

## Review

***Joyce y España.* Madrid: Círculo de Bellas Artes, 2004, 186 pp.**

The first 100 years of Bloomsday have been the basis of many celebrations throughout the world. Despite the fact that Joyce never visited Spain, this country has always been rich in Joycean events. One must not also forget that many Spanish writers have been influenced by Joyce's writings, and as consequence, the Spanish Círculo de Bellas Artes in Madrid held an exhibition devoted to Joyce last year. This exhibition presented the relationship between Joyce and Spain by means of books, articles, illustrations, photographs, drawings and, above all, the correspondence maintained by Joyce with the Spaniards Dámaso Alonso and Antonio Marichalar. After fifty-one days, the exhibition traveled to other Spanish cities, which made it possible for a wider audience to enjoy it. Several institutions and cultural foundations gave financial support, and as a complement to this exhibition, the book presently reviewed, *Joyce y España*, has been released.

The first feature worth highlighting in the volume is the first-rate quality of its impression; the book measures 28 by 25 cms., and the excellence of its paper, font quality, and illustrations over 186 pages reflects the generous support donated by several institutions.

*Joyce y España* consists of three parts. The first includes three chapters written by famous Spanish writers that have been regarded as followers of Joycean narrative techniques. The second part, the most scholarly one, offers in broader terms both the influence of Joyce in the languages of the peninsula and the Spanish elements in Joyce. Finally, the book deals with three Spaniards who had direct contact with Joyce. As a coda, a Spanish bibliography on Joyce closes the volume.

It is important to point out that, apart from the articles, each is accompanied by a painting on *Ulysses* by the well-known Spanish painter Eduardo Arroyo. Arroyo has been awarded several prizes both in France and Spain and can be considered one of the most distinguished living painters in Spain. Alongside them, there is an interesting collection of photographs related to the chapters.

Although this book can be accused of not being designed for scholars, it is surely going to be a very useful contribution, since many

readers may be tempted to begin reading Joyce after having realized that famous Spanish writers admit their Joycean influence.

The first of them is Juan Goytisolo. Goytisolo has a very fine reputation as a novelist in Spain, having lived in France and taught in the United States. He collaborated with Nobel Prize Winner Octavio Paz in two of his books. He has also published a large number of novels and always appears in textbooks of contemporary Spanish literature. His *Señas de Identidad* and *Reivindicación del conde Don Julián* have definitely a Joycean influence. In his essay included in *Joyce y España*, Goytisolo remembers his first readings of Joyce in Spanish translation and singles out the interior monologue (17). Similarly, he also comments on how difficult getting the books was at the time.

The second writer is César Antonio Molina, a poet, novelist and literary critic. Unlike the other writers in this book, Molina focuses on the secondary characters that appear in *Ulysses* and makes us reflect on the contemporary history of Ireland. In spite of the fact that he calls Joyce “a poet” (21), he recalls his first reading of *Ulysses*. He highlights how crucial it is to read Stanislaus’ biographies to understand Joyce’s life and work. Finally, he writes about Sylvia Beach and Paris. Unfortunately, one might expect another series of reflections under his title, “My Bloomsdays.”

The third novelist in this volume is Julián Ríos, a regular in Spanish literary journals and a book critic. Ríos became famous for his trilogy *Larva*, always considered difficult to understand and which has reminiscences of the *Wake*. His article, “Joyce, for instance,” formerly published in the magazine *Leer*, describes his readings in the first Spanish translations, too. Nevertheless, he makes little mention of *Finnegans Wake*, a book that, as we pointed out above, has always been associated with some of his literary production, such as *Babel de una noche de San Juan* or *Poundemonium*, novels belonging to his trilogy.

The second section opens with an article by Carlos García Santa Cecilia entitled “Joyce en España.” The author begins by emphasizing the importance of Ezra Pound and V. Larbaud in Joyce’s work. The main point is to highlight the figure of Antonio Marichalar, the very first person who introduced Joyce in Spain. The author traces the origins of the reception of the Irish author in Spain, including the letter addressed to the well-known poet and professor Dámaso Alonso, the translator of *A Portrait* (46-47). After discussing several press reviews, Santa Cecilia addresses the influence of Joyce on some Spanish novelists.

Next, we find Francisco García Tortosa’s article “España en Joyce.” Actually, the purpose of this article is manifold. To begin with,

the author writes about the Spanish references in Joyce's work. Secondly, he explains why Joyce chose Gibraltar as Molly Bloom's homeland. In the same way, the relationship between Homer's Odysseus and Joyce's Bloom is commented. After that, García Tortosa refers to Joyce's sources about Spain. Although this matter has been discussed before, he attempts to prove Joyce's use of Richard Ford's *A Handbook for Travellers in Spain* and George Borrow's *The Bible in Spain*, which constitutes a novelty in Joycean studies. As a final point, he writes about the Spanish words that appear in *Finnegans Wake*. Definitely, García Tortosa's article is a landmark in the study of the influence of Spain in Joyce's works, since he gathers the ideas and conclusions presented in former articles.<sup>1</sup>

Apart from Spanish, several regions in Spain have different languages that developed from the same Latin origin. As a consequence, literary works are also produced in languages such as Catalan and Galician. The purpose of Antonio Raúl de Toro in the next article is to discover how several Spanish novelists received Joyce's works in those languages, at times before Joyce's style was imitated by Spanish writers, a field of study which de Toro has proved to master before.<sup>2</sup>

As we mentioned above, the last three chapters are devoted to the recollections of Spaniards who met Joyce. Thus, Domingo de Ródenas in "Antonio Marichalar," writes about the first Spaniard who published something on Joyce. Marichalar was a devotee of English literature and even signed against the illegal edition of *Ulysses* in the United States. As de Toro advanced in his article, Juan Antonio Masoliver Ródenas, in his "Juan Ramón Masoliver: An Odysseus in the 20<sup>th</sup> century," tells how his relative J. R. Masoliver brought Joyce's work to Catalonia for the first time, and the nephew recalls his uncle's readings of Joyce. The importance of Masoliver for Catalonian culture is crucial, as he was a painter, an art critic and an essayist. Furthermore, he was one of the first Spanish surrealists and collaborated with Buñuel and Dalí. In the following chapter, Carlos García Santa Cecilia glosses the life of César Abín, the author of the famous drawing of Joyce as a question mark. Apart from describing the story of the well-known caricature, he remembers that a Spanish newspaper reprinted it.

The last chapter offers a bibliography of Joyce in Spain. Its length—50 pages—is proof of the deep interest that Spaniards have had in Joyce. Even if there are missing articles (for instance, some that appeared in *Papers on Joyce*), it is quite useful since it caters to both the scholar and the amateur Joycean reader and includes Ph.D. dissertations, press reviews and columns in Spanish newspapers, in addition, of course, to most of the papers published in scholarly journals. It is definitely going

to be a good tool for research, since it also includes a list of all Spanish editions and translations, something difficult to come by.

As a whole, *Joyce y España* is a very valuable book of reference for those interested in the relationship between Joyce and Spain. Likewise, it is an excellent way of inviting Spaniards to begin reading Joyce's work, perhaps owing to the volume's paintings, photographs and the opinion of well-known Spanish writers. Foreign scholars with reading knowledge of Spanish will also benefit from the ideas presented in the central part of the book.

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<sup>1</sup> See his "España y su función simbólica en la narrativa de *Ulysses*," *Revista canaria de estudios ingleses* 8 (1984) 13-31; "Función de los hispanismos en *Finnegans Wake*," *Joyce en España I*, eds. Francisco García Tortosa y Antonio Raúl de Toro Santos (La Coruña: Universidade da Coruña, 1994) 113-119; and "Tracing the Origins of Spanish in Joyce: A Sourcebook for the Spanish Vocabulary in *Buffalo Notebook VI.B.23*," *Papers on Joyce* 7/8 (2001-2002) 5-15.

<sup>2</sup> See his "La huella de Joyce en Galicia," *Joyce en España I*, eds. Francisco García Tortosa y Antonio Raúl de Toro Santos (La Coruña: Universidade da Coruña, 1994) 31-37; and "An Approach to the Influence of Joyce in *Devalar* by R. Otero Pedrayo," *Papers on Joyce* 1 (1995) 85-90.