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The *Reception of British and Irish Authors in Europe Series*, which started in 2004 with *The Reception of Virginia Woolf in Europe*, has reached its sixteenth and latest issue with the present volume, *The Reception of P.B. Shelley in Europe*, published in 2008. No new volume was released in 2009. Another volume, however, *The Reception of Oscar Wilde in Europe*, is planned for July 2010. Let us hope that the present economic crisis does not lead to the suspension or any slowing down in the implementation of a series which, under the editorship of Elinor Shaffer and the auspices of the British Academy, is achieving significant success in its overall objective of studying, in a systematic manner and on a large scale, the European reception of major British and Irish authors. While it is true that the reception of these authors in the United Kingdom and Ireland has always been the subject of academic analysis, the fact remains that consideration of their European reception has yet to be fully undertaken. As Shaffer herself contends, the project implies a substantial practical application of critical trends such as reception and reader response theories (xii). It is thus undoubtedly important not only for the new data it provides but also for the refining of these emerging fields and the concomitant redressing of imbalances and omissions. The second element in English comparative studies has traditionally been the German, French and Italian dimension: thanks to this series, other cultural provinces of vast importance, such as the Spanish or the Russian, are now able to be seen more clearly, while others of lesser significance for obvious demographic, cultural and linguistic reasons (such as the Romanian, Hungarian or Bulgarian) have at least been enabled to emerge as (comparatively) new objects of academic interest. Hardly any of this, it must be added, would have been made possible without the new electronic technologies, which in this case have facilitated the creation of an extensive database of editions, translations, critical introductions and related material which, if exploited with common sense and due professionalism, permits us to analyze the primary material in a substantially more profound and extensive way than was hitherto possible.

As far as the Romantic era is concerned, the volume devoted to Shelley was preceded by those dealing with the European reception of Byron (requiring two volumes [2004]), Walter Scott (2006), Samuel Taylor Coleridge (2007) and Jane Austen (2007). Limiting ourselves to the poets – Shelley, Coleridge and Byron – a parallel reading of their respective volumes reveals the existence of shared contexts, such as the fact that, in all three cases, the nationalist movements of the mid-nineteenth century and the symbolist literary movement of the latter part of the same century were crucial moments in the history of their European reception. And it also demonstrates how we should now add to the widespread presence of Byron in Spain (a well-known

phenomenon) the more unexpected influence of Coleridge, and of Shelley himself, which is important in its own right. But before dealing with the parts of *The Reception of P.B. Shelley in Europe* relating to Spain (of obvious interest to the Spanish reader of the book) I will discuss some more general but no less fascinating aspects of this important volume.

The Reception of P.B. Shelley in Europe consists of eighteen chapters, written by a total of twenty-four scholars, and deals with the reception of the author of *A Defence of Poetry* in France, Italy, the Iberian Peninsula, Romania, Germany, Scandinavia, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, Russia, Bulgaria and Greece. The last chapter is devoted to Shelley and music. The volume also contains an introduction, a chronology, bibliography by chapters and an index. In a sense, Ann T. Gardiner's chapter on Shelley's reception in France, placed at the beginning of the book, sets the tone for the remaining chapters. Indeed, in France as well as in the rest of Europe, the fortunes of Shelley had two powerful factors to contend with: the general conservatism of the post-Napoleonic era, in which there was little room for the radical author of *The Necessity of Atheism*, and the continued popularity of Lord Byron, who had certainly not just been successful in capturing the predominant taste of the time, but crucially helped in shaping it himself. In France as in the rest of Europe, the situation changes from the second half of the century onwards. As Gardiner rightly points out, it is then that Shelley starts to replace Byron "as the veritable genius of British Romanticism" (31), in the heat of the 'art for art's sake' and Symbolist movements that begin to dominate Europe. There is even a third aspect of Shelley's reception in France which is also paradigmatic for much of the Continent: the political use and abuse of Shelley's revolutionary, radical and atheist image. In France itself, the revolutionary ideals of the author of *Ode to Liberty* would surface at least twice: on occasion of the 1848 Revolution, and of the May 1968 revolts. Perhaps the clearest case of political (mis)use of Shelley is by Marx and Engels, who saw in the poet a "revolutionary through and through" who, had he lived longer, "would consistently have stood with the vanguard of socialism" (quoted by Polonsky [239]). As one could expect, this simplistic and, in any case, counterfactual view of Shelley would become (or rather, degenerate into) the 'official doctrine' in those European countries subjected to communist dictatorships during certain periods of their history (Russia, Romania, the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria), a point on which all the authors of the chapters dedicated to their respective nations in the volume are in agreement.

If only because they represent phenomena which are more spontaneous and less constrained by imposed ideologies, the details of Shelley's reception in countries like Greece and, especially, Italy offer a much wider interest. Without having reached Byron's status as a national Greek hero, the reception of Shelley in Greece clearly demonstrates how this country has always paid tribute to a poet whose last work published during his lifetime was actually entitled *Hellas* (1822), written both as a tribute to the cause of Hellenic independence and in order to raise funds for it. More details about the 'encounter' between Shelley and Greece are offered by Maria Schoina in what is undoubtedly one of the most interesting chapters in the book (258-77). In the case of Italy, as is well-known, Shelley follows in the footsteps of his friend Byron and takes up residence in that country from 1818, the year in which the

last and very productive phase of his life and work begins. To Shelley's Italian experience we owe such major works as *Prometheus Unbound*, his political poems *The Masque of Anarchy* and *Men of England*, and the verse drama *The Cenci*, one of his most influential works not only in Italy but elsewhere in Europe. The changeable but always interesting fortunes of Shelley in Italy (he would of course be ignored by the official intelligentsia in the Fascist era) is the subject of two studies, one by Lilla Maria Cristafulli (49-73), who covers the first one hundred years in the Italian reception of the poet (certainly the most interesting period), and the other by Laura Bandiera, who analyses Shelley's Italian fortunes from 1923 to our own day (74-96). Naturally, in Italy and Greece, as well as in the rest of the countries analysed, Shelley will eventually enter academia, via the professional criticism undertaken in universities. The process started in the 1950s, though it had precedents in the first half of the century with, for instance, Benedetto Croce in Italy and Fernando Pessoa in Portugal, both of whom were sound intellectuals who wrote insightful essays on Shelley before World War II. In general, one gets the impression that what Vitan Kostadinova writes about the fortunes of Shelley in Bulgaria (247-57) can be extrapolated to the rest of Europe. Inferior in quality and quantity to the reception enjoyed by Byron, Shelley's penetration in the Continent is in turn deeper than that of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Keats, among the great English Romantic poets.

Because of its obvious interest for the natural readers of *Atlantis*, I have left until last the treatment given by *The Reception of P.B. Shelley in Europe* to the fortunes of Shelley in Spain. The Italian and the Spanish receptions of the poet are the only ones which are granted two separate studies each. The former has been discussed above. As for the latter, the chapters in question are 'The Reception of Shelley in Spain', by Beatriz González and Santiago Rodríguez "with the assistance of Richard A. Cardwell" (97-110), and 'Shelley, Catalonia and the Spanish Civil War' by Bill Phillips (111-20). We therefore have, in terms of human resources, two Spanish Anglicists, a British Hispanist and a British Anglicist who lives in Spain; in other words, an appropriate team for a solid coverage of the topic in question. From another point of view, however, the chronological and thematic organization of the two Spanish sections strikes one as peculiar. Whereas in the case of the Italian reception of Shelley all we have is an organization based purely on chronology, here we are offered a general spatio-temporal approach to the reception of Shelley in Spain, and then another study which focuses specifically on Catalonia and the Spanish Civil War. In my opinion there is no clear justification for including as part of this book a separate section on Shelley in Catalonia (and the Civil War) at the same level of importance, theoretically at least, as the general study on Shelley in Spain. It would undoubtedly have been wonderful if, for whatever reason, some grandiose Shelleian blossoming had taken place in that part of the country (and around or during the Civil War!), but no such thing happened. In fact, the fortunes of Shelley in Catalonia seem to have been rather modest. According to this study it was only around 1921 that the first translations of Shelley's poems appeared in Catalonia – but the translated poems were for the most part taken from previous volumes published elsewhere in Spain. The translators included people such as Enrique Díaz-Canedo, born in Badajoz, or Gabriel de Zéndegui, born in Havana, the translations were into Castilian Spanish in all cases, and were published in Barcelona by

Editorial Cervantes(!), which also used to publish in Valencia. It was probably Fernando Maristany, another of the translators, who, as the presumed author of an unsigned introduction to the volume, considers Shelley “as having had no influence on poetry in Catalonia despite the much-vaunted sublimity of his works”, in Phillips’ words (116). The first (and almost the last) translation into Catalan of some poems by Shelley (Ros i Artigues *traduxit*) was to be published only as late as 1938, as part of the Generalitat’s efforts to promote and normalize the use of the Catalan language in the 1930s, something which leads Phillips to rightly conclude that the initiative “was largely political” (115). Regrettably, the fact that the paper ‘The Reception of Shelley in Spain’ is included in the volume index under the heading *Spanish*, whereas the ‘Shelley, Catalonia and the Spanish Civil War’ article is indexed under the heading *Catalan [sic]*, adds to the reader’s confusion (especially in the case of the non-Spanish reader). In my view, the analysis of Shelley’s reception in Spain would have been improved as a whole had it not been subjected to a separate treatment which is hardly justifiable on political, cultural or linguistic grounds.

It should also be said that the ‘Spanish’ reception of Shelley, the details of which are accurately dealt with by González, Rodríguez, Cardwell and Phillips (albeit within the limits imposed by the somewhat forced division just mentioned), offers us few surprises: the data summarized and analyzed are generally those that one would have expected. Among the Romantics, José de Espronceda seems to be the poet most clearly influenced by Shelley (though always less so than by Byron). As was also to be expected, the anglophile and intellectual Juan Valera, among the critics of the second half of the nineteenth century, was the first to mention Shelley, in 1888 (but see below), and the polymath Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, the first to discuss him in some depth: indeed, the author of *Historia de las ideas estéticas en España* contends that, once the age of Espronceda has passed, Shelley has succeeded Byron as the preferred choice of the Spanish public, due to the more sincere and spontaneous character of his verse. In other words, don Marcelino is referring to the change in poetical taste that was taking place all over Europe. ‘The Reception of Shelley in Spain’ article ignores, however, what the most respected and feared literary critic of the time, Leopoldo Alas ‘Clarín’, had to say about Shelley. On March 12th, 1888 Leopoldo Alas, himself a radical Republican, wrote to Menéndez Pelayo as follows: “*Me gustaron mucho también las cartas y opúsculos de Shelley, allá en mis verdes años*” (‘I also really liked Shelley’s letters and opuscles, back in my early years’ [Alas ed. 1943: 42]). Five years later – on February 23th, 1893 – in a new letter to Menéndez Pelayo, Alas informs his friend that he is publishing “*una biblioteca anglo-alemana*” (‘an Anglo-German library’) whose “*tercer tomo y segunda obra que está ya traducida, es Shelley (los Cenci y Prometeo liberado)*” (‘third volume and second work which is already translated is Shelley [*The Cenci* and *Prometheus Unbound*]’), and asks don Marcelino to write the foreword, which he apparently needs “*para muy pronto*” (‘very soon’ [Alas ed. 1943: 77]). Even though Clarín would still insist several times, Menéndez Pelayo never got down to writing the prologue in question. To make matters worse, the translator (Julián Orbón) died suddenly, thus frustrating Clarín’s further plans for his Anglo-German Library (Alas 1943: 93; Coletes Blanco 2002: 37-54). The two Shelley translations sponsored by Alas would remain unpublished and unaccounted for to this day. Had they been duly published, these two ‘Calderonian’

works by Shelley would have been ten years in advance of what *The Reception of P.B. Shelley in Europe* pinpoints as the first Spanish translation of Shelley (a version of *The Poetic Principle* and other essays published in 1904), and could have altered the subsequent course of the poet's Spanish reception, which favoured his shorter poems and *The Poetic Principle* over longer and more complex works like *The Cenci* and *Prometheus Unbound*. Clarín, in his "verdes años" ('early years'), is sure to have read Shelley translated into French, as did, presumably, most other Spanish intellectuals of his time. This constitutes an aspect of Shelley's reception in Spain, nowhere to be found in these articles, which would surely have been worth exploring.

As for the twentieth century, the analysis of Shelley's Spanish reception offered by González, Rodríguez and Cardwell yields, again, few surprises. In the transitional period between the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries it fell to Miguel de Unamuno to express due admiration for Shelley, as was to be expected given the proclivities of don Miguel, another conspicuous anglophile who also liked Keats and considered English Romantic literature to be "superior" to all others (quoted by Krause 1956: 122-35). Shelley's ethical and aesthetic idealism is perhaps traceable – as argued by González, Rodríguez and Cardwell – in Antonio Machado's *Soledades*, a generational companion of Unamuno's. But it is undoubtedly the subsequent Generation of 1914 which was responsible, in the first decades of the twentieth century, for a renewed interest in Shelley among the literary circles initially connected with the *Helios* magazine and the *modernista* movement. Once more, this new turn in the reception of Shelley in Spain does not differ greatly from the general European tendencies of the time. It is indeed the Nobel Prize-winning Juan Ramón Jiménez who champions the cause of Shelley at the time, as the authors of the study rightly contend, though one should not forget Ramón Pérez de Ayala (see below) or the important figure of Enrique Díez-Canedo, whose interesting article of 1923 on Shelley for the *Revista de Occidente* (published in Madrid and directed by the *madrileño* José Ortega y Gasset) is dealt with, in a somewhat forced manner, in the chapter dedicated to Shelley's reception in Catalonia. Perhaps "the poet-novelist and anglophile Pérez de Ayala" as González, Rodríguez and Cardwell call him, could in the context of Shelley's Spanish reception have deserved better than the passing mention given to him as comforting himself "on a grey day in Britain, in his *Tributo a Inglaterra*, with thoughts of Spanish sunshine and Shelley" (102). Pérez de Ayala refers to *el divino Shelley* ('the divine Shelley') and, indeed, to his 'oda a la alondra' ('Ode to a Skylark') as early as 1907. But ignored in the article is the fact that Pérez de Ayala was also well acquainted with Shelley's *Defence of Poetry* and, as he did with so many other English authors and works, contributed to its popularization among Spanish readers. In the article 'Poeta y trovador', subsequently collected in the volume *Divagaciones literarias*, Pérez de Ayala (1958: 115-19) translates several excerpts from *The Defence of Poetry* and offers a lucid interpretation of Shelley's treatise as a defence of a philosophical, transcendent and visionary poetry, all of which can be said of Ayala's own poetry, and of *La paz del sendero* in particular (Coletes Blanco 1997: 90).

The anglophiles of the Generation of 1927, such as Manuel Altolaguirre or Luis Cernuda, would continue to keep the 'Spanish Shelley' alive during the Second Republic, often from Britain or America, where they resided, and would continue to do so during the Francoist regime, now, sadly, as exiles. Contrary to what one might

be tempted to think, Shelley, who at that point was firmly consolidated in Spanish literary taste, does not disappear from view during that period. On the contrary, there are two important Spanish translations of *Adonais* in the 1940s, by Vicente F. Muñoz and Vicente Gaos respectively, the latter being reprinted in the 1950s, and again at the turn of the twenty-first century. Finally, more and more complete editions and translations of most of Shelley's work, as well as a more professional and balanced understanding of this outstanding figure of English Romanticism, both in terms of his innovative poetic voice and of his radical ideology, are the specific contribution of our age to the Spanish reception of the poet, a contribution which has, once again, put Spain in line with the rest of Europe, as clearly shown in the important work *The Reception of Shelley in Europe*.

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