

Dídac Pujol (2007). *Traduir Shakespeare. Les reflexions dels traductors catalans*. Lleida: Punctum & Trilcat. Quaderns, 3, 244 pp. 14€. ISBN 978-84-936094-1-2.

Just over a hundred pages of this curious volume contain an anthology of texts about translation by Catalan translators of Shakespeare from the *fin de siècle* to the present day. The selection is both predicated by the limited number of texts available and by the desire to present the full range of Catalan Shakespeare translation history. Thus we find the early prefaces of Arthur Masriera (1898), Antoni Bulbena i Tosell (1910), alongside the personal testimonies of Josep Carner (1908), Magí Morera i Galícia (1912) and Carme Montoriol (1928), even though they contain little systematic reflection on translation problems and approaches. Yet together they present a compelling glimpse of how far the desire to adequately translate Shakespeare for the Catalan stage, to do justice to his poetic language or simply correct erroneous impressions of his plays, is interwoven with the dream of cultural renewal and with the forging of a literary language. The more erudite introductions of Cebrià Montoliu (1908) and Alfons Par (1912), whilst engaging with a wide range of philological studies and cultural commentary, engage the reader most in their reflection on the kind of language in which to dress their versions, and in the audacity of their ambition; whilst the excerpts from Cèsar August Jordana's *L'art de traduir* (1938), including some thoughts on his prose translations of a number of Shakespeare's plays, both vindicate the importance of Catalonia's burgeoning translation history and assert the responsibility of the translator to bring the translated text wholly into twentieth-century Catalan, thus prioritising acceptability over adequacy.

The second half of the anthology reproduces texts written after the Spanish Civil War, with all that its aftermath represented for the Catalan language. Thus, the extent of later translators' reflection on the feats of their forebears signals a need to re-member tradition that contextualises their own endeavours to bring Shakespeare's language nearer to contemporary Catalans. Joan Triadú's study (1958) defends the legitimacy of his personal interpretation of a selection of sonnets in generational terms, as does Gerard Vergés in 1993. Josep Maria de Sagarra (1959) brings to bear his own personal experience of theatre to capture the vitality of Shakespeare's language, and defends the capacity of modern Catalan to faithfully express the rhetorical movement of the original. Jordi Pujol Cofan (1975), Terenci Moix (1980), Salvador Oliva (1993) and Miquel Desclot (2004) all reflect on the different models offered by tradition, before defending their own mode of rendering Shakespeare's poetic language, seeking a balance between formal adequacy and theatrical acceptability. Thus, whilst in general they distance themselves from the artificially anachronistic strategy of Par, all but Oliva are more tolerant of Sagarra's idiosyncratic renderings. When Oliva reminds us of 'la tremenda importancia del texto traducido, puesto que es, al fin y al cabo, la partitura final que deberán interpretar los actores que

representan la obra' (149), it is to underline the dangers of Sagarra's subordination of meaning to form. Both Oliva and Joan Sellent (1994) instead align themselves with the example of Gabriel Ferrater, and a linguistic model considered "lliure d'artificialitats... que procura no allunyar-se del català actual" (164).

Of all the texts presented, it is perhaps the fragments of Sellent's study of his experience dubbing the Kenneth Branagh film version of *Much Ado about Nothing* and the excerpts from Vergés's prologue to his translation of the sonnets that present the most wide-ranging and interesting reflections on translation practice, and fuller versions of their studies are still quite easily available elsewhere to the student of translation. Nevertheless, Pujol is to be thanked for bringing together a range of less accessible texts, with appropriate introductory notes and individual glossaries to guide the reader through the idiosyncrasies of pre-standardised Catalan. Together they provide an enjoyable introduction to the wider history of Catalan Shakespeare reception, presenting some sense of the importance of translation for contemporary Catalan cultural history, and revealing changing perceptions both of Shakespeare's language and of the Catalan language itself.

The anthology is supported by a diverse range of contextual information, beginning with a summary of European Shakespeare reception, which might have been more useful had it been more clearly linked to Catalan readings. This is followed by a brief history of Shakespeare reception in Catalan, that is basically a synthesis of Par (1935), Esquerra (1937) and Buffery (1998), often reproducing the same quotations and sources, a basic glossary, presumably aimed at undergraduate students, and the criteria used for the edition. There is an extensive annotated bibliography, containing very useful information on the Catalan translations of Shakespeare, presented alphabetically by translator with descriptions of the different texts, and by translated text. The coverage here is exhaustive, although the mode of presentation does not really help the reader to grasp the significance of particular versions, nor to obtain a critical overview of the chronological development of Shakespeare reception, let alone of metareflection on Shakespeare translation. Pujol indicates elsewhere in the volume where fuller and less fragmentary narratives might be found. There is a fairly representative bibliography of translators' reflections on their practice, and an up-to-date selection of studies of Catalan Shakespeare translations, many of them on individual translators. Thus, in spite of some uncertainty at times about the exact focus and intended reader of this anthology, it is a valuable resource for anyone interested in studying the translation of Shakespeare in Catalan, providing an eclectic guide to approaches, sources and tools that range beyond "les reflexions dels traductors Catalans".

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