

Sònia Boadas

Dos epistolarios inéditos de Diego de Saavedra: un diplomático en el Franco Condado y en Münster

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Spanish historiography has yet to produce its own, up-to-date, source-based summary of the Thirty Years' War. There has always been a strong and palpable interest in the subject, as recently demonstrated by the summer course in 2018, organised by IULCE,¹ and the many monographs about the age of king Philip IV of Spain (1621-1665) and his prime minister, the count- duke of Olivares (1621-1643),² as well as several tomes about the war itself.³ However, in terms of the foreign policy and strategy of the Spanish Monarchy, these and other compilations of the past did not rely on the relentless archival scrutiny that is a must in the fragmented, demanding, multilingual document landscape of the composite state of Spain and its European allies and opponents.⁴

It is not a coincidence that many works by foreign researchers, like the pioneering books of J. H. Elliott, René Vermeir and Peter Wilson, have been translated into Spanish in order to meet Spanish scholarship's demands and hunger for history.⁵ A sourcebook published in the Czech Republic 40-50 years ago provides more insight into Spanish military strategy than any docu-

1. Instituto Universitario 'La Corte en Europa' (IULCE): *La Guerra de los Treinta Años como conflicto confesional (1618-2018)*, Alcázar de San Juan, Spain, 18-20 June 2018.

2. E.g. Rivero Rodríguez (2017).

3. Negro del Cerro (2016), Usunáriz (2016), Borreguero Beltrán (2018).

4. There are many notable exceptions, such as that of Fraga Iribarne (1955).

5. Elliott (2004), Vermeir (2006), Wilson (2018).

ment series available in Spain so far,⁶ except for the unfinished, but exemplary and meticulous series by Aldea Vaquero.⁷

A conspicuous, gaping void exists in our knowledge of the peace negotiations conducted in Westphalia (1643-1648). Here again, interest has led recently to the production of some excellent works.⁸ For printed sources, the immense and illustrious *Acta Pacis Westphalicae* (APW)⁹ is matchless, even if the Dutch, the Venetian and the Spanish correspondences are still unedited (although this task has been in the plans for more than 50 years); in contrast, many Imperial, French and Swedish letters, diaries, protocols and other official papers have been published. It is no wonder that no one has yet written the full history of the treaties from Spain's angle. Who would spend years looking at the (as of 2018) 47 volumes of the APW for the many traces of Spanish policy making and the unpublished sources from dozens of European archives? The ones we find in the *CoDoIn* series are obviously insufficient.¹⁰ Language barriers are also considerable; for example, the magnificent and innovative German-language summary by Rohrschneider about the relationship between the French and Spanish envoys, based on primary archival research, has not received attention in Spain.¹¹

Likewise, we are yet to understand in depth the sensitive relationship between the Franche-Comté – part of the Burgundian Circle of the Holy Roman Empire, headed by the kings of Spain from the times of Emperor Charles V (1519-1556) until the second half of the 17th century – and the rest of Germany, France and the Swiss cantons during a bloody and intensive period of the Thirty Years' War. The correspondence between the entitled Spanish diplomacy and the parliament of the Franche-Comté in Dole is therefore of great importance.

Sònia Boadas' edition of hundreds of so far entirely unknown letters and other documents related to the writer and diplomat Diego Saavedra Fajardo (1584-1648), who was on multiple occasions envoy to the Franche-Comté and the neighbouring Swiss cantons in the 1630s and 1640s and was also one of the Spanish plenipotentiaries of the peace negotiations in Münster, Westphalia, is a unique and much-needed contribution to several fields of research and deserves our attention.

First, Sònia Boadas, a philologist by profession, having received her PhD at the University of Girona, has begun to satisfactorily fill the lacuna left by some of the missing volumes of the APW. The author of several critical editions of a number of important Golden Age writers, including Lope de Vega and Saavedra

6. Polisensky (1971-1981).

7. *Correspondencia de Saavedra Fajardo 1631-1634*.

8. Manzano Baena (2011).

9. *Acta Pacis Westphalicae* (1962).

10. *Colección de Documentos Inéditos para la Historia de España* (1884).

11. Rohrschneider (2006).

Fajardo,¹² Boadas is thereby paying with this volume a long outstanding debt on behalf of Spanish and European historiography.

Second, most published diplomatic correspondences concerning Spain have thus far contained letters and documents between the envoys and the decision makers sitting in Madrid, but not between the diplomats and other rulers of lower rank of the House of Austria. However, a publication of such documents would obviously aid us considerably in understanding the moving forces and motives of the agents of the dynasty. An excellent example of this in Boadas' book is the correspondence between Saavedra and the marquis of Castel Rodrigo.¹³ His letters from and to Phillip IV are also invaluable discoveries, since a large portion of original diplomatic correspondence from these decades has been lost and cannot be found in the State Archives in Spain, including the well-known General Archive of Simancas.

Third, though we have heard about the identification of a number of unpublished writings and letters of Saavedra from almost every decade of his career (and it has been always a rewarding task of scholars to edit those¹⁴), the discovery of multiple sets of collected letters for such a well-researched author like Saavedra Fajardo is extraordinary. The Departmental Archives of Doubs (Besançon-Planoise, France), the Library of Study and Conservation and Municipal Archives (Besançon, France), the National Archives of Catalonia (Barcelona, Spain), and the Estense Library (Modena, Italy) have not or have only scarcely been investigated thus far. Hopefully this discovery will set in motion new research in those precious manuscript collections.

The researcher may find of special interest the *Appendix*, in which diplomatic instructions and mandates (*plenipotencias, poderes*) as well as historically important documents about Saavedra's title of membership in the Royal and Supreme Council of the Indies can be studied. At the end of his career Saavedra assumed the role of leader and instructor of ambassadors in Madrid, and for this, Boadas's book provides new sources.

A possible criticism of this edition of documents might be the omission of a longer introduction to the historical landscape and the lack of more detailed annotations and cross-references with the APW and other sourcebooks and monographs. Also, the absence of reference to the parallel correspondences. However, we do not live in an ideal world and the extent of such a task, as

12. Boadas (2015), Boadas (2016), and others. A number of her papers shed new light on several biographical, literary, historical and artistic elements of the life and works of Saavedra Fajardo.

13. Manuel de Moura y Corte-Real, II marquis of Castel Rodrigo, governor-general of the Spanish Netherlands, including the Franche-Comté (1644–1647).

14. The list of publications, beginning with the collected papers of Luis Salazar y Castro (1658–1734) in the 17th century and the *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles* (1853) to the present year, is extensive. For a recent compilation (both editions and papers), see: <http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/portales/diego_saavedra_fajardo/su_obra_bibliografia/>.

clearly explained above, is so enormous that the author made a wise choice in focusing mostly on the new texts themselves and their environment and process of creation.

This said, small excerpts and summaries for each of the 460 documents would have aided the reader, since in the current format the researcher has to scan each individual document to determine if it contains something of interest. Since Saavedra Fajardo was a global *personaje* in terms of both his literary production¹⁵ and his diplomatic endeavours (which were well-known and respected in all major courts of the House of Austria, including Brussels, Vienna and Madrid), the extracts could have been presented in both English and Spanish. The index of names and the bibliography are very helpful.

Recently both the Saavedra studies (the discovery of new texts and unpublished correspondences of which Sònia Boadas is aware) and the research around the Thirty Years' War have gained momentum, and in the next years significant new results are expected from a variety of scholars in both fields.¹⁶ As advances are made, the present book will be widely used as a foundation for further investigations and will probably generate new research while underscoring again the vital importance of primary sources in the Humanities: the closer we get to original texts, the deeper understanding we attain of the author and the writings we have inherited. Sònia Boadas has done her part and created an almost exemplary product. Now it is scholarship's turn to make use of the new, valuable sources and move forward in both historiography and philology.

15. The most important *obra* of the Murcian writer is the *Idea de un Príncipe Político Cristiano representada en cien empresas* (abbreviated here as *Empresas Políticas*) (1640, Munich), translated into multiple languages and republished many times in the 17th century.

16. Most recently: Monostori (2019).

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