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Canada Consumed: The Impact of Canadian Writing in Central Europe (1990–2017) / Le Canada à carte : influence des écrits canadiens en Europe centrale (1990–2017)

Don Sparling and Katalin Kürtösi (eds.)

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Canadian Studies outside Canada is a relatively new branch of study. The international recognition of Canadian Literature reached momentum only in the 1980s and 1990s, and it has culminated with the Nobel Prize awarded to Alice Munro in 2013. Suddenly, Canada became a hot spot on the world's cultural map. The interest in Canada, both by researchers and laymen, has swept over Central and Eastern Europe as well. In the past decades, many Canadian research centres have been established within Central European Universities, and English Literature departments in a number of Central European universities have started offering CanLit subjects. Several international and national associations for the research and promotion of Canadian culture have been formed in the region, and, finally, numerous Canadian scholars have relocated, permanently or temporarily, to Central Europe and helped contribute to these centres, associations, and universities in promotion of Canada. Thanks to these institutions and individuals, as well as to translators, the cultural visibility of Canada in the region is rapidly changing. A vivid cultural exchange between Canada and Central Europe has been established, granting Canada much deserved international recognition in the region.

An important contribution to the understanding of the cultural impact Canada has had in the Central European region is *Canada Consumed: The Impact of Canadian Writing in Central Europe (1990–2017) / La Canada à carte : influence des écrits canadiens en Europe centrale (1990–2017)*, edited by Don Sparling and Katalin Kürtösi. Their introduction notes that “Canada Consumed” is the second CEACS project dealing with the translation of Canadian literature in the region (the first project was titled “Translating Canada,” with the subsequent publication *Canada in Eight Tongues / Le Canada en huit langues* in 2012). The selection of chapters here focuses exclusively on the translation and presentation of Canadian literature in the CEACS member countries from 1989 (a year marked by radical changes of regimes in the region) to 2017.



Canada Consumed is divided into three thematic circles: Overviews / Tours d'horizon; Munro and Cohen in Central Europe / Munro et Cohen en Europe Centrale; and Book Fair – Stagings – Migrant Writers / Salon du livre – Mises-en-scène – Ecrivains migrants. The volume offers eighteen chapters from the pens of some of the most prominent Canadianists in the Central European region.

The first group of texts, Overviews / Tours d'horizon, comprises eight texts, each dealing with the translation of Canadian literature in one CEACS member country with respect to translation intensity, quality, reception, and choice of translated authors. In their chapter on the translation of Canadian literature in Bulgaria after the regime change, Andrei Andreev and Eliza Yankova focus on full-length works of fiction and non-fiction; they report a growing number of such translations in Bulgaria, and describe that phenomenon as a “remarkable feat” (24). The second chapter, by Petra Sapun Kurtin and Mirna Sindičić Sabljó, deals with the same phenomenon in Croatia; the authors provide a fine classification of Canadian literature translated and presented in Croatia, and note that the number of such translated texts is “growing exponentially” (43). The following chapter, by Don Sparling, deals with the translation of Canadian literature in the Czech lands. While noting that the tradition of Canadian literary translations in the 20th century has been remarkable, in particular thanks to translations of Ernest Thompson Seton, the translation of Canadian literature in the Czech Republic in the last several decades has been marked by an “astonishing burst” (51). Katalin Kürtösi’s chapter focuses both on recent translations of Canadian literature in Hungary and on reviews of Canadian literature in journals and their cultural impact, as well as, finally, on the reactions of Hungarian media on the passing of Leonard Cohen in 2016. Kürtösi remarks that the translation of Canadian literature in Hungary is a thriving activity but much still has to be done. Ana-Magdalena Petraru’s chapter provides a concise and informative overview of the translation of Canadian literature in Romania while stating that Canadian literature spread in Romania after 1990 “comme des champignons le lendemain d’une pluie” (“like mushrooms after the rain”) (85). Ileana Neli Eiben’s chapter on the reception of the translations of Francophone québécois literature in the Romanian press notes the growing interest in such literature in Romania and remarks that the translation of Francophone Canadian literature has become more intense in the more permissive post-1990 landscape in that country (101). In her chapter on the ever-increasing number of translations of Canadian literature in Slovakia, Lucia Grauzľová notes one interesting occurrence: while the number of translations is growing, the choice of authors is less representative as compared to the period before 1990 because that choice is now dominated by commercially successful authors. The last chapter in this group, by Tomaž Onič, Tjaša Mohar and Michelle Gadpaille, focuses on Slovene translations of Margaret Atwood, Michael Ondaatje, Yann Martel and Lucy Maud

Montgomery, and on “a selection of media reports, comments and events that have contributed to shaping the impact of Canadian culture in Slovenia” (142).

The second group, Munro and Cohen in Central Europe / Munro et Cohen en Europe Centrale, is made up of seven texts, each dealing with variously connected aspects of translation, reception, and cultural interpretation of these two pivotal figures of Canadian literature. In the first chapter in the group, Mirna Sindičić Sabljko and Petra Sapun Kurtin provide us with a rich overview of Croatian translations, while observing an interesting cultural insight: Cohen was traditionally seen in Croatia primarily as a musician, which has had a certain impact on his Croatian translations. Sparling’s chapter on translations of Munro and Cohen in the Czech Republic provides an overview of Czech translations. Interestingly, Czech was the first language in the region into which Munro was translated. He further notes that there is a growing interest in these two Canadian authors among Czech readers. Examining the rich activity of translation of Munro’s work in Hungary, Fruzsina Kovács provides an extensive report on the number and features of Hungarian translations, on translators, and the responses of the readers. Monica Bottez and Adela Catană, meanwhile, focus on the intensity of translations of Munro and Cohen in Romania, and on the response of the Romanian readership. Vesna Lopičić and Sanja Ignjatović focus on the strikingly different translation intensity and reception Munro and Cohen have received in Serbia. In her chapter, which focuses only on Slovakian translations of Munro, Jana Javorčíková compellingly contrasts translations of Munro’s work before and after she was awarded the Nobel Prize. Finally, Tjaša Mohar and Michelle Gadpaille highlight the cultural importance of Munro and Cohen in Slovenia, especially in regard to two events: Munro’s Nobel Prize in 2013, and Cohen’s death in 2016.

The third group of texts, Book Fair – Stagings – Migrant Writers / Salon du livre – Mises-en-scène – Ecrivains migrants, contains three texts, each dealing with one theme from the title. In her chapter on staging Canadian plays in Hungary, Katalin Kürtösi points out some issues in translating and staging Canadian plays in Hungary, and focuses on Róbert Alföldi’s staging of Wajdi Mouwasi’s *Incendies*, a play that deals with the theme of immigration. Exploring migrant writers, Jelena Novaković focuses on the reception of two Canadian Francophone writers – Négovan Rajic and Pan Bouyoucas – have enjoyed in Serbian cultural circles. Finally, Vesna Lopičić and Vladislava Gordić-Petković report on the presence of (translated) Canadian literature at the annual Belgrade Book Fair, the most important such fair in the region, and the cultural impact that presence has in Serbia.

There are at least three crucial contributions that *Canada Consumed* (the project and the publications) makes to the global research of Canadian literature and culture in general. Firstly, this research and the subsequent scholarship will provide a precious database on the presence of translated Canadian literature in CEACS countries –



Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, and Slovenia – especially after 1990. Secondly, all authors note a significant rise in the interest for Canadian literature in the region, signalling an optimistic and heart-warming outlook for Canadian literature and culture in general in Central Europe. Thirdly, the chapters in this collection provide a deep insight into general issues of translation, the perception of two seminal Canadian authors – Munro and Cohen – and specific issues of staging, understanding and promoting Canadian literature in the region. In that sense, *Canada Consumed* is strongly recommended reading for researchers in Canadian literature, whether from the region or the world at large.