

**Ángel-Luis Pujante. 2019. *Shakespeare llega a España: Ilustración y Romanticismo*.
Boadilla del Monte: A. Machado Libros**

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Regular readers of SEDERI do not need an introduction to Ángel-Luis Pujante, emeritus professor of English at the Universidad de Murcia, and, among other merits, the scholar of reference on the study of the presence of Shakespeare in Spain. The latest attestation to this statement is the book under review, *Shakespeare Comes to Spain: Enlightenment and Romanticism*, a Spanish-language, 374-page essay that thoroughly examines the early reception of Shakespeare's work in Spain, from the early folios of his plays that reached these latitudes in the seventeenth century until the 1840s. While in previous book-length studies, Pujante collaborated with colleagues from Murcia, such as Laura Campillo, Juan Francisco Cerdá, and Keith Gregor, this monograph is a single-handed venture (like his book *El manuscrito shakespeariano de Herrera Bustamante* [2001]), and, instead of focusing on a single play (*Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*) or on writings on Shakespeare, this essay offers a comprehensive analysis of criticism, translations, adaptations, and theatre productions, the most conspicuous areas in which the cultural reception of a dramatist in a different country and/or culture can be studied. A precedent can be found in Alfonso Par's 359-page first volume of his *Shakespeare en la literatura española* (1935), covering the periods "Galoclasicismo" and "Romanticismo," combined with the first volume of his catalogue of theatre productions in *Representaciones shakespearianas* (1936). Preceded by a preliminary note and introduction, seventeen dense chapters (with suggestive titles) offer both an in-depth survey, in chronological order, of how Shakespeare was received and accepted in the above-mentioned areas of Spanish culture, and a critique of the central problems this kind of study has involved. As Pujante clearly states early in his book, he does not shrink from correcting previous scholars' wrong interpretations or inferences (including himself and

the author of this review), and exposing their errors (8): for instance, he corrects the view that the earliest Shakespeare-related performance, the 1772 *Hamleto*, and the 1838 production of *Macbeth* were a fiasco (50, 236), and rectifies the misattribution to José Cadalso of a pamphlet, written by Rubín de Celis, that mentions this *Hamleto* (49, 289). What empowers him to do so is his balanced and non-partisan attitude and his rigorous method, characterized by refusing gratuitous speculation, consulting sources directly (from libraries in Spain, France, United Kingdom, Germany, and Austria), painstakingly contrasting assumptions against evidence, and patiently comparing translations with their originals and explaining their differences. As expected in a comprehensive study like this, a good number of chapters are based on, or re-use findings in, Pujante's previous research, which he duly acknowledges.

The Introduction (chapter 2) summarily anticipates the general lines in which the early reception of Shakespeare in Spain can be drawn: in the eighteenth century, Spanish critics became interested in Shakespeare as an element of a French debate over the pre-eminence of neo-classicism in the Spanish controversy between classicists advocating the aesthetics of Corneille and Racine and traditionalists vindicating the dramatists of the Golden Age. Spanish views of Shakespeare did not fall prey to the Anglomania observed in French circles, and in the nineteenth century, the emergence of Romanticism and liberalism led to the paradoxical phenomenon, exclusive to Spain, of conservatives being Romanticists while liberals were classicists, some of whom, after their exile from Spain, embraced Romanticism and championed Shakespeare.

In chapter 3, Pujante expresses his skepticism as to the existence of a First Folio in the library of Count Gondomar (Spanish ambassador in England between 1613 and 1622) and ventures a hypothesis as to why the Arabist Pascual de Gayangos made up the story of the First Folio he claimed to have seen in Valladolid (29). In chapters 4, 6, 7 and 9, Pujante explains the uses of Shakespeare among Spanish men of letters in the eighteenth century, echoing Voltaire's criticism of Shakespeare's vices and virtues and reflecting the tensions that characterized the early dissemination of Shakespeare in Europe through France: Francophilia and Anglomania, and the rules of classicist French drama versus their disregard by English and Spanish playwrights, later advocated by

Romantic aesthetics. Thus, in 1764 Francisco Mariano Nifo partially used Voltaire in order to disapprove of the way Shakespeare was performed in France and to oppose the classicist rules, while later in the century exiled Jesuits relied on Voltaire to attack Shakespearean dramaturgy in their treatises. Chapter 9 elucidates the implications that Hugh Blair's influential *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* had in the Spanish and European reception of Shakespeare by a close analysis of the original and the Spanish translations. Chapter 5 focuses on the four versions of Hamlet that derive from Jean-François Ducis's "imitation," attending to both formal and ideological issues; and chapter 8 on Leandro Fernández de Moratín's complete and direct translation of this tragedy, clarifying its contradictions, revealing how Moratín took some translation solutions from the French translation by Le Tourneur (105), and qualifying the result as "flat" in comparison with the stylistic variety of the original and without the latter's subtleties, ironies, and wordplay (106).

As expected, the nature and quantity of the primary material available determines that more chapters are devoted to Shakespeare in criticism than as translated and performed. Half of the remaining nineteenth-century chapters (10, 14, 15, 16 and 19) deal with critical views on Shakespeare. In them Pujante details continuities articulated around the Voltaire-derived notions of vices and virtues, natural genius and art, most in the context of debates between classicist and Romantic positions, and traces the gradual acceptance of Shakespeare's dramaturgy until his position became consolidated once Romanticism took hold in the late 1830s, a trajectory that was immersed both in aesthetics and in politics. As a number of pieces of criticism are translations or are derived from English, French, and German sources, Pujante brings to light even "tendentious conceptual manipulations" (178) that serve the critic's own agenda (for instance, Böhl de Faber translating Schlegel's criticism). Two chapters, 15 and 16, center on exiled liberals such as José Joaquín de Mora and José Blanco White, about whom Pujante agrees with modern critics that deplore the comparatively slight impact of his fascinating, high-quality oeuvre (223).

The remaining chapters deal with Spanish Shakespeares in performance and translation, particularly *Othello*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Richard III*, and *Macbeth*. Until 1838, they were all versions of French originals. Pujante enlivens his analyses by paying attention to their

political resonances and paradoxes without losing sight of the European connections. Ducis's "imitation" of Othello was translated by Teodoro La Calle, a liberal who nonetheless diluted the allusion to the French revolution in a translation for which Pujante does not spare qualifications such as "mediocre or pedestrian" and "not rigorous" (132). A parody of this *Otelo*, entitled *Caliche o el tuno de Macarena*, first published in 1823, benefitted from, and at the same time, reinforced the popularity of Shakespeare's tragedy, an "Otelomania" that contributed to the strengthening of Shakespeare's presence in Spain even when this play was not directly translated from Shakespeare (141–42). García de Villalta reflects his liberal ideology in his "free translation" of *Macbeth* by using the term "tirano" [tyrant] sixteen times, as opposed to nine in the original, and by emphasizing the consequences of Macbeth's usurpation and tyranny more than they are in Shakespeare (249).

Published by A. Machado Libros, the monograph is number 55 in a series that combines essays with fiction and drama, with authors such as Ernst Bloch, Sinclair Lewis and Sergi Belbel. This context might explain Pujante's strategy of selectiveness in his focus on central problems in the main body of the chapters, and copiousness in the detailed endnotes (8), as well as his amenable and fluent style, with vocabulary attuned to the non-specialist in Shakespeare, and with quotations from French, English, and German sources translated into Spanish (with the originals available in the corresponding endnote). In a lengthy study such as this one, an occasional slip is almost inevitable (for instance, Henley for Heylen on page 291 and 367), and an index of names and titles like the generous one provided (361–74) is very helpful. This index somewhat compensates for the absence of a final bibliography, which would have made finding full bibliographic details easier: the endnote system proves awkward when the same source is referred to in different chapters (e.g. Pemble from note 13 on page 314).

To conclude, Pujante's *Shakespeare llega a España* is certainly a "must read" for those studying the presence of Shakespeare in Spain. In many respects, it supersedes Par's first volumes (1935 and 1936) while offering a sound examination of evidence and problems without the biased perspective often observed in Par. For those working on intercultural reception in general, Pujante's monograph can be recommended for his methodological rigor and transnational

approach, as this study “shows the extent to which Spanish Shakespeare is European Shakespeare from its inception” (Calvo 2009, 946).

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