí menos sobresaltado. Su ignorancia de las tremendas *gender wars* me pareció, contra mi voluntad, tan envidiable como su desenvoltura de narrador inocente, o naïf, para ser más exactos, aunque ya sé que tal noción es en sí misma discutible, tan, lo diré claro, *sospechosa*, como la de autor, o la de (italics, por supuesto) *obra*. (54)

Claudio’s thoughts are even subject to typographic considerations such as italization. Although the reader may chuckle at the indiscriminate correction of his thoughts, Claudio himself finds nothing strange in his language or mental processes. A fundamental change takes place, however, in Claudio’s analytical approach after his public humiliation by Simpson Mariátegui. She attacks him with the weapons of post-colonial and feminist criticism:

Me recordó, citándose sin desenvoltura a sí misma, su celebrada ecuación Europe = Eu/rape. . . Ya en jarras, Simpson Mariáteguia se preguntó hasta cuándo iba a ser tolerada la fascinación europea, heterosexual y masculina por los mitos del expolio colonial. (153)

Notwithstanding his colleague's accusation, Claudio's interest in the poem "Blind Pew" by Jorge Luis Borges was not engendered by his determination to maintain European ascendancy nor masculine superiority, nor anything else of which Simpson Mariátegui accuses him. Claudio chose *that* poem by *that* author because it moved him, "hacerme compañía siempre leal incluso en los episodios más mezquinos de la soledad o el infortunio" (154). In fact, after the nasty encounter with his adversary, Claudio rejects Ana Gadea Simpson Mariátegui as definitively as possible. He no longer attempts to critically approach Abengoa's narration; he visits Towne Hall, the hotel and home of Carlota Fainberg because of his interest in the story, the plot and in an additional denial of Simpson Mariátegui, Claudio recites "Blind Pew" to himself as he explores the streets of Buenos Aires. Later, his eventual loss of tenure to Simpson Mariátegui is the ultimate irony because Claudio's love of literature is based on the text whereas his rival distorts the text and the truth for her own aims. In a field in which enlightenment and greater understanding is the goal, in Claudio's case, obfuscation triumphs.

Although Claudio may have begun to refocus his energy on the appreciation of the primacy of the story, no one else has. The battle between the theorists and the literary interpreters permeates both the campus and the campus novel. Famously, in 1996, Alan Sokal, an NYU physics professor submitted a paper to a prestigious cultural studies journal. The paper, which had been fabricated by Sokal using as much theoretical terminology as possible, was accepted by the journal even though its content was nonsensical. Sokal would reveal later that his purpose for the deception had been to underscore the prevarication and irrational argumentation currently found in academia.<sup>11</sup>

Sokal believed that the field of literary criticism and cultural studies had become so insular that it was not only incomprehensible but also dangerous to society, resulting in the concealing of the truth. Philip Roth's novel The Human Stain (2000) also explores the trend towards theory and away from the text. In Roth's tale of academia, Coleman Silk, a highly praised professor and Dean of a small, prestigious New England university is ultimately catapulted from his position and beloved status by an intense female French theoretician, Delphine Roux. Her refusal to understand the context of Silk's words allows her and the college to deny the facts and evidence that would exonerate Silk and reveal the truth. The ultimate consequence of such misplaced intellectualism results in Silk's wife's death and his dishonorable departure from the university. This fictitious situation, like Claudio's, exemplifies Sokal's fears. The parodying of the theorist, humorously in Carlota Fainberg and gravely in The Human Stain, reveals deep flaws in the current priorities of academia, flaws whose unacceptable consequences are lies and victims.

The tension between the traditional scholar and the avant-garde theorist is neither recent nor unexpected in the campus novel, however. The campus novel from its inception has been besieged by the appearance of archetypal characters, including the radical theorist. It is also worthy of note that there are so many belligerent and uncompromising females in academic novels that the character has also become an archetype. In many cases the theorist and the female "Terminator" types have merged. Delphine Roux and Simpson Mariátegui call to mind Fulvia Morgan from David Lodge's Small World (1995). The success of these archetypal professors offers a contrast to the

protagonist and emphasize his/her inability to succeed in the academic world. In Carlota Fainberg, the two academics who are one-dimensional are Morini, the Latin American chair of the department and Ana Gadea Simpson Mariátegui, or “La Terminator del New Lesbian Criticism” (148). The epithet given to her sums up her role in the novel. The “Terminator” comes from the film of the same name, a one-man killing machine; there is no complexity in either the original Terminator or Ana Gadea. They are both fixated on righting the wrongs of society, which are cast in black and white. Delphine, in Roth’s novel also, in spite of her training in textual analysis, refuses to admit shades of gray when it weakens her case. The caricature of the woman professor theoretician is of her intelligence as a tool used to destroy, rather than understand; in this caricature, her power, and thus her academic success, emanates from the fear she invokes in her discourse, rather than the brilliance of her interpretations. Her mission becomes personal; she believes unilaterally in that she represents the side of good whilst the others, the defenders of the canon and thus of a patriarchal, oppressive, racist hegemony, represent evil. Claudio describes Simpson Mariátegui’s work: “se titulaba << (*Under*)writing the female body: Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz/Frida Kahlo/Madonna >> y venía gozando en los Spanish departments de un prestigio (a mi parecer, desde luego) un tanto overrated, pero inatacable” (149). Claudio’s assessment of her work, as overrated but unassailable, sums up the individual’s stand against the establishment, whatever it may be. Claudio, like his predecessors Jim and Sy and even Chairman X from Moo, learns that the institution is an immovable force, and that the only power one has consists of adapting to its norms or leaving altogether. This point is hammered home in Carlota Fainberg.

Simpson Mariátegui's defender and future chair, Morini, exemplifies yet another archetype, the fickle department chair. A person who "connives to repackage himself . . . (to be) more appealing to the edgy and bombastic paragon of political correctness, Mariátegui" (Marr 120). The untrustworthy chair has wreaked havoc in the lives of the faculty since time immemorial. The loyalty of a chair to any given individual rises and falls with the prestige of that faculty member in the department. Interpersonal relations or professional collegiality should never be mistaken for constancy from a chair. When a more renowned academic enters the department, all extant faculty may experience an alteration in their status. Claudio thought that he had a good relationship with Morini and thus his colleagues, but he was also aware that there were no guarantees in academia. The granting of his tenured position to an outsider, however, threatens his belief in a system which he thought he understood. Claudio had played by the rules: he wrote papers, attended conferences, deconstructed conversations in the airport, tried to use Foucault,<sup>12</sup> but Morini explains that Simpson Mariátegui not only has an impressive curriculum vitae, numerous publications and many mentions in respected journals, but "Comprende que es una mujer, y que es lesbiana" (168). Morini, like Professor Welch (Lucky Jim), President Maynard Hoar (Groves of Academe), and Gordon Masters (Changing Places) pursues success, hiring the fashionable professor who will emblazon the name of the university instead of recognizing the loyal, but unglamorous worker.<sup>13</sup> To add insult to injury, Morini dismisses Claudio's achievements and then suggests that Claudio's nationality itself is an offense, "Pero ustedes los españoles no pueden soportar que su gran héroe {Cervantes} fuese en realidad completamente queer, que lo mandasen

a la cárcel no por un delito fiscal, sino en un episodio típicamente español de gay-bashing” (187). Morini’s allegiance lies with Simpson Mariátegui, and as if in communion with her, he also accuses Claudio of transgressing his rights by daring to write about Borges, when Claudio wasn’t even a Latinamerican (291). “The ultimate object of Muñoz Molina’s critique of literary criticism, therefore, is feminist and post-colonial theory, for his presentation of them is at the very least satirical. But his irony is matched by the additional irony that derives from the fact that given today’s approach to the study of third world literature, Simpson Mariátegui is right “ (Sherzer 291).

The adversarial nature of Claudio’s relationship with these two archetypal professors also serves to highlight his status as an outsider. The protagonist as an outsider is a standard in the AmCn and the BrCN; Jim Dixon in Lucky Jim is hyperconscious of his education at a lesser univeristy, and Cecelia in Moo by Jane Smiley is both an “exotic” as the daughter of Costa Rican immigrants and an outsider as a Los Angeles transplant in the midwest. The Spaniard abroad, however, although employed in the univeristy, allows for a different sort of lens to be turned on both the academic institution and the United States. Matthew Marr notes that to a certain extent the Spaniard in America is reversing the trend of travel literature about Spain in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, which critiqued “those characteristics and excesses of Peninsular culture which exacerbate its recession from the fore as an imperial power” (111). The contrast between the Spaniard’s earlier experiences in Spain and their fumbling missteps in the US serves to illustrate the idiosyncrasies of the US and to highlight the differing cultural practices in Spain. For example, a frequently dangerous terrain for the foreigner

in the US is the navigation of political correctness. Claudio experiences wonder and jealousy at Abengoa's casual references to the beauty of women. Claudio has been socialized in the US to fear violating American social norms; he understands that the consequences could impact him greatly.

Mientras escuchaba a Abengoa, yo miraba instintivamente a mi alrededor, por miedo a que aquella conversación fuese sorprendida, como si estuviera en el departamento y alguna faculty de feminismo agresivo rondara en busca de una oportunidad de acusarme de verbal harassment o de male chauvinism. (54)

An American reader takes for granted the sexism of Abengoa's remarks while understanding the cultural context in which they originated. Another example of Claudio's outsider status is the leitmotif of smoking. The single woe that concerns Claudio about his trip to Buenos Aires is the tobacco smoke which will be in the bars and restaurants (26). This first mention of cigarettes aligns Claudio with the American way of life. However, as Claudio listens to Abengoa's story, his attention is punctuated by reveries of his father, always smoking. "El salía a la calle con el abrigo por encima de los hombros y un cigarrillo recién encendido" (56). The cigarette represents the Spain of Claudio's youth, his patria. By smoking, a professor pledges allegiance to the motherland and the canon and thus diminishes the intrusive legislation of personal life that America imposes upon its inhabitants. Claudio mentions another colleague, C.W. Wayne, from Lincoln, Nebraska, who is such a Delibes fanatic that he channels him by wearing a boina and smoking even though, "está teniendo problemas en su departamento, radicalmente non smoking, por su afición a fumar picadura" (67). Even beyond second-hand smoke, Claudio cannot eradicate the American obsession with food as a pharmaceutical, having

either positive or negative effects, but never being neutral. The “healthy, American way of life” is challenged by the aroma of red meat coming from a restaurant, however. “No ignoro que la carne roja es una mina de colesterol” (146), but sometimes one has to dispell with the theory in order to experience the story, (Winter 188) or in this case, the lunch, the wine, the satisfaction of giving oneself up to pleasure. Claudio’s rigourously guarded Americanness wanes as he allows himself to experience sensory satisfactions. In Buenos Aires, and in the company of a non-American academic compatriot, Claudio begins to relax his stringent adherence to his adopted culture. This identity shift is most apparent in Claudio’s language.

Codeswitching as defined by the *Encyclopedia of Linguistics* “refers to ‘the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two grammatical systems or subsystems’” (Gumperz 1982: 56). In other words, when Claudio speaks Spanish or English, he revert to the other language. Specifically, Claudio narrates in Spanish, yet his disccourse is peppered by English. Sherzer suggests that the codeswitching requires a reader-response interpretation. He posits, “It is thus a Spanish speaking reader with some knowledge of basic English terms that the narrative seems aimed at, but precisely in order to ridicule that particular reader: the snobbish Spanish professorial type that Muñoz Molina encountered repeatedly in his travels throughout the American academy” (288). In 2002, Laura Callahan did a thorough evaluation of the codeswitching in Carlota Fainberg, charting the English by grammatical function, such as nouns, adjectives or verbs. Although Callahan focused on the linguistic interpretation of gender chosen for English words, her study does posit an alternative to Sherzer’s

explanation for the codeswitching. Callahan suggests that the most of the codeswitches belong to the jargon of the North American University (23). Both Sherzer and Callahan add insight to Claudio's use of English, but it is also revealing to note when the instances of codeswitching appear; in the case of Sherzer's theory, many of the terms would not be accessible to a monolingual reader with only basic English (oak bar, go ahead, snapshots, whole wheat sandwiches, skirt chaser, ghost of a chance) nor are all instances academic references. Claudio's codeswitching has spacial relevance, both literal and metaphorical; the beginning and end of the novel are both set in the United States, a primarily English-speaking country. He lives and works there, so it is natural for him to acquire the language of his surroundings. He says "paper" instead of "trabajo escrito" or "snapshots" instead of "fotos" because the connotations are slightly different and the English would be what was heard in his environs. Even when he is talking to Abengoa, another Spaniard, their language is sprinkled with English because Abengoa also works in the US; however, his codeswitches primarily pertain to his work: input, output, cashflow. In Buenos Aires, in the sixth chapter, not a single English word appears. In this chapter Claudio remembers Abengoa's description of Carlota and his awareness of her importance in his life, but he also remembers who he is and who he has become, and this is marked by his adaptive language. He describes the airport, the passengers, the ambiance, even the food stands and in a passage in which the English would be so much more accurate, he translates to Spanish. Hotdogs become "perros calientes" and a fast-food cashier becomes "un expendedor de comida rápida" (98). Neither of these phrases is in common use in Spanish; they sound awkward and confusing, especially in a text in

which English has been used liberally. Suddenly, Claudio is neither praising nor objectively contemplating the American lifestyle; it is not allowing him to work or saving him from a preventable death, it is simply limiting him. Claudio's return to his native tongue represents a return to himself, his Spanish self. He describes Abengoa as the consummate Spaniard who is "tan indiferente al jet-lag como a las coacciones sutiles que impone en todo la vida norteamericana, y a las que yo suelo tan medrosamente acomodarme, con el mismo miedo al que dirán que si viviera en una provincia española de los años cuarenta" (99).

Carlota Fainberg is the quintessential SpCN. It exhibits the primary traits of the AmCN and the BrCn: locale, protagonist, parody, academic jargon, job insecurity, archetypes, academic referentiality, political correctness, while adhering to Showalter's definition of a truly wonderful academic novel: one in which the text itself plays with the genre (of fiction). Muñoz Molina blurs the distinction between events and texts in every line of the novel and all parody and criticism can be easily applied to the work itself. In addition to the innovativeness of Carlota Fainberg, Muñoz Molina contributes to the establishment of the genre of the SpCN in certain elements, which are to a greater or lesser degree in many others of our texts. These elements include the absence of interest in professorial duties, which is a constant. Claudio's only mention of students appears when he tries to defend himself against Morini's bogus accusation of racism. "Por lo menos la aprobé, ¿no? No sabe nada de nada" (188). In tandem with the apathy towards teaching, the protagonists of the SpCN frequently demonstrate a laissez-faire attitude towards their jobs in general. Claudio has made the minimal effort required by his job,

but his role in the university is not his passion. In a fit of pique after Morini crushes him by promoting Simpson Mariátegui's in his place, Claudio pens a righteous letter of indignation, refusing the offered alms. Financial considerations make him reconsider, however. Claudio reflects, "¿Voy a volver a España, a estas alturas de mi vida, voy a empezar otra vez de cero en cualquier otra parte, ahora que tengo casi pagado el mortgage de mi casita . . .?" (191). For this Spanish academic, teaching at a university is just a job, not a vocation, even though the lifestyle, the environs and the language begin to entangle him. Muñoz Molina's Claudio exploits his two languages (evident in his codeswitching) revealing his search for his identity, his first identity having been lost to him as he struggles in his acculturation to the US. His professional identity never encloses or supports him enough because the academic community remains unfamiliar, unnavigable and apparently forever closed.

Javier Cercas: El Inquilino

The two years that Javier Cercas spent at the University of Illinois in Urbana also left an indelible mark on two of his novels: El Inquilino, 1989, and La velocidad de la luz, 2005, both begin and take place in Urbana, and their protagonists have direct connections to the University; one is a professor and the other is an ersatz graduate student. Beyond these superficial similarities though, the novels diverge radically.

Of the two, El Inquilino is the novel which is more characteristic of the campus novel. Mario Rota belongs to the faculty as an Italian linguist at the University of Illinois. His position is cozy in spite of his lackluster professional execution; he has published one article in a mediocre journal in the last three years and the little that is revealed about his teaching is that he doesn't hesitate to let his class leave early as often as it suits him. But, he has formed a community. Mario is dating – or better stated, tormenting with his capriciousness – one of his graduate advisees and he maintains cordial relationships with his colleagues and chair. Unfortunately for Mario, the arrival of a new professor in the department devastates his tranquil circumstances. Strangely, the new member of the department, Berkowickz, also specializes in Italian phonology and has taken the apartment next to Mario's. At first, it appears that Mario is simply suffering from insecurity and jealousy as his friends and girlfriend begin to extol Berkowickz's virtues while Mario's luck seems to be fading. Yet clues begin to accumulate indicating that Berkowickz is not only slowly appropriating Mario's life, he is also living it with more success and gusto than Mario ever did. Berkowickz is a more personable companion, a more dedicated advisor, a far superior scholar and an overall

“great guy”. The novel ends ambiguously when the department chair reprimands Mario for failing to meet two of his classes; Mario had not attended class because the sections had been given to Berkowickz. In this moment, Mario finally begins to suspect that the similarities between him and his new colleague are more than coincidences. Then Ginger, Mario’s girlfriend, returns to his apartment explaining that she thought their relationship had ended because Mario had been acting so strangely. Whether or not Berkowickz existed is never resolved. Mario accepts the return of his life with equanimity, but the last line of the novel describes an academic paper found in his apartment written by Berkowickz. El inquilino does not really succeed as a fantastic novel because of stilted language and tedious motifs; in this writer’s opinion the reader must truly be bewildered in order for a fantastic novel to qualify as such and El inquilino contrives the invasion of Mario with a heavy hand. On the other hand, an analysis of the text as campus fiction highlights its prevailing traits as those of the academic novel. For example, the contrast between Mario and Berkowickz’s professional roles dovetails beautifully with the challenges that Claudio faces in Carlota Fainberg.

Mario, like Claudio, is a European scholar in the US, comfortable with his position. Although both are aware that their positions are not sinecures, neither is concerned about his job security. The blasé attitude towards their employment contrasts sharply with the norm in AmCNs and BrCNs. Academics from these traditions are hideously cognizant of their precarious status and of the machinations required to achieve tenure. As a result, their decision to rigorously adhere to the rules in order to get what they want (The Human Stain) is a conscious one just as despising the machine that

creates the rules is conscious (Lucky Jim). In either case, the successful, thus conformist, academics are parodied for their rigid adherence to arbitrary demands, such as publications of obscure articles of no interest to anyone other than the thirty other colleagues in their field. The uniquely Spanish twist of this parody comes from the *laissez-faire* of the protagonists, Mario and Claudio (and even the unnamed narrator in La velocidad de la luz). Both think that an occasional article, a good relationship with the department and a reasonable attitude towards the students suffice to fulfill their responsibilities – until they encounter the academic “ideal”. They are not driven to publish because they do not feel passion for their subject. When Mario began as a graduate student in Texas, neither his professors nor his classes inspired him. “Aunque disponía de tiempo y medios para hacerlo, apenas trabajó: se dedicaba a matar el tiempo en los cines de la ciudad” (29). Nonetheless, he managed to complete his work in order to stay near a woman who would eventually become his ex-wife and later ended up with his position, reliable and not strenuous until a new tenant moved into his apartment complex and life. In El inquilino, Mario’s doppelganger, Berkowickz, is not an unsympathetic character. However, his presence propels the other characters to conform to the caricatures defined in academic literature. Berkowickz’s ascendancy corresponds to Mario’s demotion as there is not enough room for “good enough” in the department. The Chair, Scanlan, explains to Mario why Berkowickz’s position in the department is so vital.

Pero es que además de contribuir a mejorar el cachet del departamento estoy convencido de que Berkowickz va a representar un estímulo impagable para todos, incluso para ellos que publican un artículo cada cinco años en revistas de tercera fila. (41)

After Scanlan's blatant insinuation of Mario's inadequacy, he reveals the direct consequence of Berkowickz's presence. Mario's three classes, which provide him with a comfortable salary, will be reduced to one in order to assure Berkowickz an adequate income.

. . . entre otras cosas le hemos asegurado un mínimo de tres clases semestrales. Comprenderás que esto te afecta de forma directa; tu situación va a cambiar, pero estoy convencido de que sabrás aceptar el sacrificio por el bien del departamento. (42)

Just as Claudio was relegated to serving at Ana Gadea Simpson Mariategui's whim by the Chair of his department, Mario's economic security was unimportant to his chair. For both men in authority, the departments' ability to retain a rising star takes precedence over a dependable employee. In fact, one of Berkowickz's attractions for all the members consists of his scholarly credentials. He, like Mario, is an Italian linguist but one with numerous publications such as "The syntax of the word-initial consonant gemination in Italian"<sup>14</sup> and "The syllable in phonological theory; with special reference to Italian"<sup>15</sup>, both titles that actually did appear in respected linguistic journals in the 1970s. These unexamined titles constitute the only references made to linguistics throughout the novel. Not even Mario's one article receives any specific description; it is never even named. The titles, to a non-linguist, are hardly intuitive in terms of content and constitute examples of academic jargon (although this trait does not receive much emphasis elsewhere in the novel). The parodic aspect of El inquilino emanates not so much from the pompousness of academic jargon, nor the self-righteousness of the scholars, but rather from a Spanish professor. Once again the Spaniard is the external

observer; in this case it is Profesor Olalde, who physically and socially offends the norms of the department. He is described as stout, balding, ungraceful, with stained and broken teeth rarely seen in a mouth that never smiled (45).<sup>16</sup> Olalde lambastes the department, the university and even the country. Mario is humiliatingly relocated from his large personal office to an unheated, leaky, poorly lit office which he must share with Olalde. Again, the sometimes unstable nature of academia is revealed as Mario's degradation and inadequacy are underscored with every passing moment: his income is reduced, his professional dignity is debased and eventually, his girlfriend leaves him. Olalde recognizes Mario's falling star even before he does. "—Y dígame — se interesó Olalde --. A usted por qué lo han mandado aquí" (47). Mario is not yet prepared to admit his decline so he responds that he requested the change, but Olalde is not fooled. Later that same day at a cocktail given by the Department Chair and his wife, Mario encounters the solitary Olalde again in the garden where Olalde is muttering to himself, "Excelente bibliografía" (50). His subsequent molongue exposes the superficiality and hypocrisy of the successful academic, a key moment in an academic novel. Beginning with Jim Dixon and Sy Levin and continuing through to Howard Belsey in White Teeth by Zadie Smith, the blatant admission of the ridiculousness of the institution serves to accentuate a post-ironic vision of the Ivory Tower. Cercas' choice of Olalde as the oracle of the truth confirms both this convention and the SpCN convention of the foreigner as spectator in the university. Olalde intones

Leí su último libro, profesor Fulano. Excelente bibliografía, excelente bibliografía. No voy a negarlo ahora, profesor Mengano; y aún le diré otra cosa: el profesor Zutano me la ha copiado sin rubor en su último libro, que por lo demás está plagado de errores. Por cierto, profesor Mengano,

también yo leí su último artículo y debo reconocer que me impresionó la honestidad científica con que refutaba la ridícula hipótesis de ese inveterado y lamentable chapucero que es el profesor Perengano, según la cual la progenitora de Pitarra contaba veintisiete años en el momento de concebir al escritor, cuando es de todo punto evidente, como se depende de los datos que usted aporta con su habitual modestia, que tenía veinticinco --. Olalde dio una calada al cigarro, expulsó el humo por la nariz, ahogó una risita; prosiguió: -- Montón de mediocres: encuentran un mérito en leer lo que nadie ha querido leer; al hablar se inflan como pavos, y se creen con derecho a opinar sobre todo porque saben distinguir un manuscrito del siglo trece de uno del siglo catorce. Lo que no entiendo es para qué en este país se empeñan en aislarlos en estos campos de concentración paradisiácos que son las universidades, a cientos de kilómetros de cualquier lugar habitado, en medio del desierto como quien dice. (51)

Olalde continues, answering his own question, that the rural and isolated locale of the universities was purposeful, an effort to quarantine the innocent from the dangerous ideas that are generated in the academic world. This attitude directly reflects the history of the Spanish university; the Spanish State's frequent interference in the autonomy of the university parallels an inherent belief that ideas can be dangerous. However, Olalde's diatribe is not about Spain, but about the insipidness of the university, reflected in the current lack of ideas from scholars whose heads are swimming with statistics and dates. As a member of the faculty, he does not exclude himself from his criticism of the profession; instead – *again ironically* – he distinguishes himself from the rest by being aware of his condition. He has observed the game and chosen to participate, but always recognizing that it is a game. He finishes with these reflections:

Sí señor, yo soy idéntico a ellos, salvo en una cosa: mientras ellos ni siquiera son conscientes de la vida insuficiente y mezquina que llevan, porque les ciega la borrachera de vanidad, yo me doy cuenta de que nosotros somos los auténticos bárbaros. (51)

Olalde is interrupted by other members of the department who turn the tables on him by painting him as a curmudgeon, dissatisfied with the department, the university and the country. The disparagement of his colleagues serves to infantilize Olalde, but his words have been spoken, and Mario has heard them. Cercas further highlights the outsider status of Olalde via his physical locations; it was his remote and pathetic office to which Mario was transferred. Physically and metaphorically, Olalde is seen as a pariah, and the university fails to embrace divergence from the norm.

Olalde, however, is not the only foreigner in the department. Mario himself fulfills twice over the characteristic of a stranger in a strange land. His nationality is Italian and he lives and works in Illinois; he is a mediocre writer and researcher among the ambitious, but he is also a stranger to himself. As the novel progresses, Mario ceases to live his own life; he observes another living it, only it is an improved version of what he lived. Mario, like Olalde, becomes an observer of how one achieves success. Mario's reaction to Berkowicz's celebrity, which prospers due to Berkowicz's adherence to the customary achievements for an academic, questions what is normal and what is not. The reader is continually faced with faculty who do not respect their colleagues or their profession. Whereas the British and American novels frequently project the notion that the campus is a surrogate for the world at-large, the Spanish campus novel reveals the Anglo education system to be a separate culture, distinct from that of the laymen, with its own language, customs and politics.

#### Javier Cercas: La velocidad de la luz

In contrast, Javier Cercas' second campus novel, La velocidad de la luz (2005), shares very little with El inquilino. The style in which each is written, the storylines, the

characteristics and adherence to the genre all differ greatly. In La velocidad de la luz the protagonist is an aspiring writer in Barcelona who receives a serendipitous offer to become a TA in the US in the Department of Spanish at the University of Illinois-Urbana. The unnamed Spaniard accepts the offer because he believes that travel and foreign experience are essential to the development of a writer's career and more importantly, the stipend from his teaching responsibilities will allow him to substantially raise his standard of living. While in Urbana, the Spaniard writes and completes a novel, El inquilino – in fact, and becomes part of an intimate social circle of fellow scholars. One friend, Rodney Falk, does not encapsulate any of the archetypal characters of the academic novel. His life in tandem with the writer's forms the backbone of the novel. Rodney Falk served in Vietnam in the elite Tiger Force; his wartime experiences, memories and secrets impacted him so vividly that he cannot maintain a stable life or relationship. The writer eventually fixates on Rodney's story as a path to understanding Rodney and ultimately himself. Tragedy, the death of the Spaniard's wife and son in a car accident, and Rodney's suicide are the eventual catalysts that prompt the blocked writer to complete Rodney's tale and thus his own.

Unlike El inquilino, the classification of La velocidad de la luz as a campus novel requires discussion. Much of the narrative takes place on a college campus and the primary protagonists teach and take classes as graduate students. But, neither Rodney's nor the writer's fortunes and security depend upon the university. As a result, traits that have commonly applied to both the Anglo and Spanish campus novels are not readily apparent, but traits unique to the SpCN are accentuated.

The Spaniard as the observer, the outsider, continues to be a theme. The protagonist, not motivated to enter an American University for a graduate education or degree, describes his temporary home mockingly. Cercas' narrator satirizes the university environment by denying it the familiar status as a bastion of intellectual and personal freedom for its inhabitants. The reputation of the American university as a setting in which everyone is free to discover their true selves, so humorously chronicled in David Lodge's description of Plotinus<sup>17</sup> is upended when Cercas' protagonist describes Rodney Falk – a maverick in this setting and clearly not accepted for who he is:

Rodney no pasaba inadvertido en medio de la rigurosa uniformidad que imperaba en el departamento y que todo el mundo acataba sin rechistar, como si tratase de una norma tácita pero palpable de profilaxis intelectual paradójicamente destinada a instigar la competencia entre los miembros de aquella comunidad orgullosa de su estricta observancia meritocrática. Rodney contravenía esa norma porque era bastante mayor que los demás ayudantes de español, casi ninguno de los cuales superaba los treinta años . . . (28)

Rodney's history, the fact that he is a Vietnam veteran, contribute to his aura as an eccentric and an intruder in the University. It is rumored that he obtained his position because of his military service (not on merit) and the gossip centers around the superficial details of his background. Acting with stereotypical expectations, thus negating the training in critical thinking which universities strive to cultivate, the TAs worry that Rodney will blow their heads off with a machine gun. Philip Roth's The Human Stain echoes this depiction of the Vietnam vet as an unstable, loaded weapon. In short, Rodney, like the protagonist, is an outsider and his presence is an ironic reminder of campus politics and non-conformity. Moreover, since it is through Rodney's story that

the protagonist ultimately processes his own, Rodney must also live as a foreigner. Difference makes culture more observable. Cercas emphasizes the relevance of the outsider status when Rodney explains that he felt more American than ever the moment in which he stepped onto Vietnamese soil. His physical description likewise separates him even more from the norm for its notable discords. Rodney is a burly, ungraceful man who has a staggering gait, not unlike that of an elephant. His physique is off kilter as well, with one shoulder higher than the other and one eye patched due to photophobia. His description echoes that of Professor Olalde in El inquilino, reinforcing the outsider status of both. Both Rodney and Olalde are painful and uncomfortable presences for their departments, yet their insights into literature and the university subvert the conventional belief that the “distinguished” faculty members are the ones who impart words of wisdom.

An additional glimpse into university life further counters the traditional view of the classroom as the place where learning takes place. The only actual description of the classroom setting in Cercas’ novels parodies the university’s precepts. A young Italian professor, Giuseppe Rota<sup>18</sup>, has been contracted by the university to teach an introductory course in Catalan literature. But reading literature in its original language presupposes competence in that language. Rota’s course is under-enrolled with only three students and the Barcelonian native - protagonist is asked to matriculate in the course in order to allow it to run, avoiding embarrassment for the university and Rota. Regrettably, the course never becomes a course. Cercas writes, “ En realidad, aquella clase no acabó de empezar nunca, sencillamente porque era una clase impracticable”

(34). There was no common language between the students and professor making discussion impossible. Consequently, the narrator had to translate Rota's every word from Catalan to English, the students' lingua franca, but a language not mastered by Rota. Thus, the class became a farse.

Además de ridículo, el procedimiento era de una morosidad exasperante aunque, mal que mal, nos permitió capear no sólo aquella clase introductoria, sino, por increíble que parezca, el semestre entero, es verdad que no sin grandes dosis de generosa hipocresía y de sonrisas por parte de todo el mundo. (35)

La velocidad de la luz is a novel for people who read a lot. Whereas many academic novels seem to tailor their humor and their referentiality for other academics with the judicious or humorous use of academic terminology, the referentiality in La velocidad stems from the unceasing mention of novels and authors. The friendship established between Rodney and the protagonist is cemented by their insatiable reading of texts. They begin with a brief discussion of Hemingway and then Mercè Rodoreda, two of Rodney's idols, but their weekly tertulia quickly expands to include everyone. Among the authors the Spaniard is reading are Philip Roth and Bernard Malamud, both of whom have written works important to the genre of the academic novel. This connection informs Cercas' own work. Firstly, Malamud's A New Life was one of the defining texts of the AmCN and was instrumental in disseminating an image of a midwestern university. The connection between Roth and Cercas is even more robust than the campus connection. Roth's oeuvre includes an alterego, Nathan Zuckerman, whose life simulates Roth's. There are certifiable biographical similarities between the two, yet the works are fictional; even Roth's memoir, The Facts: A Novelist's

Autobiography (1988), casts doubt on its own credibility by including a letter from his alter-ego Zuckerman. Cercas also straddles the line between realistic portraiture and imagination through constant references in La velocidad to his previous books; El inquilino is mentioned by name and Soldados de Salamina by context. Details in Cercas' life correspond to the protagonist's yet there is not hint in any of Cercas' interviews that the work is biographical. The conclusion that one can draw from the authors whom Cercas mentions, Roth included, is that Cercas' audience is meant to be an educated, well-read audience, sensitive to the subtle intimations of reality in the pages of fiction. Just as the jargon and obscure references in an academic novel enhance its humor and familiarity to the reader "in the know," so the references in La velocidad complement the storyline and intrigue the reader with knowledge of the texts. It is not necessary to have read any of the mentioned authors to follow the narrative, but an appreciation of Cercas' dexterity with the referentiality game can be appreciated only by a reader with a similar literary base. The other authors mentioned are giants of American fiction, complicated and experimental, and their presence demands that an analysis of La velocidad not be limited to its thematic parts. The primacy of diegesis over that of criticism is once again underscored by the outsider. Rodney accentuates this point at the same time that he confuses it. He explains to the emergent novelist that, "Pero hablar de uno mismo es la mejor manera de ocultarse . . . En una novela lo que no se cuenta siempre es más relevante que lo que se cuenta" (63). In other words, the manuscript will reveal itself: there is no need for exegesis.

Rodney's opinion of critics, for example, merits attention. In one instance, his rather condescending attitude towards them is revealed. One of the members of the Catalán class studies theater, and his final project is the staging of a scene. Rodney and the protagonist attend and afterwards discuss the performance, which is of a piece by Harold Pinter. Neither understands the scene; the protagonist takes the blame for his incomprehension, but Rodney charges the critics with Pinter's failings. He relates an anecdote that he encountered in which Pinter confesses to his wife that he has written various scenes, but that they do not relate to one another. Pinter's wife, according to Rodney, responds, " 'No te preocupes; tú pégalas todas, que ya se encargarán los críticos de decir lo que significan.' La cosa funcionó: la prueba es que no hay ni una sola línea de Pinter que los críticos no entiendan perfectamente" (57). Rodney's shares a disdain for literary criticism with his fictitious doppelganger, Olalde. And he accepts willingly the comparison. When Rodney and the now famous Spanish writer reacquaint themselves years later in Madrid, they discuss El inquilino and Rodney pointedly asks if Olalde is he. The writer vacillates, remembering the unflattering portrait of Olalde, but Rodney is delighted because the writer in his opinion has seen the truth. Rodney describes Olalde, and thus himself, "-Como el único que se entera de verdad de lo que está pasando" (169). The apparent lack of criticism of the university and its self-populating machine in La velocidad de la luz is deceptive. Condemnation of the university, a stalwart element of the Spanish as well as American campus novel, thus occurs implicitly through the intertextuality of the novels. Since Olalde was modelled after Rodney and Olalde disapproves of the hypocritical, self-important and mendacious nature of the faculty, so

must Rodney disapprove. By reiterating Showalter's most selective criteria for a truly great campus novel, that of innovation, La velocidad de la luz achieves vindication.

Superficially, it conforms to the list of traits; academia is parodied. In a more profound and pioneering sense, however, it also fulfills an academic's novel objective. The tools of the academic are reinvented within the novel. It is insufficient to notice intertextuality; the intercalated texts serve as more accurate criticism of the novel than any specialized scholar's study could.

The censure of literary critics is explicit. At a cocktail party, the protagonist's benefactor, Marcelo Cuarteto, a brilliant professor who had secured for him the provisional TA the position in Urbana, becomes a topic of conversation. The literary reviewers attending the party include one critic who aspires to be an essayist as well as a novelist; they dismiss Cuarteto's latest academic volume as "árido, estéril y estrecho de miras que triunfaba en la universidad" (194). The protagonist, who self-confesses that he thought Cuarteto's essay brilliant, chimes in with equally disparaging remarks, so the debasement of the university is complete. Both insiders (Rodney via Olalde) and outsiders (the critics and an award-winning writer) share the opinion that academia has nothing to offer the elite literary world; truth is found in a story, not in theories about it.

Finally, the only term associated with literary criticism used in the text merits attention. Rodney's father relates the story of Rodney's life as he knows it and his own role in compelling Rodney to enlist. Rodney's younger brother, Bob, was already in Vietnam and his infrequent letters enlivened the family dinner, The narrator interprets the reading of the letters " . . . el padre la (*la carta*) leyó en voz alta mientras cenaban,

salpicando la lectura de exégesis orgullosas que eran como un reproche” (95). The exegeses, critical interpretations by Rodney’s father, contributed to Rodney’s guilt. Subtly, via the simple use of the word exegesis, the idea that criticism perverts a text, is fostered.

This idea is further explored in the characters’ search for identity. Claudio, Mario and the protagonist of La velocidad share this quest, and it is one that will be explored in other SpCNs. All of the leading characters experience a moment in which they are no longer living their life, but that of another character (in the case of Claudio and the Barcelonian); or the reverse is true: another has overtaken their life (Mario). There is a constant questioning of how literature, criticism and experience impact one’s personal evolution. Rodney, as always, is the voice of logic in La velocidad. He explains to his hapless friend why he thinks his goal to be a writer is foolish. A writer sees reality, whereas the rest of the world simply looks without seeing it.. His writing, then, supposedly makes sense of the world; unfortunately, if a writer stops writing, he no longer is able to shield himself from the reality he sees and ends up killing himself (69). As such, the suggestion is that fiction, the story is what saves us. Claudio was compelled to explore Buenos Aires, to pursue the story and to remove himself from the need to explain it which motivates the critic. His meeting with the specter of Carlota suggests an encounter with life, just as Mario’s reluctant acceptance of Berkowickz, a fiction, allowed him to appreciate his life, by recuperating what he thought was lost. In every story, the loosening of the parameters of reality serves to strengthen the characters. This technique or theme is not unique to campus fiction; in fact, two of these three novels

could easily take place in fantastic literature, but the co-dependancy of plot and mise en abyme suggests an emerging pattern in the Spanish Campus Novel. The contribution of La velocidad to this transformation of one into another occurs when the writer realizes that his life is Rodney's; he too feels guilt and regret; he too caused the death of innocents (219). Therefore, it is his telling of Rodney's story that allows him to begin to relive his own. Literature is the shield that permits him to see. This component, the truth in the story, and not the exegesis will reappear many times in the Spanish Campus Novel.

Another commonality found in the SpCN is the belief that academia does not reflect the world at large, rather it insulates both students and faculty from harsher realities. The protagonist, in his role as observer, generalizes about university life:

Como todas las ciudades universitarias, aquélla era un lugar aséptico y falaz, un microclima humano huérfano de pobres y ancianos en el que cada año aterrizaba y del que cada año despegaba hacia el mundo real una población compuesta por jóvenes de paso procedentes de todo el planeta.  
(27)

Another example of the university as a sanctuary from the world outside is given by Rodney's father when Rodney does not return to the University. He explains to the protagonist that Rodney, the mentally wounded warrior, receptacle of the atrocities of the world, while at the university "estaba muy a gusto, sí, pero no podía durar: demasiado bueno para ser cierto" (79). The shelter of the university lulled Rodney, allowing him to thrive. His separation from the disproportionately secure protection of the university marks the beginning of a severe downturn in his life.

The protagonist's acquisition of his university assistantship and his subsequent employments provide further evidence of the novel's affinity with the SpCN and divergence from the AmCNs and the BrCNs. The protagonist was offered the opportunity in a bar. He had bumped into a former professor whose connections in academia included a colleague at the University of Illinois whose Spanish Department "ofrecía varias becas de profesor ayudante a licenciados españoles" (18). For those graduate students who have walked the hallowed halls enroute to a master's or a doctoral degree, applying to multiple universities with the hope of either being accepted or receiving money from one, the casualness of this offer is provocative. Even more debasing for the overworked, underpaid graduate student is Cuarteto's flippant description of the responsibilities: "Te pagan un sueldo por dar clases de lengua, lo justo para vivir, y tienes que matricularte en el programa de doctorado. Nada muy exigente" (19). In communion with his predecessors, Claudio and Mario, the protagonist is able to appreciate the comfortable life which the university offers without becoming entrenched in its rigorous demands. Unlike Claudio and Mario, the Barcelonian is not dependant on the university for his continued livelihood; he always intends to return to Spain, yet the levity which he attaches to his academic responsibilities mirrors that of his compatriots. Once the protagonist is ensconced into the rhythm of life in Urbana, it is clear that the rigors of academia do not put any demands upon him. Once again, unlike his Anglo counterparts, there is little stress in his workday. This relaxed attitude may be due to the temporariness of his sojourn in Illinois, but it is also a recurrent feature of the Spanish campus novel.

Academic work is secondary, inconsequential in fact, compared to either one's passion, fiction, or simply life itself.

Como me había prometido Marcelo Cuarteto, ganaba dinero suficiente para vivir sin estrecheces y mis obligaciones como profesor de español y estudiante de doctorado me dejaban casi todas las tardes y todas las noches libres, además de unos fines de semana larguísimos que incluían los viernes, de manera que disponía de mucho tiempo para leer y escribir.  
(27)

The second and last reference to any sort of academic effort in La velocidad sums up the narrator's attitude toward his experience. After his first year and ensuing summer vacation in Spain, he returns to Urbana and, "seguí con mis clases y mis cosas, y que por entonces empecé una tesis doctoral (que nunca acabé) . . . que estuve ocupado viviendo y no estuve ocupado muriendo; durante todo aquel tiempo trabajé con ahínco en mi novela" (145). He describes his novel and how he used Rodney's physique as fodder for a character and that the protagonist simulated exactly his own circumstances. The protagonist thus converts his life simultaneously into both fiction and academic achievement, the production of a text:

. . . aquella larga temporada en Estados Unidos había sido mi verdadero doctorado, convencido de que ya no tenía nada más que aprender allí y de que, si quería convertirme en un escritor de verdad y no en un fantasma o un zombi, - como Rodney y como los personajes de mi novela y como algunos habitantes de Urbana - , entonces debía regresar de inmediato a casa. (emphasis added 146)

Another maxim and constant in Spanish academic novels is the secondary stature of the university itself. It is a vehicle for other goals, an institution to be used and outgrown, not worthy of worry for the Spaniard who remains committed to his goals. The

protagonist's immediate acquisition of an academic position upon his return to Barcelona does not inspire satisfaction, he perceives it as a useful income while awaiting publication of his novel and gives up the job as soon as he can. Like Claudio and Mario, teaching is a "mortgage" and "groceries".

When by chance the writer renews his acquaintance with a friend from Urbana and has the opportunity to catch up on his circle of friends (this occurs years after his own family's tragic deaths) one would think that he would be more interested in the details of his friends' lives and less their curriculums, yet little more than an academic cv is given about each one. Laura had written an excellent critical edition of Los eruditos a la violeta and was giving classes in St. Louis University while Felipe Vieri, another TA, continued to teach at NYU, to write novels and various books of essays about literature and cinema (228-9). Even a novelist who seems to disdain the rigid standards by which academia measures his colleagues (the secondary characters) uses those same standards to update the reader on their lives.

In spite of the limitations inherent in the summary of academic careers, La velocidad de la luz is not only populated by the one-dimensional characters found in some Anglo campus novels. Marcelo Cuarteto, a professor en la Autónoma and the man who arranged the assistantship is portrayed with warmth and perhaps presages a new Spanish archetype as well: the leftist.

Era un cincuentón grueso, bajo, pelirrojo y descuidado en el vestir, con una cara grande de tortuga triste monopolizada por unas cejas de malvado y unos ojos sarcásticos que amedrentaban un poco; también era uno de los primeros especialistas en la novela decimonónica, había encabezado la agitación universitaria contra el franquismo en los años sesenta y setenta

y, según se decía...continuaba siendo un comunista de corazón, resignado e irredento. (17)

As stated previously, tertiary education in Spain has always been irremediably entwined with politics. Students of the 60s and 70s in Spain either accepted the status quo of Franco's regime or roundly rejected it in favor of more rigorous and more open-minded education. The professors educated in those years were either on one side of the political fence or the other. Just as social class and status codify meaning to readers of the BrCN (or in the case of the AmCN, relative wealth and geography) the political background of professors will instantly illuminate a character type for the reader of the SpCN. As students fill the walls of the Spanish university and the academic standards become more stringent, it is to be expected that shorthand descriptions will become even more prevalent.

A second respected faculty member will serve as yet another paradigmatic model for the SpCN. Borgheson, Cuarteto's friend, exemplifies the English speaker in the Spanish department. In many of the Transatlantic or channel-jumping novels, there is an evaluation of the English speakers' competency in Spanish. The close attention to speech and word choice is a continued motif in the novels. "Borgheson, que rondaba los cuarenta años y hablaba ese castellano un tanto arcaico y pedregoso que hablan a menudo quienes lo han leído mucho y lo han hablado poco" (22). These faculty members are usually astute theoreticians, commanding presences or outstanding professors, but the brief, yet indispensable linguistic commentary instantly places them outside Spain, just as the Spanish protagonist(s) are constantly reminded of their outsider status in the United States (or Britain).

Although not nearly as threatening as “La Terminator”, the female academic is still not painted in the most flattering light. Nevertheless, her intelligence is never questioned. Throughout his residence, the protagonist becomes friends and forms relationships with various graduate students, but Laura Burns appears most frequently and fully. She also best conforms to the description of women faculty in Anglo and Spanish academic novels. The first thing that he notes when he meets her is, “ su intimidante propensión al sarcasmo, a duras penas refrenada por el respeto que le inspiraba la presencia de Borgheson” (23). Even as a student, the female is given the role of verbally castrating her companions with her withering derision. When the writer encounters Laura again, 16 years later, he does not fail to note her monopoly of the conversation. The women are strong, overpowering, emasculating. Laura Burn, twice divorced, still commands a room, physically and conversationally. “Hasta que apareció Laura Burns, rubia, guapa y urgente, . . . y de inmediato se adueñó de la conversación” (232). Laura, like Delphine and Ana Gadea, is a presence.

A final touch of humor comes in the form of a metafictional allusion to the Chair of the Spanish Department at the University of Illinois-Urbana. Apparently, according to Laura, upon the publication of *El inquilino*, the Chair assumed himself to be the model for Scanlon, the ambitious and callous Chair who demoted Mario, and conspired to make any copy of the novel still left in the library disappear. The image of a chair scurrying about, hiding copies of a publication, when his essential task is to encourage publication, is comic and hypocritical. His actions once again reinforce the primacy of text over

theory. By a reading of the earlier novel, El inquilino, traits of the current novel, La velocidad, are illuminated.

The final point which merits attention concerns the use of language by Cercas. Muñoz Molina borrowed heavily from English to convey subtleties of ambiance, origin and self-identification for his Spanish professor living and working in an English environment. Cercas's use of language is equally notable, but for the opposite reason: its complete lack of English, even when the Spanish translation seems awkward or not logical. The obstinacy with which Spanish is maintained ultimately suggests the protagonist's lack of assimilation to both the US and the university environment. For example, the protagonist never refers to a Teaching Assistant as anything other than a "profesor ayudante" which is an inaccurate and misleading translation as a "profesor ayudante doctor" is commonly used for an entry-level teaching position in academia for someone who has completed their doctorate.<sup>19</sup> The campus is always the "ciudad universitaria" and a frisbee is a "disco" (52). In the only explanation of an American university phenomenon, Cercas explains Spring Break: "el equivalente norteamericano de las vacaciones de Semana Santa" (81). Military condecorations, such as Purple Heart and Silver Star, are translated as well, although their Spanish monikers are not any more meaningful than their English ones to someone who is unfamiliar with the American military (124). The resulting tone for anyone familiar with an American university is that of a report written by a foreigner for a foreign audience. Unlike Carlota Fainberg, the critique of the university does not rely upon sarcasm or parody, but upon intertextuality.

The protagonist reinforces his outsider role with such native language choices and with his references to other written works, his own included.

By aligning Antonio Muñoz Molina and Javier Cercas as decisive shapers of the SpCN, patterns begin to form as well as common motifs. Additionally, their innovations highlight the complexity and significance of their works as well as suggesting to what heights the SpCN can aspire. Javier Marías, yet another award winner, corresponds in many ways with the traits already identified while adding a uniquely individual twist.

CHAPTER 3  
JAVIER MARÍAS

Javier Marías, like Javier Cercas and Antonio Muñoz Molina, is well acquainted with university campuses. The whole of his adult life has been dedicated to letters; he wrote his first novel at nineteen and since then he has published over ten novels, written literary commentaries, essays and articles as well as winning awards for his translations. The most notable of these translations is Laurence Sterne's Tristram Shandy, an 18<sup>th</sup> century tome which reflects as much on the process of writing as it does on the life of Tristram Shandy. This detail garners relevancy upon studying Marías' body of work. His narrators obsess over the retelling of their stories, always conscious that the remembered self must perforce be a fictional creation since that self will never exist in the future. "Aunque el que habla no sea el mismo que estuvo allí" (Todas las almas 9). With this caveat, Marías opens the novel which this present study will classify as a campus novel. Early in his career, Marías spent two years as a *don* in Oxford. Although he has neither written a memoir nor an autobiography, he harvests heavily from his experiences to craft place and atmosphere in his novels and his interlude at Oxford offered fruitful terrain as evidenced in Todas las almas, published in 1989 and a winner of the Premio Ciudad de Barcelona. Because of the concordance between Javier Marías' background and that of his narrator, he must distance himself from the ersatz presumption that the novel is a *roman a clef*. He would make that clear in 1998, by publishing the astonishing Negra espalda del tiempo, a wily pseudo-memoir intent upon answering the never ending queries that Marías received about the veracity of Todas las almas while denying its own

authority as a purveyor of truth. Both novels reach and then surpass Showalter's bar of excellence, which demands that the campus novel experiment with fiction itself as well as comment on current issues and the anguish inherent in the competitive world of academia.

Todas las almas is both the title of the novel and the Oxfordian college where the events transpire. The narrator, an unnamed Spaniard who is referred to in the novel only as "nuestro querido español" or "our well-loved Spaniard," has been contracted to spend two years at prestigious Oxford University as a lecturer in Spanish literature, linguistics and translation. The novel begins with a reflection on his relationships with his Oxfordian associates. Of the three colleagues most beloved by the Spaniard, two have died. Ostensibly, the protagonist writes in order to preserve his friends and his relationship with them, but as he states explicitly, his recollection of them must be different from what they truly were. Therefore, the novel has a snapshot or episodic video quality of moments and incidences punctuated by tangential musings and reflections on the narrator's own feelings: an attractive girl at the train station with excellent ankles, his first *high table*, his lover's torn stocking, the dons' black togas, his mentor's incongruously yellow sweater. These visuals and musings are subtly perceptive, comic portraits of individualistic, unique literary personages, yet these portraits could also be classified as affectionate caricatures of the archetypes found in the AmCNs and the BrCNs. The novel concludes with the narrator back in Madrid, pushing the stroller of his newborn, pensive about the funerals that he missed and the colleagues and acquaintances he no longer sees.

Javier Marías' unnamed protagonist in Todas las almas returns, with the name of Jack or Jacobo Deza, in the recently completed trilogy Tu rostro mañana (2002, 2004, 2007). But the continuation of Deza's fictional life does not return him to Oxford in any university related position. It is the "anti-novel" or the "false novel" written in 1998 that will be considered a SpCN, once it has been established that the text really is a novel and not a memoir, essay or autobiography. Negra espalda del tiempo commences by pondering whether it is ever possible to chronicle precisely any event, to excise all fiction from an account. Marías suggests that it is not because the very inclusion of a metaphor makes art out of the intended chronicle, changing the story. Nonetheless, Marías writes himself in as the narrator of the text and he then explicitly informs the reader that his proposed objective with the writing of Negra espalda is, in fact, "relatar lo ocurrido"(11). This is the last moment in which the reader is permitted to think of the book as non-fiction. In the same paragraph, Marías writes that it will be fascinating for him to write with "una voz antojadiza e imprevisible pero que conocemos todos, la voz del tiempo cuando aún no ha pasado ni se ha perdido y quizá por eso ni siquiera es tiempo" (NE 10). In other words, he writes as the moment occurs; the reader is privy to a record of Marías' reflections in "real time." Then he says that this voice must always be fictitious and perhaps mine (my voice) will be too (10). Thus, Marías establishes in the first pages that Negra espalda is "perhaps" a fictitious work. The "perhaps" becomes less ambiguous when Marías writes in the following paragraph, "A diferencia de lo que sucede en las verdaderas novelas de ficción, los elementos de este relato que empiezo ahora son del

todo azarosos y caprichosos, meramente episódicos y acumulativos” (NE 11). If this is not a true novel of fiction, then what is it?

Marías himself struggles with his classification, but an unedited Marías text from 1997’s “Diario de Zürich” proffers the most adequate categorization, “la novela o falsa novela” (26). In either case, novel or false novel, the work is clearly a novel, an innovative, rarely written kind of novel. María Teresa Ibáñez Ehrlich describes the novel as

un mundo fantástico cimentado en los principios de la creación literaria, desde la función del narrador y sus categorías, los límites imprecisos de la noción de género, hasta el concepto de la ficcionalidad, en un juego sin límites que puede crear desconcierto en el lector. (307)

Marías composes Negra espalda in the best tradition of Tristram Shandy, a novel composed not of the story, but of the peripheral thoughts and musings which accompany it. Heretofore in this study of the SpCN, the challenge has been to establish that a novel should be included in the sub-genre of the campus novel. On the face of Negra espalda del tiempo, its masquerade as a memoir suggests that it cannot be remotely included in the SpCN. Once it is established, however, that it is a novel and one whose first third centers on the professors at Oxford, it must be included.<sup>20</sup> Marías struggles to relate how what is fictional (the events of Todas las almas) have impacted his reality. Given that in order to remember and chronicle this reality, he must put pen to paper, the chronicle itself must be addressed as fiction. Thus the two novels, written with different purposes, examine the same time, place and, to a certain extent, characters. As such, the novels will be analyzed in tandem to bring into greater relief the attributes of campus fiction

evident in both. Additionally, since Negra espalda continually alludes to Todas las almas, a comparative analysis of the two may illuminate each of them better.

The primary attribute of a campus novel is its location, and both novels to a greater or lesser degree take place in or refer to Oxford. In Negra espalda, many university references treat the Spanish university, expanding the study of Marías and the SpCN. A second requirement concerns the employment of the protagonist in the novel; Marías' protagonist in TLA is an actual *don* for the duration of his contract. Negra espalda alludes to Marías' verifiable experience as a university lecturer in Oxford and Madrid so the components match the genre's definition. Marías' genius, though, is in his character descriptions, thus that component is the most notable. Juan Francisco Jiménez clarifies that Negra espalda satisfies the rigors of Marías work. He writes, "Sí es una novela típica de Marías, con su ritmo quedo y calmado . . . y esos personajes descritos con el cuidado y la precision de un miniaturista" (79). Marías populates his Spanish department, la Sub-Facultad de Español, with eccentric and recognizably archetypal colleagues, from socially inept to socially drunk, from pompous to pretentious, and from sexual dynamo to spy.

One of the more recognizable types of academic corresponds to the scholar fixated upon his/her tiny niche. Commonly portrayed are those men and women who center their life in their research. In Todas las almas, this occupational obsession crosses disciplines. There is Rook, a Russian professor, currently at work on the definitive translation of Anna Karenina, whose title should really –it is said-- be Anna Karenin.

Este Rook era notorio porque llevaba doce años haciendo una nueva traducción de Anna Karenina y porque había conocido y tratado a

Nabokov durante un curso que pasó en América. Su traducción iba a ser —nadie había visto aún una línea, ni siquiera el editor— canónica e incomparable, empezando por la fundamental innovación en el título. (38-39)

In the “real world”, twelve years would never be an acceptable time frame for a project, nor would progress be recorded without concrete evidence. Another example of the fanatical professor appears in the form of Halliwell, an economist. The narrator was seated next to the young, promising professor at a College function, and although he was forewarned about Halliwell’s defect, he was still underwhelmed by his companion, who repeatedly explained to him the genesis of “un cierto y al parecer peculiar impuesto que entre 1760 y 1767 había existido en Inglaterra sobre la sidra” (TLA 59). The way in which this SpCN exploits this characteristic, however, is by using the Spaniard entertaining himself by first mocking him. When Halliwell pauses to await encouragement to speak, the narrator responds, “Me apasiona, continúe” as he silently contemplates the beauty of a female don (59). Then, the narrator underlines the egotism of the fanatic by pointing out that “Mientras este prometedor economista peroraba sobre la sidra sin moderación y no tenía el detalle de hacerme una sola pregunta” (59).

Thirty-five years after Lucky Jim, a continuity of situation may be clearly drawn between Amis’ text and that of Marías. Jim Dixon can neither engage with nor really find worthwhile his study of “The Economic Influence of the Developments of Shipbuilding Techniques, 1450-1485”. He disdains what he considers to be futile and superfluous research, thus making him incapable of remaining in the insular, self-congratulatory world of academia. Halliwell, as described by Marías thirty years later, is described as a promising professor with a defect: his fixation on his subject, thus

becoming the ideal. However inadequate, Halliwell's social skills will not deter him from academic success.

While almost all of the professors are socially immature, a few excel in social malfunction. From Negra espalda, Marías describes colleagues Leigh-Peele and Robert Pring-Mill, who respectively specialize in the Indies and Ernesto Cardenal (49–51). Their single-mindedness about their subjects and their inappropriate formality do not win them any friends. But it is Alec Dewar, appearing in both texts, who exemplifies the socially inept professor, incapable of functioning outside of the safe haven of academia. In Todas las almas, Alec Dewar, more frequently known as the Ripper or the Butcher by his students, is an expert in 19<sup>th</sup> century Spanish literature. Like all the rest of the *dons*, he is pompous and impressed by himself. His looks and appearance reveal his true self, a dead soul, ensconced in his work:

Aquel hombre oscuro y huesudo y protolocario, de boca enorme y cráneo picudo y pómulos altos . . . No se le conocía más vida que la universitaria. Era otro soltero más de la ciudad de Oxford, otro continuador de la vieja tradición clerical de aquel sitio inmutable e inhóspito y conservado en almíbar . . . Era un alma muerta. (219)

Dewar, as embodied in his curriculum vitae, represents a tremendous academic force. He is a literary specialist, a don at Oxford and a Russian linguist for the Secret Service; in short, a man who in an AmCN or a BrCN would successfully have tenure and prestige. Yet, his role as interrogator for Russian émigrés is used primarily as fodder for dinner conversation at the high tables. His interviews with them represent the only moments in which he can be certain of a rapt audience. Through the ideas of someone who is an outsider, professionally and nationally, the emptiness and loneliness of a life

devoted only to academia are portrayed together with the danger inherent in belonging, even provisionally, to that world. “Yo ya no soy un solitario como él, ni un vivo muerto, pero creí ser eso, durante un tiempo” (220). Dewar, like Sy Levin, Nils Harstad (Moo, 1997) and A.S.Byatt’s scholars, represents the lonely, unapproachable academic. The Oxfordian don who assumed that he was to be the inspiration for Dewar, also referred to as Dewar in Negra espalda, does not fare much better in his happiness quotient, reinforcing the archetype. He is described in NE as a man who lives for his students, perpetuating the co-dependence of the scholar on the university and vice-versa; although the students never cease to irritate him, they also keep him alive. Dewar has a persona that animates him; in front of students and visiting faculty, he displays a ferocious and sarcastic exterior, but with his colleagues he is not able to initiate or maintain conversation (NE 47–8).

Mariás’ British dons are not any more above power plays and mean-spirited attacks than were the professors populating the novels of Cercas and Muñoz Molina. There is a difference, however; in Cercas and Muñoz Molina, and indeed, the majority of AmCNs and BrCNs, the fierce competition is inside the department, and the spoils are the best classes, best schedule, early tenure, extra merit pay, office space, and so on. On the other hand, Oxfordian collegiality demands a closed front against outsiders, be it other professors or students. The narrator’s sometimes dubious responses to students’ questions are never subjected to a critique by his colleagues. On the contrary, within a College, solidarity there is considered part of being well educated. The narrator reflects on his understanding of their peculiar internal code:

En realidad hube de suponer , más tarde, que el aplauso de mis colegas a mis etimologías era consecuencia de su excelente educación, su sentido de la solidaridad y su sentido de la diversión. En Oxford nadie dice nunca nada a las claras (la franqueza sería la más imperdonable falta, también la más desconcertante). (TLA 21)

This same courtesy was not extended to dons from other universities. Consistent with the strict code of collegiality in Oxford, the dons prefer to decimate others. Dewar's savage treatment of those outside All Soul's faculty has already been mentioned, but he is not alone. Cromer-Blake, an intimate of the Spaniard, also exercises his knowledge to demean: "seguía hablando con tanta decisión y soltura como cuando quería hundir algún colega de otra universidad a los seminarios que se celebraban semanalmente" (TLA 96).

In spite of such protocol and the cohesion among the dons, Universities are hierarchical and the individual who most immediately affects each faculty member is frequently the chair. More prestigious professors may be able to cower the chair or threaten him/her with their exodus and thus a subsequent plummet in the department's status, as in the case of David Lodge's Morris Zapp. More frequently, however, faculty serve at the mercy of the chair; the chair has the power to make their days a scheduled torture, their livings, penury, or their futures precarious: Howard Belsey, Jim Dixon, Claudio, Mario, all CN protagonists suffer because of their respective chairs. In Oxford, the chain of command is different, but still operative. Cromer-Blake explains to the narrator:

Aquí sólo cuentan las instituciones, y uno puede llegar a ser muy poderoso en tanto que miembro o representante de una institución, pero no se puede llegar a nada sin ellas o fuera de ellas. De ahí convenga estar siempre en buenos términos con el *warden*, no digamos con el tesorero. (TLA 97).

The warden, frequently a member of the nobility, harkens back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century BrCN when class and education were intertwined and respect was owed due to social status, not academic merit.

Another 18<sup>th</sup> century archetype, the scholar-libertine, receives a starring role in Todas las almas, albeit with a uniquely Spanish flavor. Oxford's Chair of the Spanish Department does not reign in terror over the faculty; he does not create bureaucratic obstacles, nor does he seek to better the department by recruiting powerful academics. But, he does take his responsibilities seriously. Typically, the Chair takes responsibility for entertaining visiting luminaries, and Aidan Kavanagh, the Irish chair who writes horror novels under a pseudonym and who is "una autoridad internacional en nuestro Siglo de Oro" performs this office in spades (TLA 167). One night, the narrator, lonely without his lover, enters one of the local discos primarily frequented by the working class from the villages around Oxford. While there, to his initial shock, he runs into Aidan Kavanagh. His garb, far from the black gown of the high tables, is one of the humorous highlights of the novel.

Al principio pensé con alarma . . . que había sustituido su habitual indumentaria anodina o sobria por un chaleco de color verde Nilo y debajo nada, pero comprobé en seguida . . . que eran sólo los brazos lo que llevaba al desnudo, aunque hasta los hombros, es decir, bajo el chaleco verde Nilo, había corbata y había camisa . . . pero tenía que tratarse de una extraña camisa que no consistiese más que en la pechera . . . Su atuendo discotequero me permitió, en cualquier caso, descubrir que tenía mucho vello en las extremidades. (TLA 167)

Kavanagh then recognizes the narrator and is delighted to see him, contrary to what might be expected. Kavanagh gleefully announces that he is at the disco every

night; he then proceeds to offer the narrator a choice selection of the village girls while giving him helpful tips, such as to use a pseudonym when speaking with them.

It may be noted at this point, consistent with the BrCNs, that all of the Oxfordian professors, regardless of their personal eccentricities, are well-respected authorities in their field. The final professorial “type” to be mentioned embodies this characteristic and is, in fact, the quintessential scholar. When speaking of Toby Rylands, the illustrious, emeritus don and probable ex-secret service agent, the narrator takes pain to detail the relationship that one could have with Toby – something akin to friendship, yet with a pinch of fearful admiration. Contrary sentiments are not inspired by Rylands’ behavior, but by his presence. The word the narrator uses, “lo que en inglés es *awe*, y me entenderán algunos”, and the necessity of expressing it in English, indicate the uniquely British aura around Toby Rylands; he is competent, principled and of great consequence, Toby is, in fact, the exemplary mentor (TLA 182). The Toby Rylands of Negra espalda, though, is neither so stereotypical, nor so honorable. In TLA, Rylands represents the timeless, upstanding man of civil service both in the university and in the government, whereas in NE, he becomes a darker and more complex character. His distinguished emeritus status morphs into the more paradigmatic “vengeful chair” archetype. Mariás recounts a rumor in which a university in the US was going to employ one of Ryland’s ungrateful students. Rylands started a rumor in “sotto voce” that the student was a cophragist. The American university withdrew the offer without explanation (NE 45). Whether or not this ever occurred does not impact its consistency with the traits of the professors and the campus novels themselves. Rumor is a powerful tool, manipulated

well by those in insular societies. Coleman Silk did not use racially charged terms against his students, but he left the university in disgrace because of the accusation. Claudio did not discriminate against an African-American student, but his chair, Morini, uses the possible accusation to prevent Claudio's protests over his loss of tenure. Thus, rumor and truth coexist in the university realm as factors in one's employment, and even professor emeriti are not exempt from them.

The indistinctness between rumor and truth parallels the ambiguity between fiction and reality that Marías cultivates in his fiction, thus observing Showalter's exigency that the best campus novels innovate within the genre. Marías adapts the CN to his aesthetic and so doing, adds a new dimension to both the SpCN and CN.

Rodríguez Fisher summarizes the fundamental elements in the works of Javier Marías:

. . . la mezcla de géneros literarios, la presencia de personajes pasivos e irresueltos, el contagio entre ficción y realidad o la presencia de ésta en aquella, el <<desorden>> temporal, la magnífica elocuencia de los narradores. (62)

Just as there may be truth in rumors or it may be simply that people choose to believe rumors as truth, in Marías' fiction, there may be reality –or the reader may just choose to believe it to be so.<sup>21</sup>

Toby Rylands is not the only illustrious professor in Marías' work, but he does represent the British ideal. His Spanish counterpart, no less academically impressive, radically differs from Toby socially. Toby is dressed in tweeds or a yellow sweater, exuding dignity and import. On the other hand, on the first occasion in which the academic expert from Spain appears, he is caught in *flagrante delicto* in a disco. The

narrator-Spaniard frequently contrasts the cultural norms that distinguish the isles from the continent. He notes, for example, the differences in gazes: the non-British look at and approach others in an open, self-revealing way, whereas the British master and exercise an inscrutable gaze. Another contrast between the distinguished Spaniard professor (met when kissing the fat, local girl in the disco) and the distinguished ‘awe-inspiring’ British professor emeritus, emphasizes the cultural divide between the exposed Spaniard and the reserved British. That these cultural descriptions are neither surprising nor fresh is not the point; the originality lies in their relation to the SpCN. The exemplar of the great British professor is maintained, dignified in all situations, albeit not above professional crucifixion of those who have earned his displeasure. In addition, readers of SpCNs are given a first glimpse of what may become the literary archetype of the distinguished Spanish professor *whose position is in a Spanish university*. Both men exude competence and confidence in their work, the Spaniard being the self-declared expert on Cervantes, while Toby Rylands, no less humble, in describing his current activities, mentions that he is writing the best book that has ever been written about Laurence Sterne and Sentimental Journey (TLA 193). Yet despite their similarities, Marías’ depiction of them evokes just as strongly their cultural differences.

The Spanish professor, who figures in both novels --more so in Negra espalda-- requires more analysis because of his uniqueness in the SpCN. He is and will remain the only successful Spanish professor and scholar in this study, confident in his accomplishments and recognized by his peers. In Todas las almas, his academic achievements and physical description create a continental image of the renowned

academic: brutally intelligent, savagely witty and dapper. Basing his knowledge on the Spanish professor's reputation, Marías' protagonist describes him as “. . . el famoso profesor del Diestro, el mayor y más joven experto mundial en Cervantes, según él mismo, e inevitablemente conocido en Madrid . . . como el diestro del Diestro o el siniestro del Diestro” (TLA 169). When the narrator finally sees him in the disco, his physical appearance strikes him as being suitable for a man of his distinction and thus understands his reputation better.

El profesor, hombre distinguido, petulante, de cuarenta y tantos años, camisa de Ferré y una muy bien llevada calva, ('Un profesor español distinguido', pensé con asombro al verlo, me expliqué su éxito), ya besuqueaba . . . una de las chicas más gruesas. (TLA 169)

Whether or not this paradigmatic professor will continue in the SpCN outside of Marías' texts remains to be seen. His inspiration, however, does have a significant role in Negra espalda. Just as Javier Marías includes a mention of the Spanish university in the SpCN, he also includes a Spanish professor, Francisco Rico who lives and works in Spain. Rico is described as a proud man pleased to be surrounded by acolytes. When Marías broached Rico with the possibility of penning him into a novel, Rico was preparing for his entrance into the Real Academia Española and appeared not to be interested. Marías coaxed him into acquiescence by reminding him of the matter of his immortality and the likelihood that his body of work would fade away into insignificance upon his death. Marías then proposed that perhaps Rico's appearance in a novel would guarantee him greater renown (NE 59). Rico reacted rapidly and negatively, reminding Marías that he had already appeared as a protagonist in a novel of revenge written by a

jilted woman, clearly delighted that he had inspired enough emotion to motivate the writing of a novel. “El profesor es tan deliberadamente vanidoso” (NE 61).

Rico’s vanity prompts him to make an even more outrageous request. “Que salga Francisco Rico, no un ente de ficción que se le parezca ni lo parodie” (NE 69) This mere statement encapsulates the goal of campus fiction on many levels. Obviously, there is the acknowledgement that campus fiction at its core is a parody of the university and its inhabitants. The character named Rico pointedly evokes the description that was given of him in both TLA and NE as a conceited and egotistical professor, reveling in attention. This description thus adheres to an archetypal professor in the academic novel. His desire for attention supports other characters’ claims that the ultimate insult would be to not be included. There is, finally, an overt element of metafiction, made comical by the fact that the character of Marías denies Rico’s demand while at the same time the writer, Javier Marías, fulfills it. Marías refuses to incorporate him, by name, in another novel, yet here Rico appears quite recognizably by name and vital statistics. This level of innovation is only surpassed by what must be the decisive trait of academic fiction: intertextuality. Rico, the expert in Cervantes, begs for what Don Quixote achieved before the end of Part II. “Una de las cosas –dijo a esta sazón don Quijote – que más debe dar contento a un hombre virtuoso y eminente es verse, viviendo, andar con buen nombre por las lenguas de las gentes, impreso y en estampa” (Part II, 48).

Analogous to the idea of the professors as stagnant, or icons deserving of caricature is the description of their professorial space, the campus, as another kind of stagnancy, a place incompatible with the dynamic reality of a city or town. The habitants

of Oxford, the city preserved in syrup, are no less preternaturally removed from contemporary society than their American counterparts: U of Illinois at Urbana, Moo U, Athena College. Marías writes,

. . . todos los que viven allí están perturbados o son unos perturbados. Pues *no están en el mundo*, y eso ya es bastante para que, cuando salen a él (por ejemplo Londres), les falta el aire, los oídos les zumben . . . y tengan que volver a la ciudad que los posibilita y guarda: allí ni siquiera están en el tiempo. (TLA 82)

In this same vein, even Cromer-Blake, the most socially gifted of the Oxfordian dons, recognizes the university, specifically Oxford, as a haven for social misfits. The students “logran colocarse donde hay dinero de verdad . . . aunque lo que más sepan sea de Góngora o de Cervantes” (TLA 95). Thus, the recent campus novel, British, American or Spanish, cannot center upon the transitory nature of the student body for they are not the permanent inhabitants. To capture the campus, one must strive to portray those who might be known colloquially as “lifers”, such as Cromer-Blake. “Sólo los más torpes para la vida del mundo, como yo, acabamos regresando con nuestra toga a cuestras” (TLA 95).

The recurring description of Oxford as a preserved or a stagnant city and of its professors as frozen in time, dysfunctional in the world outside, may not appeal to those who choose to inhabit campuses, and they could argue against this view. The Spanish university, though, fairs far worse; ambiance and collegiality are lacking there, according to Marías. Sometime after Oxford, he taught a course in Translation Theory at the Complutense in Madrid and the experience left him disgusted.

—jamás pensé dedicarme a la sufrida docencia plagada de zancadillas e intrigas-- . . . Tanto me desagradaba el ambiente universitario español y sus mezquindades que aprovechaba el horario nocturno para no hacer ninguna vida de claustro y aparecer nada más de lo indispensable por la mohína Facultad semi-vacía y a media luz. (NE 31)

The British university may be an unrealistic haven, but the intimation is that the Spanish university is narrow-minded, inhospitable, semi-deserted . . . hardly suited to teaching and learning.

In spite of the differences between the British and Spanish universities, universal types appear. Upon the publication of Todas las almas, Marías achieves celebrity, which allows him to imitate the professors he has been observing. In this instance, he does not specify a nationality. “—he notado que caminar con revuelo gusta mucho a los profesores, y me divertía imitarlos por una vez, a los verdaderos y diurnos--“ (NE 32). Morris Zapp, Howard Belsey, Monty Kipps, Coleman Silk, Henry Mulcahy; not one would ever be accused of too much humility.

Academic novels, by virtue of portraying scholars, must on some level address their work. Those readers conversant with the fields caricatured will generally understand the significance of such parodies better than outsiders. The texts and authors Marías mentions usually refer to the Spanish canon: Cervantes, La Celestina, Zorrilla, La Regenta, Gómez de la Serna, Valle-Inclán, Juan Benet. References to these authors and texts help the reader to form a cultural picture of the character who references these works; he is well-read and acquainted with the trajectory of Spanish literature, thus justifying his position as a don. Nor does Marías neglect literature in English. The authors and works from English literature, Tristram Shandy by Laurence Sterne, Pnin by

Vladimir Nabokov and the works of John Gawsworth, have self-referentiality and innovation in common: traits found in many of Marías' works and especially in Negra espalda del tiempo.

A second way in which Marías creates academic references is by mentioning a literary conference he attended in Cambridge with P.D.James, Kazuo Ishiguro, Angela Carter and most importantly, David Lodge. While we cannot assume that Marías has read Lodge's novels or trilogy, he must be aware of their subject matter (NE 38). Marías also parodies the type of information traded in the academic black-market by reminding the reader of the buzzwords in literary theory:

No importa que la información sea importante o superflua, útil o baladí, política o económica, diplomática o epistemológica, psicológica o genealógica, familiar o ancilar, histórica o sexual, social o profesional, antropológica o metodológica, fenomenológica, tecnológica o directamente fálica; pero quien quiera sobrevivir allí debe poseer . . . información transmisible de alguna clase. (TLA 53-54)

Since the non-academics rarely discuss phenomenology, the implication is clear; the world of which he writes is unique to academia and academia, with its passing fads, will consider almost any area of knowledge relevant to the texts studied.

It is now time to consider the attributes of academic fiction that are unique to the SpCN such as outsider status, the significance of code-switches and identity shifts. The Spaniard as a foreigner, yet not a traveler, is singularly well placed to observe cultural rituals. Since his/her employment is within the foreign country, the Spaniard's position is not that of a guest, but of a legitimate participant. Nevertheless, arriving at a non Spanish

campus with a vastly different background, makes the visiting academic highlight many cultural quirks which the native group may take for granted.

Marías' narrator begins by dispelling myths about the hallowed walls of Oxford; he suggests that it is as economically driven as the commercial world. Information is the currency and it used to acquire usufructuary rights. In order to gain the information necessary to barter and to protect themselves from espionage, Oxfordian dons stoop to ignoble levels. Above all, they must protect themselves:

Todo Oxford . . . está plena y continuamente dedicado a ocultarse o escatimarse y a la vez a averiguar la mayor cantidad posible de datos acerca de los demás, y de ahí vienen la tradición —cierta— y la leyenda —cierta— de la gran calidad, eficacia y virtuosísimo de los *dons* . . . en las tareas más sucias del espionaje. (TLA 40)

An even more damning description is of the dons' flair for eavesdropping – not just during wartime. The narrator takes pains to point out that the word itself does not have a Spanish equivalent. As already stated, of crucial importance is the knowledge the professors possess. Knowledge assures them security, money, access, anything that can make their jobs and lives easier. Since the knowledge needed is not limited to their respective fields, they must also have personal and professional secrets in their arsenals. In view of the fact that British dons exercise discretion and reserve, the singularly most effective way to acquire this clandestine knowledge is through eavesdropping. The narrator notes that eavesdropping is:

el mejor medio siempre . . . de obtener la información precisa para no ser un marginado de los que no poseen ni transmiten ninguna . . . había visto a *dons* circunspectos y sentenciosos en plena genuflexión (los pantalones

polvoreados) para astisbar por una cerradura . . . o tirados sobre la moqueta . . . el oído pegado a la ranura de una puerta. (TLA 243)

Although eavesdropping may be a commonplace occurrence in British universities, it is not regularly noted in BrCNs.

Another theme of genuine interest to the non-Oxfordian is the local traditions and rituals. Mariás' narrator is able to relate both the minutiae of such rituals as well as an observer's reaction. His observations account for much of the novel's humor. At the formal dinner given weekly by an Oxfordian College for faculty and students, there is a high table where the dons preside. The actual table is raised, so the term is a literal description of the dining location of the dons as well as a metaphorical reference to their lofty positions in the university hierarchy. The existence of the high table is standard knowledge, what gives the description a special flavor is the neophyte Spaniard's attempt to gracefully survive the event. He explains that during a high table, it is de rigueur to speak with the guest on one's right for seven minutes and then to the guest on one's left for another five minutes. Speaking to the guest across the table would constitute an unforgivable breach of etiquette. The narrator, initially incapable of performing the required tasks, notes the following:

Los profesores de Oxford son, por tanto, expertos en hablar, comer, beber y contar los minutos simultáneamente, las tres primeras cosas a gran velocidad y la cuarta con enorme precisión . . . En mis primeras *high tables* apenas si probé bocado, ocupado como estaba en calcular los minutos transcurridos. (TLA 56)

Another uniquely British ritual, emphasizing the British fascination with decorum and royalty, hampers the Spaniard from engaging in an after dinner cigarette. Convention

demands that no smoking take place in the salon following the dinner until the warden toasts the Queen. “A partir de un momento dado yo fumé sin parar, gracias a la tolerancia imprevista o a la devoción monárquica del *warden* Lord Rymer” (TLA 79).

Since the Enlightenment, a hallmark of the British character (and the American) has been a sense of community and the desire to join. In democratic terms, the individual has a voice which when joined with others either forms a majority or dissenting opinion. In numbers, there is recognition and ultimately all decisions are presumably for the greater good. The Spanish, by contrast, have always been categorized as ruggedly individual, unwilling to acquiesce in favor of the majority or the greater good. Hooper discusses this distinctiveness when describing the uniqueness of Spanish journalism. “The singularity of Spain’s journalism is to be found in a high degree of personalization that faithfully reflects the Spanish fascination with individuals and a relative indifference to depersonalized institutions and associations”(361). The narrator’s closest incursion into assimilation occurs within this realm of institutionalization and membership, although his marveling at his compliance assures him that he still maintains a certain distance from the both the country and the university.

Yo, que nunca había sido miembro de nada en Madrid, me había hecho en pocos meses miembro de la congregación oxoniense en virtud de mi cargo, miembro de St. Antony’s College, al que se me había adscrito desde la Tayloriana por mi condición de extranjero, miembro de Wadham College, al que me había adscrito por capricho de Aidan Kavanagh, el jefe de mi departamento, y miembro de la Machen Company, a la que me había adscrito yo mismo sin saber con qué fin e ignorándolo todo acerca de ella. (TLA 125)

No contemporary academic novel would be complete without at least one mention of political correctness. Relationships between students and professors are strictly forbidden, even consensual ones can wreak professional havoc. The professor is always viewed as the predator and the student, the victim, regardless of the true circumstances. Blue Angel by Francine Prose, devotes the entire text to precisely this situation: the demise of Professor Ted Swenson at the hands of Angela Argo. Although no such incident occurs in Todas las almas, the narrator very quickly learns the danger of violating the university's strict moral code and, as he does all other oddities, he comments that there is " . . . nada más grave en Oxford que una acusación de *sexual harassment* u hostigamiento sexual a un estudiante, o aún peor (y posible) de *moral turpitude* o torpeza moral" (TLA 245). Like Claudio, who is cowed by Abengoa's overt sexual references, the narrator internalizes the sexual mores of the country in which he works.

It has been demonstrated that one of the hallmarks and yields of the SpCN is the acuteness of the outsider's observation. Through the contrast between the narrator's personal experience and his bewilderment over the Oxfordian culture, personalities and internal mores are highlighted. According to Negra espalda, others believe that a novel can be revelatory as well. Marías explains that a few months after TLA was published, a Vice-Dean commented in a faculty meeting that at that particular moment she was reading an interesting novel –understood to be Todas las almas-- with the goal of understanding more fully the psychology of the Spanish department. Eric Southworth<sup>22</sup>, responding to the murmurs of alarm expressed by those present at the meeting, pointed

out to the Vice-Dean that a better way to get to know the faculty was to spend time with them and, that the key word in her remark was “novel”. Even more importantly, Eric added, “Y quizá sea aconsejable no olvidar además, que esa novela la ha escrito un extranjero” (NE 76).

The final statement that must be made regarding the outsider or foreigner in the SpCN concerns the characters’ ability to leave. As much or as little as a foreign visitor may assimilate, there is always the option or obligation of returning to Spain. When an academic leaves his/her position in the AmCN or the BrCN, his/her decision takes on life-changing proportions because the decision will mean questioning anew his/her past, present and future. The Spanish academic abroad is rarely so invested in the new life that leaving it seems impossible. In fact, for Cercas’ protagonists and Mariás, the return to Spain is eventually as important as the journey itself.

. . .que quien pasa demasiado tiempo en un sitio del que no procede acaba no siendo de ninguno de ellos . . .Pero yo no llevo aquí demasiado tiempo, yo no soy un exiliado ni tampoco un emigrante, además me marcharé ya pronto. (TLA 231)

Claudio, at the loss of his tenure to Simpson Mariátegui at the end of the novel, has not completely decided what to do. If he stays in the US, he knows that he remains as a toady for the Chair and his star. If he returns to Spain, he will reassume the identity that gradually faded during his years in America. The options are clear; his decision is not.

One characteristic element of the SpCN is the author’s emphasis on the academic’s foreign status through the use of language. In the professors from Spain,

especially Muñoz Molina's and Marías', we find many pointed uses of English. In Todas las almas, for example, the narrator plays with the reader linguistically. Margaret Drabble describes the importance of explicit language discussion by noting that "The dubious role of translator or interpreter is prominent in much of the work of Marías, and the treachery of language itself is frequently stressed in All Souls".

Marías unfailingly italicizes English words when referring to Oxfordian traditions that might not be too unusual, but he then gives literal translations again and again of the terms. Such linguistic emphasis and repetition suggest a tactile pleasure in the oxymoronic 'strange familiarity' with the terms and the traditions cited. The narrator understands the English and he possesses and exercises the words in his native tongue, but just as he is borrowed by Oxford, the English words and British traditions are borrowed by him. While there, he is a part of the process, the ritual. But he knows that he will eventually return to his own country where the translated text items will signify nothing other than a description; their legendary connotations destined to be lost in Spanish. The *high table* best encompasses this twinning of the languages.

. . . en una de las grandilocuentes cenas que allí se conocen como *high tables*. Estas cenas tienen lugar en los enormes refectorios de los diferentes *colleges* . . . Si se llaman literalmente *mesas altas* es más porque la mesa a la que se sientan los anfitriones . . . está sobre una tarima y preside sobre las demás. (TLA 53)

The narrator chooses the English words twenty percent more frequently than the Spanish. The Spanish translates the idea, but the English evokes the event.<sup>23</sup>

As the narrator permeates his discourse with reflections on language, he also captures the multilingual nature of a Department of Language. In sociolinguistic terms,

the election of a language in any given situation by two bilinguals is fraught with significance: there is power and prestige in a choice as well as inferiority and marginalization, in the mind of a bilingual speaker. To repeat, a recurrent theme in the SpCN is the reference to the linguistic abilities of the non-native Spanish speakers and thus an implicit judgment. Marías' narrator in Todas las almas observes too, though, that in relationships of great intimacy between friends, a linguistic selection may simply reflect the speaker's sense of comfort. With Cromer-Blake, the Spaniard states, "A veces hablábamos en inglés y a veces en español; a veces hablaba cada uno en su lengua" (TLA 85).

This level of comfort is not achieved with the dons of the Spanish department depicted by Marías in Negra espalda. In fact, he feels the need to comment on almost every professor's competence in Spanish. Although he does not equate his friendship with their level of competence, there is a correlation. The two professors described as skillful Spanish speakers are also portrayed as Marías' preferred interlocutors. His preference suggests that greater linguistic ability indicates greater character, and vice versa. Of Alec Dewar, Marías writes that "Su español oral era inseguro, prefería el inglés conmigo" (NE 48). His insecurity in Spanish is matched by his strangely pompous reticence when he is around his colleagues. "Era tan simpático que con él no se podía bajar nunca la guardia, tenía un español excelente" describes Fred Hodcroft (NE 48). Thus, his linguistic dexterity corresponds to his cerebral adroitness. Robert Pring-Mill, already mentioned as one of the more tedious dons, inhibited and humorless, has language skills similarly bereft of charm. "Su español era defectuoso, tendía a evitarlo"

(NE, 49). To finish, Marías describes Eric Southworth. “Su español era bueno aunque un poco renacentista por libresco, le daba pereza hablarlo allí en Oxford, en sus habitaciones o en sus comedores o salas”(NE 51). Southworth, more than any other don, is described by Marías as having an excellent sense of humor with a bent towards the folkloric (such as the use of a Bishop’s biretta) as well as being the most principled of human beings. His perfect, yet slightly archaic Spanish, complements his perfectly principled, yet slightly archaic flamboyancy.

Marías does not discriminate against non-native Spanish speakers in his commentary. He simply introduces this additional component, linguistic proficiency, to the CN. His measuring of colleagues’ proficiency in either language is evident when he criticizes and denies Francisco Rico a (fictitious) lecture based on the Spaniard’s limited English skills. In direct contrast to Dewar and Pring-Mill, whose oral Spanish does not meet the Spaniards’ standards (and thus they chose to circumvent the issue whenever possible) Rico is nonchalant about his English ability. His arrogance and desire for sycophants lead him to insist that his fictional self, when visiting Oxford, give a lecture not only to the Spanish department, but also to the entire University. Marías, egalitarian in his linguistic observations, remonstrates with him, as follows:

Profesor, no seas ambicioso y absurdo. Para eso tendrías que dar tu lección en inglés, y entonces ya no sería muy magistral, me temo que tus saberes no llegan tan lejos, ni siquiera los de tu posible personaje de ficción. (NE 63)

Every comment on language accentuates Marías’ respect for the precision and weightiness of language, his awareness of the multiplicity of interpretations and of the

pleasure and pain in inadequate language. Claudio, too, mulled over language and identity, emphasizing this characteristic unique to the SpCN.

One final example vigorously underlines both the narrator's foreignness and his willing identification with Spain. The narrator minimizes the gravity and the wisdom of Cromer-Blake in his field, by commenting on his choice of wording, thus mocking him. Cromer-Blake "era muy cruel con los hagiógrafos de García Lorca, al que juzgaba un primavera, un fraude: le encantaba utilizar jerga antigua en mi lengua" (TLA 95). Although the protagonists of the SpCN tend towards conceit regarding the limited oral abilities of non-native speakers, Todas las almas differs from other SpCNs in that the narrator masters both relevant languages and, by extension, has gained the prerogative to judge others on their use. Unlike Claudio and Cercas' personages, this narrator's conscious manipulation of his code-switches reaffirms his bond with his country and thus disassociates himself from the intrigues of the campus.

The professors' workload and attitude towards work, however, represent the one trait that will be consistent throughout all of the novels considered in this investigation. One of the first observations that the Spanish visiting professor formulates is how little work actually takes place. "De hecho Oxford es, sin duda, una de las ciudades del mundo en las que menos se trabaja, en ella resultaba mucho más decisivo el hecho de estar que el de hacer o incluso actuar" (TLA 10). He finds himself conforming to the expectation and accepting his rather undemanding role, although he never becomes accustomed enough to not mention it. "Como he dicho, mis obligaciones en la ciudad de Oxford eran mínimas, lo cual me hacía sentirme a menudo como un personaje

decorativo” (TLA 17).<sup>24</sup> In spite of the undemanding workload, the narrator clearly exercises an authority over the students, who grant him a silent, unquestioning attendance to his every word, even when he himself is bored by what he says.

. . . sino ni siquiera me hicieran preguntas cuando peroraba sobre la sombría literatura española de la postguerra durante una hora que se me hacía interminable como la propia postguerra a sus literatos (a los antirrégimen, muy pocos). (TLA 17)

Once again, the Spanish protagonists have no illusion or ambition about being docents; their goal is neither to educate nor to enlighten, but simply to finish the class and in some cases, to entertain the students. For example, the narrator teaches translation classes; his British colleagues tend to choose either extremely esoteric texts or obscure regional ones. As a result, many of the Spanish words are so rare that they are unknown to the narrator. Not being one to worry about accuracy, the intrepid and highly creative narrator created his own definitions.

. . . (los textos) eran tan rebuscados o costumbristas que con frecuencia tenía que improvisar definiciones espúreas para palabras que rancias o herméticas que en mi vida había visto ni oído y que por supuesto los estudiantes no volverían a ver ni a oír en las suyas. (TLA 18)

In fact, the narrator’s primary motivation in his invention of words, is his desire to divert the students and challenge himself.

. . . no tuve reparo en ir inventando etimologías delirantes sobre la marcha y para salir del paso, en la confianza de que ningún alumno ni el colega de turno que me acompañaba tendrían nunca la curiosidad suficiente para comprobar más tarde lo verídico de mis contestaciones. (TLA 19).

As demonstrated, the narrator does not take his work seriously. It is a diversion and a responsibility, not a vocation. He feels no need to confess this; in fact he suspects that his colleagues and friends are well aware of the ludic nature of his lectures and his non-academic preoccupations (women and books) and accept it. As in the texts by Cercas and Muñoz Molina, however, there is a moment in which a key character questions the labor that fills the professorial day. In El inquilino, Obilo, the Spaniard, parodies the profession, and in La velocidad de luz, Rodney ridicules the theorist. Claudio, from Carlota Fainberg, willfully and injuriously disregards the trends of the field, leading him to the ambiguous ending, the point at which he must choose between returning to Spain or becoming a convert to the new status quo. In each case, a marginalized player in academia voices doubts about or slurs against academia. Cromer-Blake, however, a fully established and recognized don in the *college*, invalidates the widespread legend that learning and knowledge are the *raison d'être* of every don's life. When his Spanish colleague recriminates himself for what he considers to be a base obsession with women and relationships, Cromer-Blake enlightens him.

Los paréntesis no son ellos, sino las clases y las investigaciones, las lecturas y los escritos, las conferencias y las ceremonias, las cenas y las reuniones, las finanzas y el politiquero, la totalidad de lo que aquí consideramos la actividad . . . La que nos permite, luego, dedicarnos a pensar en ellos con toda intensidad. Hasta en este país es así, en contra de nuestra pretensión y fama, en contra de lo que a nosotros mismos nos gusta creer. (TLA 93)

The difficulty for the Spaniards seems to be finding the equilibrium.

Marías' brief experience in a Spanish university conforms to the work pattern that has been seen thus far in Cercas, Muñoz Molina and TLA's narrator. Marías explains

that not only did he dislike the Complutense so much that he spent as little time there as possible, he also thought as little as possible about the work. “Daba mis lecciones improvisadas en el taxi de ida y me marchaba en cuanto acababan“ (NE 32).

No campus novel would be complete without reference to the conditional nature of the faculty's appointment. In the competent world of the SpCN at Oxford, no one anxiously wrings their hands awaiting judgement, nor are there oblique references to insecurity. Marías' characters carefully emulate British reserve, and their frankness about academia takes place only behind closed doors, and with a continental. Notwithstanding, job insecurity remains a staple. Cromer-Blake explains to the protagonist that his only real interest in life are his past, present and future lovers, even though based on his activities and accomplishments, an observer would be inclined to include Spanish literature in the mix. He contradicts the obvious and explains that

. . . la literatura española (que no me interesa en absoluto, o no más que la de cualquier otro lugar, de hecho menos que la de algunos lugares) y la promoción académica (que sólo me interesa a medias, no por ambición, sino para evitarme riesgos y hacer mi trabajo más cómodamente). (TLA 97)

Accordingly, the fictitious Oxford of Javier Marías mirrors the fictitious campuses of the corpus of the academic novels. It is worthwhile to indicate here that another tendency in the SpCN is the relationship of the protagonist to the one other individual in the novel for whom the academic obligations are to a certain extent fraudulent. The Spanish professor-protagonist does not become intimate with the faculty member who accepts unskeptically the pretensions of academic life. For example, Claudio's dearest friend in Carlota Fainberg is Mario Said, an Argentinian professor

denied tenure in the US. Mario describes the requirements of academia as “vaina gringa” (139). Cercas’ protagonists also befriend the cynics, Olalde and Rodney. Marias’ don prefers Cromer-Blake’s frankness and the narrator of Negra espalda, the voice of Marias, makes clear that the single-minded professors, such as Pring-Mill and Leigh-Peele, are not the ones with whom he bonds.

In fact, a rather unusual feature of the SpCN concerns the protagonists’ contemplation of identity and the ways in which an established personality alters or assimilates unconsciously to a paradigmatic idea or experiences a *desdoblamiento*<sup>25</sup>. In Mario’s case, Berkowickz demonstrates a literal example of *desdoblamiento*, while the narrator of La velocidad de la luz effortlessly begins to think of himself as an extension and double of Rodney. Claudio’s alteration is a bit different; in his encounter with Abengoa, which instigates him to question his core; he becomes hyperconscious and critical of his academic persona, and wonders what else he is. Marias’ Spaniard and other personages in Todas las almas experience identity splits on temporal terms. It’s already been indicated that the Spanish protagonist is always mindful that time and space are ephemeral, so too must be the person who experiences them. He opens the text with the caveat that he who writes an event can never be the same as he who experiences it.

Aunque el que habla no sea el mismo que estuvo allí. Lo parece pero no es el mismo. Sí a mi mismo me llamo *yo*, o si utilizo un nombre que me ha venido acompañando desde que nací . . .es sólo porque prefiero hablar en primera persona, y no porque crea que basta con la facultad de la memoria para que alguien siga siendo el mismo en diferentes tiempos y en diferentes espacios. (TLA 9-10)

For example, Will the porter, perpetually relives the past, every day for Will corresponds to a different one in the past sixty years. Therefore Will, according to the decade in which he awakes, greets and identifies the narrator as a specific don from that period. Consequently, in the porter's eyes, the keeper of the college's memories, the narrator is more firmly ensconced in Oxford than his two year contract permits and at the same he is less obviously himself; he is simply one of the dons, bound by another's time (TLA 14).

Vestury, a significant element in Mariás' writing, only slightly addressed in this investigation, also marks the division between identities.<sup>26</sup> Unlike US universities, Oxford and Cambridge hurry along the identification with the institution through dress. Not only does a faculty position in the hallowed halls beg an internal assimilation to the culture, there is an overt absorption of the body into the role. The narrator, for example, conscientiously plays his role as a decorative presence, and in order not to disillusion anyone, carefully dresses in his black gown. “. . . con el objetivo principal de contentar a los numerosos turistas con que solía cruzarme en el trayecto . . . y el secundario de sentirme disfrazado y algo más justificado en mi calidad de adorno” (TLA 17). Will and the narrator are not the only two dwellers of Oxford to swap identities like accessories; the dons also excel in playacting. Their talent for gathering information has linked them inexorably to the worlds of intrigue in which they participated “como prestigiosos agentes sencillos, dobles y triples” (TLA 40). In spite of the dons' (or in other novels, the professors') affinity for performing a role, it is their sameness which accentuates the *desdoblamiento* or fractioning of the Spanish protagonists. In Negra espalda del tiempo,

Mariás affirms that the only intersection between his experience in Oxford and Todas las almas concerns the details. It is “el ambiente amortiguado de la ciudad reservada o esquiva y sus profesores atemporales que tanto se engañan sobre su quehacer y tan poco sobre su sino (su espíritu siempre usufructuario)” that never changes (17). The professors are timeless, dressing and acting as they did two centuries ago in the city preserved in syrup.

The inalterable quality of Oxford, the evolution of an individual into a “don”, the complicity in rituals and traditions (which bordered upon offensive half a century ago) – all these account for much of the humor. In my opinion, the best campus novels are very funny, with foibles mocked while virtues remain strong, yet unexamined. For example, the narrator’s frequent references to the collective faculty are piercingly satirical portraits. The service to country provided by faculty as spies is enhanced by the maliciousness and insatiability of their gossip. The treasured custom of hierarchical seating at the *high tables* loses its prestige when imagined through the narrator’s perspective, which suspects all of them of being jockeying juveniles, tussling for the top place in line.

Recordar en un instante la antigüedad y títulos de diez o doce personas de mérito y puntillosidad extrema no resulta fácil, por lo que ya antes de entrar suele haber alguna que otra discusión o rencilla, empujón, zarandeo o codazo, por culpa de los miembros o fellows ambiciosos u olvidadizo que, por así decirlo, intentan torpedear el protocolo y colarse en la fila para ganar prestigio. (TLA 54)

But, the childish, selfish one-upsmanship pales in comparison to the warden’s behavior. The dean of a College at Oxford has been called the warden since 1429.<sup>27</sup> In its purest sense, a warden is one who guards or protects, a noble and auspicious

undertaking. Nevertheless, in Marías' narrator's view, the warden's job involves weapons, although not in the way originally proposed. The depiction of the high table is quickly made farcical by the emphasis on the use of the "mazo" or gavel, a word which is never given in English even though the gavel's primary connotation in English links it to authority whereas the Spanish translation has a much more utilitarian connotation, suggesting it to be a mallet or hammer.<sup>28</sup> Thus, the description intends not only to be humorous, but absurd. Reconstructing the picture, Marías evokes a solemn and centuries old tradition of a noble donned in a black-gowned presiding over the most erudite citizens of the realm, flourishing a tradesman's tool with delight and abandon. The account renders ridiculous the tradition and the position.

El *warden* o director o administrador del *college* (con frecuencia un miembro bostezante de la nobleza . . . y ya antes de que nos sentemos da comienzo al aspecto más sensible de su doble presidencia, esto es, a su inexcusable serie de mazazos y latinajos, que se prolongará, para nuestro sobresalto y terror de los extranjeros, a lo largo de toda la cena. Pues dicho *warden* tiene preparado a su vera un pequeño mazo (así como una peana de madera adosada a la mesa para atraer al mazo, como las de los jueces) que le sirve para dar la cena por inaugurada, decidir y anunciar los numerosos cambios de vino y plato y jugar a distraída y peligrosamente con él cuando le aburre el entorno (casi siempre). (TLA 55)

Marías' *warden*, however, does not limit his gavel use to the circumstances prescribed by tradition. The gavel bestows power and thus immunity. In the *high table* portrayed in the text, the warden, Lord Rymer, grows weary of his dull companions and tries to infiltrate the carefully regulated seven and five minute conversations of the others. Unsuccessful, he resorts to his gavel, once again, recalling an association between the professors and unruly children.

Y así, borracho y disgustado como estaba, no se dio cuenta en ningún momento de que su indolente percusión inicial sobre la adosada peana . . . se iba convirtiendo en una serie de martillazos cada vez más brutales . . . pero lo suficientemente espaciados para causar . . . un enorme desconcierto, ya que al oírlos unos camareros procedían a retirar los platos que acaban de servir mientras otros, más avezados y sabedores de que aquellos aldabonazos no formaban parte de la ceremonia. (TLA 66)

Besides unconsciously tormenting the staff, Rymer sabotaged the meal; peas rolled, mushrooms jumped, glasses and goblets wobbled precariously. The narrator even shifted his position to avoid being in target range should the gavel escape (and to facilitate the bonking of Halliwell). The culmination of the ever-multiplying gavel strikes occurs when Lord Rymer, overcome by wine and boredom, fastens his lascivious gaze on a female don. His complete absorption in her décolletage corresponds to his utter oblivion to his unfettered wielding of the gavel. As a result, he begins

un martilleo continuando y mecánico, del cual él no tenía la menor conciencia. El efecto de los mazazos se dejaba ya ver en la mesa . . . sobre la que saltaban no sólo migas, guisantes y champiñones. . . sino pedazos de patatas al vapor, espinas de lenguados, churretones de espesas salsas, las gafas del feo profesor de Leydon. (TLA 67)

The comic acuity continues; the five waiters cannot clear the food because they are occupied in gripping the table in order to stabilize it. The tedious Halliwell continues his unrelenting sermon on cider, the esteemed literary authority Toby Rylands slaps the waiters on their backs rewarding their efforts to maintain the table upright, Dr. Wetenhall tries to cover her ears, right the precariously tipping bottles, and reposition her dangerously tilting wig while Professor Kavanagh, adds to the cacophony “irónicamente” by tapping his spoon against his goblet. The many other members of the table suffer in

silence the warden's abuse (TLA 70). Thus, all etiquette breaches are forgiven when the 'breacher' is of the nobility. The criticism of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century British campuses (and the BrCNs) for its unrepentant worship and protection of the upper class continues through the centuries.

In Todas las almas, the humor is caricature, exaggeration of the *dons'* eccentricities and vices and its comedy is owed in part due to embellishment and reiteration, but one keen and ironical comment in Negra espalda reveals humor and a critique of the entire system of graduate degrees. When describing his students at the Complutense, Marías explains that he was younger than many of them and that his courses were part of the doctoral curriculum, a degree that he neither had at the time nor has now. However, the idea of being his own professor appealed to him and he remembers,

Más de una vez consideré la posibilidad de matricularme en ellos y ser alumno de mí mismo para aprovechar los créditos (habría disimulado y me habría dado sólo Notable; y me habría llamado de usted siempre. (NE 33)

The SpCN constantly questions whether the professor or the profession is real or illusory; academic service never achieves an unquestioned distinction in any of the novels.

Marías' characters do feel, though, that a primary text: poem, essay or novel, has consequence and meaning as do the personages in Cercas and Muñoz Molina. The literary deconstruction of texts, the work of the scholars, will wane into insignificance, but not the text itself. Eric Southworth, who has been considered by some to be the inspiration for Cromer-Blake, does resemble him in at least one way: the sangfroid with

which he approaches the production of the professors. Unlike the impassioned linguists and literary theorists who strive to write the definitive book on their subject, be it Cervantes or Anna Karenin(a) or Laurence Sterne, Southworth, like Olalde and Claudio and even Jim Dixon, recognizes the limited possibilities of immortality that exist as a writer of academic papers. In a conversation between Rylands, Southworth and Marías, Toby acknowledges the fleeting nature of their work. Southworth, not one of the publishing dons, accepts and prefers that his knowledge be scattered to the wind at the end of every class (NE 53). Rylands laments the futility of their efforts.

Lo que es seguro que no va a pervivir son nuestras investigaciones e interpretaciones que sólo interesarían a un *yo* futuro arqueológico, cómo decirlo, a un *nosotros* repetido que no va a darse; ni nuestra erudición cada vez más impersonal y superflua . . .no me gusta. (NE 53-4)

Yet he also recognizes that even when newly published, their careful work is scarcely read. “Ni siquiera hoy en día leen muchos nuestros textos plagados de esforzadas notas y exégesis, y la mayoría de esos lectores son colegas resentidos que se acercan a ellos con malos ojos, para objetar o rebatirlos o plagiarlos si hay suerte” (NE 54).

Therefore, the only true way to achieve literary immortality –and Francisco Rico captured this immediately—is to appear in a book. No one seems to be excused from an inner longing (pleasurable at best) to be immortalized via pen and paper. The University of Oxford even maintains on its website a blurb about its role in informing Javier Marías’ work.

**Javier Marías**, also a novelist, was Lecturer/Lector 1983-85 and went on to become one of Spain's leading writers. His novel Todas las almas (1989; = All Souls, pub. 1992) has an Oxford setting and mentions the

Taylorian, as well as alluding to several members of the Sub-faculty at that time.<sup>29</sup>

Elaine Showalter, in her introduction to Faculty Towers, comments that she, too, experiences a narcissistic pleasure in reading about her world, admitting: "And yes, I am a professor of English literature, and yes, I have been a character in academic fiction as least twice" although she does express a preference for her portrayal as a "voluptuous, promiscuous, drug-addicted bohemian" to that of "a prudish, dumpy, judgmental frump"(1). The primacy of the text supersedes any misgivings the scholarly might have about taking center stage. Toby Rylands sums up the essential self-centeredness of the professors:

Probablemente los únicos que podrán sentirse molestos u ofendidos sean los que no se reconozcan en tu novela, los que crean no salir en ella, ni siquiera camuflados o disfrazados. O vilipendiados, o escarnecidos. Al fin y al cabo, es más humillante no ser motivo de inspiración que serlo, no ser digno de la ficción que serlo. (NE 53)

And, I'd like to think that even I managed to snatch a role in at least one of Mariás novels, if not by name, clearly by reference. Rylands again, "¿Te imaginas? Gente como nosotros, dentro de un siglo, investigando sobre nosotros las personas. Ta, ta, ta" (NE 54).

CHAPTER 4  
JOSEFINA ALDECOA AND LAURA FREIXAS

In Negra espalda del tiempo, Javier Marías describes the podium effect in which gorgeous women and youthful men swoon over their decrepit, unattractive professors. He points out that all instructors in this authoritative position benefit from the podium effect, but he makes an important distinction between those who exploit it and those who do not. “Quienes se aprovechan de este efecto tarima suelen ser despreciables, y son muchos” (NE 34-5). This quote gains relevance because the two novels treated in this chapter share three significant features: both were written by women, strong, multi-dimensional women appear and male protagonists are contemptible seducers of students. In both novels, the sexual exploits of the professors emphasize their personal and professional failures, thus reinforcing a stereotype of the socially incompetent professor. Additionally, although the trappings and circumstances of these male protagonists are very different, the diegeses in which they act place them firmly in the realm of the SpCN.

Josefina Aldecoa

Josefina Aldecoa has been writing, editing and engaged in literature, literary studies and pedagogy since 1944. Since earning a Doctorate in Education in 1956, she has founded a school and written more than twenty works. In 2003, Aldecoa was awarded the Premio Castilla y León de las Letras for her work as a novelist, biographer, essayist and docent. Throughout her career, Aldecoa has focused on themes of education

and post-war experiences; she is most well known for her semi-autobiographical trilogy: Historia de una maestra (1990), Mujeres de negro (1994) and La fuerza del destino (1997) in which she delves into the experiences of life as rural teacher, university student in the postwar years and exile returning to Spain. Aldecoa's El enigma (2002), embodies her interest in pedagogy and the educational system, but from a very particular point of view. In this novel, a successful male professor from Madrid, Daniel Rivera, spends a semester at a prestigious university in the Northeast of the United States. Through his interactions with family, colleagues and students in Spain and the US, subtle distinctions about university life and cultural attitudes are revealed. One American relationship, in particular, contrasts with Daniel's relationships in Spain; the American one is with Teresa, a professor's daughter, an independent scholar who had left Spain with her parents when she was eight to escape Franco's dictatorship. Her dual perspective, intimately Spanish, yet profoundly American, informs her expectations of intellectual dialogue and close relationships. Daniel and Teresa's conversations highlight past versus present Spanish attitudes towards professors and women. The supplemental theme of women in the novel develops through the presence of the non-archetypal women characters in academia.

Of all of the SpCNs, El enigma most clearly accentuates the cultural differences between American and Spanish universities. It is subtly implied that these differences, more so than the character's free will, influence the decisions made by Daniel, the successful professor. Daniel's work (teaching college students) and location (a campus)

determine the inclusion of El enigma as a campus novel, From the beginning of the text, there is no doubt that this is an academic story:

Daniel Rivera, catedrático de Licenciatura en la Universidad de Madrid, poeta en su primera juventud, después ensayista, crítico, conferenciante, colaborador en diferentes revistas. Daniel Rivera, cuarenta y ocho años, casado, dos hijos, navegaba por el aire rumbo a Nueva York para seguir viaje volando desde Nueva Jersey a una prestigiosa Universidad de los Estados Unidos de América. (12)

In spite of Daniel's academic success, so unlike Muñoz Molina's and Cercas' naive stumblers or Mariás' entertaining, provisional don, self-doubt dogs him. In this, Daniel's behavior differs from that of the professors of the AmCN and the BrCN. The academically successful in the Anglo tradition exude confidence and *joie de vivre* as exemplified by Morris Zapp or Coleman Silk. Like many of the Spanish protagonists, Daniel considers his own creative writing more valuable than his work as a university professor. Throughout the text, Daniel's potential to produce poetry, and his inclination to write verse, measure his well-being. At his most content moments, fulfilled and intellectually stimulated, Daniel revisits the efforts of his youth; he writes poetry. The academic achievements that gave Daniel the opportunity to be an invited Visiting Professor in the US do not matter much to him; he still feels that at some point in his life he committed an error, that he is now condemned to "el color gris de su vida" (19). His work and his home life lack the vitality which creation engenders. On numerous occasions, Daniel reflects on the way in which his current life and work (as a professor) prevent him from engaging in true intellectual productivity (168, 210-11). Teresa, his

intellectual equal, even suggests that he abandon academia for an unfettered intellectual life, unburdened by the minutiae of family life and professorial responsibilities (218).

Another recurrent characteristic in the SpCN is the identification of the Anglo university as a unique and cloistered society, a safe harbor for its employees and students. Both Teresa, born in Spain and raised in the US, and Daniel concur in this idea. For them the University functions as a refuge from the drudgery of life and mundane relationships, letting their wits take precedence over other responsibilities. For Teresa, the idea of the American university as an oasis began in childhood when her academic father became a pariah in Franco's Spain. A few years after arriving in the US, his erudition was appreciated; he was made a professor at an unnamed prestigious University. Daniel too recognizes the freedom which the American university (and to some extent, the Spanish university) offers him, although it is a personal liberty instead of a political one. When he feels oppressed or threatened by demands from Berta, his traditional Spanish wife, he invents conferences he must attend and articles that he must write in order to justify time away from the grind of family life. Later, he tells Teresa how he envisions his imminent return to Spain. He explains that he will no longer have the peace and tranquility to write found in America. He says, "Me siento como expulsado del paraíso" (145).

In the Spanish Campus Novel, the tendency is for the American university to provide a haven from the societal and political pressures, whereas the Spanish university is portrayed as a microcosm of the country's social ills. This is an interesting distinction because critics have observed that for Anglo writers of academic novels, such as David Lodge and Malcolm Bradbury, the university does present in a microcosm a great variety

of persons (Baena Molina 90). Teresa remembers a gloomy and isolated Spain in the fifties<sup>30</sup> when her parents decided to emigrate in large part due to her father's ostracism from his profession and that profession's corruption: "El padre, ignorado en los medios universitarios, dando clases en academias de bachillerato, corrigiendo galeradas para editoriales modestas, trabajando en tesis doctorales para otros que pagaban muy bien, en aquella época" (13).

Even Daniel, a generation younger than Teresa's father, recognizes the lack of freedom, the religious pressure that he experiences while attending the university in the sixties (34). And it is Teresa who points out to him that his children will be educated in the same way --with his tacit consent; they attend parochial schools so the vestiges of that repressive education will remain with them forever (203). Daniel has noticed intellectual curiosity and a freedom to opine in his American students and once back in Madrid, he compares them to his Spanish students. On Daniel's first day in the US, he observes that "Las clases se habían desarrollado con fluidez en una atmósfera grata" (30). Eventually, he realizes that in the US, students ask questions, discuss texts and plan their research papers, whereas "Daniel recordaba sus clases de la Facultad de Madrid, un quinto de carrera con muchos alumnos y no todos interesados" (30). For Daniel, the haven of the American university is personal as well as professional.

The absence of parody in El enigma is noticeable. It can be explained in large part by the perceived irrelevance of Daniel's success as an academic and the actual difficulties which a professor faces in Spain. Whereas Mario and Claudio were flawed scholars, at best, Daniel portrays par excellence all of the traits that the American

universities desire despite his own devaluing of those traits: conscientious teaching, rigorous research and conference presentations. He is not absorbed by the complicated steps to tenure, nor is he subjected to eccentric colleagues or a capricious Chair.

Daniel's limited experience in the US provides a more ideal image of professors; they are considered iconic members of society, wise and trustworthy, individuals whose opinions and work matter greatly. At his first cocktail party, his opinion is solicited on all matters Spanish and his interlocutors listen reverently (80). The conversations highlight the reality of the Spanish University and its role in society. For example, a faculty position in Spain confers no special status on a professor outside of the University setting. Throughout the text, Daniel's wife disdains her husband's title, activities and talents, measuring success only monetarily. She is distressed that although he labors as an educator, he does not involve himself in their children's education. Berta even thinks that she has to forgive Daniel his profession (24). Nor does Daniel's social circle bring him any intellectual pleasure. It is limited to dinner out with Luis and Carmen, an unbearable couple whose interest in Daniel's work is limited to: "¿Qué tal, campeón? ¿Para cuándo el Nobel?" (18).

Marías' "podium effect" also plays a part in the life of this Spanish professor. Given that his marriage foreshadowed a torturous sacrifice of the intellect to the mundane, Daniel left all household responsibility to his wife. He says that "Yo me había refugiado en mi trabajo, en mi mundo universitario . . . Y empecé a buscar un rayo de luz en las citas con las alumnas" (62). His liaisons with the students are neither unusual nor taboo. In fact, Daniel scans the students the first day of class, detecting potential

sycophants among the women; it is almost considered a fringe benefit; he blames the flirtation and the adult allure of these students for his infidelities. In contrast, the American students “veían en él a una especie de padre, nadie a quien conquistar, nadie a quien perseguir . . . << ¿Seré yo quien ha cambiado? >>” he muses (31). Thus, even Daniel’s sexual behavior underscores the differences between the universities. In Spain, the disparagement of his talents by his contemporaries (his wife, family, etc) leads him to seek reassurance in immature and ignoble relations. Again, the SpCN emphasizes the fact that work is not enough, that a personal life cannot be neglected. This contrasts with the successful academic in the AmCN or the BrCN who does not habitually engage in affairs with students. It is important to note, however, that marital fidelity is never guaranteed. Sy Levin in A New Life, for example, seduces the first student who hints at her interest in him, while Morris Zapp, an academic celebrity, prefers to sleep with his female colleagues or his male colleagues’ wives. Zapp needs nothing from his students by way of esteem; he is at ease with his intelligence and his productivity: whereas Sy Levin, like Daniel, craves approval. The primary difference is that Daniel, even having triumphs in academia, still craves approval and understanding from young female students.

Daniel’s affair provides insight into one academic type, the professor as seducer of students. As already mentioned, this scholar seeks adoration; he –or possibly she– lacks self-esteem, yet strangely enough overflows with egotism. The Lecherous Professor (1984) categorizes types of seducers as well as their motivations. The following passage sums up Daniel’s oddly contradictory egotism, which blames the

students for their seduction of him, and the forlornness that he accepts as part of life with his bourgeois marriage.

A professor who sees himself in a static or unsuccessful professional and financial position may choose to exert his masculinity in negative ways. Feelings of frustration and defeat can be displaced onto the women students under his control. He can affirm his authority by being openly abusive to them, or he can turn to them for solace and ego-gratification. The dean of students at a very selective liberal arts college considered such displacement significant in some sexual harassment:

I guess you might say that many men consider access to females one of the perks of the profession. If you don't make a lot of money, if you can't go to Europe without scrimping and sacrificing . . . It's also not hard to see why some of these men turn to students for comfort or excitement or whatever it is their egos need. Sometimes they're abusive to students because that's a way to deal with their own anger and *despair*. It's not right, but it's one of the realities we have to live with. (140)

Daniel's personal life is both static and unsatisfying; the female students, in his mind, offer him a slight respite. The relationship is entirely self-centered. When Daniel begins to tire of his current lover, Isabela, before leaving for the US, it is because her attention has waned. “. . .estaba perdiendo por momentos el interés que había despertado en él, su vivacidad, su alegría, su inteligencia despierta y ávida de saber, *su admiración constante hacia él y hacía todo lo que él decía o escribía*”(emphasis added 10). Additionally, Daniel's egotism is such that he displaces the culpability for the inappropriate relation. When female students clearly flirt with him, he maintains his decorum by choosing only the best. In an encounter with Isabela's father, Daniel verbally accepts responsibility, yet all the while thinking, “era él quien tenía que rechazar las insinuaciones de sus alumnas. . . sólo cuando alguien tan inteligente. . .entablaba una relación amistosa con un profesor todavía joven las cosas podían complicarse” (33).

The following quotation, regarding sexual relations, written in an American journal on tenure illustrates, however, the enormity of the cultural divergence between Spanish norms and American norms. William Tierney, the director of the Center for Higher Education Policy Analysis at the University of Southern California, writes that “a common portrait of academic life is of sexually ravenous men, who may be productive scholars, but are seriously flawed human beings. . . the men are not made out to be monsters or evil, but they are made to pay the highest price for their transgression: they lose tenure” (173). The lecherous professor may be a universal trope, but his status in the university, while explicit in American publications, is very much a gray area in Spanish ones.

Egotism in many forms seems to be the great Achilles heel of the Spanish professor. Daniel cannot reconcile himself to his wife because he deems that she is not worthy of him, yet her lack of approval of him also generates his need for adulation. Daniel’s ambivalent attitude towards his wife and her role as domestic warden: cook, child caretaker, housekeeper, is further at odds after he meets Teresa. Daniel’s confusion about what he wants from a woman, Teresa’s intellectual companionship or Berta’s tending, foments new questions about contemporary Spanish society and the changes that have taken place (or not) since Franco’s death. Daniel’s wife epitomizes the ideal woman of postwar Spain and Daniel knew who she was when he married her. As Carmen Martín Gaité demonstrates in her book Usos amorosos de la postguerra española (1987), Berta was born in a time when the Falangists endeavored to instill into every girl and woman the education necessary to perform daily chores: caring for the children,

cooking, preparing their trousseau and gardening. Above all, the Falange took great care to give women the necessary culture to understand men; this culture did not include educating them to think (63). On a very intuitive level, Daniel realizes that he benefits from this traditional relationship; he has complete freedom from the minutiae of life in which he is not at all interested. At the same time, however, the price of his creature comforts is high. Berta exacts painful social demands from Daniel: unpleasant dinners with people he doesn't like, summering in places where he doesn't want to go, and eventually, a successful campaign to move out of Madrid. In addition, she fails to participate in – or even appreciate—his work. Until Daniel met Teresa, he wasn't even aware that there might be an alternative lifestyle for him. The contrast between these women foments new questions for Daniel about the previously accepted Spanish social norms. Daniel describes himself as, “. . .el Profesor Rivera, llegado con un aureola de prestigio, colaborador en revistas importantes, conferenciante serio y riguroso está casado con una burguesa tradicional que no trabaja” (24). At one point in time, Daniel's marriage would have represented achieving the pinnacle of domestic success (he supports a stay-at-home wife), but now, after meeting Teresa, Daniel feels self-conscious about Berta's lack of intellectual or non-domestic pursuits. This quote also reveals both Daniel's pride and inflated self-image. This strange combination of narcissism and insecurity will repeat itself in the SpCNs of Freixas, Mañas, and Chirbes.

In both Anglo and Spanish campus novels, the use of academic references abounds and El enigma is no exception. Teresa's father is an expert in Spanish Golden Age Literature and Daniel embarks on what will be the definitive study of Juan Ramón

Jiménez's poetry. Like Mariás' protagonist, the atmosphere of the university is permeated by the projects of the colleagues, but Daniel, again demonstrating egotism, is interested only in his plans. For example, at the Chair's cocktail party, he meets a Mexican woman who informs him that she is investigating the influence of pre-Colombian art on contemporary Mexican painters. Daniel's only response, "Qué interesante" (15). He is then rescued by a Hispanist.

Since Daniel is a "stranger in a strange land" or a foreigner, he observes and digests the peculiarities of the American campus. For example, Marr points out that the novel is:

replete, too, with more pithy reflections, quips and critical truisms on the peculiarities of American life in and around the realm of the university . . . for instance, by the grim language of warnings posted in an off-campus liquor store: 'MINORS PROSECUTED, CHILDREN PROHIBITED' – this is a country where many of the same minors can legally marry and, of course, raise children. (112)

Like Claudio, Mario and even Mariás, points of reference for the contrast between the nations include the issue of political correctness, Daniel's Spanish identity and language itself.

Daniel illicit relation with Isabela has been discussed in various contexts; a third context is that of 'political correctness'. It is the American reader who may be most astounded by Daniel's meeting with his student's father. A simple google search for "Faculty Code of Conduct" turns up the express prohibition of sexual relationships between professors and students, yet when Daniel is confronted by Isabela's father, his wariness is quickly dispelled by the latter. "Ella es mayor de edad, tranquilízate" (31).

Isabela's father protests Daniel's adultery, the fact that he is married with children almost her age, the fruitless nature of the relation, but not the potential abuse of his authoritative role in her life.<sup>31</sup>

Another trait that has consistently appeared in the SpCN concerns the protagonist's development and awareness of his own identity. Claudio grappled with his "Spanishness" both rejecting and embracing it via Abengoa, whereas Cercas' narrator knew that he had to both leave and return to Spain to become a writer. Marías' provisional don reflected deeply on the bizarre land in which he found himself. He did not shed his cultural mores, nor did he ever speak, glance, or interact with the British without reflecting on his instincts versus those of his colleagues.

Even in the Spanish department, Daniel is aware of being separate from his colleagues. At his first cocktail party, shortly after his arrival, "Daniel se sintió solo, ahogado en un mar de sonidos"(15). This is his first inkling that part of his self is his cultural background. In order to truly embrace his nationality and accept his identity as a Spaniard, Daniel had to leave Spain. While at the Jersey shore with Teresa, he is taken back to the countryside of his childhood in the North of Spain. Through Teresa and through his displacement from the immanence of his daily Spanish life, a part of his identity which had been lost to him is restored. At the same time, his circle of acquaintances in the US reveals to him the provinciality of Spain and of his wife, even in Madrid. In America, Teresa, his colleagues and their spouses seek and create intellectual communities. These communities contrast sharply with his community in Spain which consists of bread-winners and women climbing a social ladder. Much of Daniel's

awakening to a fuller sense of his life as a Spaniard he owes to Teresa. She provides the foil against which she (and through her eyes, Daniel) measures Daniel's choices: his wife, his willingness to conform, his forbearance (or passivity) in intellectual and cultural norms (220, 223). An important distinction, however, needs to be made. The disparity between the countries is not emphasized as a feminist concern, but rather as different educational norms. The university in the US is inclusive, and welcoming, beckoning the erudite. In Spain, the University and its corresponding environs are not desirable. Ultimately, however, Daniel chooses his familiar life in Spain, with its tedious and predictable domesticity, enlivened by an ever-renewing fountain of young female students (227).

Lastly, Aldecoa's characters, like Muñoz Molina's and Marías', also engage in code-switching and reflections on language norms. Daniel never refers to the Chair of the Department as anything other than *chairman* (22). This single English word in Spanish discourse demonstrates Daniel's level of assimilation as well as his continuously alien status. On one hand, Daniel does not eventually translate or try to find an equivalent for John Bernard's role; he understands and assimilates the uniquely American position. On the other hand, the faculty director of a department is more commonly called a *chair*. Even Daniel's first interaction with English in a social situation exhausts him and reinforces his outsider status, his reliance upon others for his linguistic comfort. "Se esforzaba por hablar en inglés pero sonreía agradecido cuando se dirigían a él en español" (16). Daniel, like the protagonists of Marías and Cercas, does not fail to notice the Spanish spoken by his colleagues in America. Philip, a Contemporary History

professor who has written a book about the Spanish Civil War, has “un español un poco duro” (26) while Teresa, his American lover, a Spanish emigrant, speaks with “un acento suavísimo en el que advertía la influencia del inglés” (26). Daniel even comments on the American students’ skills, remarking that they “discutían con bastante soltura” (30). The language concern, apparent in so many of the novels, suggests a uniquely forward-looking and global SpCN, one in which the campus may include the departments of multiple countries. Unlike the AmCN and the BrCN, one specific university does not constitute the whole of the campus reference and its particular inhabitants are not the center of the universe, but a distinctive satellite.<sup>32</sup>

#### Laura Freixas

Strong female characters are also present in the works of Laura Freixas. A Barcelonian native, Freixas engages in a multitude of literary activities, including working as an editor, translator, essayist and novelist. She also counts amongst her many accomplishments the award Premio Leonor de Guzmán for her essay on the devaluation of female writers and female readers in contemporary Spain. Many of her writings address the myth that female writing can not be considered universal and that classification of literature by gender or sexual orientation: female, male, gay, etc., continues to be a facile excuse to dismiss women writers.<sup>33</sup> In Freixas’ second novel, Último domingo en Londres, published in 1997, she confronts the reduction of women’s writing by using multi-perspectives. This epistolary novel in which all of the principle personages are intimately connected with the university, either as professors, students, or recent graduates, reveals the innermost thoughts of three men and two women. The

setting of the novel is London plus various cities in Spain. Freixas, like Mariás, has concrete experiences in British universities, to relate; she was a lecturer in Bradford and Southampton from 1983-1985. Although an overriding theme of the novel concerns true love and blind passion, the characters' reflections and preoccupations about their paths and their work squarely place the novel within the parameters of the SpCN.

The novel describes the innermost thoughts and feelings of five characters: Gerald, Miriam, Emma, Teo and Max. All of them are currently associated with a university or have just recently left one. Gerald and Miriam teach in a language department at an unidentified London university. Gerald is a lecturer in French and Miriam teaches Spanish although she holds her degree in English literature. Emma, Teo and Max are recent Master's students; Emma, a Scot, graduated in Spanish philology and Teo and Max, Spaniards, have just completed their studies in English literature. Teo plans to continue his studies and is beginning a thesis as well as editing the university literary magazine, while Max has finally started to write a novel. Emma is working in Spain as a translator. No one protagonist knows all the others, but their studies and interests form an interactive web along which they all move to and from one another. This personal and spacial proximity to literary, linguistic and academic concerns constitutes the justification for inclusion of Último domingo en Londres as a SpCN.

This novel differs from previous ones examined because it lacks many of the key traits found in AmCNs and BrCNs: academic jargon, an assertion that the campus is either an insular world or a microcosm, a parody of the university. It is, in fact, noticeably humorless. The only ironic statement in the novel is actually very grating.

Max, the would-be novelist, comments cattily about a prize given to a semi-famous author of whom he is both admiring and jealous. Max calls the award, “un congreso con premio, como los detergentes y las barracas de tiro al blanco” (115). This remark could have come from the attitude of any of the protagonists, because they are egocentric. The emphasis on their inner lives leaves little room for more complex (or more interesting) observations of academia or its increasingly global reach. Antonio Gómez López-Quiñones in “La península ingrávida: Sobre la novela española contemporánea” describes how in some recent works of peninsular fiction, identity becomes a never-ending questioning of one’s self for which there are no definitive answers (75). Although Gómez López-Quiñones is specifically addressing works by Juan José Millas and Álvaro Pombo, the following appraisal could apply just as well to Freixas’ text and characters:

{la obra} puede ser interpretada como un extenso estudio sobre una identidad divergente y distinta de sí misma, a punto de la disolución, envolvente y carente de grandes macro-discursos políticos o culturales que las sostenga. (75)

In spite of these shortcomings, a brief analysis of the text contributes to the corpus of SpCNs.

One of the hallmarks of the Anglo campus novels, job insecurity, is found in Freixas’ work, although its sufferer is British, not Spanish. Gerald is well aware of what he should do and what he has not done and he suffers the quintessential angst of Sy Levin and Jim Dixon. He sneers at the events –failures—of his life:

Veamos. Treinta y nueve años. Un puesto cómodo en la universidad (un puesto en realidad ínfimo en el que no progreso desde hace quince años,

pero dejémoslo). Una tesis en curso que debo acabar para no perder el empleo. (10)

Gerald's vacillation must eventually lead to a decision about whether to unreservedly accept or reject the university and its policies. Like his Anglo precursors, Gerald's decision will oust him from the cozy haven of academia. "Una decisión que imprimirá rumbo a mi existencia. No haré la tesis. Que me expulsen de la universidad si quieren" (118). Gerald's conclusion that he will never complete his thesis initiates his death sentence. As the emblematic professorial type, brilliant yet inept, preying on the young women who worship him, he must also characterize that man who does not succeed outside of academia. By admitting the truth with which he has lived for so long, -that his thesis will never be completed- Gerald's academic suicide presages his factual one.

Gerald's job woes indicate that he represents an archetypal character. He, in fact, embodies one about whom a non-fiction book has been written and adopted as a cautionary guide on American campuses, the lecherous professor. Interestingly enough, all of the characters with whom Gerald comes in contact recognize him as a predator, but their cultural or personal experiences shape the language which they use to describe him. Miriam, a woman who was once involved in a torrid affair with an older authoritative figure, an author, remembers his reputation as that of a "donjuán" (193). She does not attach a pejorative connotation to this description, rather Gerald's attraction to women sparks her curiosity. In her musings about him, it becomes clear that Gerald is neither memorable nor exceptional. Miriam has difficulty remembering his name even while admitting that there is 'something' about him. "... con esa cara de lechuza. Guapo no es, desde luego, pero tiene... misterio" (94). Miriam substantiates both the traditional

Anglo attitude towards male professors and female students: that of men who can't control themselves, as well as the Spanish cultural norm, in which such relationships are considered neither detrimental nor unusual.

Emma, the student with whom Gerald lived, sees him clearly for the first time only after leaving England and the closed society of the university. Initially,

Emma's impression was of Gerald's ugliness. She wondered:

¿Era él el donjuán, el profesor de quien se decía que siempre estaba liado con alguna alumna? No podía ser: seguramente aquel estaba enfermo y este era un sustituto. ¡Pero en cuanto empezó a hablar . . . ! ¡Qué erudición, qué inteligencia! ¡Qué galantería, desvergonzada e irónica! Tres meses más tarde me sentía orgullosa de que me hubiera escogido a mí entre todas. (76)

When Gerald is in his rightful place, in a classroom, on a *tarima*, he becomes a God to the students. He is dethroned violently when he surprises Emma in Spain. Outside of the enchanted world of the university, Gerald is no longer a prince of erudition; Emma sees him as he truly is, a man who believes he can buy what he wants. Emma physically rejects him, pushing him away from her, humiliating him and freeing herself (77).

The third perspective from which the lecherous professor is observed is that of the professor himself, Gerald. He articulates the thoughts that Emma will someday recognize; their relation was due entirely to the "podium effect" and his exploitation of it.

¿No ves que te admiraba porque no conocía nada mejor? ¿No comprendes que una cosa es verte encima de una tarima, como un emperador –que reina sobre treinta súbditos, durante tres cuartos de hora-- . . . ? (11)

In spite of Gerald's self-awareness, his desires trump his conscience. After Emma leaves, Gerald finds a new twenty-year old, Camilla. His description of her appears to be that of a woman even younger than twenty - a child. Gerald has frozen in time; his inability to finish his thesis, to advance beyond the passion of the work is his failure as represented by his inability to interact with women his own age. His academic offense is even more unconscionable as he describes the seduction of his new paramour, except that it is not seduction, but date rape. The child is unconscious, rendered lethargic and listless through alcohol and drugs slipped in her drink. Once she is insensible, he rapes her, confident that she won't remember anything but his attention. (114). The Lecherous Professor describes Gerald's mental state and the process behind Emma's and Camille's deception.

Seeking refuge from the harsh assaults of this midlife period and release from heightened anxieties that haunt and perplex them, [some men in middle age] confirm their manhood through the worshipful gaze of a nubile girl -- who mirrors back an image of their most potent self. . . This, then, is the single most seductive reason for the appeal of the nubile girl: A yielding innocent on whom a man can project whatever fantasy he craves, she makes him feel not merely potent, but also omnipotent . . .

The enormous advantage that college professors have over men in similar situations is that for them, the stage is already set. Not only are there more than enough "nubile girls" from whom to choose, but they are women who have already been conditioned to regard the teacher as intellectually omnipotent . . . A male confused about responding to an older woman's demands may find those of female students more manageable and less intense . . . Older women may pose not only intellectual and professional threats but also -and perhaps more important -- very real sexual pressure. One man explained to Mayer:

One thing that's true, though, I think you can get a younger woman to respond to you very strongly. She's going to be less appraising than an older woman. . . You can dominate her more, sort of impose your myth on her. . . Thus the student seems "safe," a novice flattered by the attentions of the professor . . . And the harasser can delude himself into believing that

he has done no harm and that the student is responding to his sexuality rather than his position. (141-142)

Stereotypes do not evolve throughout the course of the novel and Gerald is no exception. As mentioned, his self-awareness does not restrain his actions, but his pride – yet another element of a professor-- that is often self-indulgent and cruel may inhibit him. He fears aging and thus ridicule, not ethical concerns. He refuses to become

Como esos profesores solterones, a los que miraba de reojo mientras bailaba. Con sus narizotas estriadas de venitas, sus cuatro pelos lastimosos, su eterno vaso en la mano. Yo noy soy viejo, todavía no soy viejo, me repetía rabiosamente. (110)

Gerald does recognize his limitations; when he writes on July 6, he juxtaposes two key ideas in his life, reinforcing his ineffectiveness outside of the shelter of the university. “Ayer terminaron las clases. Angustia” (154). As the novel demonstrates, the lecherous professor loses professional and sexual power outside of the classroom. When he is in danger of losing it in what heretofore has been his kingdom, he will die. Emma’s rejection of Gerald in Spain represents the defeat of his sexual “magnetism.” His final decision to never complete his thesis is his professional surrender, but even that decision is marked by arrogance. He questions why the human species would want to survive. He then justifies his inability to complete his thesis by indicating that a thesis cannot answer the questions of the true meaning of life.

Por eso, no consigo dedicarme a la tesis. Porque la tesis no me va a contestar preguntas como ésa. La Bruyère, La Rochefoucauld, Pascal sobre todo, quizá sí. Una tesis sobre ellos, como una tesis sobre cualquier cosa, rotundamente no. (33)

The end of the novel marks the end of Gerald's life; he commits suicide.

Another academic stereotype, found more frequently in the Anglo campus novel, is the successful academic. Teo, who is working on both his thesis and his poetry, brims with this potential. Overwhelmed by his thesis and his solitude, he works diligently and has shown signs of critical brilliance. In one of his letters to Max he mentions the poet Philip Larkin, who at one point turned down the post of Poet Laureate of England. Larkin's biography includes extensive stints as a librarian in British universities. This relationship is interesting in large part due to the fewer than "six degrees of separation" found among authors. One of Kingsley Amis' closest friends and literary intimates was Larkin, who advised Amis during the writing of Lucky Jim (Bradford 70). Teo's unusual work ethic, his relation to his scholarly activity and his confidence in his own intelligence suggest that he will succeed. Additionally, the end of the novel finds Teo in England, a country which has historically respected the academic, unlike Spain. This truism is reinforced when Teo runs into an acquaintance in a bar in Zaragoza and learns that he has achieved serendipitous fame for having earned a meritorious mark from a professor known for his academic parsimony. The woman clearly professes awe and expectantly asks what Teo is currently doing. He avoids the truth, knowing it would disillusion her. This fabrication, once again, illustrates the lack of prestige of academia in Spain. "Iba a contestar: la tesis; pero comprendiendo la insuficiencia de tan modesto gorrión para sus ávidas fauces, he optado por una cabra entera . . .le he dicho que estoy preparando un libro de poemas" (47).

Academic referentiality, a text written for other academics, is also a factor in Último domingo en Londres. In a letter to Miriam, Max mentions the novel, Paul et Virginie. It was written by Bemardin de St. Pierre, published in 1787 and Gerald is a French professor, specializing in 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century French literature. Borges mentions Paul y Virginie in El sur, a story in which the librarian-protagonist ultimately chooses to die in a way he considered honorable, in a knife fight, in an adventurous, physical, non-scholarly way (30). When Max meets Emma, he is delighted by her Britishness, to the point of comparing her to “un personaje de Jane Austen” (36). Teo alludes to Shakespeare’s “Anthony y Cleopatra” (47) and Max compares himself to Pío Baroja. He believes his writing style finds its antecedent in Baroja’s philosophy of the novel: “Decía Baroja que la novela es un saco donde cabe todo” (79). Miriam is translating Emily Dickinson. And lastly, Max is reading “una biografía de Whitman en inglés” (90).

The literary references in Freixas novel can be appreciated by academics, as well as non-academic, general readers of French, Spanish and English literature. The various references show the author’s the attentive readings of the texts mentioned and knowledge of their background, essential for professors of literature. Such references also provide diegetic clues and insight into the characters. The most obvious example is Max’s recently admitted homosexuality and the reading of Whitman; more obliquely, Teo and Emma are reinforced as innocents, somewhat analogous to Paul and Virginia, as creatures pure of heart meant to be together regardless of unfavorable social circumstances.

Another hallmark of the SpCN evident in Último domingo is the lackadaisical attitude towards scholarly work often accompanied by an excessive valuation of the

scholar's own creative work. Max epitomizes this trait. Teo has given him the assignment of interviewing an author for a university magazine which he, (Teo) manages. Max's real interest in meeting Dante R ben Garc a, however, is in talking to him not as a critic, but as a fellow writer. Ultimately, his motive for completing the assignment is egotistical, not intellectual (12). Even when Max obtains a job in the profession for which he was educated he trivializes it: "Ah, no te cont  que por fin he encontrado una academia en la que dar clase. Empec  el lunes. Quince horas semanales, y sueldo min simo; pero no me importa: yo, con mi novela, a pan y cebolla" (74). His attitude recalls Javier Cercas' protagonist who also chooses to teach in order to eat so that he can write. But Max goes even further; he suggests that critical analysis may impede an author's creativity:

Y en ese todo, Teo, creo que te equivocas si pretendes hincar el cuchillo de la raz n. Los grandes escritores, los grandes de verdad, no han sido eruditos. Ni siquiera han sido inteligentes. Con la raz n no se escribe poes a, sino ensayo rimado, *collage* de citas, taxidermia. (127)

Additionally, although Miriam is a professor, her true love is also more creative, translation. She reflects on " . . . los poemas de Emily Dickinson, mi traducci n, mi ambici n" (21). Teaching for Miriam just serves to provide money.

Ojal  me contrate alguna universidad, y despu s del verano empiece a dar alguna clase, a ganar algo . . . Bueno, con clases o con traducciones mercenarias, siempre he ganado algo. Pero no es eso lo que me importa . . . Cinco a os para elegir un poeta, para embarcarme al fin en una traducci n de envergadura. (22)

Freixas' Spanish characters' attitude toward teaching seems to be that it is the meat and potato work of the university: this attitude remains essentially unchanged throughout the SpCN. Academic work is, for them, drudgery, whereas creative work is a vocation, Teo is the first (and only) exception.

The last relevant element of the SpCN manifested in Último domingo is code-switching. The English words used by the native Spaniards create webs of identity. Depending on the context, the English either highlights the speaker's affinity for England and the adopted field of English literature or the words emphasize the speaker's foreignness, his or her inability to assimilate completely. For example, the former is portrayed in Max's letter to Miriam when he describes "pastorcillas de *biscuit*" (35). Max uses an English word to describe Greek food when the Spanish lexicon would have sufficed. Max knew, however, that Miriam would understand the English, and its use formed a linguistic and nostalgic bond between them, the two of them maintaining an intense relationship with England and its literature. On the other hand, Miriam chooses to ruminate in English to emphasize her status as an outsider. When speaking of a past boyfriend, she describes her disconnection from him and his family. "*We're very fond of walking, the four of us*" (108). In another example of reflecting on her past, she recreates a conversation with a taxi driver, again using English. "*Here, please. Las mismas palabras que le dije a él, con rabiosa frialdad, con altanería, como si fuera mi chófer*" (108). The use of English is a way in which she distances herself from the Englishman with whom she cannot be fully involved – he is married. Although she is now married to

an Englishman and pregnant, she only uses Spanish to discuss her feelings about him.

The code-switch here highlights her distancing from a troubled past.

Lastly, brief allusions to how people speak mark a majority of the SpCNs, including this one. Emma meets Teo and Max on a Greek boat. She comments on the random meeting as follows: “inmediatamente reconocí su acento. Que dos españoles recién licenciados en lengua inglesa conozcan en un barco griego a una inglesa recién licenciada en lengua española” (27).

Even if Último domingo en Londres does not stand out as an exemplary work of fiction, the attributes of the academic novel in the text are valuable contributions to the establishment of the genre. Additionally, the narcissistic focus of the characters and their identity shifts and crises link them indubitably to the current trends in contemporary Spanish literature. The integration of the academic novel with the recent trends in the Spanish novel reinforces the uniqueness of the SpCN. The following two authors, Rafael Chirbes and José Ángel Mañas, also clearly show this inclination.

## CHAPTER 5

## RAFAEL CHIRBES AND JOSÉ ÁNGEL MAÑAS

Rafael Chirbes (born 1949) and José Ángel Mañas (born 1971) will be considered in tandem for both stylistic and thematic reasons. In the case of the former, the dialogue in the novels exhibits a vulgarity and dissolute sensibility, not commonly found in the SpCN. Thematically, Chirbes and Mañas' academics are the most dysfunctional; outrageous examples of their type, they represent a latter-day movement in Contemporary Spanish fiction while at the same time exhibiting enough traits to be classified as SpCNs. Antonio Gómez López-Quiñones, while describing recent Spanish postmodern fiction, describes general tendencies: "la última novelística española sería su carácter anti-elitista, su capacidad para dialogar con la cultura de masas o la cultura popular" (57).

Another significant thematic element of Chirbes and Mañas' novels is the obsessive goal of the protagonists to become writers. While being a professor suggests a certain intellectualism and therefore, a lowering of popular credibility in Spain, being a writer has a certain cachet in that country. As a result, the two protagonists, devalue, even more than seen previously in the SpCNs, their relationship with the universities in favor of their identification with their interminable struggles to solidify their identities as *artistes*. Gómez López-Quiñones explains:

Ser escritor en España se convierte, sin dejar de ser una actividad con prestigiosas connotaciones público-intelectuales, en una actividad hacia el

*éxito*, uno de los grandes tótem de la cultura de la democracia, y hacia la participación en los réditos económicos producidos por una industria en expansión. (63)

These protagonists, so desirous to enter the world of literary success, are hindered by their inability to find something tangible that will anchor them to the world. José María Izquierdo notes that the new narratives inquire exhaustively into the collapse of the self as they inquire into the essential absence of any models (which the protagonists could emulate) that have overcome the “crisis del sistema cultural occidental” (304). Both Chirbes and Mañas’ professors use alcohol to assuage their identity crisis: neither appears to have experienced any overwhelming tragedy, yet their lives torment them daily, and in the fictional account of their psychological malaise, the texts conform to what Gómez López-Quñones calls the ‘Spanish postmodern modernization’ in which material prosperity and cultural integration are experienced by beings who are spinning out of control and who are insecure both about their positions and their capacity for initiative (76). In both of the following texts, *Mimoun* (1988) and *Soy un escritor frustrado* (1996), the university represents the only stable force in their lives. What differentiates these texts from an Anglo CN, however, is the protagonists’ scornful view of their roles in academia, preferring to pursue their identities as writers.<sup>34</sup> In one case, the university may provide enough of a lifeline for the protagonist to locate a model that allows him to escape a complete physical and mental annihilation; in the other case, the protagonist crashes and burns. In the Anglo novels, the decision to stay in the university or to leave it is ultimately redemptive, regardless of which path is followed. The conscious decision

by the protagonist allows him to finally recognize his true self; in contrast, in the following two novels, the escape from the university is demise.

### Rafael Chirbes

Rafael Chirbes, from Valencia, Spain, is yet another award winning author. His 2007 novel, Crematorio, won both the Premio Nacional de la Crítica 2007 y also the Premio Cálamo for 'Libro del año 2007'. He began his literary journey as a critic and journalist. In 1988, his first novel, Mimoun, garnered him international attention. It was a finalist for the Premio Herralde de Novela and in 1992, upon translation into English, the novel received favorable attention in *The New York Times* and *The Sunday Times* in London.

In Mimoun, Manuel, an aspiring author as well as a teacher, moves to Morocco in order to finish his novel. He succeeds in obtaining a job at the University of Fez. After becoming quickly disillusioned with Fez, Manuel relocates to a small village named Mimoun. In this setting and with the Moroccan natives and European expats as companions and enablers, Manuel spirals downward into a vicious circle of alcoholic and sexual surfeit, powerless to write or even escape his self-destructive environment. Although the novel focuses on Manuel's inner angst and powerlessness, every scene a yet more haunting and gloomy glimpse into depression, there are infrequent (although recurring) references to his life as a teacher. These references link the novel to the genre of the SpCN, and create a nexus between the SpCN and the contemporary Spanish novel. Not only is the reader privy to the protagonist's struggle to stay afloat, the reader is also introduced to an author whose body of work has been described by Javier Rodríguez

Marcos as:

un retrato sin concesiones de una generación, la suya, que, como dice uno de sus personajes, perdió la memoria en el instante en que ganó el poder. Los libros de Chirbes están llenos de revolucionarios que querían cambiar la Historia y terminaron cambiando de chalet. Si no vendieron su alma es porque no la tenían.

It has been reiterated several times that academic novels are not only for academics; they are simply much funnier if the reader gets the joke. In Mimoun, the focus is not so much on the academic as it is on the over-educated, purposeless Spaniard. Gómez López-Quiñones defines what he considers to be nuances and tendencies of the recent Peninsular narrative. He writes that recent novels “se caracterizan por instalarse en la crisis del sujeto para abundar en ésta e incluso para convertirla en una fuente de posibilidades que los personajes aprovechan para modificarse, deshacerse, cuestionarse y reinventarse” (77). The crises experienced by Manuel in Mimoun and J. in Soy un escritor frustrado offer a sketch of Spain and its educators in the late twentieth century. These novels are perhaps the least academic and yet the most Spanish; their narrators do not step into established academic traditions and form impressions, but it is through the intersection of the academic novel and the narrative trends of the younger generation that many of the tendencies seen in the previous SpCNs are highlighted.

The evocative descriptions of the land and the people, the intimate observations of the Moroccans’ customs and the peculiarities of the European expatriots, and the untranslated conversations in French, do, however, lend a classification to Mimoun which bears mentioning, that of a lyric novel, as described by Ricardo Gullón:

Si llamamos líricos a estos escritores o, cuando menos, líricas a sus ficciones, no es porque les falte el elemento narrativo propio de la novela realista, sino porque lo destacable, lo en verdad memorable en ellas no es la acción sino la emoción. Y la intensidad de la emoción, conseguida al concentrarse en lo esencial, no es el accidente (el incidente) y sí la sustancia de la emoción misma, que – y esto es importante recordarlo – se expresa mejor en frío, utilizando las palabras justas y la precisión conveniente. (22-3)

Mimoun functions as a lyric novel precisely because the intensity of the emotion is conveyed to and felt by the reader. For example, Manuel, the protagonist, describes the countryside at night, employing ghostly metaphors from the sea:

A lo lejos brillaban, entre la niebla, las luces de Batij, en la ladera de una ola negra. Pronto entraríamos en la Avenida de los Plátanos y navegaríamos bajo la osamenta blanquecina de los árboles sin hojas, como carcasas de ballenas fosforescentes ahogadas en aquel naufragio atroz que acabaría llevándose todo. (45)

The spooky unfamiliarity with which the countryside is consistently described induces a lingering sense of foreboding; cries, shouts, groans, anguished sobs and howls only add another sensory dimension. Manuel's struggle to interpret the country and the people; the primal emotion of loneliness, engendered in part by his foreignness, is also conveyed to the reader through the use of untranslated French dialogue. The content of the exchanges rarely matters in diegetic terms, but for someone without a knowledge of French, the sensation of interpreting meaning --without words—highlights the frustrations and difficulties of an outsider. As Gullón writes of the lyric novel, “su espacio verbal, hormiguea de sensaciones multiformes donde lo impalpable se hace palpable” (18). Mimoun intensifies time and again the “impalpable” impression of peril in the face of the unfamiliar. The continuing motif of the dog is yet another one of Chirbes' devices to

provoke anxiety. The house which Manuel shares with Francisco, another Spaniard, is the site of a suicide whose body was consumed by hungry dogs, dogs that still hover near by (27). Manuel is frightened by dogs, dreams of dogs, hears the howls of dogs in human voices, is called a dog, and in a scene at the end of the novel, a dog is found hung by the neck in Francisco's house (123). Dogs foreshadow death; when Manuel first sees the dogs, he confesses that dogs cause panic in him. The gratuitous death of the animal at the end of the novel penetrates Manuel's conscious and he understands, as does the reader, that it is time for him to leave.

Mimoun is, nevertheless a SpCN. Of primary consideration then is its justification as one; very little occurs within the university environs, but that freedom is what allows the events to occur. Additionally, Manuel maintains a serviceable personal and professional life only while the University and his teaching responsibilities hold him to a schedule. Manuel describes the University campus in Fez as a barracks, "y en cuyo patio pastaban las vacas y picoteaban las gallinas" (9).

Manuel, like many other characters in the SpCN, measures his self-worth by his creative output. Teaching at the university will pay the bills while he writes. After several months in Morocco, however, he stops writing. Manuel's separation from Madrid has lessened his creativity, not increased it.

Apenas escribía. Durante las últimas semanas no le había añadido más que unas pocas líneas al libro; en vez de escribir, cortaba y corregía. . . . Me sentía cansado, tenía sueño y sed . . . Madrid era un punto insignificante en el mapa y mi libro, algo perdido en algún rincón invisible de ese punto. Me había acostumbrado a leer en la cama y bebía demasiado. (47)

Later, it will become obvious that the university and teaching responsibilities save Manuel from complete obliteration. Through his identity as a Spaniard in the Spanish Department in Fez, a semblance of who Manuel has been remains, and it is this link with a past and a cultural self which allow Manuel to escape from the dissipation of Mimoun.

Returning to the assertion that Chirbes' characters portray a generation, Manuel's alcoholism and debauchery additionally signal the ailment of both a nation and of a potentially new archetype. Manuel drinks anything with anyone at anytime of the day. It would be easy to dismiss this vice as peculiar to him and simply part of character development, but the staggering increase in Spain's alcohol consumption suggests that Manuel may be closer to the rule than the exception. John Hooper describes an anecdote in which a foreign supervisor explains to Hooper, "While none of them (his employees) is ever drunk, at any one time about half are less than sober" (156). Additionally, drinking among the youth of Spain is becoming more Northern European in its proclivity for binge drinking (158). This is the environment which Manuel (and later Mañas' J.) probably experienced as teenagers. Their adult professional habits are thus culturally accurate, if extreme. The significant difference between Manuel's life in Spain and his life in Morocco is the fact that in Spain, while drinking, work still goes on. Manuel's alcoholism overtakes his life when drinking with the Moroccans for whom alcohol is prohibited; he stops writing completely.

Another briefly mentioned professor from the Department in Fez, Abd-el-Jaq, corresponds to the stereotype of the ascending academic star. Unlike the AmCN, the BrCN or the previously mentioned SpCNs, requirements for becoming Chair of the

Department or for achieving tenure rest not on publications, other professional accomplishments or administrative talents; rather, the primary trait required is an ability to act like a European. In the university, the norm for the Moroccan professors is to stay within the university “barracks”, and these men “se limitaban a pavonearse en las barras de los cafés del bulevar, y a procurarse botellas de whisky para beber con las alumnas” (36). The one Moroccan who becomes notable for his non-conformity is Abd-el-Jaq, who Manuel quickly befriends. Manuel notes that the Spaniards there hate the university atmosphere and avoid it whenever possible; only Abd-el-Jaq agrees with the Spaniards’ view. From the repressive atmosphere, “sólo parecía escaparse un profesor recién llegado que mostraba interés por la literatura española y un extraño orgullo de marroquí” (36). When Manuel first moves to Mimoun, he even invites Abd-el-Jaq to visit and they frequent prostitutes together. At this point, both men have relatively equal footing in the department, a newly arrived Spaniard and an exemplary professor, passionate about literature. After Manuel’s debauched summer, Abd-el-Jaq, well on his way to becoming Chair, barely even greets Manuel. Abd-el-Jaq then receives an administrative post and even stops speaking with Manuel. The more Manuel assimilates, the more he becomes *persona non grata*.

Abd-el-Jaq se había convertido en el más seguro candidato a la dirección, y se cruzaba conmigo por los pasillos de la facultad sin saludarme. Había pasado el verano en algún lugar de la Costa del Sol y regresó disfrazado de veraneante madrileño. (126)

The one moment when Abd-el-Jaq warms to Manuel again is when he needs money for his father’s operation –which may or may not be true. It is revealed that he has

deceitfully extracted money from all the Spaniards in the department (64-65). This skill alone indicates that he has the talent to become a university administrator, for acquiring resources is one of the greatest accomplishments of a Chair.

The naïveté of the Spanish, and Manuel, in particular, is a constant throughout the text. The role of confused observer is Manuel's primary occupation throughout the academic year. Manuel scrutinizes his surroundings, wondering at the exoticism of Morocco, at times needing and at other times rejecting his Spanish compatriots, as they remind him of what he is not. His depiction of Morocco emphasizes his role as both a spectator and a non-believer in the truth of the country; he describes the country as if it were a movie set and he, a visiting actor playing a role in the fiction.

Como si las maltratadas casas coloniales sólo fueran un decorado, y las gentes que se movían entre ellas, extras de una película en el descanso de rodaje. Para nosotros {los profesores españoles}, la ciudad no existía más que como un guión interminable, al que íbamos añadiéndole cada día nuevas secuencias. (10)

Manuel, like Javier Marías' narrator, also discerns the small, but culturally significant differences. For example, Europeans need to see a woman's face in order to recognize her when she is covered by the veil; otherwise all the women look the same, yet Manuel notes that Moroccans spot details beyond the ken of an untrained eye, details that enable them to recognize the women (38). Another notion, commonly held by Spaniards, is the idea that Moroccans are deceitful. Francisco, Manuel's roommate, daily struggles against a place where "Te engañan todos" (40). Francisco, at times contradictory, is not a reliable enough source for his observation to be unthinkingly believed, but, in this novel, deceit is an almost invariable part of interactions with the

Moroccans. Manuel, obsessed with the handsome and capricious Hassan, and always drunk when he's with him, tries to introduce Hassan into the world of the Spaniards, but "el encuentro siempre se convertía en un fracaso" (76). He recognizes that the disastrous meetings are due in part to their bad behavior and "También influían en la incomprensión las reservas que los españoles mantenían hacia los marroquíes y que eran fruto, en buena parte, de largas y decepcionantes convivencias anteriores"(76). On these visits, Hassan and Manuel empty the Spaniards' alcohol reserves. And Rachida, Manuel's housekeeper, is never mentioned without including an anecdote about her habit of stealing. As is typical of the SpCN, the protagonist does not censure the foreign country for its eccentricities; he only observes and remarks on it. One of the results of Chirbes' detailed portrayal of the cast of secondary characters and their eccentricities (Francisco, Charpent, the French neighbor, Rachida, Hassan, Abd-el-Jaq) is a lyrical depth that is often more interesting than the typical academic novel.

Another way in which the foreignness of the professor is highlighted is through the comments and views of the natives. Manuel's drinking, for example, and his nationality, provide entertainment for the locals. He squanders all of his time in the bars run by the Jews and "A mi pesar, me había convertido en la novedad de aquel otoño en la ciudad muerta" (26). Part of the reason for their fascination, beyond Manuel's antics, is curiosity about why he would leave Spain. He is asked, "—Ah, L'Espagne! Et c'est Madrid que vous habitiez avant Mimoun? Vous n'avez pas bien choisi, Monsieur "(50).<sup>35</sup> Eventually, Manuel is counseled to return to Spain; Morocco, Mimoun, is no place for a foreigner, assimilated or not.

Linguistic choice further emphasizes Manuel's status as an interloper. The novel's code-switches and discussion of language are very revelatory of Manuel's relationships with the people and their country. As in every SpCN heretofore studied, narrative comment on the non-native speakers' Spanish is included. Manuel notes that the Moroccan professors of Spanish, "Hablaban un español más próximo al de Millán Astray<sup>36</sup> que al de Cervantes, no disimulaban su complejo de inferioridad ante los europeos" (36). In the text, however, no Moroccan ever speaks in Spanish; in fact, Manuel rarely summarizes a conversation in Spanish. He always transcribes his acquaintances, lovers and friends as speaking for themselves in French, although Manuel's responses are, by and large, relayed in Spanish.

In conjunction with the separation from the Moroccans and Manuel's linguistic personality in Spanish, Manuel rarely quotes himself in French; and the few instances are striking. He speaks French to an insistent prostitute who understands only Arabic, showing the gap between who he is and the place where he is. He speaks French to a poet from France, and to French doctors, demonstrating his comfort with Europeans and his skill in French. He has no need to chronicle these situations in Spanish because they do not threaten his identity. Lastly, after Manuel has fallen into the lowest level of degradation: his house is covered in filth, he only stirs himself from the squalor to find more alcohol and he sees no one, only after the worst has befallen him, is his half of a dialogue with a Moroccan written in French. In the sentences that Manuel speaks, one to Hassan, a capricious lover who has just humiliated him (122), and the other to a venerated Moroccan who comes to save Manuel from himself (126), it is clear that

Manuel's identity has deteriorated; he is no longer simply a Spaniard, of interest to the town. To Hassan, he is now a cur worthy of insult, and to Sidi Mohammed, he is a prodigal son, in danger in Morocco. Equally telling is the compliment that the Policeman Driss gives Manuel shortly before Hassan disgraces him. Driss congratulates Manuel on his progress, on his learning Arabic and "fitting in" with the people. Earlier, before Manuel's debauchery, he had described the language in the same way that he eventually comes to perceive Mimoun. "Yo ignoraba aquella lengua, bella y terrible" (72). This observation occurs during Manuel's descent into hell. His later ability in Arabic does not indicate success for Manuel, but rather, ironically, a defeat: the country has ensnared him. The early rigorous linguistic division between Moroccans and Manuel establishes Manuel's voice as that of someone who has gotten lost, someone who never feels at home. By denying who he is, and acquiring Arabic, he plummets into an abyss. In order to escape the abyss, he must leave the country and re-establish a linguistic nationality.

Relevant to Manuel's self-destructive behavior is his original decision to isolate himself from the Spanish community and the university. There is never a suggestion that any of the other Spanish professors in Fez might implode. Even Manuel recognizes that without the university, he is aimless. In the two months of summer, after the university closes its doors, Manuel becomes a raving alcoholic. In the fall, when classes begin again, Manuel manages not to miss a single day; it is the structure of academic responsibilities which return to him any fraction of self-esteem and the ability to escape Morocco.

El inicio del curso había puesto un leve principio de orden en mi vida. A pesar de que seguía bebiendo, me veía obligado a hacer el esfuerzo de ir a

Fez varios días por semana para dar las clases. No sé de dónde conseguía las fuerzas para acudir a Fez, pero logré no faltar a clase ningún día, aunque el Departamento de español me producía náuseas. (126)

Manuel's professorial responsibilities ultimately save him even though it is the halfhearted requirements of his post which had initially placed him in danger. His job requires insignificant preparation and although recognizing that so much free time is a blessing, in Morocco, such liberty overwhelms him; he feels socially limited to the other Spanish teachers and Fez loses its attraction as the dirt and confusion take precedence in his life over the beauty of the land. Eventually he realizes that his minimal commitments allow him to live outside of Fez. Manuel, like so many other characters in the SpCN, begins to seek an identity by leaving behind the one which he knew the best, his Spanish self. In Mimoun, his only Spanish contact is Francisco, an ersatz painter and teacher in an institute. Francisco is as unstable or more so than Manuel and does not serve as an anchor to Spain or to sanity.

To conclude, Mimoun portrays a professor seeking to understand his identity. The university setting permits him the freedom and more than enough time to nurture his vices and self-destructive tendencies, while at the same time it provides the link to his national self which will ultimately allow him to return from the abyss. Identity, archetypes and work ethic continue to be integral elements of the SpCN.

José Ángel Mañas

Soy un escritor frustrado is the title of the ninth and last novel to be considered in this study. It may also be considered a caption for the SpCN. Of the novels studied, five

have had a protagonist whose real dream is to be a creative writer: novelist or poet, it does not matter. Perhaps it is fitting then, in a genre which is based on a given profession that no one seems to really esteem, the one novel which takes place in Spain presents an esperpentesque character, an outrageous parody of all the worst academic fiction has to offer.

José Ángel Mañas exploded onto Spain's literary sphere in 1994 at the age of 23 with his debut novel, Historias del Kronen, a finalist for the Premio Nadal. Its protagonists are young and streetwise, drawn in by the world of violence and drugs, sex and rock and roll. The novel exposed the world in which Spain's youth lived, until then largely overlooked by adults. Mañas quickly joined Lucía Extebarría and Ray Loriga in the group called *Realismo Sucio*. Cintia Santana explains that these writers are "obsessed with sex, designer drugs, and rock and roll" in addition to violence (35).<sup>37</sup> One of the most salient traits of *Realismo Sucio* is the authors' insistence that their characters and plots are not Spanish, but global; their antecedents are Anglo (34). With this background, the reckless violence of J. Salieri, the protagonist of the novel in question, does not seem so irreconcilable with the campus novel. José Ángel Mañas, born in 1971, is the youngest of the authors, and the first of his generation to write an academic novel from the perspective of the professor, albeit a professor with more serious psychological problems than any previously studied example.

J. Salieri, the "yo" of the title, desires more than anything else to be a published and renowned author. His job as a professor of literature provides him no satisfaction, his relationship with his live-in girlfriend is venomous and prone to melodrama, and his

behavior, often worsened by drinking, is calamitous, combative and volatile. At the beginning of the novel, it is evident that J. is trapped in a pattern of anger and jealousy (of a successful colleague, Mozart) that will potentially result in the loss of his girlfriend and his job. Until one day, when a daring student in one of his classes, Marian, asks him to read a draft of her novel. J. agrees mostly because he wants to get rid of the girl so that he can get a “tinto” (red wine) before class. After frequent prodding from Marian about the quality of the novel, J. finally reads it and realizes that it is an exceptional work. It is, in fact, the novel *he* should have written. From this point on, J.’s previously alcohol-addled brain gains great lucidity as over the course of the following months, he copyrights the novel, finds an agent, plans Marian’s kidnapping, kills her mother and seduces the wife of Mozart, his nemesis. Mañas’ novel suggests genres such as horror, crime, parody and similarly to Bret Easton Ellis’ American Psycho, a brutally difficult black comedy. There is no doubt, however, that is a SpCN; the actions and crimes are executed by a professor, the acquisition of the astonishing novel and the subsequent kidnapping of the novel’s true author all take place on campus.

At first glance, the novel exemplifies many of the traits of CNs. Parody makes the humor apparent. For example, J.’s egotism is notorious. It is humorous that Marian knows how to approach J.: with excessive flattery, telling him that she has read his thesis and it is equally ridiculous that J. is offended when she wants to talk about herself (15). Even the incorporation of J.’s thesis title into the novel caricaturizes the academic world. J., in order to emphasize his superior scholarly ability, includes a description of his thesis in the most pedantic way possible, as a footnote, the only footnote in the novel.

Hago un pequeño inciso para precisar al lector que mi tesis ‘La vacuidad de una hermenéutica posmoderna en la teoría literaria contemporánea española’ fue una demoledora crítica a esa corriente de pensamiento entonces en boga. Desgraciadamente, el tribunal le rateó su merecido *cum laude* y, dado que la Comunidad de Madrid tardó cinco años en publicarla, su trascendencia histórica pasó desapercibida. (14)

The title of his thesis also buttresses the general characteristic of the SpCN to satirize literary criticism in favor of creative work. By alluding to hermeneutics, J. references all criticism and then trivializes it. Literary criticism’s role is to illuminate the more complex meanings of a text; J.’s suggestion that literary criticism is superficial, missing the true meaning, is an assault on his own profession. In fact, it is not even hypocritical that he has written a thesis, because his thesis does not analyze a text, it repudiates criticism. This belief echoes that held by previous protagonists who either misunderstood or disdained contemporary theory: Claudio (Carlota Fainberg), Olalde (El inquilino), Rodney (La velocidad de la luz), and Gerald (Último domingo en Londres).

Other elements typifying academic novels include academic references and jargon, amusing to those ‘in the know’. For example, Mozart congratulates J. on his article in *Babelia* and on his harsh criticism of the subject matter (41). Negative critiques are both inflammatory and entertaining to academics; this reference serves to enlighten the reader to J.’s aesthetic. Later, when J. is teaching, he misspeaks; his Freudian slip in a lecture to students is “rapto semántico” to the students instead of a “salto semántico”. The “rapto” is actually a dual slip, because it refers to both the kidnapping of Marian and the stealing of her novel. Other “raptos” occur throughout the novel with the “rapto” becoming a motif as J. purloins Mozart’s wife, his reputation and his ideas. Mozart tells J. that soon he intends to write an *esperpento* but it is J. who does so (41). In another

example of referentiality, J. keeps his hidden stash of alcohol next to La Divina Comedia, making reference to J.'s assessment of his life as a purgatory where he is doomed to suffer (28).

Alcohol qualifies as a motif in the SpCN; its consistent abuse by professors—even while working-- constitutes a standard in the SpCN. Cercas' writer uses it as therapy after the death of his wife and child, and Marías puts the alcoholic debauchery of the English high tables to comedic use, but J. Salieri's abuse portends a more troubled soul. Like Chirbes' Manuel, Mañas' J. abuses alcohol to replace character. His pains and joys, worries and ennui, his cruelty and his failings, are all associated with alcohol.

... hacía ya mucho tiempo que había dejado de escribir, refugiándome cada vez más en el alcohol, circunstancia que se había hecho célebre en el departamento, donde mi volubilidad de carácter y mi inestabilidad emocional me habían granjeado numerosas enemistades entre los demás profesores. Sin embargo, aunque parezca increíble, mi aura de malditismo seguía atrayendo a suficientes alumnos, de tal manera que su número se mantenía de año en año. (10)

After meeting Marian for the first time, J. leaves her to stop in at the bar even though both of them are already fifteen minutes late for class. J. then spends another twenty minutes in the bar and when he finally arrives, half the class has left (16).

Another campus stereotype, the predatory female, takes a less academic turn in Soy. Where Mariátegui Simpson (Carlota Fainberg) and Delphine Roux (The Human Stain) prey on academically conservative stances, and Fulvia Morgan (Changing Places) is an academic and sexual carnivore, the cartoonish femme fatale, Marta, in Soy un escritor frustrado is a disfigurement of the dangerous, sexually charged professor. Iñaki Esteban writes, “Marta, la ninfómana, {es} un chiste cruel contra los profesores

universitarios.” J. describes Marta as a good friend, and also as a deeply frustrated female. Her passions are men and sex, but unfortunately, her unattractiveness prevents her from being the siren of the Department. “Ella era pequeña y un poco jorobada, tenía la cara insulsa y un vientre enorme. Era una ninfómana incorregible y una profesora incompetente” (16). Marta confesses to J. that her classes are dull; she can barely tolerate her own repetitive lectures and she finds it hard to believe that the students can. Her saving grace in the current term is the cute boy in the third row. Marta is a failure as a professor and as a woman, yet she intimidates the department as efficiently as the aforementioned women. J. reveals that “Marta siempre aterrorizaba a profesores y alumnos con insinuaciones sexuales” (17). Even more ironic is Marta’s likely promotion, emphasizing again how ineffectual the Spanish university can be. Besides sexual harassment of others, Marta’s laziness is notorious.

Haced como yo, que leo los mismos apuntes desde hace cinco años. ¿Y qué más da? Yo estoy fija. De allí no me quita nadie hasta que me muera. Y encima, igual me hacen decana por antigüedad en las próximas elecciones. (37)

Marta epitomizes both the treacherous female academic and the archetypical lecherous professor, but with a distinctly Spanish twist.

The last archetype to be found in the novel is that of a one-dimensional character, the impossible ideal. A previous example from the SpCN is Berkowickz from El inquilino, a fantastic figure who did not exist. In Soy, Mozart, the professor whose nickname derisively alludes to the musical prodigy, represents everything J. most hates and desires. Mozart is attractive, married to the woman J. covets and a successful

novelist. Mozart completes Marta and J. He has what they want: looks and talent (18).

In fact, every semester, Mozart receives innumerable love letters from students and there is even a rumor circulating that one girl committed suicide because he didn't pay attention to her (39-40). Once again, however, note that for J. (and the rest of the community) success and prestige are due to his creative work, not his professorial accomplishments. Consistent with other powerful academic figures, i.e., Francisco Rico or Daniel Rivera, Mozart oozes egotism. Iñaki Esteban describes him as “una caricatura de la vanidad.”

A last addendum to the discussion of Spanish academic figures –especially those living in Spain or most closely affiliated with their homeland even if abroad-- is the tremendous intake of alcohol. Cercas' protagonist drinks heavily and alone in Spain, Marías' don or Daniel Rivera indulge only in social drinking. Manuel and J. are clearly alcoholics, but even Marta and Mozart drink before and after class. Mañas, in the end, is creating an image of the professor as someone who finds a refuge in the university, not because the world is safe there (as in the US and Britain) and so that their skills can find an outlet, but because they are too incompetent to find any other job.

J., for example, made no effort to either become a professor, nor it appears, to do his job well once he becomes a professor. Fate provided J.<sup>38</sup> with a thesis advisor who really wanted to help him, “consequ[ir] un puesto de asociado, primero, y más tarde una plaza como titular” (20). In the very tenuous job market of the academic world, J. has a full-time teaching position, not that he makes any effort to do it justice. J. is not any fonder of teaching than Cercas' characters or Gerald or even the transitory Oxford don; J,

in fact, treats his work as a pernicious interference with his writing, considering his students dim-witted animals who block his path to his true destiny. Pushing the limits of ‘the minimum work necessary’, J explains that his normal routine, when his car has broken down, is to call the secretary, tell her that he is ill and then spend the day at home. Unfortunately, on one pivotal occasion, he must attend classes:

. . . resultaba que ya había faltado a un par de clases la semana anterior y temía alguna protesta por parte de los alumnos. *Los muy cabrones* siempre me ponían fatal en las encuestas de fin de curso y habían conseguido que me congelaran el sueldo este año. (emphasis added 13)

This quote, seemingly another example of J.’s loutishness, actually reveals more about the past, present and perhaps future Spanish university than may appear at first. In Chapter One of this thesis, Márquez Villanueva was cited as remembering that in the post-war university, the students often had to become autodidacts because the professors either arrived late or not at all (224). J.’s actions thus suggest, that to a certain extent his behavior is accepted and understood because he conforms to traditional conduct by Spanish faculty, that perhaps *he* had professors who came late or not at all, leading him to imitate the convenient behavior. Additionally, this passage also indicates that the Spanish university is still evolving, in its pedagogical standards and professorial responsibility.

But J. fears fiscal castigation for not performing his duties. When one misses work, one does not get paid, is a professional maxim, but until recently, according to my research, the maxim did not apply to the university where autonomous professors, disrespected and often ill-prepared for their jobs, treated their students and

responsibilities apathetically (Alted 323). The recent use of student evaluations and penalties for poor work indicates a significant reform. Nevertheless, the lack of respect shown by the professors toward the students is echoed in the latter's behavior. "El sonido de la alarma de uno de aquellos relojes que mis mediocres alumnos hacían sonar irreverentemente al acercarse la hora de terminar" (86). Traditionally, the teacher dismisses class, not the students. Given the professors' abuse of the students' time (by arriving late), students are likely to feel justified in protecting what they can, and perhaps in reminding their professor of the correct time for the class. More recently, as the Spanish university has entered into a period of constant revision of majors (carreras), students have begun to feel the need to complete their education quickly, even though said education has frequently been considered inadequate for their profession (R. Rodríguez 29). This constant student insecurity may manifest itself both as a lack of respect for professors and as an aggression towards them.

J., however, does not relish the improving university. His job still gives him neither satisfaction nor, more importantly, status. J.'s apprehension about never succeeding as a writer causes him to frequently reflect on the dismal prospect that he will be a professor forever. To a reader of campus novels, this fear alone is ironic since the fear of many of the fictitious Anglo professors is that they *will not* be professors forever: tenure may elude them. "Toda mi vida sería un profesorucho de mierda, un alcohólico incapaz de afrontar su inexistencia artística. ¡No sería nunca nada!"(58). J.'s contempt for his profession extends to everyone associated with it, such as students and colleagues, all of whom are mediocre. Departing from the CN antecedent, this contempt encompasses

the writers that J. teaches although not his evaluation of them. One day, after drinking in the bar and arriving more than half-way through the class, J. is pleased with himself because, as he explains, “improvisé una brillante introducción a la obra poética de uno de los muchos cretinos consagrados cuyos nombres ensucian los libros de texto” (16).

The scorn J. feels for academia is not his alone, however. The job is evidently undervalued by the Spanish government; professors earn less money than other state employees of equal preparation (Alted 323). And J. belongs to that generation denominated *mileuristas*, the underpaid younger generation, so it is not surprising that J. needs to ask his mother for money because “. . . los cuatro duros de mi sueldo ya se habían ido en copas” (17). Furthermore, J.’s condescension toward his work is substantiated by his acquaintances. Ana insults J by calling him a second-rate professor and a drunk. “¡Borrado de mierda! ¡Profesorcillo de pacotilla!”(12). Later, a desirable woman married to Mozart, Carmen, leaves Mozart when he experiences writer’s block; his university job does not provide sufficient income or position. She becomes J.’s paramour after the publication of his (i.e., Marian’s) novel. When J. refuses the Premio Planeta (before having written the book that will win it) claiming that it would be unethical to prematurely accept a prize, Carmen again demonstrates the inadequacy of life as a professor’s companion. She menaces, “Pues ya puedes irte poniendo a escribir, porque si no presentas una novela al premio no sólo te dejo, sino que a tu hijo además del nombre de Mozart le pondré el apellido de mi marido legal” (131). The professor, for accepting such miserable pittance, must then be considered stupid, even though honorable. As seen in Aldecoa and now Mañas, and perhaps even in Miguel Delibes’

Cinco horas con Mario, the prestige of a professor is very low; their earnings are pitiful and companions (wives and girlfriends) do not respect or understand what they do during the day. But, the one quality which is not questioned, is their honor, and J. comforts himself with this knowledge as he embarks on his crime spree. “¿Quién podía sospechar de un honorable profesor de universidad, que además escribía regularmente en los periódicos?” (94).

Another unusual characteristic in the SpCN seems to be the Spaniard’s affinity and capacity for publishing critical works without too much exertion. In the AmCN, publications, leading to the Holy Grail of tenure, make or break the Assistant Professor and their writing and submission is fraught with anxiety. But the professors living and working in Spain do not seem to experience failure in this regard. The first example, from Marías’ works is Francisco Rico; he suffers from an over-estimation of himself, not insecurity or an inability to write. Daniel Rivera may not compose poetry anymore, but it is his reputation as a scholar which allows him to spend a semester in the US, and J., an atrocious professor and frustrated writer, does manage to publish scholarly articles. He does “sacar adelante [sus] artículos y [sus] trabajos académicos, pero [es] sencillamente incapaz de escribir un buen cuento” (9). His lack of self-confidence regarding his ability to write a novel does not in any way encumber his opinion of himself as a critic, though. J. believes that his strength as a critic is due to his exacting standards. He says of himself that he is not a “crítico ligero” (30); in fact, one of his greatest pleasures is to decimate another’s work, especially if they are near to him in time and space.

A los del veintisiete todavía les respetaba porque no se metieron demasiado en el campo de la novela, pero a casi todos los de los cincuenta

los despellejaba vivos; a los sudacas de segunda fila de los sesenta, a los novísimos, a la nueva narrativa hispánica y a todas esas cagarrutasseudoliterarios y cuasianalfabetas ... los tenía tan maltratados que mis alumnos se asustaban cuando me veían en clase analizando sus textos.  
(30)

J.'s strident denigration of the canon and his unpredictable, embarrassing behavior garner for him a certain reputation, which does not faze him or cause him remorse. He mentions that his invitations to colloquiums and conferences have diminished because of his "fama de personaje conflictivo" (20), but since his true passion is writing, he is not troubled by any exclusion from the academic circuit.

Although J.'s crassness, unprofessionalism and perversity set him apart from other protagonists, it is important to recognize that his desires and instincts are no different from those of any of the other principals in the SpCNs; he is simply a hyperbolic version of the others. There is even an affinity between J. and the scions of British reserve. As Toby Rylands explained to Mariás in NE, professors want lasting recognition, yet they know that their critical works are doomed to end up in yard sales. Therefore, their appearance by name in a work of fiction ensures their legacy; any literary criticism then of said work of fiction in which they appear increases their fame. J. understands this co-dependent relationship perfectly. He dreams not only of writing the perfect novel (or stealing it) and then publishing it, but also of being recognized and thus validated by the same critics whom he has disparaged: "... me vi a mí mismo juez de su existencia, tras haber sido consagrado por la crítica como valor supremo de la literatura hispánica contemporánea" (53).

J.'s newfound fame increases not only his personal wellbeing, but also his professional status at the university. Such prioritization of one's personal life and creativity over academic work and scholarly research is typical in the SpCN. Once J. has appropriated Marian's work, copyrighted it and found a literary agent, his sense of wellbeing suffuses his relations with others. He no longer resents his girlfriend and he develops some rapport with his department. But even then, he doesn't make any greater effort at his teaching. While feverishly copying and editing Marian's novel, he says that he would lock himself up in his office every day for five hours, and that he "complementaba mi frenética actividad creativa con un mínimo de dedicación a la preparación de mis clases" (103). Nevertheless, J.'s star rises in the Department, classes notwithstanding. When J.'s –Marian's—book is finally published, the department's treatment of him experiences a 180 degree turn; he becomes the beloved son, the focus of conferences and panels and he chooses Mozart as the model for his new behavior (122).

As clearly evidenced from J.'s actions, his character vacillates; he has no fixed sense of himself, other than a need to indulge his every instinct.

Soy un escritor frustrado. Y esta circunstancia ha determinado en gran medida mis difíciles relaciones con el mundo exterior. Si hubiera podido satisfacer mi pasión por la escritura no estaría ahora donde estoy. (9)

The first line of the novel explicitly presents an unformed identity, an incapacity to define one's self. J. conforms to E.M. Forster's characterization of a "flat character," a character who can be described in a sentence and thus who is "constructed around a single idea or quality" (67). In the SpCN, until now, the question of identity has been measured in terms of nationality. As this novel features a Spaniard and takes place in a

Spanish university, the construction of identity must be evaluated differently. Regardless of the method, the important factor is that the one constant in all nine SpCNs is the struggle of the protagonists to define themselves. J. thinks of himself as a writer and any action he takes that advances him on that path is justified. The professors/protagonists of previous novels constructed their identity in large part through their nationality because their profession never occupied enough mental space to be the deciding factor in how they chose to live. In that J.'s academic life is neither fulfilling, nor a vocation, he remains true to this characteristic. And in the sense that he is a person still "under construction" it is also true. That J.'s greatest desire is to be a writer, even when he is incapable of writing, does not change his identity; it merely qualifies it, and he recognizes the fact, painfully and palpably, with his novel's title; he is a *frustrated writer*. When J. finally begins to write, it is clear that the book itself is not so much a novel as a reinvention of the man who could not write (J.) and the one who could (Mozart). The relationship between Mozart and J., their discussions about literature and the merging of their discussed novelistic plots with the novel's actual plot hint at one of the more postmodern aspects of academic fiction. Rosalía Baena Molina develops this idea. "En muchos casos, estas novelas se caracterizan por un alto componente metaficcional o autorreferencial, en especial las que se refieren a profesores de literatura como críticos literarios" (89).

At one point, Mozart outlines the schemata of his new book to J. It contains a plot twist that Mañas incorporates into J.'s narration for his experience to us, his real readers. When asked to explain his story line, Mozart responds,

<<Que Mozart reinventa a Salieri, lo retrata para la posteridad a su modo, de tal manera que en la imaginación de los lectores el Salieri real queda suplantado por el Salieri literario de Mozart. Es decir, que, al suplantarlo, Mozart mata, imaginativamente hablando, al Salieri real. >> (21)

J. eventually writes the story (Soy un escritor frustrado) in which Mozart, the handsome, talented professor and novelist, suffers writer's block and ends up being fired from the department for sexual deviance -almost unheard of in the sexually lenient Spanish society- and eventually living in a hippie-commune. He eradicates, in a manner of speaking, the Mozart who is his nemesis and recreates himself as the prototype of the perfect professor. Mozart:

Se había dado a la bebida con desenfreno. Llegaba tarde y borracho a clase, y sus frecuentes depresiones alcohólicas le acarrearón tales problemas en la facultad que el decano se vio forzado a reunir un consejo extraordinario cuando Mozart, en mitad de una de sus clases y ante el susto y la incredibilidad de los alumnos, intentó agredir sexualmente a una de ellos. . . La junta extraordinaria de profesores discutió estos sucesos y decidió suspenderle de la docencia, una medida sin precedentes en los veinte años de vida que tenía la Universidad Autónoma. (122-3)

J. manipulates the committee to oust Mozart; with his rising star, the rest of the them bow to his pressure. Like Mario and Berkowickz, Claudio and Simpson Mariátegui (and Coleman Silk and Delphine Roux), the productive, yet vindictive, star is allowed to intervene in the fates of others.

J.'s transformation into a novelist is not his only "false" identity shift, however. Since he never wrote the potentially award-winning novel, the identity of talented writer is as purloined as the text. And, the identity to which he could lay claim as his own, he rejects as neither satisfying enough nor resilient enough to withstand a challenge from his

id. He defines his two potential “Yos” as “el racional y crítico Yo del profesor universitario” (which is humorous when considering J.s diligence or lack thereof as a professor) and “el supersticioso Yo primitivo” (85). J. recognizes that any ethics or values instilled into the former rational self are easily overpowered by desire --and just in case --he drinks a little bit extra to help his id along. Where other protagonists of the SpCN evolve into an understanding of their identity in relation to their “first” experiences, their lives in Spain, J.’s evolution or devolution is into that of a non-rational being.

The final piece that J. eventually places into the puzzle of his identity is an understanding of his own fictionality, of himself as a creation. Upon Marian’s death, J. understands that the focus of his life (in his mind, caring for her –in the brutal, isolated jail he forced her into-- killing her in the minds of everyone else) is gone. With Marian’s death, J. has also lost the potential for any new novels. “Me daba cuenta de que mi vida no había sido más de una ficción. Había vivido del talento de Marian, pero sobre todo del odio a Mozart”(150). Complicating matters further is the text of Soy un escritor frustrado. In this novel, the narrator creates his fictional self and thus manages to become a novelist, falsifying his identity as a frustrated writer.

In the fictionalization of his principle character and in the style in which the novel is written, Mañas successfully incorporates yet another key element of the SpCN, the unique and idiosyncratic features of Spain that have survived Europeanization. Bearing in mind that both the setting and protagonist in Soy are Spanish, the previously identified characteristic of the Spaniard as the outside observer in the SpCN does not come into

play in the same way. A foreigner draws comparisons between the new culture and Spain's, and the contrast often brings to light traditions or customs, thus making the work an indelible example of Spanish writing. Even Javier Marías, who has often been referred to as a European writer in lieu of a Spanish writer, infuses his CNs with a Spanish flavor. José Ángel Mañas accomplishes this same infusion in a very different way, by alluding to certain Spanish literary traditions, such as the *tremendismo* of the forties, made popular by its chief cultivator, Camilo José Cela in his prize-winning La familia de Pascual Duarte. Edward Stanton explains how authors of Spanish detective novels in the seventies and eighties identified themselves as national writers.

It would be hard to speak of a single school of detective fiction in contemporary Spain. What most writers in the genre have in common is a desire to write unmistakably Spanish novels, frequently recurring to national traditions like the picaresque, *costumbrismo*, surrealism, *esperpento* or the grotesque. (221)

I argue that Mañas exhibits the same tendency. Although the plot line of Soy un escritor frustrado corresponds to one of the four most common scenarios in the AmCN<sup>39</sup>, murder in order to plagiarize another's work, the kidnapping plan and the subsequent unfolding of the events, show signs of the *tremendismo*.<sup>40</sup>

A brief summary of how Marian eventually dies and how J. reacts will suffice to illustrate the grotesque, yet often darkly comic aspects of the novel. J. decides to kidnap Marian and keep her locked up in the basement of his parents' summer home while he passes himself off as the author of her novel. For example, when J. offers to take Marian home –planning to kidnap her – the novel reflects his agitation. He asks, “¿QUIERES QUE TE ACERQUE?!” which emerges as a growl. J.'s mind explodes, yet Marian

registers no alarm. Within minutes of getting into his car, however, the girl is anesthetized with ether, bound, gagged and unceremoniously dumped in the back of the car like a carpet. While traveling to the hide-away spot, J.'s self-doubt returns, but only briefly as he assures himself that "Había obrado bien en legítima defensa, preservando la integridad psíquica de mi persona"(91). The exaggeration and the self-importance separate this CN from previous SpCNs. It defies classification; black comedy, dark side of academia, crime literature, confessional, arrogant account are perceptible in the novel, yet it does not fall neatly into any one of these. Unsuccessful as it is, Soy un escritor frustrado succeeds in provoking the reader to recoil at the narrator's condescension and cruelty. J.'s treatment of Marian while she is alive and then postmortem secure one classification: that of monstrous. While Marian is kept in captivity, J. fills bowls of food and water for her as if she were an animal; he cleans her excrements and he pats her when she behaves. He actually feels sorry for her situation and it occurs to him that if it becomes necessary to kill her, he will wait until she has fallen in love with him in the classic Stockholm Syndrome scenario, so that she will understand the need for her sacrifice (101). When J. learns that he needs to write another book; he has been told that he will win the Premio Planeta no matter what he scribbles, he realizes that he needs Marian alive and writing; his physical abuse of her is intended to motivate her to procure for him another novel, but it only results in her refusal to eat.

--Eres una egoísta—le dije otro día--. Te estás dejando morir sólo para joderme, sólo porque te da envidia que gane el Planeta. ¡Putá! --Le di un par de patadas que tampoco provocaron ninguna reacción. (142)

As she starves herself to death, J. deludes himself that she is the only woman he will ever love and upon her death, he engages in necrophilia. The most horrific part is how rational J. feels his actions to be. The final grotesque comedic touch is that the novel (memoir) that recounts the murder and debasement of Marian does win the Premio Planeta and “las ventas de su segunda novela . . . han supuesto un nuevo <<boom>> editorial” (155).

Thus, the novel, protagonized by J. and narrating his relationship with Marian is almost a brutal caricature of the SpCN. The tendency towards valuation of creative writing over criticism is apparent in all the novels, in Soy, it becomes an obsession. The lackadaisical attitude towards work and the lesser or greater degrees of negligence appear frequently, but J. epitomizes the qualities of an appalling professor: he is contemptuous of his own work. The exploitative relationship between professor and student appears in several novels, but J.’s exploitation is psychopathic. The problem of identity and the influence of Spain are reflected in the absurdity and grotesqueness of the ending. And the conclusion, in which J. writes from his jail cell, gives credence to the idea of the university as a haven; in this case, for a criminal. <sup>41</sup> <sup>42</sup>,

## CONCLUSION

This thesis hopes to introduce the Spanish Campus Novel as a clearly defined, yet constantly evolving variant in the field of the Academic Novel within the broader field of Contemporary Spanish Peninsular Narrative. The nine Spanish campus novels analyzed demonstrate what has been observed by numerous critics of the Anglo academic novel: that some academic works are better than others, but all of them contribute to an understanding of the trajectory of modern fiction and the institution of the university in the West. Bearing in mind that the novels studied were written by Spanish authors, who also write other fictional works, we should briefly summarize some current theories of recent Spanish narrative to better appreciate the context in which the novels have been written.

Antonio Gómez López-Quñones in his article “La península ingrávida: Sobre la novela española contemporánea” (2007) explains that the contemporary Spanish novel contrasts with the Spanish novel of the sixties and seventies --such as Juan Benet’s Volverás a Región (1967) or Juan Goytisolo’s Reivindicación del conde don Julián (1970)- - when language was not a form of communication with the reader; it was, instead, a means in and of itself; the reader had to abandon him/herself to the pleasure of an incongruous language. Unlike those novels, more recent Spanish fiction has not cultivated the structurally, linguistically, thematically abstruse or the highly intellectual. Instead, most current Spanish fiction has harvested as its characters’ milieu, transnationalism and pop-culture: including, rock music, alternative sexual identities and the youth culture. The SpCN may be inscribed in the postmodern novel, although this

thesis does not examine this interrelationship so as to focus more on the campus novel itself. But certainly, our understanding of the emerging genre studied improves if we have a prior knowledge of postmodern fiction. Gómez López-Quiñones states that in works like Cercas' Soldados de Salamina, Marias' Negra espalda del tiempo, Montero's La hija del caníbal, and, I suggest, the SpCNs,

existe una conciencia (que, en algunos casos, se torna en un aspecto temático de la trama) de que el lenguaje no se trata ni de un circuito cerrado de signos ni de una herramienta con la que nos acercamos a una realidad pre-existente para explicarla, sino un aspecto constitutivo e intrínseco de esa misma realidad. Conocer el lenguaje conlleva conocer la realidad, es decir, cómo estamos instalados en la realidad y cómo tenemos, en parte al menos, conciencia de ella. (55)

As a result, the first six novels studied in this thesis, almost demand an academic reader familiar with the milieu: English academic references, personal models for characters, tenure politics and collegial relationships seek an inside reader. At the same time, the SpCNs' observations on Spanish behavior seek to understand both national and transnational Spanish identity. The last three novels, those of Freixas, Chirbes and Mañas, correspond more closely to tendencies in Spanish culture as defined by Gómez López-Quiñones:

. . . la cultura española contemporánea se distingue por una pluralidad multifacética y caleidoscópica, pero dicha pluralidad constituye el signo de una normalización y de una pérdida, la pérdida de la diferencia idiosincrática. (39)

I would argue that the incorporation of a plurality of voices into the Spanish contemporary novel does not have to necessarily result in a loss of 'the idiosyncratic

difference' but, instead, may simply elaborate on what is considered part of the 'idiosyncratic difference.' For example, although the voice of the AmCN originally belonged to white males, with the occasional female, recent additions to the genre include We Happy Few (2006) by Rolando Hinojosa, which provides an image of Tex-Mex culture, Japanese by Spring (1996) by Ishmael Reed interposes an African-American voice and Bone Game: A Novel (1996) by Louis Owens, a Native American writer. These novels broaden the scope of the academic novel. Similarly, the SpCN contributes to an expansion of the academic novel; the plurality of Spanish voices, including those in the campus novel, then broadens the reach of the contemporary novel in Spain.

Another trend worthy of note in the today's Spanish novel is the construction of the author as persona. For example, "Muñoz Molina ha construido implícita o explícitamente una imagen de escritor culto" (GLQ 45), whereas concerning Mañas and his contemporaries, Gómez López-Quñones states:

sus respectivas figuras públicas han sido construidas con distintos mecanismos . . . Loriga, Mañas o Extebarría se presentan como los intermediarios con una cultura, no exenta de ciertas pretensions políticas, pero caracterizada por el desenfado, la provocación , el *pop* y una prosa en ocasiones muy elaborada . . . en concreto, la oralidad de un franja generacional relativamente joven . . . Lo relevante de esta comparación es las figuras públicas de Loriga, Extebarría y Mañas se han convertido en uno los ejes fundamentales en torno al que gravitan sus obras. El tono procaz y conscientemente *anti-intelectual* de muchas de sus intervenciones públicas constituye el perfecto aliado de un aura cultural "contra-cultural." (emphasis added; GLQ 46)

The latest manifestation of the author's persona as an integral part of the work, evidenced in Cercas, Marías, Chirbes and Mañas, represents a significant shift in the classification of contemporary fiction as well as a current trend in the Anglo campus

novel. Gómez López Quiñones references Francisco Rico (the very same critic appearing as a character in Negra espalda del tiempo), who has noted that a difference between an author of Juan Benet's generation and that of Eduardo Mendoza's (Mendoza being a contemporary of the authors included in the present investigation) represents the transition from aesthetic modernism to postmodernism. He then further explains what postmodern elements can be found in writers such as Antonio Muñoz Molina and Javier Marías, among many others. He writes:

En primer lugar, resulta evidente la constante y consciente interacción con géneros literarios como la serie negra, la novela gótica, el folletín, la novela de aventuras, la novela histórica, el *bildungsroman* e incluso el ensayo. . . En otras palabras, este intercambio está basado en una dinámica de imitación y traición . . . Leer estas novelas implica identificar un determinado género literario y asistir simultáneamente a su deformación.  
(53)

All of this reinforces Gómez López-Quíñonez's assessment of contemporary Spanish literature and its relationship to the marketplace. If part of the goal, explicit or not, is to expand markets, one way in which to do that is to employ the genres favored by those desirable markets and then reinvent them so that they are both familiar and "new." In terms of the Spanish Academic Novel, that familiarity lies in the foreign market's comfort of knowing exactly what a campus is like – the reader has been there either literally or figuratively. The home market, Spain, can relate to the protagonists' shared perspective and viewpoint. Their observations and consternations will signal familiarity to the reader in Spain, who is less familiar with life on an American campus. Thus readers from both markets will have prior knowledge of situations in the SpCN even though their points of reference will be different.

One of the aspects of the Spaniards' viewpoint, which again differs greatly from that found in the Anglo Campus Novel, is its ability to “explora{r} las posibilidades y ventajas de un tiempo descreído y errático en el que los personajes no *son*, sino que se reinventan y se rehacen sin obligaciones doctrinarias o metafísicas” (GLQ 82). Gómez López-Quiñones points to the new plurality of voices as the condition which allows authors and consumers such fluidity. Within the AmCN, the plurality of voices has emerged through the figures who struggle within the constraints of a system, striving to either alter its prejudices or adapt to its demands, such as in the novels of Ishmael Reed. The novel of Muñoz Molina and to a certain extent, that of Aldecoa, exemplify the latter: the desire to adapt to the American campus; their protagonists begin to integrate American academic expectations into their behavior and thoughts. Cercas and Marías take an intermediary step; they have both written novels in which the protagonist makes a concentrated effort to remain a dispassionate observer of the campus machinations and norms, essentially not impacted by the campus, yet also not loathe to fulfilling the expectations of their jobs. The novels of Chirbes and Mañas, however, clearly adhere to the idea of the subject reinventing himself, regardless of what the university wants or expects.

In postmodern academic novels of the 1990s, a new pattern emerged, what Adam Begley calls the “Postmodern Postdoctoral Romance,” which is what occurs when “anxiety of influence gives way to irony of influence” (36). What differentiates these postmodern academic novels from previous ones are two factors: first, the author has created a text which the professor-scholar finds, with the action unfolding around the

interpretation of the text and second, this interpretative reading of the text, the actual scholarship, moves the action forward. The intellectual activity of the scholar/protagonist impacts his/her real life decisions. Begley mentions novels by A.S. Byatt (Possession, 1990) Louise Erdrich and Michael Dorris (The Crown of Columbus, 1991) and the Italian Umberto Eco (The Name of the Rose, 1983). In Possession, for example ( a very simplified example) , the research (and subsequent Quest) by Roland Mitchell into the passionate love-life of the subject of his scholarly investigation the (fictitious) Victorian poet Randolph Henry Ash, results in Mitchell reevaluating the notion of “self” and love and ultimately leading him to live a more fulfilling life. As we have seen, scholarship for the Spaniards is not the albatross which both Jim Dixon and Sy Levin experienced, nor does it differentiate the celebrity professor (Morris Zapp) from the workhorse teaching professor (Philip Swallow) as David Lodge envisioned it. For the Spaniards, scholarship is something they merely do. As demonstrated, postmodernism currently has a solid grip on the literary scene in Spain and it will be interesting to watch these developments to see if the SpCN novels will follow the trajectory of the AmCN and the BrCN.

Related to the notion of esteeming a professor’s work is what Ramón Rodríguez considers the cultural mission of the university. He advises that for the university to really become a positive cultural force in Spain, several changes are needed, among them a transition ceasing to treat the university as an extension of high school (33). More importantly, however, Rodríguez believes that the Spanish university needs to dedicate itself to two fundamental objectives: first, it must organize and run interdisciplinary seminars to deal objectively with current cultural issues; in other words, it must take part

in the culture, becoming a literal and metaphorical space for debate and investigation. Secondly, the university must establish courses, for students in any career, in which a basic knowledge of culture and the ability to investigate said culture, provides them with critical, analytical skills to succeed. In short, Rodríguez wants the university to reassume its “peso social específico” (43). William Tierney, posits that the reading of CNs may even improve the university. He writes, “. . . the purpose in reading academic fiction has less to do with proving or disproving the truth of a text; instead, the novel might be thought of as a way to help academics think about how academic life has been structured, defined and interpreted in order to create constructive change” (164). AmCNs and BrCNs have pinpointed the follies and quirks – and frequently- injustices suffered by professors and students; in the meantime, lay people and administrators have engaged in a never-ending dialogue about what works and what does not in the university. In Spain, educational reform has always been top down, initiated by the government, with sweeping changes, perhaps dispensing with the good (the exile of 160,000 Spanish citizens post Civil War) as well as the bad (Faber 15). In accordance with Rodríguez’s position on the university, Tierney suggests that at a grassroots level, “the reading of academic novels ought to re-instill in the professorate a concern for academic freedom and awareness of the social obligations and responsibility that academics have” (176).

### Chapter Summaries

This thesis has focused on the *professorroman* by Spanish authors. In order to appreciate how this genre is itself a product of transnationalism, I began, in Chapter One, by introducing both the literary and historical background of my subject, summarizing

the evolution of the Anglo campus novel, from the first glimmering of it in Elizabethan England to its impact on the flesh and blood American undergraduate of the nineteenth century. The subsequent fictionalization of said undergraduates, in both England and America, was overtaken, in both quantity and quality, by novels about the professor. With the publication of Kingsley Amis' Lucky Jim in 1954, the academic novel itself became a primary source of scholarship –often hotly debated. Several key characteristics have emerged from the ongoing critical debate about the classification of the academic novel, however. These characteristics include: an academic location and academic characters (the latter are often archetypes), humor, academic jargon, job insecurity, parody and satire. For the purposes of this study, a definition from Elaine Showalter's engaging book about the history of the campus novel, Faculty Towers (2005), is used to appraise the relevance of a particular campus novel to the genre. Showalter states that the best campus novels innovate within fiction itself, a feature we have observed in the SpCN, most notably in Antonio Muñoz Molina and Javier Marías.

The latter part of the introduction reviews the social and political history of Spain, thus accounting for the long absence of the campus novel in a country with a rich literary tradition; the historical survey also serves to correlate the genre's very recent emergence with the socio-economic changes that have occurred in Spain since the death of Franco in 1975. The entangling of church, state and education largely determined the lack of autonomy of the Spanish university and its evolution. Because of radical changes in government, and the reforms said government deemed necessary, the Spanish university was never free to improve itself or adapt to the needs of the Spanish population. Instead,

the university was frequently abused as a tool for ecclesiastical or political propaganda. Pedro Laín Entralgo notes that with Franco's ascension to power, the slight reforms that had been made between 1934 – 1936 were lost as Franco's ideological agenda took precedence over all educational goals (17). Rodríguez-San Pedro cites the *Ley de Ordenación Universitaria* (July 1943) which placed all of a university's direction under the control of the rector, who was chosen by the Ministry and therefore, an active member of the Falange. It has only been since the Franco's death, a mere thirty-odd years ago, that the university in Spain has begun to diversify its offerings. There are now public and private institutions, and with such diversification and freedom, students, parents, professors and university administrators have begun to demand higher standards, more transnational curricula and accountability.

The last major point in the introduction addresses the traits unique to the SpCN. Globalization, for example, or the way in which Spanish academics (in these novels) are exposed to many more campuses and academic styles than their Anglo fictional counterparts, constitutes a central characteristic of the SpCN. The other primary characteristics have evolved due to the Spaniards' exposure to other academic worlds. These characteristics include: the theme of displacement and its corollary, the creation of identity, the use of language – specifically code-switching, the professors' less strictly academic attitude towards their university work, subtle commentaries about the Spanish university and ultimately, the primacy of creative work over any academic effort.

In Chapter Two, the Spaniard in America is considered. Antonio Muñoz Molina and Javier Cercas, both prize-winning novelists, set their stories on fictitious American

campuses. Muñoz Molina's Carlota Fainberg (1999) introduces the reader to Claudio, a Spanish professor on the cusp of attaining tenure at a university in Western Pennsylvania. His accidental encounter with a traveling Spanish businessman at an airport causes him to reflect on his academic life and identity --his Spanish cultural heritage which he has slowly been shedding as he adapts to the rigid environs of the American university-- and his future. The novel is funny; there are scathing satirical portrayals of his sexually ambiguous Chair and of the radical female theorist who usurps the tenured position Claudio thought would be his. The intercalated titular story, that of Carlota, conforms to the advisement of Showalter to innovate in the academic novel; its presence serves to comment on the role of criticism versus text in both academic circles and in life itself. Claudio, a literary scholar, who begins the novel by deconstructing and analyzing all dialogues in which he engages is drawn in by Abengoa's (his compatriot's) tale. His changing involvement with Abengoa's story, from literary theorist to participant in the eerie tale, reinforces Muñoz Molina's innovation, as Claudio's story merges with Abengoa's tale to become a haunting ghost story. Consistent with the SpCN is the conclusion that truth is found in the "story" and not in its interpretation.

Javier Cercas' two novels emanate from his real life experience as a teaching assistant at the University of Illinois in Urbana, Illinois in 1988. His first campus novel, El inquilino (1989), concerns a lackadaisical Italian linguist, Mario, who returns to campus after the summer break to find that an interloper, Berkowickz, has appropriated his apartment, his classes, his girlfriend and his position in the department. Berkowickz's execution of the responsibilities and duties of a professor (teaching, advising,

collaborating on committees, publishing) far surpasses any professional contributions from Mario. The contrast between the two and Mario's ignominious descent, highlight both the Anglo campus novel's concern over station and job (in) security as well as the SpCN's focus on the protagonist's point of view towards the work (not that important) and his meditation on his own identity (all-consuming). The overt duplication of Mario, in the presentation of an idealized other, into the quintessential academic, serves to emphasize the uncomfortable division between academic self and integral self that is found so frequently in the SpCN.

La velocidad de la luz (2005), Cercas' second campus novel, takes as its protagonist a young Spaniard who is given the opportunity to spend two years in the United States as a teaching assistant. Although he is not particularly interested in obtaining a degree (he shows the typical *laissez-faire* attitude towards academic work), he accepts because he is broke and because he feels that in order to be a writer, it is necessary to travel. While in Illinois, he writes a novel ---El inquilino, in fact—and becomes a friend of a tortured Vietnam veteran. Much of the novel then takes place off campus as the tragic lives of Rodney, the veteran, and the Spaniard are told, but the development of their friendship, founded on voracious reading and a shared appreciation for fiction, exemplifies the essential traits of the SpCN. The Spaniard's quest for his identity, even to the point at which he hopes to adopt his dead friend's family as his own, and his ultimate salvation in the writing of the story of himself and Rodney, highlight the secondary nature of literary criticism when it is compared to the importance of a creative work, and, of course, life itself.

Chapter Three analyzes two of Javier Marías' masterpieces: Todas las almas (1989) and Negra espalda del tiempo (1998). The former chronicles a Spaniard's two years as a don in the Oxfordian college of All Souls while the latter proposes to clarify the misconception that the earlier novel is a *roman à clef*. Of all the novels studied in this thesis, Marías' best reflect the affectionate, satirical humor typical of the BrCN. In Todas las almas, the reader is introduced to the eccentric inner sanctum that is Oxford and to its inhabitants. Marías' observant eye paints detailed portraits of the idiosyncratic dons, never taking for granted any of their actions. His recurrent comparisons between their actions and beliefs and his own decidedly Spanish conduct emphasize the peculiarities of the British university and its limited environment. With its comic intensity, Marías' work embodies all of the elements of a classic BrCN: academic location, academic characters, academic jargon, job-insecurity, parody and satire. The particular gift of these two novels, however, is that while paragons of the Anglo campus novel, they are also uniquely and unequivocally Spanish. Marías' ruminations on language, his assessment of his foreignness and the strain which this places on an already fragile sense of one's identity abroad, his commentary on his Spanish colleagues and thus the Spanish university, evoke a new academic space, one that is as transnational as Marías himself is. In Marías' works, the Spaniard's impact on the foreign campus is noted together with that influence on the visiting Spaniard.

Lastly, it bears mentioning that Javier Marías' academic novels, and especially Negra espalda del tiempo, surpass the most rigorous requirement of innovation within the genre. Throughout the first third of the book, ambiguous disclaimers about the veracity

of the text and the reliability of Marías himself, the narrator, suggest that perhaps it is not a novel, but a memoir. Real people are mentioned, i.e., the professor and scholar Francisco Rico, and their desires are recorded; Rico's explicit wish is to be mentioned by name in a novel (which of course happens even as Marías also writes that he refuses Rico his request).<sup>43</sup> By using flesh-and-blood professors and then using said professors' own words (as written in the text) to depict their personalities, Marías achieves a tour de force of self-referentiality.

The novels in Chapter Four are both written by women, but a more compelling reason for them to be studied in tandem is the thematic importance in the texts of the sexually exploitive male professor, a truism in the academic novel of any country, but one which, in these novels, reveals much about the low moral expectations of a professor by the Spanish public. *El enigma* (2002) by Josefina Aldecoa follows the semester foray on an American campus of an accomplished Spanish professor who is a visiting professor at a prestigious (imaginary) northeastern university. Daniel Rivera's subsequent meeting and affair with an intellectually stimulating Spanish exile of his own age causes him to compare the academic life of a professor in the US to that of one in Spain. This comparison, in which the American campus is portrayed as a sanctuary for scholars and American professors and students as stimulating, well-read conversationalists, serves not so much to reveal truths about American academic life, as to accentuate deficiencies in the public's perception of academia in Spain. Daniel's ultimate decision to remain with a wife who conforms to the ideal cultivated by Franco, that of homemaker, and to accompany his return to Spain with his ethically questionable erotic adventures with

attractive students, suggests a correlation between unethical sexual behavior and the lack of satisfaction inherent in a bourgeois Spanish professor's marriage. Spain is a country whose past is still weighing down its present, at least as depicted in this novel.

Moreover, the Spanish public's acceptance of professor-student liaisons emphasizes that country's old cultural norm, according to which a man was expected to behave dishonorably in such matters, and therefore, was not socially condemned for such deviations.

Último domingo en Londres (1997) by Laura Freixas incorporates multi-perspectivism through which the campus and academia are viewed by contemporary Spanish academics. The five protagonists in their letters to one another or in their reflections, two professors and three recent graduates of Master's programs, touch on a BrCN and AmCN trait, job insecurity, and on various Spanish ones: displacement, identity, the professors' dismissive attitude toward academic work, and above all, the supremacy of creative work over critical analysis. The self-induced plight of the male professor, though, receives extended treatment in the novel and thus, also in this thesis. The character's illicit affairs with students (including one with one of the other protagonists) and then a minute description of what could be construed as "date rape"—or simply rape—emphasize the following traits of the stereotypical lecherous professor: self-aggrandizement, social ineptitude off campus and academic failure. The female Spanish professor's comments in this novel about her male colleague's reputation as a womanizer remind one of the attitude found in Aldecoa's El enigma. In both texts, male seduction of female students is to be expected; there is no indication from any of the

Spanish nationals in these two novels that this situation is, for them, unacceptable. The one appalled voice comes from Daniel's Spanish, but Americanized, lover in El enigma, once again indicating a cultural gulf between the codes of conduct in the American and Spanish university.

Chapter Five presents two writers of vastly different generations. Rafael Chirbes is the second oldest of the writers included, born in 1949, while José Ángel Mañas is at least ten years younger than the rest, having been born in 1971. Nevertheless, the protagonists of these two writers echo each other's vices and passions and thus represent extreme examples of the traits identified as those of the Spanish Campus Novel. In Chirbes' lyrical, French infused Mimoun (1988) a Spanish professor leaves Madrid for Morocco with the intention of securing a job at the university and more importantly, finding the time and the tranquility to finish his novel. The tale of alcoholic and sexual excess unifies the SpCN elements of displacement and identity and the significance attached to writing a novel. Manuel, the protagonist, loses all personal integrity as he drinks his way through the village of Mimoun. In so doing, he stops writing, subjecting himself even to the loss of his chosen identity as a writer once his condition deteriorates. His one sensible endeavor is to show up at the university on time, to give class. Although he does not attach any prestige or fulfillment to his teaching duty, he recognizes that it is his only act of sanity and his only viable identity. At the university he teaches Spanish and has Spanish colleagues, and this combination keeps him from sinking totally into a morass from which he cannot escape. In tandem with the theme of displacement, the code-switching in Mimoun is provocative, communicating both rejection of and

acculturation to the Arab culture through the use of French and eventually, through the suggestion of Arabic. Once again, the transnationalism of the university is present, and Manuel's ability to find work in Morocco turns out to be a catalyst for his self-quest; the discontented Spaniard lives off-campus in an ambience that leads him to question his very being, once it is not structured by his university role.

José Ángel Mañas' Soy un escritor frustrado (1996) holds a unique place in this thesis as an exception: his is the only SpCN in which the protagonist lives and works exclusively in Spain. In this novel, the obsessions of other Spanish professors in the SpCN are exaggerated to outrageous proportions, going beyond caricature to a new *tremendista/esperpentesque* effect. The protagonist, identified only as "J.", shows skill as a literary critic, but the skill is irrelevant to him except for the pleasure it gives him to decimate canonical figures. His responsibilities as a professor are undercut by his alcoholism and his loathing of the students. J.'s desire, like Cercas' writer's in La velocidad de la luz, to some degree Daniel's in El enigma, Max's in Último domingo en Londres and Manuel's in Mimoun, is to write a novel. J., more extreme than the other writer-professors, craves the literary fame, fortune and the consequent adoration, and in order to achieve his goal, he willingly kidnaps and even murders an innocent student. The surfeit of self-indulgence which J. exhibits satirizes the self-pity seen in most fictional Spanish professors; their paid work - the education of young minds - is but a bothersome obligation, enabling them to eat and take care of the mortgage.

### Latin American Campus Novel

As the SpCN tradition grows among Spanish-language writers, it is likely that a body of investigation will be initiated into the Latin American Campus Novel (LACN). It is also likely that these two novelistic categories will be compared to each other in the near future. Marketing new works in this genre will undoubtedly affect their presentation to the public because ‘España pretende capitalizar la potencia y la magnitud culturales/demográficas/políticas de Latinoamérica en los mercados europeos y estadounidenses’ (GLQ 49). As the demand for the academic novel in Spanish grows, transatlantic studies will characterize traits specific to, versus shared by, the two. While we cannot analyze the LACN in this study, it does seem safe to assume, after reading several, that one of the principle traits of the LACN is a political element. Although not absent from the AmCN or the BrCN, academics in Latin American universities are often harbingers of dissident political opinions, whose experiences include a representation of their views.

In 2001, Edmundo Paz Soldán published La materia del deseo, an academic - mystery novel concerning a young professor, Pedro, who has left his native Bolivia to follow his famous father's academic path. He studies at Berkeley, an institution where the novel is centered, and then lands a job at an unnamed university in the Northeast. His intense love affair with a graduate student engaged to another and his ambivalence about his academic work (he publishes well-received newspaper articles about Latin American politics) send him back to Bolivia for both the summer and a semester sabbatical. His ostensible plan is to research the life of his father, a counter-revolutionary in the style of

Che Guevara, and his father's cryptic, but brilliant semi-autobiographical novel, Berkeley, which contains both truths and lies about his life.

Mexico's Guillermo Fadanelli, author of Lodo (2002) founded the literary magazine *Moho* in 1989 and considers writing to be a shameless occupation but nevertheless, one in which he fanatically engages.<sup>44</sup> In Lodo, a cynical fifty-year old, socially inept philosophy professor, Benito Torrentera, makes a radical decision to break away from his peaceful existence in order to protect a young assassin, Flor Eduarda, in exchange for sexual favors. The two head for Michoacán; Flor Eduarda's purpose is to escape the police, whereas Benito's goal is to visit the site of the first Department of Philosophy in the Americas, established over five hundred years ago. Their journey results in an examination of the cultural, philosophical and historical particulars of Mexico as well as an introspective study of the characters.

Roberto Bolaño, Chilean author of 2666, the novel awarded the Best Book of 2008 by *Time Magazine*, died in 2003. His few novels, nonetheless, have become favorites of both readers and critics, and 2666 is considered his masterpiece. A brief synopsis of the novel will establish its unique place in the LACN – it bursts with political analysis and crime -- as well as its relationship with the latest tendency of the academic novel as described by Begley: the scholarly search, this time for an obscure German author. The five parts of the novel include a meeting of the literary critics who embark on a scholarly quest to meet Archimboldi, the German novelist. Other parts center on a Chilean Philosophy professor in Santa Teresa, México and the crimes committed against

women there. Many critics have explained that the novel has no theme, except possibly that of everything.

Eloy Urroz's recent novel Fricción (2008) also enters into an academic, political and postmodern world. Urroz is a graduate of the American higher education system who completed his doctorate in Hispanic Language and Literature at UCLA. In this novel, the professor-protagonist, Eusebio, is once again the son of a famous politician in Mexico. He embarks on an affair with the wife of a friend; Matilde, the wife, is currently writing a thesis, and the object of her investigation is Eusebio's father. In this necessarily brief summary, we must omit the various intercalated stories of Eusebio's life with his second wife, his university career, and his reflections on Greek philosophy. One of the most postmodern touches is that an important character is the reader, who is addressed throughout the text.

### In Closing

Non-Anglo academic fiction, the SpCN included, is expected to grow. In the past decades, a college degree has become the high-school degree of years past, and universities, in the US and abroad, are multiplying and expanding exponentially, as are international university exchanges. Although it may be many years and many novels before a more comprehensive understanding of the role of an international campus novel in the genre can be recognized, patterns in the SpCN are already apparent. Matthew Marr sees the Spanish Campus Novel as a text reversing the "fiction-based counter-rhetoric . . . an heretofore under examined poetics of resistance whose very conditions of genesis are . . . the much maligned phenomenon that is globalization itself" (122). For Marr, the

observations of the American university by Spaniards serve as a correction for the years of pigeonholing of Spain by American (and European) travel literature. True globalization, however, is connectivity and interchange.<sup>45</sup> With this perspective, the idea that American culture is now being “commodified” by Spaniards is not wholly accurate. Rather, it seems evident that the eccentricities of the foreign culture, be it American, British or Moroccan, are examined in differing degrees alongside the native culture, with global similarities and differences noted as individuals continue to hatch their own reflections on who they are and from whence they come and to where they may be headed.

The exchange of scholars –in both directions- will continue to ensure this globalization or trade of cultures and information. Morris Zapp, as long ago as 1984, knew that globalization was coming and, in the best tradition possible, reveled in it and referenced, a tad obliquely, the most fabled of all Spaniards, Don Quixote.

{Morris} “I was telling a young guy at the conference just this morning. The day of the single, static campus is over.”

{Hilary} “And the single, static campus novel with it, I suppose?”

{Morris}”Exactly! Even two campuses wouldn’t be enough. Scholars these days are like the errant knights of old, wandering the ways of the world in search of adventure and glory.” (Small World 72)

## NOTES

### Chapter 1 Notes

<sup>1</sup> United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2008) College Enrollment And Work Activity of 2007 High School Graduates. 23 Sep. 2008 <<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/hsgec.pdf>>.

<sup>2</sup> Stewart, William. "The plaid truth on class sizes." TES (13 Jul. 2007) 23 Sep. 2008 <<http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=2409935>>.

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Education and Science. OECD Thematic Review of Tertiary Education: Country Background Report for Spain. OECD (2008) 12 October 2008 <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/18/46/41014632.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Manetto, Francesco. "Uno de cada dos alumnos españoles no acaba los estudios de secundaria." El País (10 Feb. 2007) 23 Sep. 2008 <[http://www.elpais.com/articulo/sociedad/alumnos/espanoles/acaba/estudios/secundaria/elpepusoc/20071002elpepusoc\\_3/Tes](http://www.elpais.com/articulo/sociedad/alumnos/espanoles/acaba/estudios/secundaria/elpepusoc/20071002elpepusoc_3/Tes)>.

<sup>5</sup> Rush Limbaugh, a radio host revered among Conservative listeners, is particularly zealous in his anti-university intellectual rhetoric. From a transcription on his website of his show comes the following:  
All right, let it run, but I want to get back to the phones here, but I'll tell you, this is how intellectuals speak, pseudo-intellectuals, too. I'll never forget one of the funniest things I ever saw when I first became aware of this manner, this pattern of speaking. I was watching Mr. Buckley's TV show Firing Line, and he had this guest, some professor from somewhere, I don't remember his name, all I remember is how this guy looked and what he sounded like. He was smoking. He had the ugliest teeth that I have ever seen, his hair was typically professorial, all over the place and not much of it, he had a frozen smile on his face like everything he was being asked was beneath him and his speech pattern went something like this. (doing impression) "Well, see-eeee, glacial componeeeent and identifier -- eeeeeee, perhaps -- difficult toooo -- more than eeeeh average person -- comprehend." He actually spoke this way. I'm laughing myself silly because this guy obviously thought that he was Mr. Wizard. They do, they speak this way. I have long lampooned 'em.

Limbaugh, Rush. "Obama... Uh... Um... the Intellectual." 19 Aug. 2008. Transcription from radio performance. Accessed on 25 Sep. 2008.  
<[http://www.rushlimbaugh.com/home/daily/site\\_081908/content/01125109.guest.html](http://www.rushlimbaugh.com/home/daily/site_081908/content/01125109.guest.html)>.

<sup>6</sup> Compare this to the 18,000 students attending seminary school.

## Chapter Two Notes

<sup>7</sup> American refers to the United States. Although the author is aware of the omission of all of the other countries that encompass the American continents, common nomenclature in English language texts and Peninsular Spanish texts uses American as the correct adjective to refer to anything or anyone from the US.

<sup>8</sup> Muñoz Molina repeatedly refers to Claudio's trepidation over the decision about his promotion to full professorship from an associate position. I believe Muñoz Molina is referring to tenure from an assistant professorship not a full professorship. American universities generally concede newly tenured faculty the rank of Associate Professor unless the individual has already achieved full professorship elsewhere. I base my assumption on the following quotes from the text. Firstly, "donde he venido labrándome en los últimos años una posición decorosa, aunque todavía insegura, como associate professor" (23). ". . . lo que yo ahora estaba a punto de conseguir, el full professorship, el tenure, la plaza fija, como yo le había traducido a Marcelo Abengoa, . . ." (138 – 139). Also, see UVA's explanation:

[http://www.virginia.edu/provost/docs\\_policies/appointments.html](http://www.virginia.edu/provost/docs_policies/appointments.html) (10 October 2008)

<sup>9</sup> The name Humbert College may be yet another sly academic reference. Vladimir Nabokov wrote *Pnin*, an academic novel concerning the eponymous professor, first published in installments in *The New Yorker*. Nabokov's most famous character, however, is Humbert Humbert from *Lolita* (1955).

<sup>10</sup> draw, scratch, flutter

<sup>11</sup> Sokal's explanation follows. "**Why did I do it?** While my method was satirical, my motivation is utterly serious. What concerns me is the proliferation, not just of nonsense and sloppy thinking *per se*, but of a particular kind of nonsense and sloppy thinking: one that denies the existence of objective realities, or (when challenged) admits their existence but downplays their practical relevance. At its best, a journal like *Social Text* raises important questions that no scientist should ignore -- questions, for example, about how corporate and government funding influence scientific work. Unfortunately,

epistemic relativism does little to further the discussion of these matters. In short, my concern over the spread of subjectivist thinking is both intellectual and political. Intellectually, the problem with such doctrines is that they are false (when not simply meaningless). There *is* a real world; its properties are *not* merely social constructions; facts and evidence *do* matter. What sane person would contend otherwise? And yet, much contemporary academic theorizing consists precisely of attempts to blur these obvious truths -- the utter absurdity of it all being concealed through obscure and pretentious language.“

<sup>12</sup> “desde los estudios pioneros y esclarecedores de Michel Foucault, estudios que todos citamos tantas veces en nuestros papers, aunque yo confieso, para mi vergüenza (y si se supiera, también para mi ruina), que jamás he terminado de leer ninguno de ellos . . . menos los entiendo . . . “ (88)

<sup>13</sup> To give just one example, Rummidge’s Head of Department, Gordon Masters, sends Philip Swallow on the Euphoria Exchange (to America) in order to promote a younger, but more prolific faculty member over Swallow, the senior, pack horse of the department. If Swallow is abroad, the discomfort of blatantly passing him over will be minimized. (Changing Places, 20)

<sup>14</sup> Napoli, Donna Jo and Marina Nespor. “The Syntax of Word-Initial Consonant Gemination in Italian.” Language. 55:4 (1979):812-841.

<sup>15</sup> Vogel, Irene Barrie (1977) The Syllable in Phonological Theory, with Special Reference to Italian. Ph.D. thesis, Stanford.

<sup>16</sup> This description reflects that of Rodney Falk, one of the principle characters in Cercas’ later novel, La velocidad de la luz.

<sup>17</sup> Plotinus in Euphoria is modelled after UC Berkely in California.

<sup>18</sup> Rota is also the last name of the protagonist in El inquilino

<sup>19</sup> According to the European University Institute the definition of the Profesor Ayudante Doctor is the following : “the temporary position of *Profesor Ayudante Doctor* is the usual entry position for an academic career in Spain. A new figure of *Contratado Doctor* (lecturer) was created recently, for which one needs 3 years of postdoctoral experience and a specific accreditation.

<http://www.iue.it/MaxWeberProgramme/academiccareers/Spain.shtml> 4 November 2008

<sup>20</sup> The remaining two-thirds of Negra espalda del tiempo also references Todas las almas, but not the people and events that relate to the university. There are passages about the owners of an antiquarian book store which the narrator frequented and there is a long explanation addressing the Reino de Redonda, the Caribbean island bought in 1865 by M.P. Shiel, who then bestowed the kingdom upon the writer John Gawsworth. Gawsworth ennobled various writers, such as Henry Miller and Lawrence Durrell. In the 90s, Javier Marías was ceded the kingdom and as King, has given titles to writers, critics and filmmakers. A.S. Byatt is the Duchess of Morpho Eugenia, Eduardo Mendoza, the Duke of Isla Larga (Long Island) and Pedro Almóvodar was bestowed with the title of the Duke of Trémula (Quivering).

<sup>21</sup> Juan Francisco Jiménez further delves into Marías' ludic relationship with the reader. "Javier Marías entiende la relación entre autor y lector de forma definida: el autor de una novella finge que no es arbitrario lo que sí lo es; el lector, por su parte, puede sospechar que lo que se presenta como ficción no lo es." (78)

<sup>22</sup> Eric Southworth: Todas las almas is dedicated to him. Marías devotes more space to him than any other of the professors, except for Rylands, yet his portrait seems incomplete. He is loyal and honest, moral to a fault, with both a sense of humor and an air of sincere gravity. His eccentricities consist in a fascination with the Catholic reigion in folkloric terms and he requested from Marías an Archbishop's biretta. (NE, 51)

<sup>23</sup> In Todas las almas, on pages 53, 56 (two times), 58, 163, Marías uses "high table.

<sup>24</sup> ". . . en Oxford se imparten clases durante tres periodos de ocho semanas justas –Michaelmas, Hilary, Trinity—y el resto es desocupación para aquellos que no tienen tareas administrativas ni apenas que examinar, como no tenía yo" (TLA,132)

"No sólo estuve más solo y más desocupado (durante el último trimestre muchas clases son desatendidas o acaban suspendiéndose para que los alumnos puedan dedicarse a preparar los exámenes y los *dons* a preparar las preguntas más criminales)" (TLA,134)

<sup>25</sup> The dictionary of the Real Academia Española defines *desdoblamiento* as "m. Fraccionamiento natural o artificial de un compuesto en sus componentes o elementos"

[http://buscon.rae.es/draeI/SrvltConsulta?TIPO\\_BUS=3&LEMA=desdoblamiento](http://buscon.rae.es/draeI/SrvltConsulta?TIPO_BUS=3&LEMA=desdoblamiento)  
9 December 2008.

There is no satisfactory English equivalent. Multiple or split personalities have been suggested, but these terms do not capture the full meaning.

<sup>26</sup> Clothing is a significant element in all of Mariás' works; his characters' gabardinas, neckline, stockings and shoes, are observed and duly noted.

<sup>27</sup> The Warden: According to the OED, the Dean of a college in England has been a warden since 1429. **b.** The dean of a cathedral or collegiate church, or of a royal chapel. *Obs.*

**1429** *Rolls of Parlt.* IV. 346 John Arundell, Dean or Wardein of the Chapelle Roiall of Seint George,..Windsor. *Ibid.*, The saide Wardein is named and wretyn Dean; also..Wardeins therof have usually be called Deans. **1538** FITZHERB. *Just. Peas* 121b, Al..wardens of cathedrall and collegiate Churches.

"warden, *n.*1" *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. *OED Online*. Oxford University Press. 3 December 2008

<[http://libproxy.temple.edu:2232/cgi/entry/50280711?query\\_type=word&queryword=warden&first=1&max\\_to\\_show=10&sort\\_type=alpha&result\\_place=2&search\\_id=NhS3-iVVvoy-10571&hilite=50280711](http://libproxy.temple.edu:2232/cgi/entry/50280711?query_type=word&queryword=warden&first=1&max_to_show=10&sort_type=alpha&result_place=2&search_id=NhS3-iVVvoy-10571&hilite=50280711)>

<sup>28</sup> <<http://forum.wordreference.com/showthread.php?t=261615>> (3 december 2008)

<sup>29</sup> [http://www.mod-langs.ox.ac.uk/spanish/100years/Spanish\\_Writers.html](http://www.mod-langs.ox.ac.uk/spanish/100years/Spanish_Writers.html) (2 December 2008)

#### Chapter Four Notes

<sup>30</sup> This date is based on Daniel's statement to Isabela's father that they are "en los ochenta" (34). Therefore, if Teresa, who is 40, left Spain when she was 3, it must have been thirty years ago.

<sup>31</sup> Temple University's policy reads as follows:  
"With reference to behavior between an instructor and students of that instructor, no instructor shall make a sexually suggestive or intimidating remark, ask a student for a date or sexual favor, or in other ways make a sexual advance to the student. While a student is a student of a particular instructor, any sort of sexual or romantic advances or relationship between the student and the particular instructor is prohibited."

<[http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy\\_no=02.78.02](http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy_no=02.78.02)>  
Faculty Handbook, p. 17. (3 January 2009)

<sup>32</sup> In accordance with the other chapters, a brief mention of the importance of clothing is necessitated. When Daniel packs for his trip to US, he chooses an elegant,

name-brand outfit. “ Los zapatos Sebago. Mejor la chaqueta de cachemir puesta: no se arruga”(10).

<sup>33</sup> Entrevista: Laura Freixas □ “La idea de que las mujeres estamos arrasando en las listas de ventas es falsa y un poco paranoica”. Interviewer: Eva Moreno.  
< <http://www.laurafreixas.com/freixascriticas10.htm> > (27 December 2008)

<sup>34</sup> Morris Zapp reflects on the jackpot dream of every professor, remembering that all it takes is the first published book. With each publication, a reduction in teaching schedules and administrative responsibilities frees the professor up for more publishing. “In theory, it was possible to wind up being full professor while doing nothing except to be permanently absent on some kind of sabbatical grant or fellowship. Morris hadn’t quite reached that omega point, but he was working on it.” (Small World 172)

#### Chapter Five Notes

<sup>35</sup> ‘Ah, Spain! And was it Madrid you lived in before Mimoun? You have chosen badly, monsieur.’

<sup>36</sup> Millán Astray was appointed head of the Spanish Foreign Legion in 1920 after having served in Morocco for five years. He then selected Francisco Franco as his second in command. The linguistic reference may suggest the Falangist rhetoric used by Millán Astray.

<sup>37</sup> Cintia Santana explains in detail the difference between the classification of “Dirty Realism” in the US as seen in the works of authors such as Raymond Carver and Tobias Wolff and *Realismo Sucio*. Further explanation can be found on pages 34 – 36 of the article. For the purposes of this study, the characteristics of “Realismo Sucio” are relevant.

<sup>39</sup> Lyons, 108. See Chapter 1 for more explanation.

<sup>40</sup> “Emphasizing violence, the repulsive and ugly, *tremendismo* lacks naturalism’s scientific pretensions, employing caricature, gallows humour, and deliberate distortions.”(Pérez 97)

<sup>41</sup> Mañas’ book also references clothing. The many mentions of it in Marías, Aldecoa and Mañas can be related to the role of identity. References include:  
1) A group of youths tease him about his “gabardina” (79)

- 2) Ana looks at J. derisively and says “Podrías ponerte la cazadora que te compré o, por lo menos, algo más juvenil que ese ridículo abrigo.”(79)
- 3) J. leaves gabardine behind to burn down Marian’s mother’s house. Instead, he wears “un viejo anorak azul marino y un gorro de esquí”. (111)

<sup>42</sup> *Chalet adosado*: Berta’s greatest desire, in *El Enigma*, is to escape the city and move to a chalet in an *urbanización*. Carmen threatens to leave J. if he does not move their family to a *chalet adosado* and Chirbes writes a book censuring the real estate speculators that build the chalets. It may seem insignificant, but just as the BrCNs often predicted political shifts in the country, their themes presaging the country’s new ideology, cultural conflicts in the SpCN indicate nationwide transitions.

#### Conclusion Notes

<sup>43</sup> This recalls the encounter between Unamuno and Augusto Pérez in *Niebla* by Miguel Unamuno, 1914.

<sup>44</sup> < <http://www.anagrama-ed.es/PDF/Fadanelli%20%20entrevista%20LA%20NACION.pdf>>

<sup>45</sup> Thomas Friedman’s *The World is Flat* (2004) examines the globalization and complex interactivity of the world today.

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## APPENDIX A

### Abbreviations

AmCN = American Campus Novel

BrCN = British Campus Novel

CN = Campus Novel

LACN = Latin American Campus Novel

SpCN = Spanish Campus Novel

CSIC = the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas.

ILE = Institución Libre de Enseñanza

SEU = Sindicato Español Universitario

NE = Negra espalda del tiempo

TLA = Todas las almas

La velocidad = La velocidad de la luz

Último = Último domingo en londres

Soy = Yo soy un escritor frustrado

## APPENDIX B

## LIST OF NOVELS (WITH KEY CHARACTERS)

## American Campus Novels

Erdrich and Michael Dorris. The Crown of Columbus. New York: HarperCollins, 1991.

Hinojosa, Rolando. We Happy Few. Houston: Arte Publico Press, 2006.

Malamud, Bernard. A New Life. New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1961.  
Professor Sy Levin

McCarthy, Mary. The Groves of Academe. New York: New American Library, 1951  
Chairman Maynard Hoar  
Henry Mulcahy

Owens, Louis. Bone Game: A Novel. Norman: U Oklahoma P, 1994.

Prose, Francine. Blue Angel. New York: HarperCollinsPublishers, 2000.  
Angela Argo  
Professor Ted Swenson

Reed, Ishmael. Japanese by Spring. New York: Maxwell Macmillan International, 1993.

Roth, Philip. The Human Stain. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000.  
Coleman Silk

Delphine Roux

Smiley, Jane. Moo. Boston, Mass: Compass Press, 1995.

Chairman X  
Cecelia Sanchez  
Nils Harstadt  
Tim Monahan

#### British Campus Novels

Amis, Kingsley. Lucky Jim. London: Victor Gallancz, 1953.

Jim Dixon  
Professor Welch

Byatt, A. S. Possession: A Romance. New York: Random House, 1991.

Roland Mitchell

Lodge, David. A David Lodge Trilogy: Changing Places, Small World, Nice Work.

London: Penguin Books, 1975, 1984, 1988.

Morris Zapp  
Philip Swallow  
Fulvia Morgan

Smith, Zadie. On Beauty. New York: Penguin Books, 2005.

Howard Belsey  
Monty Kipps

#### Spanish Campus Novels

Aldecoa, Josefina. El enigma. Madrid: Alfaguara, 2002.

Daniel Rivera  
Teresa  
Berta  
Isabela

Cercas, Javier. El inquilino. Barcelona: Sirmio, 1989.

Mario Rota  
Berkowickz  
Professor Olalde

Cercas, Javier. La velocidad de la luz. Barcelona: Tusquets, 2005.

The Spaniard  
Rodney  
Laura Burns  
Marcelo Cuarteto

Chirbes, Rafael. Mimoun. Barcelona: Anagrama, 1988.

Manuel  
Abd-el-Jaq  
Francisco  
Charpent  
Rashida

Freixas, Laura. Último domingo en Londres. Barcelona: Plaza y Janes, 1997.

Emma  
Gerald  
Miriam  
Max  
Teo

Mañas, José Ángel. Soy un escritor frustrado. Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1996.

J. Salieri  
Mozart  
Marian  
Marta

Marías, Javier. Negra espalda del tiempo. Barcelona: Alfaguara, 1998.

Javier Marías  
Toby Rylands  
Francisco Rico  
Leigh-Peele  
Pring-Mill  
Alec Dewar  
Eric Southworth

Marías, Javier. Todas las almas. Madrid: Punto de Lectura, 2000. (1989)

The Spanish don  
Lord Rymer  
Toby Rylands  
Aidan Kavanagh  
Cromer-Blake

Rook  
Halliwell

Muñoz Molina, Antonio. Carlota Fainberg. Punto de Lectura, 2004. (1999)  
Claudio  
Marcelo Abengoa  
Carlota Fainberg  
Ana Gadea Simpson Mariátegui  
Professor Morini