

MOLIÈRE IN THE CATALAN LANDS

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The great French author of comic plays Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, Molière, is one of the foreign playwrights who has been most translated into Catalan over the years. In the last third of the 18th century some of his plays were already being performed in some parts of the Catalan Lands, for example in Majorca, where Lluís Foco did a version of *The Imaginary Invalid* and where, in the following century, Antoni M. Cervera translated *The Doctor in Spite of Himself* and *Fake Statue*, and Antoni Bisafies did a very free adaptation of *The Doctor in Spite of Himself*. Due to their particular socio-political circumstances, the Roussillon and Minorca were influenced more by European intellectual trends and many translations were made in these two places, mainly from French. So, although the versions have not survived, the Minorcan Pere Ramis translated several plays by Molière in the 18th century; five versions by another Minorcan, Vicenç Albertí, have survived, however. In Northern Catalonia three translations from the 18th century have survived, as well as a 19th century manuscript, with two different versions of *M. de Pourceaugnac*.

In the Principality, no attempt was made to translate Molière into Catalan, as far as we know, until the beginning of the 20th century. *Married In Spite of Himself*, translated by Salvador Vilaregut, and *The Miser* by Josep Roca i Cupull, were the first plays by Molière staged by the Teatre Íntim in 1903, followed two years later by *The Imaginary Invalid* by Josep Carner and the *Precious Young Maidens* and *The Marquess of Scarbaguyres*, by Manuel de Montoliu. In 1917 the Escola d'Art Dramàtic organised the cycle "Molière and the Doctors' Farce", during which Adrià Gual illustrated his own studies – published in 1921 – with the staging of *The Doctor in Spite of Himself* and *The Flying Doctor* in his own versions, and *The Imaginary Invalid* by Carner. Five years later, Gual himself would translate *The Bourgeois Gentleman*. In 1922 it was the third centenary of Molière's birth and

the Escola celebrated it with a series of lectures and with a performance of *The Miser* by Roca i Cupull, and of *The Misanthrope* by Alfons Maseras. Another commemorative performance was of *The School for Husbands* by Josep M. de Sagarra.

In the first third of the 20th century, more translations of the work of this comic writer appeared apart from those of the Teatre Íntim and of the Escola: five adaptations a *Don Joan* in a joint version by Pere Prat and Gaballí i Maseras; *Tartuffe* by Maseras, and *Esganarel* and *Doctor Love* by Prat i Gaballí, which initiated a "Biblioteca Molière" [Molière Collection]; *The Imaginary Invalid* by Manuel de Montoliu; *The Bourgeois Gentleman* i *Marriage in Spite of Himself* by Carner; *El senyor Pupurull*, an adaptation by Sagarra of *George Dandin*; and *The Doctor in Spite of Himself* by Arnau Belcaire (Cèsar-August Jordana). In the 1930s, the Barcino publishing house, as well as bringing out a translation by Joaquim Ruyra of *The School for Husbands* – preceded by a long essay –, set about publishing Molière's complete works, translated by Maseras.

In the 1940s and 1950s, the only Catalan translations of Molière authorised by the Franco regime were reprints and a bibliophile edition, in 1951, of Joan Oliver's translation of *The Misanthrope* which was republished in 1973 together with *The Imaginary Cuckold* and *Tartuffe*. From the 1960s onward, many translations appeared: *El senyor Perramon*, an adaptation by Sagarra of *The Miser*; various versions by Bonaventura Vallespinosa; *Tartuffe* and *The School for Wives* by Santiago Rubió i Tudurí; and *The Imaginary Invalid* by Joan Vila Casas. In the 1970s, Ramon Gomis translated *The Bourgeois Gentleman* Rodolf Sirera put *The Doctor in Spite of Himself* into Valencian popular parlance, Juli Leal and Francesc Romà did an adaptation of *Georges Dandin*: Jordi Babau, and for the first time two children's versions came out: *The Doctor in Spite of Himself*, by Francesc Nel·lo, and *The School for Wives* by Nicasí Camps i Pinós.

translated using criteria that were very different, freer and less hampered, from those employed in the virtually interlinear version of 1478 (criteria which were comparable to those adopted by Luther a few years earlier when he translated biblical texts into German).

