

Vicente Blasco Ibáñez:
An Annotated Bibliography 1975-2002

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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	9
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	14
Organization of the Bibliography	15
Abbreviations and Symbols	16
Primary Material	
Complete Works and Additional Collections	17
Individual Works	25
Journalism, Speeches, and Letters of BI	36
Films Based on BI's Writings or Life	38
Secondary Material	
Bibliographies	39
Books, Pamphlets, and Other Monographic Publications	
Primarily about BI's Writings or Life	41
Published Proceedings of Symposia, Conventions,	
"Homenajes," and Special Issues of Journals	
Dedicated Exclusively or Primarily to BI	61
Articles, Chapters of Books, Prologues and	
Introductions to Editions, and Other	
Significant References to BI or His Works	68
PhD Dissertations about BI or His Works	191
INDEX	193

Introduction

THIS BIBLIOGRAPHY UPDATES Paul Smith's *Vicente Blasco Ibáñez: An Annotated Bibliography* (London: Grant & Cutler Ltd., 1976), which covers writings by and about Blasco Ibáñez published between 1882 and 1974 inclusive. The present compilation is intended as a guide to editions of the works of Vicente Blasco Ibáñez (henceforth VBI or BI) and significant writings about the author or his works published from 1975 through 2002. With a few exceptions (mostly reissues of early monographic studies), it does not repeat entries from the Grant & Cutler bibliography.

Intended as a general guide and as a research tool, this bibliography can help students and scholars alike to (1) identify and distinguish among editions of BI's works that have appeared during the indicated period, (2) locate significant items written about BI's life as well as his writings, and (3) determine whether a specific publication is germane to their interest. This compilation does not purport to be exhaustive. Indeed, it attempts to identify as many editions of BI's works as possible, but only significant writings about the author or his works. Thus, it ignores much incidental and anecdotal trivia that has appeared about BI in the Spanish (especially the Valencian) press.

The annotations in this bibliography are more extensive than those in the 1976 Grant & Cutler compilation. Given the considerable amount of serious writing about BI that has appeared since 1974, these longer comments should save users time by enabling them to make more rapid and informed judgments as to whether a study merits further consideration. It should be noted that no other annotated or critical bibliographies on BI have appeared during the period 1975-2002. Indeed, as our bibliography section reveals, there exist few bibliographies of any kind on BI. Worth mentioning is Manuel Bas Carbonell's brief but informative "Bibliografía de primeras ediciones de BI." More significant is Antoni Espinós Quero's *La obra literaria de VBI: Catálogo de ediciones* (1998, 2002), which is especially valuable for distinguishing between first editions and frequent reprints of BI's works, particularly those issued by the publishers Sempere and

Prometeo during the novelist's own lifetime. Since Espinós's work also contains a very thorough listing of foreign translations of BI's works (in fact, the most complete listing to date), we do not include a translation section. However, recent translations into Catalan, Valencian, or English are included under "Primary Material: Individual Works," as are Castilian Spanish translations of the few works BI wrote in Valencian while still in his teens.

To appreciate the vicissitudes of BI's popularity and critical reputation throughout the twentieth century, one must place them within the context of historical developments in Spain. By the turn of the twentieth century, the still young BI had become the most influential leader among Valencian Republicans and was for five terms their elected representative in Madrid, where he was an outspoken advocate of a Spanish republic. Two decades later, as an internationally renowned author living in France, he was again calling for the overthrow of the Spanish monarchy and the establishment of a republic, at times in widely distributed pamphlets published in Spanish, French, and English. Since BI died in 1928, he did not witness the advent of the Second Spanish Republic. Nonetheless, his importance as a political figure (apart from his importance as a writer) is attested by the appearance of his portrait on two values of the first set of postage stamps issued by the new Republic in 1931, a patriotic series honoring such Republican political icons as Joaquín Costa, Francisco Pi y Margall, Pablo Iglesias, and Emilio Castelar.

The defeat of the Spanish Republic in 1939 ushered in several decades during which the name of BI was taboo and his figure anathema in most circles in Spain. As Richard A. Cardwell observes in his 1973 (2nd ed. 1994) monograph on *La barraca*, a "conspiracy of silence" enveloped BI's person and works in the post-Civil War period in reaction to his anticlerical, antimonarchist, and antimilitaristic postures. Because of BI's depiction as a radical, he was not openly discussed in scholarly meetings, and his works were removed from many libraries. His novels, even the politically non-controversial Valencian regional works, did not appear in school or university curricula. During the late 1950s, many of BI's works that were for sale in Spain were price rationed. For instance, social or thesis novels such as *La catedral*, *El intruso*, or *La bodega* were readily available only in Vol. I of the expensive, leather-bound Ed. Aguilar *Obras Completas*, whose texts (often arbitrarily truncated or rewritten) were not faithful to BI's originals. As late as the early 1960s, few of BI's works were readily available in inexpensive editions, with one principal exception: his seven early Valencian works appeared sporadically in the imported Espasa-Calpe Argentina Colección Austral series. Also, over a period of seven years, on an irregular basis and in small printings, Ed.

Planeta issued selected works in its Colección de Autores Españoles Contemporáneos. Strongly anticlerical novels were excluded from this series, and censors clumsily modified many passages in the works that were available.

The quarter century following Francisco Franco's death in 1975, however, witnessed the publication of a steadily increasing number and variety of editions of BI's works, some in large printings and reprintings, which is a testimony to the writer's readability and his popularity with modern readers. During the last decade of the twentieth century, a surge of interest in BI resulted in the publication of edited collections of his works, some with critical introductions and notes. Even the pre-1895 *La araña negra*, which BI repudiated and expressed regret at having written, was republished in various editions. And selections of BI's excellent early journalism were edited and examined critically for the first time.

During this same period there appeared an impressive number of books and articles about BI and his works. As the appreciative lectures and writings by Juan Luis Alborg, Francisco Caudet, Domingo Induráin, Andrés Amorós, Richard Cardwell, Joan Oleza, and other distinguished scholars demonstrate, BI can no longer be ignored or relegated to the second tier of twentieth-century Spanish prose writers. The work which most definitively revindicates BI as a major author is Alborg's *Historia de la literatura española. Realismo y naturalismo. La novela* (1999), for which Valencia awarded him the 1999 Lluís Guarnier literary prize. More than six hundred pages in length, this study offers a comprehensive and enthusiastic evaluation of the Valencian writer's works and demonstrates their originality and importance.

The Simposium Internacional a VBI (Valencia, 26-30 January 1981), sponsored by the Asociación Nostra Cultura, marked the first major gathering of academics, writers, and journalists held to discuss BI. Most participants were not specialists on BI and were from Spain, France, and England, with one representative each from the United States and Argentina. Five years later, in 1986, the Diputación de Valencia published the attractively illustrated *VBI: la aventura del triunfo, 1867-1928*, which includes several of the addresses originally presented at the Simposium, as well as reprints of several previously published articles about BI.

Seventeen years after the Simposium Internacional, the Diputación de Valencia declared 1998 the "Año/Any BI." It sponsored monthly lectures by well-known scholars, film directors, and Spanish writers at the Centre Cultural La Beneficència, where it presented throughout the year a cycle of special exhibits on BI's life, times, and works. Coinciding with the themes of these exhibits, the

Centre Cultural and the Diputación jointly published six profusely illustrated thematic “catálogos,” each of which contains several studies dealing with a specific aspect of BI’s writings, careers, or life. These attractive editions became collector’s items and disappeared from the commercial market before they could become widely distributed. Individual issues are to be found in some US libraries, but as of this bibliography’s date of completion, we believe that no one site has the complete set of six.

The culminating act of the “Año BI” was the Congreso Internacional BI (November 23-27), timed to coincide with the one hundredth anniversary of the November 1898 publication of *La barraca*. Organized by a team of scholars directed by Professor Joan Oleza Simó of the University of Valencia, this gathering was indeed international, with participants from Asia, North and South America, Slavic nations, and many Western European countries. Two years later, sixty-six of its presentations, scrupulously edited by Oleza and Javier Lluch, were published in two volumes by the Biblioteca Valenciana with the title *VBI: 1898-1998. La vuelta al siglo de un novelista (Actas del Congreso Internacional celebrado en Valencia del 23 al 27 de noviembre de 1998)*. These volumes constitute an invaluable resource for the study of BI’s life and works, which are analyzed from a wide range of critical and theoretical perspectives. In their totality, along with Alborg’s study, they validate BI’s status as a major Spanish prose writer.

The last quarter of the twentieth century produced other notable changes in the official attitude regarding BI. Toward the end of the Spanish Civil War, all visible reminders of his person and name had been removed from his native Valencia after that Republican city fell to the Nationalists in March 1939. But after 1975, statues, busts, and plaques honoring BI appeared throughout his native city. In 1977, a major thoroughfare, the Paseo de Valencia al Mar, was renamed Avenida/Avinguda BI. This important artery of the city, which begins at Viveros Park, is the principal thoroughfare through the University of Valencia campus district, and its broad park-like median contains a number of memorials to BI. It has been growing steadily eastward toward the Mediterranean Sea, and soon it will reach the Cabañal district, just south of the Malvarrosa beach area where the novelist’s former seaside chalet, also named La Malvarrosa, is located. From a ruinous and abandoned state, the chalet was rebuilt by the Ayuntamiento de Valencia and inaugurated as the Casa-Museo BI in 1997. Open to the public daily (except Mondays) without an admission charge, the museum’s two floors of exhibits provide an excellent perspective on the life and achievements of the Valencian writer who became, after Cervantes, Spain’s best-known author internationally. (Casa-Museo BI, Isabel de Villena 159, 46011 Valencia. Tel: 96