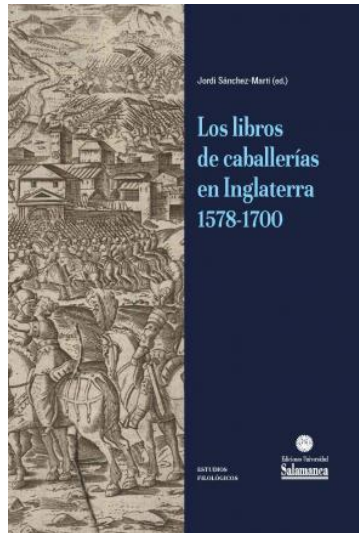


Jordi Sánchez Martí ed. *Los libros de caballerías en Inglaterra, 1578–1700*. (Estudios filológicos, 349.) Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad Salamanca. 2020. ISBN 978-84-1311-407-1. xiii + 216 pgs.

Reviewed by Antonio Cortijo Ocaña
University of California



As the editor of this excellent volume aptly remarks, “*libros de caballerías* or chivalry books are a literary genre born in the Iberian Peninsula at the end of the Middle Ages, reaching its peak in the 16th c.” The success of the genre spanned over a century (1508, first edition of *Amadís de Gaula* and 1623, last edition of *Espejo de príncipes y caballeros*) and probably stopped only by the despise to and mockery of the genre shown by *Don Quixote*, together with the ample dissemination of Shelton’s translation of Cervantes’s work into English. The works belonging to the *Amadís* and *Palmerín* cycles were broadly disseminated throughout Europe in German, Danish, French, Hebrew, Netherlandish, Italian and English translations. To this fact pointed out in this book, we should add that the Iberian influence in England on chivalric matters runs long and deep, for it began with Caxton’s translation into English of Lull’s extremely influential *Llibre de l’orde de cavalleria* (Cortijo ed., 2015).

This large editorial success is what has prompted Jordi Sánchez to explore the topic of those *libros de caballerías* that were translated into English between 1578-1700, which was first analyzed in 1920 by Sir Henry Thomas in his momentous *Spanish and Portuguese Romances of Chivalry: The Revival of the Romance of Chivalry in the Spanish Peninsula, and its Extension and Influence Abroad*. To this end, the editor has gathered a group of renowned scholars (Joyce Boro, Donna B. Hamilton, Jordi Sánchez Martí, Agustín López Avilés, Leticia Álvarez Recio, Helen Moore, María Beatriz Hernández Pérez, Rocío G. Sumillera, Alejandra Ortiz Salamovich) who offer us important contributions respectively on a long list of books that include *Espejo de príncipes y caballeros* (*Mirror of Princely Deeds and Knighthood*) (1578-1601), *Palmerín de Inglaterra* (*Palmerin of England*), (1581-1685), *Palmerín de Olivia* (*Palmerin d’Oliva*) (1588-

1637), *Don Florando (Palladine of England)* (1588-1700?), *Primaleón de Grecia (Palmendos, 1589-1663)*; and *Primaleon of Greece, 1595-1619*), *Amadís de Gaula (Amadis of Gaule)* (I-IV, 1590-1702), *Belianís de Grecia (Belianis of Greece)* (1598-1700), and *Amadís de Gaula (Amadis de Gaule)* (V-VIII, 1598-1694). The translators of these works were William Barley, Francis Kirkman, Anthony Munday (by far the most prolific translator), Robert Parry, John Shirley, and a remarkable female author, Margaret Tyler (whose biographies are provided in an Appendix). The result is a fascinating collection of essays which serves to fill a gap in a field of studies that explores the connections between Spanish and English literatures at large in prose and theater genres that is producing abundant bibliography in the last decade.

The topic of the book must be put in the context of the arrival of Spanish literature to France, Italy, and England in the 16th and 17th c. In the case of England, not many chivalric works were translated into English directly from Spanish (only probably Margaret Tyler) or Italian (only Munday?). It was especially French that was usually the intermediary language used by translators. In all, the three languages represent the market in which Spanish literary works found a prolific dissemination. A very relevant fact pointed out in this volume is that many of the translators of chivalric works had Catholic connections (Tyler, Sheldon, Munday). This is a fact amply proven by our own studies, as the case of the elusive James Salgado makes clear in the 17th c. (*Herejía, inquisición y leyenda Negra en el siglo XVII*, 2016). Let us also remember that Spanish novels and short stories circulated in translation in the English market, such as those of Céspedes's and Castillo Solórzano's (together with other French and Italian collections of short stories) mostly derived from Italian and French originals. And again, as the case of Salgado makes patent, many of these stories were first introduced through Catholic circles in England, or originated in Protestant circles abounding in episodes that included monks' and priests' examples of immoral behavior that served to criticize the Catholic religion, particularly the Jesuits. In studying the topic of the presence of Spanish literature in England, together with chivalric novels, we would do well considering the translations of sentimental fictions into English early in the 16th c., as the cases of *Arnalte and Lucenda* and *Cárcel de amor* make clear (see Cortijo & Hurtado, <https://www.ehumanista.ucsb.edu/publications/translations>), for these provide a taste for psychological elements also present in chivalric romances that were dear to 16th c. audiences. We could also add other Spanish works such as Montemayor's *Diana*, picaresque novels, or *Don Quixote*, not to talk about the myriad works that described Spain for an English audience, in general within the context of criticism of Spanish mores and the perplexing construction of a black legend (see Cortijo), on many occasions deriving from university circles and groups of Spanish expatriates in England, starting with Casiodoro de la Reina.

The chapters of this collection touch on a variety of topics: books in private libraries, comparisons among chivalric books, popularity of books in both languages, the influence of the French market, the quality of the English translation and a comparison with French originals, as well as the role of women as writers of the genre and translators, together with the possibility the genre offered to portray emotions and self-analysis. This collection of edited essays must be now read in combination with that edited by L. Álvarez Recio, *Iberian Chivalric Romance. Translations and Cultural Transmission in Early Modern England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2021), mostly centered around the role of Anthony Munday as translator. Once again, the topic of chivalric romances and their success in the English market must be combined with that of other Spanish literary genres, and even of these chivalric romances in translations other than into English. Further research about the Catholic connection is also desirable, for it could help explain some of the channels through which this literature found its way between

France and England, or even between Spain and England. In addition, more questions arise, such as the role Gondomar could have played in the dissemination of this literature in England, or the role exerted by many Jesuit colleges scattered throughout France, Italy, and Spain.

In all, we have an excellent collection of essays that pave the way for future research on this fascinating and rarely-studied topic.