

Alberto Lázaro Lafuente and Antonio Raúl de Toro, ed. 2003: *James Joyce in Spain: A Critical Bibliography, 1972–2002*. A Coruña: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidade da Coruña and Asociación Española James Joyce. 172 pp.

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The tremendous influence of James Joyce and his work on many contemporary writers has spurred a huge growth in critical production on the Irish author, covering all his works, especially the ever-controversial *Ulysses*. Joyce has been loved and hated, praised and despised, a manifestation of the manifold views his literary universe inspires. The great quality of James Joyce's literature lies in its controversial and polemic nature, and in the widespread effect that his books provoked in the different currents of critical opinion, especially after the 50s. In the reviews of two fundamental books published recently (*Joyce's Critics* and *The Reception of James Joyce in Europe*), Justin Beplate points out that we live "in an era when Joyce's apotheosis seems assured, when the formidable output of PhD theses, annotations, biographies and critical commentaries churned out yearly by the Joyce industry continues to grow" (3). And he also cites his well-known biographer, Richard Ellman, who wrote: "[Joyce] holds his place of eminence under fire" (3). Probably due to Joyce's resistance to any analysis or classification, the most recent critical approaches seem to have accepted that Joyce's literature has to be considered as a peculiar artefact, difficult to place within the traditional literary canon. Notwithstanding, *Ulysses* still holds the first position in the list of the largely acclaimed novels of the 20th century, though, as the aforementioned Justin Beplate says, "yet even now the book on which Joyce's reputation primarily rests, *Ulysses*, remains more talked about than read" (3). What seems to be decisive in Joyce's work is his ability to challenge the readership, the accepted values and the prevalent critical approaches. He reshaped, so to speak, the literary world. Beplate points out, commenting on his influence on "fellow writers": "he seems to have provoked admiration and anxiety in equal measure" (4).

Considering the complexity and multiplicity of James Joyce's criticisms, *James Joyce in Spain*, edited by Luis Alberto Lázaro and Antonio Raúl de Toro Santos, represents an outstanding achievement. It is not solely a book about the reception of the author in Spain. It can also be considered an academic guide, a valuable tool for researchers, in which the bulk of Joycean criticism published in Spain, in any language, has been neatly classified. An impressive task, indeed, which, as Francisco García Tortosa writes in the introduction, obliges those who wish "to carry out critical studies to take into account that which has been previously written and researched into up to then" (7). In fact, the book provides the potential researcher with a wide and varied catalogue, although, as the authors state, it "makes no pretence of being complete" (11). As we have already said, the books, articles, chapters or papers listed here have been published in Spain, which may restrict the scope of the compilation but, at the same time, it provides the reader with an overview of recent Spanish scholarly criticism. In this sense, the book is an absolute novelty. The list of pieces of criticism gathered in its 172 pages give an accurate idea of the great importance Joyce's work has reached in our universities, despite the well-known difficulties many Spanish readers encounter when analysing his work. Just by browsing the entries, without any further purpose, this book helps to evaluate the reception of Joyce's work in Spain in the last 30 years. But, as the editors of the book point out, the interest in Joyce's work arises much earlier in

Spain, namely in the 1920s. Joyce was regarded as an outstanding literary figure from the very beginning, and his name hit headlines in some newspapers thanks to Antonio Marichalar, author of the first significant article on Joyce published in Spain in 1924, “Joyce en su laberinto” (“Joyce in His Labyrinth”), which appeared in *Revista de Occidente*.

A recent exhibition, entitled *Joyce y España*, showed some of these earliest records of the relationship between Joyce and Spain, including some unpublished letters. Marichalar, as well as Juan Ramón Masoliver or César Abín, were among the key names who contributed to the propagation of Joyce’s work in Spain. So, we can say that Joyce captured the attention of Spanish intellectuals right from the start. Otero Pedrayo’s translation of but a few pages of *Ulysses*, published in Galician in the well-known literary journal *Nós*, is still regarded as the very first attempt to introduce Joyce’s difficulty in the Peninsula. Undoubtedly, Otero’s effort represents the increasing interest of Galician intellectuals at the start of the century, namely the nationalist branch, in identifying Celtism with the Irish tradition, as can be easily concluded by analysing *Nós* from its earliest issue. Justin Beplate himself, in the above-mentioned article, refers to the impressive attempt made by Galician intellectuals in the 20s in order to identify Galicia and Joyce’s ideas:

In Spain Joyce assumed particular importance for a group of Galician writers who, on top of the shared Celtic origins of Ireland and Galicia, saw their own preoccupation with cultural marginalization and nationalism powerfully expressed in the Irish Literary Revival. In the 1920s, the Galician Journal *Nós* (a title that echoes the sentiment of *Sinn Féin*’s “We Ourselves”) devoted a number of issues to the theme of Irish-Galician relations. Perhaps the most memorable contribution was that of the journal’s Editor, Vicente Risco, who imagined Joyce’s protagonist Stephen Dedalus going on a final adventure to Galicia, where, as part of his pact with the devil, he will be the last pilgrim to die on Celtic soil. (4)

This early interest in Joyce has been repeatedly studied in the last years, namely, as the authors point out in the introduction, in Carlos García Santa Cecilia’s great book, *La recepción de James Joyce en la prensa española, 1921–1976*, published in 1976. Antonio Raúl de Toro has also contributed to the expansion of Joyce’s name in some of his previous pieces of criticism. Two of them, *Joyce en España I* (1994) and *Joyce en España II* (1997), both published, together with Francisco García Tortosa, by the Servicio de Publicaciones of the University of A Coruña, contain plenty of information and criticism related to the connection between Spanish intellectuals and the Irish writer.

In fact, as García Tortosa points out in the Preface, Joyce’s work “has been the subject of a considerable amount of research both in Europe and North America” (6). It is true that in the recent decades a wider number of critics have devoted their lives to the analysis of Joyce’s work, but, as we have just seen, Joyce became quite popular in some Spanish intellectual circles almost from the very beginning of his literary career, particularly after the publication of *Ulysses* in Paris. This explains, to a certain extent, what Beplate calls “the curious co-dependence of Joyce and his critics” (3). The result of this increasing interest in Joyce, mostly in the academic context, is neatly reflected in the book we are dealing with. Lázaro and De Toro offer the reader the possibility of browsing through the most outstanding academic references of the last thirty years, compiling the entries in many different ways. Clarity is one of the main virtues of the work.

As is stated by the authors in the Introduction, the book is divided into four parts or sections. Its structure is simple, but effective and practical. Each part is also designed

following logical parameters, gathering contributions in significant subsections. The first part contains over three hundred academic contributions, arranged, as the rest of the book, in alphabetical order by author's name. This classification ranges from critical studies to postgraduate dissertations, including book chapters, essays and journal articles. As David Clark has pointed out, in a review of this book published in *Papers on Joyce* (7–8), “the consistent use of the MLA style sheet facilitates a rapid identification of the sources and provides all the information necessary in order to locate the entries” (226). Clark also praises the relevance of the subsection devoted to doctoral dissertations, for it demonstrates the amazing attraction Joyce has for the “young and emerging academics” (226). In fact, a rapid analysis of the first part of this book (and also an analysis of the rest of it) reveals the voluminous amount of scholarship which has been published around the figure of James Joyce. It is well known that his work has been the object of debate and polemics, but only when we have the opportunity of browsing a comprehensive list of the contributions made so far, including books, do we realize that Joyce's work has been one of the most extensively analysed and researched in Spain, at least if we consider non-Spanish authors.

The second part of the book is devoted to articles and essays dealing with the analysis of a particular work written by Joyce. This organization helps the researcher who is interested in a specific book to browse the whole critical work strictly focused on it. *Ulysses*, unsurprisingly covers most of the entries in this part, but *Finnegans Wake*, to our surprise, also seems to attract the attention of researchers publishing in Spain. In fact, almost forty articles have been written on *Finnegans Wake* (*FW*) so far. David Clark, in the above-mentioned review, refers to the importance of part of the research done on *FW*, considering the extraordinary difficulty of this book, “which had previously appeared to many as inaccessible” (226). Clark's remarks the influence exerted by Francisco García Tortosa in this particular field, mostly due to his celebrated and somewhat unexpected translation of *Anna Livia Plurabelle* in 1992. The research done by José Antonio Álvarez Amorós on the field of Joyce's poetry also deserves our attention for, as Clark puts it, this area of Joyce's production “has traditionally suffered a degree of neglect” (226).

The third section could be considered as a more eclectic one, for it deals with a wide variety of topics and critical approaches, such as literary criticism, comparative studies, translation studies, stylistics, psychoanalytic criticism, feminism, or postcolonial criticism. This section contains four relevant subsections concerning, in a very specific way, the relationship between Joyce and Spain, Joyce and literary theory, Joyce and art, and Joyce on the screen. As we have already pointed out, Joyce's reception studies, along with Joyce's comparative studies, should both be regarded as highly relevant, for they demonstrate the tremendous and early impact made by the Irish novelist on our culture.

As a conclusion, authors are listed alphabetically in the fourth section, even those who took part in collaborative works, as it is stated in the Introduction. For those researchers who are not interested in any critical study or critical approach in particular, but in a concrete author, this comprehensive list will, very probably, be the most useful part of the book: everybody who wrote something about Joyce in Spain, within the 1972–2002 period, seems to be included in it. Finally, a useful appendix on translations provides the researcher with a wide list of the various works by Joyce published in Spain (not only in Spanish). As there are so many of them, the authors insist that only first editions have been taken into consideration in this particular section. Obviously, Spanish criticism on Joyce

published abroad has not been included, nor have translations of articles published in other countries or journalistic articles and book references (except a few).

There are several outstanding examples of other, similar works published in Great Britain, or in the States, mostly intended to collect criticism written, in English-speaking countries. However, as criticism on Joyce has been so productive, and is constantly growing, lists of essays or books on the Irish author are not always comprehensive, though they tend to include the majority of the most significant titles. Quite large in scope is, for instance, a compilation carried out by Warren Wedin (California State University at Northridge), *James Joyce Bibliography, 1962–1996*, which can be looked up on his personal webpage (see the works cited), and downloaded as a PDF file. This compilation also deals with criticism on each different book written by Joyce in a separate way, and provides the reader with a selected list of major books on Joyce's criticism. In fact, electronic sites can be very useful for researchers in the Joycean field. Consider, for example, "The Modern World" (see the Works Cited section), an electronic resource which contains a wide range of links and references, including plenty of criticism on Joyce. As we have already said, Joyce's literary achievement excited criticism right from the start. Sometimes due to the controversial nature of his work, sometimes due to his impressive use of language and cross-references (for instance, Thornton's *Allusions in Ulysses* proves particularly valuable for understanding the many references to literature, history or theology in Joyce's masterpiece). Difficulties in Joyce's books impelled the critics to analyse his works in detail, always looking for a hidden idea or an unpredictable verbal treasure. As a result, a vast amount of criticism has been published and is being published almost everyday. Among the most outstanding books of criticism on Joyce, Thomas Stanley's *An Annotated Critical Bibliography of James Joyce*, published in 1989, must be cited. And also the two volumes edited by Robert H. Deming, *James Joyce, the Critical Heritage*, a useful compilation which has the peculiarity of listing not only a comprehensive list of critical pieces, but also the most outstanding excerpts of each of them. In this sense, Deming's book, though only covering criticism published up to 1941, represents an invaluable tool for researchers working on Joyce's literary production. Of course, other significant books of equal interest dealing with Joyce and his works, of equal interest, could also be cited. However, our purpose here is not to offer the reader a comprehensive list of critical bibliographies on Joyce published abroad, but to provide the reader with a few relevant and useful examples.

As a whole, and as we have already said in the lines above, *James Joyce in Spain: A Critical Bibliography*, can be regarded as a magnificent tool for researchers. Clarity and simplicity are the main aims of the authors, as they make clear in the Introduction. The book is organised in a logical manner, avoiding cross-references and using repetitions on purpose, in order to facilitate quick research. Though this bibliography demands continuous updating due to the explosion of Joycean criticism and research, this compilation is an excellent attempt to gather together in one volume Spanish criticism on Joyce.

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