

ATLANTIS

Journal of the Spanish Association of Anglo-American Studies

38.2 (DECEMBER 2016): 261-265

ISSN 0210-6124

Ángel-Luis Pujante and Juan F. Cerdá, eds. 2015. *Shakespeare en España: Bibliografía bilingüe anotada / Shakespeare in Spain: An Annotated Bilingual Bibliography*. Murcia y Granada: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Murcia y Ediciones Universidad de Granada. xlii + 532 pp. ISBN: 978-84-16038-54-1.

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Whenever one opens the pages of a new book by Professor Ángel-Luis Pujante, one expects to find a thoroughly researched compilation of factual data and a clear, factual analysis of those data; this is a trademark that defined his editions of works by Shakespeare and, more recently, his studies on the reception of Shakespeare's works in Spain. Expectations are fulfilled once again with this annotated bibliography of Shakespearean criticism in Spain, compiled jointly with Juan F. Cerdá.

This book is the result of many years of intense research and analysis; it could not be otherwise considering that it comprises virtually all literary criticism on Shakespeare conducted by Spanish scholars or published by foreign academics in Spain since 1674, the date of the earliest known record.¹ The total list of essays collected (over a thousand) is given in a general bibliography, on pages 453-518; but the central core of this book is the annotated bibliography, that takes up 449 pages. It consists of 695 entries that provide the bibliographical data (author, title, publisher, etc.) and a brief summary, written by both the editors and a team of collaborators, of the contents of each essay. The entries are both in English (on even-numbered pages) and Spanish (odd-), in recognition of the more than probable interest that this book may arouse among scholars from fields other than English Studies (e.g., the history of theatre in Spain) as well as among those within this field.

The entries in the general bibliography are arranged alphabetically by author—a logical choice, and a useful one if one wishes to find what any given critic has published—whereas those in the annotated bibliography are listed chronologically. This is undoubtedly the most sensible choice, as it is the approach that most clearly facilitates a historical reading of Shakespearean criticism in Spain. However, it presupposes that scholars will wish to read through from beginning to end rather than

¹ The adverb “virtually” is included here to make room for the possibility that some critical essay may have eluded the searches made by Pujante and Cerdá, although that possibility is quite remote.

merely browse or check for specific references. Selective browsing is still feasible, but the procedure will require some diversion: in order to find, for example, what Moratín said about Shakespeare, the reader must first consult the general bibliography, where all his publications are listed together; then the general index, which provides the number of the pages where Moratín's entries in the summaries are located; and finally, look for those pages. For searches by scholars whose contributions were published in the twentieth century, the only option is to check in the general bibliography, and then look for each essay in the annotated bibliography by its year of publication—a procedure that may take up several long minutes of page turning in order to find every entry. This problem could have been solved either by adding the names of all scholars to the general index or by marking in the general bibliography those entries that also appear in the summaries (for example, giving the entry number). This would certainly have saved time for searches—and prevent disappointment when the search involves one of the three-hundred essays whose content has not been summarized.

Still, an entry-by-entry reading of the annotated bibliography will prove an enriching experience. This will particularly be the case with essays published before the mid-twentieth century, most of which are not easily accessible to scholars. This mode of reading will also grant an unprecedented perspective on the evolution of research on Shakespeare in Spain in the last decades of the twentieth century. But whatever the motivation for consulting this book, the information provided in it will prove most valuable: this is a unique bibliographical source and gives scholars wishing to do research on Shakespeare a useful insight into the contents of an extensive critical corpus.² It is therefore bound to become an essential reference for all future studies in the reception of Shakespeare in Spain.

As noted above, Professor Pujante typically shies away from any sort of subjective or evaluative interpretation when it comes to analysing the materials he offers in his editions; his mediation can therefore only be noticed in brief, fact-based introductory essays. Here, once again, both he and Cerdá choose to mediate as little as possible between us and the material they have collected, and they constrain their analysis of the bibliographical corpus to a short introduction spanning thirty four pages—or in effect seventeen, as it too is split into a Spanish and an English version. It is indeed a very short introduction, especially if one bears in mind that it precedes a veritable treasure trove of data waiting to be shuffled through, classified and analysed in detail, and it therefore leaves one longing for much more.

The introduction does engage in some critical discussion, nonetheless, and will prove very useful as a first point of entry to the most recurrent topics in the essays collected. It is primarily a historicist account of Shakespearean criticism and therefore shows the progression in that criticism from the earliest to the most recent publications. It is also

² This book widens the time span covered by a previous publication, Pujante and Campillo's *Shakespeare en España: Textos 1764-1916* (2007).

a thematic account, so each section offers a brief analysis of a specific topical highlight. Section I is a very short (one page) presentation, in which these central topics are first mentioned. Section II focuses on the influence exerted by neoclassical prescription in the assessment of the virtues and flaws of Shakespeare's drama in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century criticism. To readers as yet unacquainted with the history of Shakespeare's reception, it may come as a surprise to find that he was the object of a long controversy between neoclassicists and romantics, the former foregrounding the formal flaws of his works, the latter his genius, unfettered by any formal restrictions; to scholars already familiar with this topic, the pages in this section will bring clear echoes of research carried out by Pujante and his team, now confirmed by bibliographical evidence. Section III seeks to answer a question that persistently arises when reading early criticism on Shakespeare: what was the true extent of these critics' knowledge of Shakespeare's original texts? Pujante and Cerdá state their concern on the very first page of their introduction: Shakespeare did not come to Spain directly from England, but through France; and this, they fear, may have conditioned, even prevented, the reading of his plays, to the extent that in some early writings "Shakespeare' is only a name, without reference to a single play of his" (xxviii). It can be surmised, moreover, that some critics may not have read any of his works, or read him only through French adaptations. Pujante and Cerdá seem relieved to find that the percentage of essays that mention no play by Shakespeare drops from 40% in the first half of the nineteenth century to 5% in the second half (xxviii). This second section addresses a second concern: which texts were most often studied by early critics? The corpus collected by Pujante and Cerdá shows that Shakespeare was preeminently known as a tragedian, *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Julius Caesar* and *Richard III* being the plays most often quoted.

In Section IV, Pujante and Cerdá temporarily shift their focus onto the comparison of Shakespeare with various Spanish writers who could claim a similar status as *the* national poet. Nowadays it is taken for granted that Cervantes is the natural partner to Shakespeare; but a historical overview of the corpus allows the authors to discern a clear development, from the earliest coupling with Lope de Vega—in the eighteenth century—to Calderón—in the nineteenth—before Cervantes was finally settled upon. They also remark on the influence exerted by leading scholars, both at home and abroad, in each stage; hence, Cadalso and Moratín favoured Lope, while Lista and Schlegel backed Calderón. The pairing of Cervantes and Shakespeare has its inception in 1880, according to Pujante and Cerdá, with an essay by Blanco Asenjo, and it would be confirmed in 1916, with the tercentenary of their death (xxxvi; see also 56 and 459).

The last section of the introduction centres on the growth of Shakespearean criticism in the second half of the twentieth century—an all too evident increment, as a mere quantitative account shows: in the last four decades of the twentieth century, the number of essays rises almost exponentially from 38 (in the 1960s) and 41 (in the 1970s) to 143 and 240 in the last two decades, respectively. By comparison, between 1763 and 1900 the corpus comprises just 185 texts. This proves the increasing buoyancy of

Shakespeare studies in Spain, and attests to the influence exerted by scholars ascribed to Departments of English Studies, all of them created in the second half of the last century (xxxviii). It also shows that interest in Shakespeare and his work has both continued and widened in scope, as publications in Spain or by Spanish scholars now include research on all his plays and poems. Still, the figures collected by Pujante and Cerdá confirm that “Shakespeare begins and ends these three centuries as an author of tragedies” (xl). *Hamlet* is the play most often studied, with 160 entries, twice as many as the next two in the list (*Macbeth* and *Othello*) and three times more than the most recurrent comedy (*The Tempest*).

The introduction does however offer only a brief glimpse at what can be drawn from the analysis of the bibliographical corpus. There is still an extraordinary amount of information awaiting further research, and Pujante and Cerdá hint as much at the end of this introduction (xl). Future research is something indeed to be wished for, either by members of Pujante’s research team or by other scholars. The compilers also state that this bibliography is a step forward in the pursuit of an additional goal, in which they have been involved for the last several years: “we still need documentary publications on the Shakespeare canon in other countries, not so much to measure ourselves against others as to develop a spirit of cooperation which, some day, will enable us to write the history of Shakespeare on the European continent, and, by extension, in the rest of the world” (xlii). This is a very ambitious goal that has no foreseeable conclusion in the near future; but Pujante and Cerdá’s compilation is a very useful contribution.

This bibliography should perhaps not be constrained to its presentation as printed matter only, either. We are increasingly accustoming ourselves to the dynamic interaction with online corpora that our computer age provides. Formatting the bibliography as a searchable database would certainly prove a challenge, both technically and economically, but not an unsurmountable one: Pujante’s research team already have one such database for the performances of plays by Shakespeare in Spain (www.um.es/shakespeare/representaciones); they would just need to use this as a model. A searchable online bibliography would not only make it more accessible to scholars worldwide and facilitate research; it would also grant the opportunity to correct and, if necessary, enlarge it. As it stands, it is evidence of the care which Pujante and Cerdá have taken to present a clear, well-organized, virtually typo-free text—no small challenge considering the amount of data compiled. But some revisions would be welcome. Most of them are minor and hardly worth mentioning: alphabetical order is occasionally disrupted in both the annotated and the general bibliography; the general bibliography should include additional entries for essays published by more than one author; and some inconsistency should perhaps be redressed in cases such as entry 428, a collection of essays in *Guía de Hamlet* (1988), all of them summed up in this entry instead of separately, as is done in other cases. Some other matters are more substantial; most particularly, the editors’ decision to exclude works published after the year 2000. Their reasons—as stated in their

preliminary note—are understandable, yet one may be excused for the fantasy of a complete or ever-in-progress database, even if it is not fully annotated.

To conclude, this is a very welcome and extremely useful addition to the research carried out in Spain by scholars working on the history of the reception of Shakespeare in Spain. It will be useful for scholars both here and abroad—and a compulsory reference source on the research done here. Their editors themselves, however, state that this is not yet the end, but rather one more—albeit a very important—step in their work; and one can only eagerly look forward to reading what they will produce in the future.

WORK CITED

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Received 27 December 2015

Accepted 5 May 2016

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